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Connecticut Wildlife

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From the Director

Because many wildlife issues extend beyond state boundaries, Connecticut's Wildlife Division routinely cooperates with other states and federal agencies on research projects to improve the management of wildlife populations. In the case of migratory animals, such as waterfowl and shorebirds, the need for such cooperative ventures is obvious. In addition, regional or national research is frequently valuable for advancing and testing new management techniques, such as fertility control for white-tailed deer. Cooperative projects allow agencies to pool their resources to expand sample sizes and replicate studies providing meaningful results.

An extremely large, multi-year cooperative wildlife research project is currently being conducted in the United States and Canada to evaluate, improve and modernize trap technology. It is without a doubt the most extensive study of traps and trapping ever undertaken. The goal of the study, involving biologists from all 50 states, wildlife veterinarians and federal experts, is to improve the welfare of trapped animals and the technology behind traps themselves. Hundreds of devices are being tested to evaluate factors such as effectiveness, selectivity, animal welfare, practicability and human safety in order to develop "best management practices" (BMPs) for various furbearing mammals trapped throughout the United States. The United States, Canada, Russia and the European Union have all agreed to further the progress of trapping and animal welfare by developing international humane standards.

More than half of the states in the country are involved in the field research. While field research is not planned for Connecticut, the Wildlife Division has participated in the design of the project and will also help to evaluate the results and determine the BMPs by cooperating with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. The value of regulated trapping to balance wildlife populations and control problem animals has been demonstrated time and again. In addition, trapping for research, species reintroductions and rare species protection are tools that wildlife managers rely upon. We are committed to using the best practices to conduct our furbearer management programs and strongly support the scientific research that will provide objective evaluations of traps and trapping technology.

Dale W. May

Cover:

Beavers are considered "nature's engineers" because they construct dams on streams and thus create marshes. Learn more about beavers on page 19.

Photo courtesy of Paul J. Fusco

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The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program was initiated by sportsmen and conservationists to provide states with funding for wildlife management and research programs, habitat acquisition, wildlife management area development and hunter education programs. It places an excise tax on firearms, ammunition and archery equipment. Articles reporting on Wildlife Division projects funded entirely or in part with federal aid monies are depicted with the logo of the Wildlife Restoration Program.



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Mixed Results for Plover and Tern Nesting Season

Written by Julie Victoria, Nonharvested Wildlife Program Biologist

Another nesting season for two state-threatened shorebirds, the piping plover (also federally threatened) and least tern, came to a close with mixed results. While the number of piping plovers nesting along Connecticut's shoreline remained the same as last year, the number of least terns decreased 29 percent.

Nesting Results for Piping Plovers

During the 2000 breeding season, 22 actively nesting pairs of piping plovers fledged 41 young. The number of young increased by nine from the 32 chicks fledged in 1999. The good news is that Connecticut's nesting population of piping plovers has remained stable in recent years and the East Coast population has been increasing its range.

Nesting Results for Least Terns

Least terns, communal nesters with piping plovers, have fared poorly in recent years in their nesting attempts along the Connecticut coastline. Approximately 239 pairs of least terns nested in the state this season, a considerable decrease from the 335 pairs that nested last year and the 447 that nested in 1998.

Only 26 least tern chicks fledged this year, resulting in a productivity level of 0.11 chicks fledged per nesting pair. This productivity level, which is below the poor production of recent years, is well below the 0.5 fledglings needed to maintain a stable population in Connecticut. Factors that affected productiv-



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Least terns continue to have nesting difficulty in Connecticut.

ity varied from site to site, but were punctuated by human disturbance at three sites, predation by gulls and crows at two sites, and high tides and heavy rains that destroyed many nests at three sites.

The low number of least tern chicks has been a concern of biologists. Since 1995, additional funding has been awarded through the Connecticut Endangered Species/Wildlife Income Tax Check-off Fund to census terns, improve nesting habitat and erect fencing around large nesting areas where least tern decoys have been placed to lure pairs to these protected sites.

Regionally, the number of least tern pairs has been stable (see table). Although least terns do not breed until

they are two years old, these persistent renesters make up for years of poor productivity by living 20 or more years.

Education Makes a Difference

Every nesting season, the Wildlife Division places fencing at plover and tern nesting areas to help protect the birds from predation and human-caused factors that decrease productivity. Piping plover nests are individually fenced, while entire nesting areas of least terns are roped off and posted with informational signs. The Division appreciates the cooperation of beach visitors who respected the fenced and posted areas during the spring-summer nesting season. Thanks are also ex-

Continued on next page

Least tern pairs in Connecticut and neighboring states from 1990-1999*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
MA	2,546	2,356	2,642	2,622	2,617	2,756	2,673	3,197	3,085	3,416
NY	2,707	3,477	2,460	3,033	2,547	3,520	3,093	2,560	2,445	2,708
CT	827	627	655	175	334	538	461	403	447	335
RI	294	430	425	351	433	270	556	525	1,050	594
Totals	6,374	6,890	6,182	6,181	5,931	7,084	6,783	6,685	7,027	7,053

* Regional results for 2000 were not yet available.

Continued from page 3

tended to volunteers from The Nature Conservancy whose public education efforts about plovers and terns resulted in the cooperation of beach visitors and

dog owners at several nesting sites. The Division plans to continue public education efforts through the assistance of volunteers next nesting season in the hope that human disturbance and littering at beaches will decrease. For

more information or to obtain a complete summary of the 2000 piping plover and least tern nesting season, contact the Nonharvested Wildlife Program at the Division's Franklin office.

Beach visitors to Milford Point this past summer were greeted with new informational signs about piping plovers and least terns. The signs contain natural history information about both shorebirds. But, most importantly, they tell visitors how to avoid disturbing the nesting birds. The signs were a cooperative effort between Connecticut Audubon and the DEP's Wildlife Division and Office of Long Island Sound Programs.

Animal Rights Groups Lose Attempt to Stop Trapping on State Lands

A Superior Court judge's ruling on October 5, 2000, denied the most recent attempt by animal rights groups to impede a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) program that allows the trapping of animals such as beavers, raccoons, coyotes and muskrats on selected state properties. The animal rights groups sought an injunction to halt this year's state land trapping program. The program, which was established over 40 years ago, is important for managing wildlife on state forests and wildlife management areas. Also, the program allows persons who are licensed to trap and have completed a trapping education course the opportunity to harvest furbearing animals.

The judge discounted the animal rights groups' claims that the state land trapping program unreasonably destroys natural resources and thereby violated

state law. The judge also discounted the assertion that this year's guidelines violated an earlier settlement in which DEP agreed to remove a requirement that trappers demonstrate past trapping experience; a requirement that animal rights activists claimed excluded them from purchasing trapping permits.

The requirement was put forward by the DEP to help ensure that knowledgeable and experienced trappers will participate in trapping on state lands to ensure proper application of this wildlife management tool.

Evidence and testimony indicated many potential benefits from regulated trapping, including habitat protection, reducing or resolving property damage caused by some animals and the use of trapped animals for food and pelts. Testimony also highlighted that

trapping is strictly regulated and only allowed for common species.

Many wildlife populations are abundant in Connecticut, so much so that some species frequently damage property and cause other conflicts with humans. The DEP annually receives hundreds of complaints from citizens about beavers, raccoons, coyotes and foxes.

The judge's ruling allows trapping opportunities to be assigned for this winter's trapping season. In denying the animal rights groups' application for a temporary injunction, the judge reasoned that such an action would essentially shut down the 2000 trapping season on state lands with all its attendant benefits to the ecology, the economy and the recreational interests of Connecticut citizens.

Audubon Winter Wildlife Weekend to Be Held in February

The Third Annual Audubon Winter Wildlife Weekend will be held February 2-4, 2001, at the Interlaken Inn in Lakeville, Connecticut. This event will be a "Celebration of Wildlife and Nature" through art and informational programs. The art section of the event will be separated into three categories: 1) fine art, including original paintings, 2) nature photography and 3) crafts and other nature-related items. Artists and craftspeople interested in exhibiting their work should contact Scott Heth, at

the Sharon Audubon Center (860-364-0520) or send email to sheth@audubon.org.

The Winter Wildlife Weekend also features live animal exhibits and demonstrations, wildlife art workshops for both children and adults, special wildlife programs on Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. and exhibits by conservation organizations and agencies (such as the Wildlife Division). There will be a special "Meet the Artists" reception on Friday, from 6:00-8:00

p.m., a silent auction throughout the weekend and a live auction on Sunday. All proceeds assist Audubon in Sharon with their work in conservation and education. Auction items would be greatly appreciated. For additional information about the Winter Wildlife Weekend, call the Sharon Audubon Center, at (860) 364-0520, or check their website at www.audubon.org/local/sanctuary/sharon.

Moose Are Making a Home in Connecticut

Written by Howard Kilpatrick, Deer/Turkey Program Biologist

Ten years ago, it was rare for a moose to be seen in Connecticut. Occasionally, a moose would wander into Connecticut from Massachusetts and catch the attention of the media. Today, sightings of moose in Connecticut are more common and recent observations of a cow moose with two calves indicate that Connecticut now has a resident moose population.

Moose Sightings on the Rise

When moose sightings are reported to the Wildlife Division, the date, location and sex are recorded. Based on the frequency of moose sightings received from the public, the number of individual moose living or wandering into Connecticut has increased steadily throughout the past decade. From 1990 to 1995, sightings of one or two moose were reported each year. From 1996 to 1998, the number of moose sightings ranged from four to seven each year. During the past two years, sightings of 12 to 13 different moose have been reported. With expanding moose populations in neighboring Massachusetts and the propensity of these animals to disperse long distances, this trend is expected to continue.

Hunters Surveyed

To monitor trends in moose sightings in Connecticut, a question was added to the 1996 deer hunter survey card regarding hunter observations of moose during the fall hunting season. Deer hunters reported 15 moose sightings in 1999 and 83 sightings over the past four years. Sightings have been reported from nine to 17 different towns each year. During this four-year period, moose sightings have been reported in 30 towns. Moose have been reported in Hartland, Norfolk, Thompson and Woodstock for three of four years and in Union during all four years. Almost 22 percent of all sightings over the past four years were reported from Union.

Moose Reproducing in CT

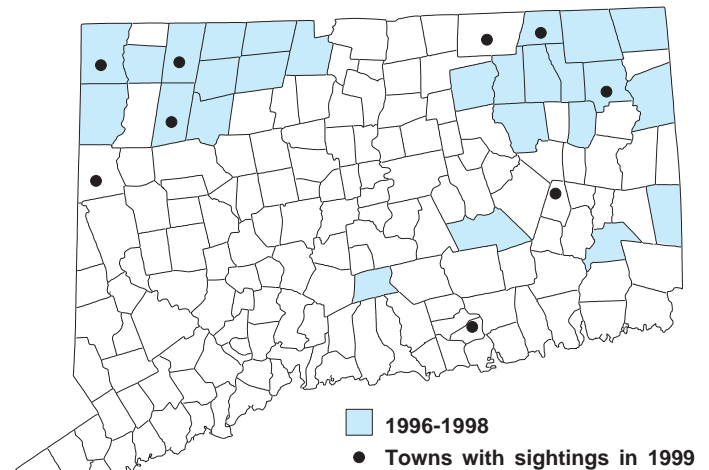
The first reported observations of a cow moose with two calves was docu-

mented this past summer. The cow and calves were seen in Hartland in July and again in September. This was the first report of a cow moose reproducing in Connecticut, providing clear evidence that moose are now calling Connecticut home.

Moose/Car Collisions Dangerous

Although observing a moose in Connecticut may be exciting, the ramifications of hitting a 500 to 1,000-pound moose that stands over six feet tall with a car can be dangerous. The first ever report of a moose-car accident in Connecticut was documented in 1995. A young bull moose was hit by a car in northeastern Connecticut and survived, but a week later was involved in a two-car accident in Willington in which both cars were totaled and the moose was killed. In 1998, two moose were hit by vehicles. The first involved a moose that was brushed by a car at 4:30 a.m. on Route 44 in Canton. No serious injuries were reported. The second involved a female moose, which was struck by a vehicle at 4:20 a.m. on Interstate 95 in Westbrook. The moose was killed, the vehicle was severely damaged and the passengers of the vehicle escaped with non life-threatening head injuries. The most recent moose-car collision occurred in September 2000. A young bull moose was hit by two cars on Route 63 in Litchfield on September 7, then hit by a third car four days later on Route 63 in Goshen. In all three incidences, the cars were travelling slow and damage to the cars and the moose was minimal.

Moose sightings reported on deer hunter surveys, 1996-1999



Since June 1995, seven moose-vehicle accidents have been reported in Connecticut. Although this seems like a small number of accidents, the fact that so few moose live or wander into Connecticut and a significant proportion of these animals have been involved in motor vehicle accidents, wandering moose in Connecticut are highly susceptible to being hit by a vehicle. Human fatalities from moose-vehicle collisions occur each year in northern New England states where moose are much more abundant. The risk of a human fatality from a moose-vehicle accident is much greater than the low risk associated with a deer-vehicle collision.

As Connecticut's moose population continues to grow, it is expected that the moose-vehicle accident rate will also grow. The tolerance level that citizens have for this increased public safety risk may dictate future moose population management strategies in Connecticut.

To learn more about historical sightings of moose in Connecticut, see the article on page 17.

Connecticut's Expert Dive Team - The Sawbills

Written by Paul Fusco, Public Awareness Program

Sawbills, more properly known as mergansers, are strong swimming and diving ducks. The name "sawbill" refers to their long, narrow bill with serrated edges that they use to catch their slippery prey of small fish.

There are six species of mergansers worldwide. Three species are found in Connecticut. In each species, the male wears bold patterned plumage, while the female is much more drab. All sport crests, although in the male common merganser, the crest is usually very short and inapparent, especially in winter.

All mergansers are strong, fast fliers, commonly seen flying low over the water, in single file, with rapid

wingbeats and direct flight. Their noteworthy flying posture separates them from most other ducks. They fly with their bill, head, neck and body all

held in a straight horizontal line. In flight, the male red-breasted and the male common merganser both show large, white wing patches which make them identifiable from a distance.

Common Merganser

This freshwater species is one of the largest ducks to be found in Connecticut. It is also known by the name goosander, which is a reference to its large size. Large reservoirs and wooded rivers are its preferred habitat.

The northwestern part of the state supports a small nesting population, but this species becomes much more common during winter when large numbers move into Connecticut from their breeding grounds farther north. Ice-free portions of our major rivers are the best place to find them. Many will spend the winter near large hydroelectric dams, including the Shepaug Dam in Southbury, where visitors to the Shepaug Eagle Observation Area can watch not only eagles but these large diving ducks.



P. J. FUSCO (2)

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During winter, common mergansers may concentrate on stretches of rivers that are ice-free and have an abundance of small fish.



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The red-breasted merganser can be found spending the winter in salt water habitats in Connecticut. Its long, shaggy crest gives it an unkempt appearance.

During summer, female common mergansers may be seen leading their brood of fluffy chicks along sections of the Farmington and Housatonic Rivers. Sometimes the young mergansers will hitch a ride on their mother's back.

Feeding almost exclusively on fish, the common merganser needs clear water to see and catch its food. Because mergansers are more likely to be inhabiting lakes and rivers with clear water, their presence on a body of water can be an indicator of water quality.

Red-breasted Merganser

The North American population of red-breasted mergansers breeds along water bodies mainly in the boreal habitats of Canada and Alaska and winters principally in saltwater along the coastlines of the United States. In Connecticut, look for this fairly common visitor from November through April in tidal and shoreline areas, although it may temporarily show up at inland water bodies during migration.

This medium-sized sawbill can be found in small flocks at favored wintering areas of Long Island Sound, such as river estuaries and harbors. It can be seen swimming low in the water, ducking its face under to look for schools of fish. Upon finding its prey, a red-breasted merganser will dive under water, sometimes covering a great distance in the chase.

Although the red-breasted merganser feeds mostly on fish, it will also take a small amount of crustaceans, including crayfish.

Hooded Merganser

Sporting a dazzling white crest, the male hooded merganser is one of our most beautiful ducks. When lowered, the crest can be inconspicuous, but when raised it is most impressive. Hens have a bushy, brown crest.

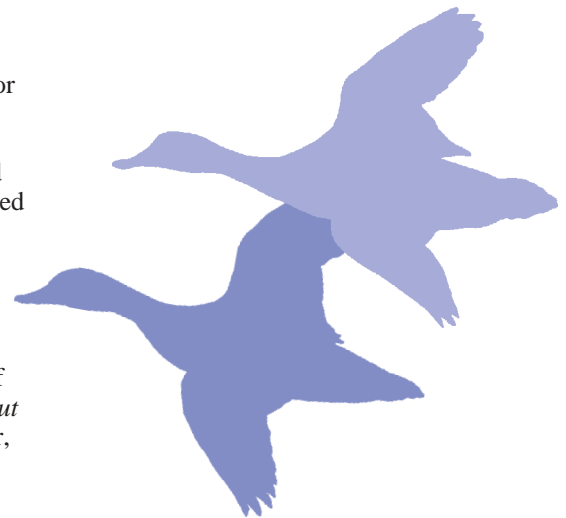
This smallest and least common of our mergansers prefers quiet wooded ponds and streams, including beaver marshes. In Connecticut, hooded mergansers occur in low numbers during the breeding season. They are secretive and have a low tolerance for disturbance, making accurate population estimates difficult. Most breeders

can be found in the northwest hills or near the lower Connecticut River.

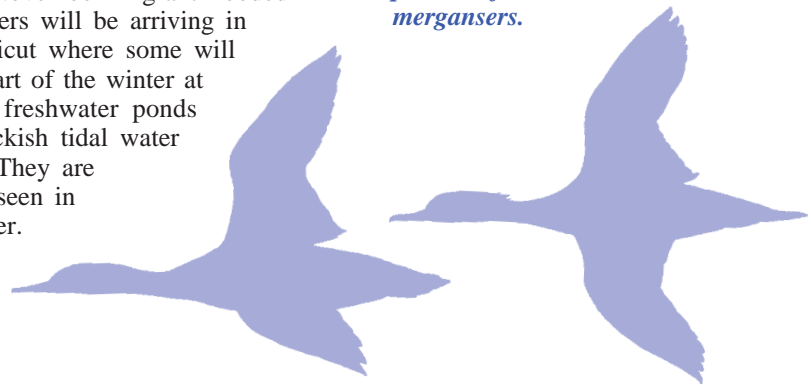
This shy duck shares the same breeding season habitat as the wood duck. Like the wood duck, the hooded merganser prefers to nest in tree cavities and will also use artificial nest boxes. Sometimes wood duck hens will deposit their eggs in a hooded merganser nest box. Mixed broods may occur because of this "egg dumping." (see *Connecticut Wildlife/SCOPE*, September/October, 1991).

Hooded mergansers eat mainly fish, but crayfish and aquatic insects also make up a large percentage of their diet. They will consume more invertebrates and less fish than the other two merganser species.

By November migrant hooded mergansers will be arriving in Connecticut where some will spend part of the winter at ice-free freshwater ponds and brackish tidal water bodies. They are seldom seen in salt water.



Flight silhouettes of a pair of mallards (above) compared to a pair of mergansers (below). Note the sleek, streamlined posture of the mergansers.



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The bold fan-shaped crest of the male hooded merganser can make this duck highly visible on small ponds.

Denizen of the Deep Woods

Written by Kathy Herz, Editor

For the past few years, the Wildlife Division has had a display at the Durham Fair to provide fair visitors with information on Connecticut's wildlife. The wildlife highlighted have included the bear, coyote and fisher. Each year, people visiting the booth tell stories about coyotes in their backyards or express surprise that bears have been seen in their town. And, by and large, at least in the early years of our display, hardly anybody knew what a fisher was and that this interesting animal even lived in Connecticut. However, our experience at the fair this past fall was different. We were surprised to see that more people recognized the fisher, knew a little bit about it and some had even seen one. It now seems that the rarely seen fisher is not so obscure anymore.

Fishers in Connecticut

Fishers were once present in Connecticut in greater numbers than they are now. Their soft, dark fur made them a treasured commodity. Prices for prime fisher pelts peaked as high as \$150 at the turn of the twentieth century. As a result, fishers were intensively trapped in the past. In addition, populations became scarce due to the clearing of forests for agriculture and timber production. By 1870, fishers were considered to be gone from Connecticut. However, the reforestation of Connecticut's landscape and changes in land-use practices restored the fisher's habitat in part of its historic range, allowing a small population to begin recolonizing the northeastern section of the state. A similar recolonization into northwestern Connecticut was unlikely to occur because the region was not near any established fisher populations. Further, westward expansion by the budding population in eastern Connecticut was blocked by the Connecticut River and surrounding developed and agricultural land.

A project to reintroduce this native mammal into northwestern Connecticut

was initiated by the Wildlife Division in 1988. Funding was generated from the shipment of native wild turkeys to Maine in early 1988 in support of that state's turkey restoration program. In return, Maine donated funds to Connecticut's fisher restoration project. Working with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and cooperating trappers in both states, the Division obtained 11 fishers late in 1988. The fishers were held separately in large holding pens, complete with nest boxes, for a period of nearly three months and were fed a diet of high protein dog food and beaver and deer meat. Division biologists and veterinarians from the University of Connecticut gathered data on the health, sex and age of the fishers and monitored any weight changes while they were in captivity. They also immobilized the fishers in order to attach radio collars and administer antibiotics and the distemper vaccine. The radio collars allowed biologists to track the fishers' movements, as well as to determine survival and if they raised young.

All 11 fishers, seven females and four males, were determined to be in excellent health. Prior to their release in March 1989, the fishers and their holding pens were moved to a state forest in northwestern Connecticut. The March release was timed to be close to the denning and breeding periods in the hope that denning behavior might decrease dispersal distances and increase the opportunity for breeding. A second group of 21 fishers was released in northwestern Connecticut in March 1990. Through radio-tracking and snow-tracking conducted for a few years after the releases, biologists found that the fishers remained in northwestern Connecticut, had high survival rates and successfully reproduced. As a result of this ambitious project, a viable, self-sustaining population of fishers is now

established in the northwestern region of the state.

A Closer Look at the Fisher

The fisher is a large member of the Mustelidae (weasel) family. Typical of weasels, fishers are long and thin. Males weigh eight to 10 pounds and measure 36 to 40 inches in length. Females are smaller, weighing from four to six pounds and measuring 30 to 36 inches. Fishers feed mainly on squirrels, rabbits, mice and voles (despite their name, they rarely fish). They are one of the few predators that regularly prey on porcupines, although porcupines do not make up a large portion of their diet in Connecticut.

Fishers inhabit large tracts of dense coniferous or mixed hardwood-softwood forests that have plenty of large trees for den sites. They tend to avoid open areas, preferring to remain along river corridors or combing the forest understory for prey. When hunting for food, fishers zig-zag through areas of thick forest vegetation. However, when traveling areas with little ground cover, they stay in a relatively straight line. Excellent climbers, fishers often search trees for their prey, such as squirrels. Fishers do not stalk or chase their prey but rather surprise them. Home ranges of fishers are fairly large, ranging anywhere from three to 15 square miles and averaging four to eight square miles in suitable habitat. Population density also varies with habitat suitability; there may be an average of one fisher per three to five square miles in good quality habitats.

Typical of most members of the weasel family, the fisher has a high metabolism. Although primarily nocturnal, it can be active day and night throughout the year. Fisher are also solitary, except for a brief period during the breeding season. All mustelids, including fishers, undergo delayed implantation; the fertilized ovum develops only slightly and then

As a result of the Wildlife Division's fisher reintroduction project, a viable, self-sustaining population of fishers is now established in the northwestern region of the state.



The Wildlife Division's fisher reintroduction project experienced a notable success in 1991. At least three female fishers that were released in the winter of 1989-1990 gave birth to young in 1991, proof that reintroduced females and males were able to find one another during the previous year's breeding season. This fisher kit, born in the spring of 1991 in northwestern Connecticut, was one of the first fisher kits to be conceived and born in the state.

remains dormant for nine to 10 months before attaching to the uterine wall and completing growth. About one week after a female gives birth, she breeds again.

In Connecticut, fishers have their young in March and April. The two to four kits are helpless and their eyes are closed at birth. Only the female cares for the young. The kits develop rapidly and are weaned in four months. Three cavities are used for the birth and early rearing of young.

Fishers have not been studied as extensively as many other wildlife species because they are difficult to observe. Because they seldom travel in open areas and tend to be active mainly at night, they are rarely seen by people. Alert, secretive and rarely found in high numbers, the fisher is a rewarding sight to the wildlife observer.

Wildlife Division to Study CT's Cottontail Populations

The Wildlife Division is updating information on the population status and distribution of Connecticut's two species of cottontail rabbits, the New England cottontail and the eastern cottontail. Because it is almost impossible to differentiate between the two species with the naked eye, skull characteristics or DNA tissue analysis are needed for identification.

The New England cottontail was originally the only cottontail species found in Connecticut. The eastern cottontail was introduced into New England in the late 1800s and early

1900s. Since then, it has been expanding its range, out-competing the native New England cottontail for its habitat. In the mid-1930s, New England cottontails were still considered abundant and more numerous than the eastern cottontail. However, the eastern cottontail is now the predominant species.

To obtain the necessary information, the Wildlife Division needs to collect skulls from cottontails harvested during the hunting season or from roadkills. This is where assistance from the public is needed. Anyone interested in submit-

ting heads of cottontails that have been harvested during the hunted season or recovered from roadkills should contact, in eastern Connecticut, the Franklin Wildlife Management Area, 391 Route 32, North Franklin, CT 06254 (860-642-7239) or, in western Connecticut, Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013 (860-675-8130). Email messages may also be sent to michael.gregonis@po.state.ct.us.

Stay tuned to *Connecticut Wildlife* for future updates on this new project.

Water Chestnut Appears in Connecticut Waters

Written by Lori Benoit and Laurie Rardin, DEP Office of Long Island Sound Programs

Although many people are familiar with nuisance weeds in their lawn or garden, few may have experience with aquatic weeds. Over the last two years, the DEP has discovered water chestnut (*Trapa natans*), a non-native, invasive plant, in the Connecticut, Hockanum and Podunk rivers.

So what is the danger of this plant infesting our waters? The dense growth of water chestnut can effectively choke a waterbody, making boating, fishing and swimming nearly impossible. The seeds have sharp spines that can inflict puncture wounds. Ecological impacts are particularly severe. This weed reduces biological diversity by shading out the native submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). The loss of native SAV in turn can negatively impact habitat for wildlife. Connecticut's native SAV provides important food for waterfowl and critical habitat for juvenile fish, where they are protected from predators and can find food. Therefore, invasion by water chestnut greatly reduces habitat value for wildlife. If water chestnut becomes established in Connecticut, it could

become the dominant plant in the shallow waters of all Connecticut River coves, including the tidal freshwater coves from Hartford to Essex.

In June 1999, an infestation was discovered in Keeney Cove in Glastonbury. During the first week of August 1999, DEP staff hand-pulled the plants found in Keeney Cove, and conducted a search of other coves along the Connecticut River.

"We had hoped to keep this plant out of Connecticut and escape the fate of neighboring states," said DEP Commissioner Arthur J. Rocque, Jr. "Massachusetts, Vermont and New York already have extensive infestations in various rivers and ponds. Catching this problem early on will help ensure we can completely eradicate water chestnut from Connecticut waters," added Rocque.

However, just when DEP staff thought they might have squeaked through with only one outbreak of water chestnut in Connecticut, two new infestations were discovered: one in the shallow waters of the Hockanum River

in East Hartford and the other in the Podunk River in South Windsor. Starting June 28 2000, plants in the seven-acre Hockanum River site were removed using a combination of mechanical harvesters for deeper water areas and hand-pulling for concentrations of the plant in less than two feet of water. Volunteers also scouted downstream from the harvesting operation to locate and remove any additional vegetation or cut plants that may have escaped the harvesting equipment. Over the next month, additional hand-pulling was conducted by DEP staff and partner organizations to remove the remaining plants. The much smaller populations in the Podunk River and Keeney Cove were hand-pulled.

Spearheaded by DEP's Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP), staff from the DEP's Wildlife Division and Environmental and Geographic Information Center and representatives from The Nature Conservancy, the Town of East Hartford, The Connecticut River Watershed Council, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Hockanum River Watershed Association and volunteers from United Technologies Corporation were all a part of the effort to corral this outbreak and prevent further spreading of water chestnut to other parts of the river. Funding was provided by The Nature Conservancy, the USFWS, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

"The timing of this harvest was very important," said OLISP's Lori Benoit. "We had to be sure to pull this new growth of plants before they matured, dropped their seeds and caused the infestation to grow larger." Monitoring of this site and the entire river will be ongoing for as long as seven to 10 years because seeds can lie dormant for many years before sprouting.

Connecticut is working aggressively to prevent any additional infestations of water chestnut in its waters. Continued



A mechanical weed harvester was used in deep water areas of the Hockanum River to help eliminate water chestnut, an invasive, non-native plant.

DEP - OFFICE OF LONG ISLAND SOUND PROGRAMS

vigilance will be required, however, as surrounding states are still infested with water chestnut and may act as a seed source for more introductions into Connecticut. Seeds can drift down the Connecticut River, or be carried by waterfowl in their feathers. If water chestnut infestation occurs unchecked, removal can be extremely expensive. Last year, Massachusetts spent \$150,000 to control the plant in the Charles River alone. By finding and removing any new infestations when

they are small, Connecticut can avoid the expense and damage that other states have experienced.

“An infestation of water chestnut, left unchallenged, will permanently alter the very same habitats and ecosystems which make the Connecticut River so special,” said DEP Deputy Commissioner David K. Leff. “The control of this and other invasive species throughout Connecticut will prevent the degradation of these significant habitats and ensure the

continued viability of Connecticut’s natural resources.”

The DEP has published a fact sheet about water chestnut that will help people identify the plant. You can help by looking for this plant in your nearest lake, pond or river. To receive a copy of the water chestnut identification fact sheet, or to report a sighting of this plant in Connecticut, please contact Lori Benoit, DEP Office of Long Island Sound Programs, at (860) 424-3034, or by email: lori.benoit@po.state.ct.us.

Connecticut Wildlife Receives Award

This past summer, *Connecticut Wildlife* was entered in the annual Association for Conservation Information (ACI) Awards Program, the only nationwide competition exclusively for conservation education, information and public relations professionals of state and federal agencies and conservation organizations. *Connecticut Wildlife* competed in the one- to three-color newsletter category and was awarded third place behind *Share with Wildlife UPDATE* (first place), published by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, and *Growing WILD* (second place), published by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

This is the third year in a row that *Connecticut Wildlife* was entered in the

contest and each year its standing in the competition improved. The staff of *Connecticut Wildlife* was pleased with the award this year, as it demonstrates that our efforts to enhance the publication are being recognized. An added benefit of the competition is that the judges, who are professionals from the private sector, provide written, constructive critiques. The critiques offered in previous contests have helped us make improvements to *Connecticut Wildlife*.

The Wildlife Division’s Public Awareness Program, which publishes *Connecticut Wildlife*, is a member of ACI. Membership in the association consists of the information, education and public affairs staffs of state, federal and Canadian wildlife conservation,

parks and natural resource agencies. Many private organizations, corporations and individuals with similar functions also belong. ACI member professionals play a major role in providing natural resource, environmental, wildlife and other information and education to the public through a variety of means. The association does not provide information directly to the public, but instead trains and informs the staffs of member agencies and provides forums to exchange ideas, new concepts and to improve skills and craftsmanship. The annual awards contest is one the most popular and successful ACI programs in that it recognizes excellence in more than 20 categories and promotes craft improvement through competition.

View Bald Eagles at the Shepaug Eagle Observation Area

Northeast Utilities has announced that it will continue to operate the Shepaug Eagle Observation Area for the 2000-2001 viewing season. The observation area will be open three days a week, strictly by advance reservation, on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays,

from December 27, 2000, through March 21, 2001. Viewing times on these days will be from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

All individuals and groups wishing to visit the site must make a reservation for a particular date, as there will be a

limited number of visitors allowed per open day. Reservations may be made Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays), from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., by calling 1-800-368-8954, starting December 5, 2000.

Wanted: Participants for the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey

Since 1979, the Wildlife Division has participated in a national Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. This survey is not a complete census of the entire wintering population of eagles, but an index of the species’ use of the state, which can be compared from year to year.

The Wildlife Division is looking for volunteers who are interested in counting eagles during this annual survey. Volunteers are especially needed for the lower Connecticut River area. The next survey is scheduled for Saturday, January 6, 2001, from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This is a statewide survey and volunteers will be assigned a convenient area.

Interested individuals should contact Wildlife Division biologist Julie Victoria at (860) 642-7239.

Bait and the Movements of White-tailed Deer

Written by Howard Kilpatrick, Deer/Turkey Program Biologist

Food at bait sites has been used to manipulate movements of white-tailed deer for research and management purposes. Researchers have used bait sites to capture deer, apply amitraz to deer for controlling ticks and deliver immunocontraceptive agents. Resource managers have used temporary bait sites to increase hunter success rates, determine age and sex composition of deer and implement efficient sharpshooting programs.

In 1999, baiting deer during the regulated hunting season was permitted in 26 of 48 United States. In recent years, New Jersey and Delaware passed legislation to legalize hunting over bait specifically to increase deer harvest rates and thus alleviate deer damage on agricultural lands and in suburban areas. There have been no previous studies on how baiting may affect deer use of home ranges during the time bait is being used. Therefore, the Wildlife Division initiated a study in the Mumford Cove community in Groton that examined the effects of bait sites on deer movements, activity and use of home ranges during the fall.

Deer were captured from 1995 to 1997 and equipped with radio collars

and ear tags. Whole kernel corn was placed daily at bait sites during a 12-week (September–November 1997) baiting period. Bait sites were located in forest openings so that deer using the sites could be observed at a distance with

binoculars and a spotting scope. During the fall data collection periods, deer locations were recorded weekly for a 24-hour period using radio telemetry. Radio telemetry data were used to delineate deer home ranges and core areas (an area of high use or activity within a deer's home range). The size of core areas and their distance to bait sites during the



P. J. FUSCO

baiting and no-baiting periods were measured. Then these measurements were compared between baiting and no-baiting periods.

Deer exhibited four responses to the presence of bait sites. If bait sites were established within deer core areas, deer maintained their original core area (Figure 1). If bait sites were established

Figure 1. Spatial arrangements of a white-tailed deer core area when exposed to a temporary bait site within an existing core area in the Mumford Cove community in Groton, CT, 1996-1998.

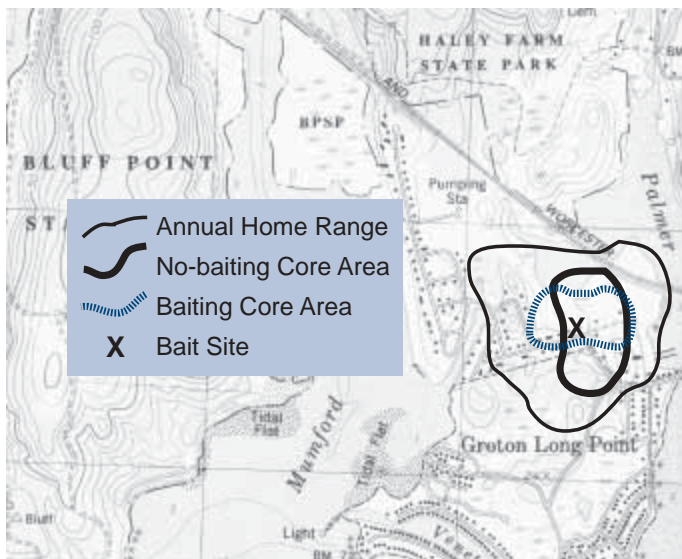
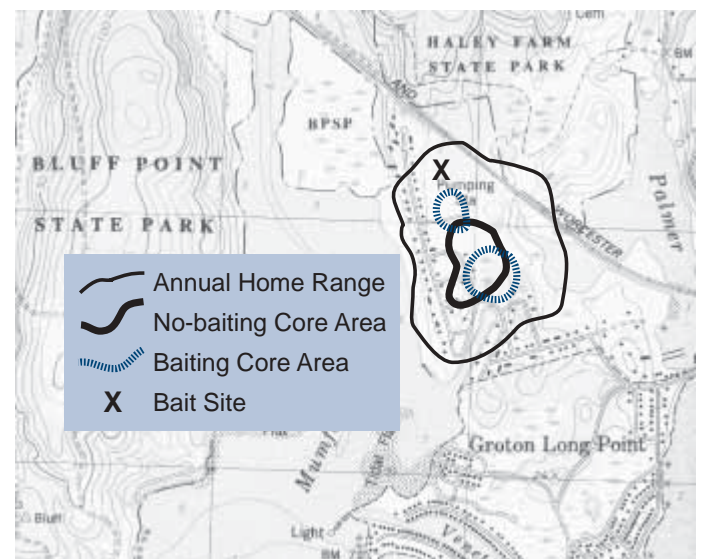


Figure 2. White-tailed deer establishment of a second core area when exposed to a temporary bait site outside of existing core areas in the Mumford Cove community in Groton, CT, 1996-1998.



outside original core areas but within home ranges, deer either shifted existing core areas closer to bait sites or established new core areas closer to bait sites (Figure 2). Deer with two core areas in their home range abandoned core areas that were distant from bait sites. No deer were observed using bait sites outside their annual home range boundary. Deer core area size was similar between the baiting (8 acres) and no-baiting periods (13 acres) during fall. These observations suggest that bait sites located outside of deer home ranges will have little or no effect on deer movements.

Distance of core areas to bait sites was 110 yards during the no-baiting period and 72 yards during the baiting period for all deer. Deer with bait sites outside their core areas exhibited greater shifts toward bait sites (56 yards) than deer with bait sites in their core areas (5 yards). Deer with bait sites in their core

areas were observed feeding at bait sites more frequently than deer with bait sites outside their core area. Bait sites may increase the chances of observing local deer, but not deer that have home ranges without bait sites. Permitting hunting over bait in suburban landscapes or other areas with high deer densities may help hunters reduce local deer numbers. Bait could be used to shift deer activity away from residential areas to enhance shooting safety, making deer more accessible to sharpshooting, hunting or other management techniques. Bait sites established in deer core areas or outside deer home ranges will have little effect on the size or positioning of core areas. Management activities at bait sites will have the greatest effect on deer with core areas that include the bait site.

Use of bait to increase deer harvest rates may be helpful in specific areas of Connecticut with increasing deer

populations, such as the Fairfield County area. Although hunting over bait is allowed in most states, it currently is prohibited in Connecticut. The Wildlife Division is considering allowing hunting over bait in restricted areas to achieve deer population management goals. If you have an opinion, on whether hunting over bait should be permitted in restricted areas of the state to achieve deer management goals, please let us know. You can email opinions to

howard.kilpatrick@po.state.ct.us or write a letter to Howard Kilpatrick, Franklin WMA, 391 Route 32, North Franklin, CT 06254.

This project was supported by the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program, the DEP Wildlife Division and Wildlife Forever.

Explore a Wildlife Management Area: *Bartlett Brook*

Written by Ann Kilpatrick, Eastern District Wildlife Biologist

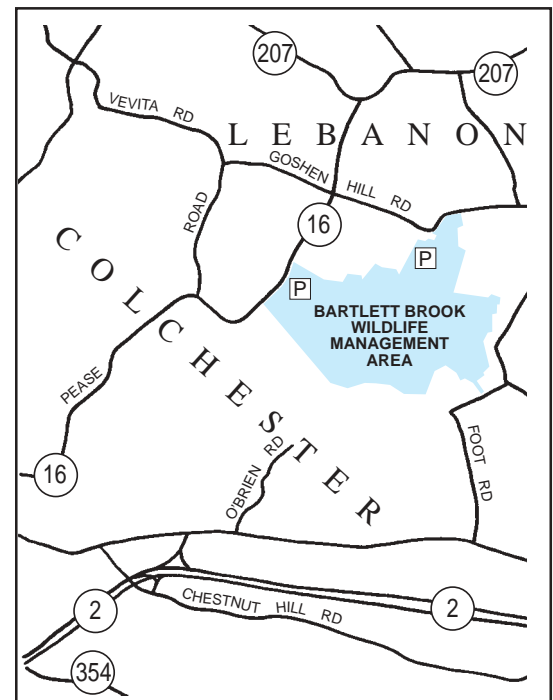
The 675-acre Bartlett Brook Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in the town of Lebanon. The property was acquired in several parcels by the DEP beginning in 1967 and ending in 1978. The area is dominated by mixed hardwood forest and hardwood swamp. Important habitat features include agricultural and old fields, grasslands, Bartlett and Exeter Brooks, a two-acre man-made pond and an extensive beaver marsh. Wildlife using the property include white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, American woodcock, wild turkeys, pheasants, cottontail rabbits, waterfowl, bluebirds and a variety of other songbirds.

The area is managed to maintain a diversity of cover types, including old fields, shrublands, sapling-pole forest and mature sawtimber forest. The Wildlife Division, in cooperation with the DEP Forestry Division and a local farmer, administers a variety of habitat management activities, such as brush

mowing, hydro-axing and prescribed burning. Silvicultural practices are implemented to maintain forest health and diversity, with an emphasis on enhancing habitat for ruffed grouse through forest thinnings and patch cuts.

Bartlett Brook WMA is open to fishing (yearling trout are stocked in both Bartlett Brook and Exeter Brook) and is heavily used by hunters during fall and winter for deer, turkey and pheasant hunting. A road and trail system provides opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.

Access to Bartlett Brook WMA can be found on Goshen Hill Road, approximately 0.75 miles east of Route 16, and on Route 16, approximately one mile south of Goshen Hill Road.



Learn About Connecticut's Wildlife on the Web: The wildlife section of the Department of Environmental Protection's website contains links to all of the Wildlife Division's species fact sheets, recent publications, hunting information, kid's pages, special features and more. The web address is: <http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife>. Check us out!

Wildlife Management through the Century

As the final segment in our year-long feature of “Wildlife Management through the Century,” we decided to highlight excerpts from one of the most comprehensive reports found from the early years of wildlife management in Connecticut. In the “Twentieth Biennial Report of the State Board of Fisheries and Game for the years 1932-34,” Arthur L. Clark, Acting Chief for the Division of Wildlife Restoration, covered such topics as Connecticut’s role in federal wildlife restoration programs, women and hunting, unusual mammals and songbirds, among others. Following are several excerpts from his report which provide insight into a time when wildlife management and conservation were still developing professions.

and many women have used these training areas. Since that time, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and other states have adopted a similar program and policy. . .”

Efforts to encourage women to participate in hunting and fishing were just as ambitious in the 1930s as they are today. Although state hunting and fishing areas for the exclusive use by women no longer exist in Connecticut, programs to introduce women to outdoor activities are currently being undertaken by various private conservation organizations. For example, the Connecticut Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation has been holding “Women in the Outdoors” workshops in recent years (see article in July/August 2000 *Connecticut Wildlife*) that offer experience in hunting, fishing, canoeing, camping, rock climbing and other outdoor activities.

The first female game warden in Connecticut was hired in 1933. In the year 2000, the DEP’s Division of Law Enforcement currently employs four female conservation officers and the Wildlife Division has seven female biologists on staff.

Federal Programs

In the early 1930s, Connecticut’s wildlife restoration program played a critical role in the development of a national program. Thomas Beck, the Chairman of Connecticut’s wildlife restoration program was asked by President Theodore Roosevelt to head a national Committee on Wildlife Restoration, along with noted conservationists Jay (Ding) Darling, who founded the National Wildlife Federation and designed the first federal Duck Stamp, and Aldo Leopold, the “Father of Wildlife Management.”

“The outstanding development in the field of wildlife restoration during the biennium has been the recognition which the Federal government has given to the fact that wildlife plays an important part in furnishing opportunities for inexpensive healthful outdoor recreation and for employment of a large number of people. (Approximately

Women in Sports

“To encourage women to take a more active interest in the sport of fishing, a trout stream was leased in North Branford and maintained for their exclusive use in the spring of 1933. Miss Edith A. Stoehr was appointed warden and assigned to the Branford River. In the fall she was assigned to the public shooting ground in Farmington of which a small portion was reserved for the exclusive use of women.

Miss Stoehr was the first woman to be uniformed and appointed to regular active duties as a game warden. She is particularly fitted for these duties which are mostly concerned with offering encouragement and instruction in the sports of fishing and hunting with particular reference to the skillful use of fishing tackle and firearms.

This action by the Board has met with encouraging response



CT DEP - WILDLIFE

Edith A. Stoehr, first woman warden uniformed and assigned to regular duties, checking the catch on the first state-leased stream reserved for women. Branford River, Connecticut, 1932.



Jay N. "Ding" Darling was an editorial cartoonist from Iowa who stepped into the unlikely role of chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey (1934-35) under Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Before that Darling served on the committee that created the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (Duck Stamp) as a means to raise money to purchase waterfowl habitat for the refuge system. He also designed the first federal Duck Stamp (above, left). In 1936, Darling founded the National Wildlife Federation, the nation's premiere grassroots conservation organization.

80% of the arms and ammunition and much of the fishing tackle used by sportsmen is manufactured in Connecticut.) This recognition has attracted public attention and encouraging support for the many wildlife restoration projects which have been undertaken in Connecticut and elsewhere.

Through the influence of the national policies and programs, the conservation of the natural resources of this country has been advanced further during the past two years than during any previous twenty-year period. . .

President Roosevelt paid a signal honor to the wildlife restoration program of Connecticut when, in December, 1933, he requested our Chairman, Thomas H. Beck, to serve as Chairman of the President's Committee on Wildlife Restoration. The other members appointed to serve on this Committee were Jay N. Darling, noted cartoonist and member of the Iowa State Fish and Game Commission, and Aldo Leopold, Professor of Game Management at the University of Wisconsin. The purpose of the Committee was to study a tentative program of wildlife restoration which Mr. Beck had previously submitted to the President and to make definite recommendations for carrying out the plan. . . .

During the summer of 1934 great progress has been made in carrying out the recommendations of the President's

Committee. Since the waterfowl situation was most serious, special attention has been given to the acquisition and restoration of important waterfowl breeding areas which have been destroyed by drainage. These are located mostly in the west although a few important wintering areas for waterfowl will be secured and placed under management in the south. It is expected that the acquisition of one million acres will have been completed before March 1, 1935, at which time it is hoped that additional appropriations will be made for continuing this important constructive program. . .

All of the Federal programs having to do with wildlife restoration are based on the permanent improvement of environments for wildlife so as to encourage natural propagation and to

provide for its subsistence and survival at all seasons without artificial aids. This is one of the most important features of the combined programs since it calls attention to the value of depending on natural methods to assist the forces of nature. . ."

Scientific Research

Wildlife research was still a new and growing concept in the early

Continued on next page

Wildlife Management through the Century

Continued from page 15

1930s. Wildlife managers were starting to realize that they needed to learn more about the biology of the animals and their habitat needs before they could devise ways to enhance or increase populations.

"It should be understood, however, that reliable information about the habits of game birds and quadrupeds and their requirements for existence is very incomplete in most cases. Hundreds of volumes have been published describing the plumage of birds. Thousands of laws have been passed for their protection. Millions of pheasants have been raised and liberated. But only during the past ten years has anyone given serious study to the natural environments required for the survival and increase of any species. . ."

Song and Insectivorous Birds

Just as today, not all wildlife management efforts were focused on game animals. Even though the current Nonharvested Wildlife Program did not exist in the early 1930s, wildlife managers still made efforts to improve habitat for songbirds and to protect their populations. The Wildlife Division of the twenty-first century is still strongly committed to the conservation of all forms of wildlife even though most of the Division's funding comes from sportsmen through the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program. Only with increased funding for nongame wildlife and endangered species can the Division better protect and manage these species.

"The protection of song and insectivorous birds is an important part of the work of this Department although it is relatively inconspicuous and often escapes attention.

The efficiency of our warden service holds in check those who would snare or trap birds of all kinds if given the opportunity. The sanctuaries maintained and managed by the Department are valuable for song and



CTDEP - WILDLIFE

This photograph, taken in 1932 in Farmington, shows a woman hunting with her bird dog on the first state-leased shooting ground for women.

insectivorous birds as well as for game. The grain and fruit-bearing shrubs planted by the Department offer food for birds of all kinds. The control of predators is helpful to small birds as well as to game.

There are still some who refuse to believe that the Department is sincerely interested in the conservation of all forms of wildlife, including song and insectivorous birds, each in a normal balance and relationship to each other. This interest and acknowledged responsibility is demonstrated by the fact that this Department suggested and sponsored the organization of The Connecticut Nature League to represent those who are interested in the conservation of all natural resources. . ."

Unusual Mammals

In the early 1930s, opossums, moose and black bears were considered unusual mammals. Opossums were introduced in Connecticut and are now plentiful throughout the entire state. During the same time period, moose and bear were considered gone from the state, although wandering individuals were seen occasionally. It is interesting to note that early wildlife

managers believed that Connecticut would never again harbor healthy moose and bear populations. How wrong they were as both species now appear to be making a comeback, particularly the bear.

"Opossums were introduced from the south and liberated in New Haven and Fairfield Counties by a few sportsmen several years ago. These interesting mammals (Marsupials), which carry their young in a pouch like the kangaroo, are increasing and extending their range northward although they are not protected by law. It is unlikely that they will become sufficiently abundant to cause any material damage to wildlife or to crops.

Few people realize that an occasional moose inhabits Connecticut. These animals come from a small herd which escaped from the Whitney preserve on October Mountain a number of years ago. A small herd still survives in an almost impenetrable swamp area in southwestern Massachusetts. There will never be many moose in Connecticut but there is interest in the thought that even a few may be found in our outdoor museum

of wild specimens and protection should be provided for them.

A few black bear wandered into Connecticut from eastern New York and southwestern Massachusetts during the spring and summer of 1934. The nursery traditions about the dangerous killing habits of bears in general have no foundation in fact, particularly as applied to the black bear which is a most interesting and thoroughly harmless animal. It is an unfortunate reflection on our intelligence and attitude toward many living things to record the fact that as soon as a single bear was reported in Connecticut a few men proceeded at once to hunt and to kill, if possible, the first and only specimen which has been reported here for many years. Black bear will never become numerous in Connecticut and the few specimens which remain here should be given the complete protection which our laws do not now afford. . . .”

Historical Moose Sightings

On September 15, 1956, Victor Piecyk took a photograph of a moose seen on his farm along Route 44 in Warrenville (Ashford). As far as the Board of Fisheries and Game was concerned, this was the first official photograph that recorded the presence of moose in Connecticut. An article published in the November/December 1956 issue of *The Connecticut Wildlife Conservation Bulletin*, discussed the history of moose sightings in the state up to that time. The article quoted Bulletin 53 of the State Geological and Natural History Survey “Mammals of Connecticut,” which stated that “at the beginning of the eighteenth century the range of the Moose extended south . . . as far as Massachusetts. . . there are no records of Moose in Connecticut. It is possible, however, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century this animal was to be found in this state.”

Once the word got out about the moose photographed in Warrenville, the Board began to receive reliable



CTDEP - WILDLIFE

On September 15, 1956, Victor Piecyk took the first photograph ever of a moose in Connecticut. The moose was observed on his farm, along Route 44 in Warrenville (Ashford). Although moose had been seen in the state before that time, none of them had been photographed. This moose was killed two days after the photo was taken.

reports demonstrating that moose had been present for years in Connecticut. However, some sightings were never reported to the Board. One letter, from the personal files of Thomas Barbour (the brother of a former department commissioner) and dated December 7, 1936, described a moose concentration around Norfolk, and gave specific information of moose having been killed near there in 1930; another had been killed years before that in Goshen.

John Wood, once a District 3 supervisor of the Board of Fisheries and Game, reported that a bull moose had been frequently seen by him, as well as others, in the vicinity of Somers in 1916.

Once the moose seen in Warrenville was reported, the Board, on September 18, 1956, passed an emergency regulation that gave full protection to moose found in Connecticut. Unfortunately, this protection did not extend to the Warrenville moose, which was reportedly shot on September 17, two days after being photographed.

The next time a moose was observed in Connecticut was in October 1964. The wandering bull, believed to be from Maine, was seen off and on for a few months after its initial sighting.

Other Visitors Welcome

The November/December 1964 issue of *The Connecticut Wildlife Conservation Bulletin*, which mentions the moose sighting in 1964, also discussed other unusual wildlife visitors that made their way to Connecticut that year:

“1964 may well be recalled here as the year when Connecticut played host to an unusually large representation of interesting wild creatures.

A black bear made a meandering circuit through the west-central portion of the state in the Spring, probably having wandered down from the Berkshires. These animals are not exceptionally rare in Connecticut, but their infrequent visits do receive considerable attention.

At about the same time an ambitious harbor seal swam up the Connecticut River and set up housekeeping on a rock a short distance below the Enfield Dam. Easily seen from the east bank, the animal was the source of many hours of pleasure to observers. Although the harbor seal is far from the unusual along our coast, the last report of one traveling as far inland came in the 1890’s.

The flamingo spotted at Old Saybrook during the summer was really off the beaten track. But he was here, seen and identified by experts...”

Wildlife Holiday Gift Ideas

Give a gift of nature this holiday season to friends and family

Connecticut Wildlife Magazine

Use the form on the back page of this issue to order gift subscriptions for one, two or three years. Gift cards will be sent to all gift recipients.

Woodworking for Wildlife

(\$10.00) This revised second edition has color photographs and an easy-to-use spiral binding. The book is a perfect resource for anyone wishing to build homes for wildlife. Send orders and make checks payable to: CT DEP Nonharvested Wildlife Fund, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013. Proceeds from the sale of this book help fund Nonharvested Wildlife Program projects.

Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps and Prints

Full-color art prints and stamps of the 2000 and some earlier editions of Connecticut Duck Stamps are available at local art dealers. The 2000 stamp depicts a group of wood ducks "pitching in" near the covered bridge in Cornwall. The proceeds from the sale of stamps, prints and other Duck Stamp memorabilia can only be used to finance wetland habitat restoration and enhancement projects in Connecticut.

DEP Store Selections

The DEP Store has hundreds of environmental and Connecticut-related items available, ranging from children's books to topographic maps and software. There are over 20 new items available this year! The DEP Store carries the gifts that will thrill the outdoor enthusiasts on your holiday shopping list. To see the most popular items and to shop on-line, visit the Store's new website, www.mbzmall.com/depstore. To request a copy of the 2001 DEP Store Catalog, call (860) 424-3555 or (860) 424-3692.

"Give a Gift to Wildlife" this holiday season by donating to the Wildlife Division's Nonharvested Wildlife Fund and help finance projects to conserve bluebirds, bats, ospreys, least terns and other nongame and endangered wildlife. Send tax-deductible donations to the DEP Nonharvested Wildlife Fund, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013.

Wildlife Calendar Reminders

- Dec. 1 Beaver trapping season opens.
- Dec. 5 **Teacher Workshop: Connecticut's Endangered Species**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Call Laura Rogers-Castro at (860) 675-8130 for more information and registration details.
- Dec. 6-19 Deer muzzleloader season.
- Dec. 15 2001 Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide available at town clerks' and Wildlife Division offices. The guide can also be accessed on the DEP website at <http://dep.state.ct.us>.
- Dec. 20-30 Second part of the fall turkey bowhunting season on state and private lands.
- January Donate to the Endangered Species/Wildlife Income Tax Check-off Fund on your 2000 CT Income Tax form.
..... Spring turkey hunting and state land deer lottery applications available at town clerks' and Wildlife Division offices.
..... Black bear cubs born in the winter den weigh about one-half pound.
..... The beaver breeding season lasts from mid-January to mid-March.
- Jan. 6 Volunteers needed for the **Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey** (see article on page 11)
- Jan. 6 **Endangered and Threatened Wildlife Update**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 9:30 a.m. Wildlife Division biologist Julie Victoria will show slides and discuss what's been happening with endangered wildlife in Connecticut. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
- Jan. 13 **CT Duck Stamp Rewards**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 1:30 p.m. Paul Capotosto, from the DEP Wetlands Restoration Unit, and Paul Rothbart, a Wildlife Division district supervisor, will show slides and discuss how the dollars raised from Connecticut Duck Stamp sales have been used to restore wetland habitat for wildlife. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
- Jan. 15-Feb. 15 Special late Canada goose season in the south zone only. For more details, see the 2000-2001 Waterfowl Hunting Guide, available at town clerks' and DEP offices. The guide can also be found on the DEP website at <http://dep.state.ct.us>.

Visit the Wildlife Division's informational display at the Northeast Fishing and Hunting Expo, on February 15-18, 2001, at the Connecticut Expo Center. For more information, you can visit the website at <http://www.northeastpromo.com>.

Just for Kids

Nature's Engineers

Beavers are large rodents with strong teeth that are used to cut down trees. They are famous for building dams. Beaver dams turn streams into ponds, providing places to live for the beavers and other animals, such as wood ducks and river otters.

Not All Beaver Floods Are Good

Connecticut has lots of beavers. Sometimes, beavers flood areas which shouldn't be flooded (such as roads or farmer's fields). When this happens, the beavers may be trapped during the trapping season or pipes may be put in the dam to let the water out. Towns have people that make decisions on what to do when flooding occurs on public land.

Made for the Water

Unscramble the words below and learn how beavers are adapted to live in the water. (Answers below).

bbeedw hind feet
orofertaw fur
ddlape-shaped tail



P. J. FUSCO

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Beavers drag branches back to their lodge to eat later.

Did you know?

The Native Americans and early settlers traded beaver skins, or pelts, as money. The pelts were shipped to Europe where they were turned into felt and made into hats.

Today, beaver pelts are used to make coats, hats, gloves, rugs and blankets.



Livable Lodges

Most beavers live in lodges that they make out of sticks and mud. Inside, there is a dry area for shelter and a place to have young. Several underwater entrances lead to the lodge.

Answers to Quiz:

webbed, waterproof, paddle

Connecticut Wildlife

The official bimonthly publication of the
DEP Wildlife Division

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Woodworking for Wildlife

Homes for Birds & Mammals

The Wildlife Division's Nonharvested Wildlife Program is offering a revised second edition of this popular book for **\$10.00**. Now published with color photographs and an easy-to-use spiral binding, it is the perfect resource for anyone wishing to build homes for wildlife.

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Mail completed coupon with a check or money order (\$10.00 per copy) to CT DEP Nonharvested Wildlife Fund, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013-1550.

TIP

 Turn In Poachers

TO REPORT A WILDLIFE VIOLATION

CALL 1-800-842-HELP

24 HOURS - TOLL FREE

REWARDS OFFERED AFTER ARREST
ALL CALLS CONFIDENTIAL

For more information on TIP, call Conservation Law Enforcement at 424-3012

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Bureau of Natural Resources / Wildlife Division
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

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