May / June 2000

Connecticut Wildlife

PUBLISHED BY THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES ● WILDLIFE DIVISION

From the Director

For those who love wildlife, the return of black bears to Connecticut is a thrilling development. The fact that bears are recolonizing their native range indicates that our environment is healthy enough to support a species associated with the wildest of places. We now have the opportunity to glimpse a creature that has fascinated humans for thousands of years. The delicate task at hand is to manage our coexistence.

The next decade or two will be a period of rapid population expansion for black bears in Connecticut. Although their reproductive rate is relatively low, their survival rate will be high given the abundance of unoccupied habitat and the absence of a hunting season. They are highly adaptable and, like deer, coyote and wild turkeys, will eventually colonize habitats in close proximity to people. The potential for close contact will be exacerbated if the trend to build housing in wooded areas continues.

For the most part, bears will go unnoticed due to their secretive nature, nocturnal habits, and tendency to use thick cover. While bears can cause problems, many of these are minor and avoidable. The Department's primary effort to date has been to educate the public about the presence of bears, their biology and habits, and simple precautions that people can take to prevent bear problems. (Visit the DEP's website at http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife to learn about bears and the prevention of problems). Catchy phrases like "a fed bear is a dead bear" convey the message that feeding, whether intentional or not, reinforces bold behavior in bears. Bears with the greatest chance of long-term survival will be those that are wary of humans.

As the bear population grows, so will the frequency of "bad news" bears. These are bears that kill livestock, destroy property, or exhibit extreme boldness around people. Over the past two years, DEP conservation officers and wildlife biologists have expended more than one hundred man-days capturing and removing these serious offenders while recognizing that bear removal is only a temporary solution. We cannot export bears out-of-state and, because of their strong homing instinct, long-distance in-state relocations are seldom effective. Therefore, we have been subjecting captured bears to aversive conditioning before releasing them in the general vicinity of their capture in the hope that the unpleasant encounter with humans will discourage future bad behavior. Time will tell whether this is an adequate solution.

It is daunting to anticipate the increasing burden that problem bears will place on DEP staff in the years to come. Our best defense will be the preventative measures taken by an informed public to ensure that bears do not become a problem in the first place. However, it is inevitable that the expanding bear population is going to create significant new challenges for the Department.

Dale W. May

Cover:

New signs are being posted at Connecticut beaches to help minimize human disturbance to nesting piping plovers (pictured on cover) and least terns. See story on page 9.

Photo courtesy of Paul J. Fusco

Connecticut Wildlife

Published bimonthly by

State of Connecticut
Department of Environmental Protection
http://dep.state.ct.us

Arthur J. Rocque, Jr. ..... *Commissioner*
David K. Leff ..... *Deputy Commissioner*
Edward C. Parker ..... *Chief, Bureau of Natural Resources*

Wildlife Division

79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127 *(860-424-3011)*
Dale May ..... *Director*
Peter Bogue ..... *Assistant Director (Management)*
Greg Chasko ..... *Assistant Director (Assessment)*
Mark Clavette ..... *Recreation Management*
Chris Vann ..... *Technical Assistance Biologist*
Laurie Fortin ..... *Wildlife Technician*
Brenda Marquez ..... *Secretary*

Eastern District Area Headquarters
209 Hebron Road, Marlborough, CT 06447 *(860-295-9523)*
Paul Rothbart ..... *District Supervising Biologist*
Ann Kilpatrick ..... *Eastern District Biologist*
Rich Garini ..... *DEP-DOC Crew Supervisor*

Franklin W.M.A.
391 Route 32, N. Franklin, CT 06254 *(860-642-7239)*
Paul Merola ..... *Waterfowl Program Biologist*
Howard Kilpatrick ..... *Deer/Turkey Program Biologist*
Mike Gregonis ..... *Deer/Turkey Program Biologist*
Julie Victoria ..... *Nonharvested Wildlife Program Biologist*
Paul Capotosto ..... *Wetlands Restoration Biologist*
Roger Wolfe ..... *Mosquito Management Coordinator*
Bob Kalinowski ..... *CE/FS Coordinator (East)*
Winnie Reid ..... *Secretary*
Georgie McGlinchey ..... *Program Assistant*

Sessions Woods W.M.A.
P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013-1550 *(860-675-8130)*
Peter Good ..... *Supervising Wildlife Biologist*
Steve Jackson ..... *Supervising Wildlife Biologist*
Paul Rego ..... *Furbearer Program Biologist*
Jenny Dickson ..... *Nonharvested Wildlife Program Biologist*
Peter Picone ..... *Urban Wildlife Program Biologist*
Judy Wilson ..... *Western District Biologist*
Dave Kubas ..... *CE/FS Coordinator (West)*
Sandy Jacobson ..... *Program Assistant*
Trish Cernik ..... *Program Assistant*
Jim Warner ..... *Field Assistant*
Lew Hale ..... *Field Assistant*

Public Awareness Program / Connecticut Wildlife
Kathy Herz ..... *Editor*
Paul Fusco ..... *Media Designer/Photography*
Laura Rogers-Castro ..... *Education/Outreach*

Wetlands Habitat & Mosquito Management Crew Hdqtrs.
51 Mill Road, Madison, CT 06443
Daniel Shaw ..... *Mosquito Control Specialist*
Steven Rosa ..... *Mosquito Control Specialist*

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.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is an equal opportunity agency that provides services, facilities, and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, physical and mental disability, national origin, ancestry, marital status, and political beliefs.

Preparing for West Nile Virus and the Mosquito Season

Written by Roger Wolfe, Mosquito Management Coordinator

For the State's Mosquito Management Program, winter is generally a welcomed break from the heat, mud, mosquitoes and phone calls of the year before. However, with the outbreak of West Nile Virus (WNV) last summer (see the Nov./Dec. 1999 issue of *Connecticut Wildlife*) and the national attention it gained, that brief hiatus never came. There probably hasn't been an event of this magnitude that has brought together so many professionals from the public health, mosquito management and wildlife fields since the discovery of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in 1938.

Over the winter, the Mosquito Management Program has had time to review the events of last fall, converse with surrounding states and local health districts and prepare for the upcoming year.

Connecticut's Mosquito Management Program is a cooperative effort between several state agencies, including the DEP (the program administrator), the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and the Department of Public Health, with assistance from the Department of Agriculture and the University of Connecticut Pathobiology Laboratory.

R. WOLFE

If the presence of West Nile Virus or EEE virus is detected in mosquitos, the Mosquito Management Program will consider ultra low volume adulticide spraying in those affected areas.

Summary of Mosquito-related Events in Connecticut (1999)

Following are some of the highlights of the WNV outbreak in 1999 and what has happened since then.

August: State of Connecticut experiences extremely dry weather, reducing certain mosquito populations. All trapping and testing results to date are negative for EEE.

September: Heavy rains from Hurricane Floyd create highly favorable conditions for increased mosquito breeding.

New York reports suspected human cases of St. Louis Encephalitis (SLE) in New York City.

Mosquito traps are set in Greenwich and Stamford, the two closest towns to the New York border.

Personal protective measures are recommended to avoid mosquito bites, especially in Fairfield County.

Two isolations of SLE in mosquitoes trapped in Greenwich and one isolation in a dead crow from Westport are identified.

Ultra low volume ground-level spraying of a narrow band pesticide, Resmythrin, and catch basin larviciding with Bti and methoprene were conducted in selected areas of Darien, Greenwich, Norwalk, Stamford and Westport by DEP staff and a contractor.

Federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) identify the virus previously thought to be SLE as West Nile virus (WNV).

October: State reports positive results for WNV in seven dead crows from Greenwich, Fairfield and Stamford. Mosquitoes test negative for WNV and EEE.

Department of Agriculture issues protocol for veterinarians to look for possible WNV infections in domestic animals, poultry and pet birds.

State reports mosquitoes tested statewide are negative for WNV and EEE.

Sixteen of 20 birds collected in the state test positive for WNV.

Sandhill crane from Beardsley Zoo, in Bridgeport, tests positive for WNV. Mosquito test results, including traps set at the zoo, report negative for WNV and EEE.

State advises personal protective measures be taken until a hard frost occurs.

Long Island reports WNV identified in 22 horses, of which six died.

November: State reports five of 12 crows test positive for WNV, and informs public of end of bird collection program.

continued on next page

WNV Response Plan Developed

The Mosquito Management Program spent much of the winter and spring developing a West Nile Virus Monitoring, Surveillance and Response Plan. The state plan for EEE was kept intact. The WNV Plan was developed with input from DEP, CAES, Department of Public Health (DPH), Department of Agriculture and University of Connecticut Pathobiology Lab. The Plan has four key elements: 1) a mosquito trapping, surveillance and testing program to detect the presence of WNV in Connecticut in mosquitoes, humans, wild and domestic birds and animals; 2) a mosquito control and prevention program that identifies preventive measures to reduce the threat of WNV in areas where the virus is most likely to reemerge; 3) a communication and public awareness plan to provide needed information to local officials, the public and the media in a timely manner; and 4) a response plan which identifies actions to be taken if WNV is detected in Connecticut or neighboring states.

WNV infection in humans often results in an inapparent or mild illness. However, some persons, the elderly in particular, can develop neurologic illness, including encephalitis and aseptic meningitis.

Trapping, Testing and Control

The Mosquito Management Program uses an integrated pest management approach, which includes a combination of surveillance, source reduction, larval and adult mosquito control and public education emphasizing source reduction around the home and personal protective measures. Personal protective measures (see *Managing Mosquitoes* article) are the most effective way to prevent WNV transmission to the human population. Mosquito control and source reduction are an integral part of lowering the risks of disease transmission. The most effective and economical way to control mosquitoes is by larval source reduction through abatement programs that monitor mosquito populations and initiate control before disease transmission occurs.

In June 2000, CAES will begin trapping and testing for WNV. Based on the findings of WNV in 1999, the current mosquito trapping program, which consists of 37 trapping locations statewide to detect EEE, will be expanded to include 36 new locations for a total of 73 trap sites. The new trap sites, which will be located in lower Fairfield County and New Haven County, where mosquitoes and dead crows infected with the virus were found, will have two kinds of traps, a CO_2-baited light trap and a special trap designed to attract and trap previously blood-fed adult female mosquitoes, principally the *Culex* species. *Culex pipiens*, the northern house mosquito, is a common backyard mosquito. It is one of two species that tested positive for WNV last year in Connecticut and has been identified as a vector in WNV outbreaks in other parts of the world. Mosquito trapping will be conducted daily from June 1 through October, with the results reported weekly.

Several towns have either hired private applicators or are training their staff to do mosquito control. Many inquiries have already been made from individuals or homeowner associations on what they can do around the home, as well as what they can purchase to rid their yard of mosquitoes or to protect themselves from mosquito bites. There are products available at nursery and garden centers and hardware stores that are labeled for the control of larval and adult mosquitoes. Bti (*Bacillus thurengiensis* var. *israelensis)* is a bacterial larvicide available to homeowners that comes in liquid, granular and briquet form. Bti is very specific and is labeled for the control of mosquitoes, black flies and certain midge species. It must be ingested by the filter-feeding mosquito larvae to be effective. Bti is safe to the environment and **poses no risk to non-target organisms when used in accordance with EPA application recommendations.**

P. CAPATOSTO

Mosquito Management Coordinator Roger Wolfe inspects for moquito larvae at a freshwater wetland.

The Best Defense

The best defense against a public health issue related to mosquito-borne viruses is an educated public. Being able to identify and eliminate potential mosquito-breeding sources around the home, taking normal precautions against mosquito bites and using a little common sense are much more effective, less costly and more environmentally-

friendly than trying to find a "quick fix" from off the shelf.

Each year, Mosquito Management Program staff are asked to predict what the mosquito season will be like to which the response is, "We have no idea." Although it sounds rather unprofessional, it is true. With all of the planning and preparedness, the bottom line is that no one really knows what will happen. All we can do is learn from the past, prepare for the future and then wait and see.

For updates on mosquito trapping and testing and additional information on WNV and mosquito management, visit the DEP's website at http://dep.state.ct.us.

Managing Mosquitoes

Eliminating mosquito breeding around the home

One of the easiest and surest ways you can help eliminate mosquitoes is to get rid of standing water during the mosquito season (May to October) where mosquitoes can lay their eggs.

- Mosquitoes (and ticks) like to rest in tall grass. Keep your lawn mowed and shrubs trimmed.
- Fix any holes in screens and make sure screens are tightly attached to all doors and windows.
- Keep car windows rolled up and garage doors closed at night.
- Use yellow lights for outside lighting.
- There are a number of safe and effective aerosol sprays and products for control of larval and adult mosquitoes available at local garden centers, nurseries and hardware stores. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS.
- Private certified applicators can be hired to treat your yard or neighborhood for mosquitoes. Make sure the applicator is licensed in the "**Mosquito and Biting Fly**" supervisor's category by the DEP Pesticide Unit (860-424-3369).

Common mosquito breeding sites around the home:

- Rain barrels and clogged rain gutters
- Unmaintained swimming pools and bird baths
- Drainage ditches and low areas that hold rainwater for more than seven to 10 days
- Open cesspools or septic tanks
- Boats, pool covers and tarps that collect rainwater
- Discarded tires
- Tree holes
- Any containers that hold water (wheelbarrows, cans, buckets, flower pots)

Eliminate sources of mosquito breeding around your home:

- Properly dispose of trash and containers that can hold water.
- Clean rain gutters regularly to prevent clogging.
- Cover rain barrels with screening to prevent mosquitoes from laying eggs on the water.
- Maintain swimming pools with pool chemicals and filters or drain if not being used.
- Change water in wading pools, bird baths and flower pots weekly.
- Maintain septic systems and cover septic tanks.
- Keep boats/canoes drained or overturned to prevent water from collecting.
- Avoid over-watering gardens and lawns to prevent puddling.
- Dispose of old tires, store indoors or stack tires and cover with a tarp or board to keep rainwater out.
- Repair leaky pipes and outside faucets.
- Clean ditches of grass clippings, leaves, weeds and debris.
- Fill tree holes with sand or cement.
- Stock ornamental ponds with fish that eat mosquito larvae, like goldfish, guppies, killifish or other top-feeding minnows. Fish in small garden ponds may not survive the winter and will need to be brought indoors for the winter or restocked annually.
- Encourage others in your area to eliminate mosquito-breeding sites on their property to reduce mosquitoes in your neighborhood.

Protective measures for your home and family

Mosquitoes can breed in many types of settings, including salt marshes, swamps, roadside ditches, catch basins and artificial containers. Some can spread diseases such as Eastern Equine Encephalitis, West Nile virus and canine heartworm. Because some types of mosquitoes are very strong fliers, mosquitoes may still frequent your yard or house even though you may have eliminated mosquito-breeding sources around your home. There are several ways you can reduce mosquitoes on your property and protect your family from mosquito bites:

- Limit outdoor activities at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- When mosquitoes are active, wear light-colored, loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts and pants or use repellants.
- **Use repellents that contain less than 40 percent DEET on skin or clothing. Higher dosages are not that much more effective. On children, use products containing less than 10-15 percent DEET. Do not use repellents on infants. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS.**
- **Sprays containing permethrin are widely available for repelling mosquitoes and ticks. Apply to clothing only. DO NOT APPLY TO SKIN. ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS.**
- When outdoors, use mosquito netting over babies' playpens or carriages.
- When camping outdoors, make sure your tent is equipped with mosquito netting. And, avoid camping overnight near wetland areas where mosquitoes are most active.

Web Surfers Get a "Bird's Eye" View of Peregrine Falcons

Web surfers can get a "bird's eye" view into the nest of a pair of endangered peregrine falcons through a new webcam. The *Peregrine Watch at Travelers Tower* webcam is the first of its kind in Connecticut, enabling teachers, students and wildlife watchers to see and learn about the life cycle and habits of a rare bird pair and its young. Throughout the project, Wildlife Division biologists will monitor the status of the nest and attach leg bands to any chicks when they are about three weeks of age. The webcam is a partnership of the Science Center of Connecticut, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and Travelers Insurance. IBM and DeSai Systems, Inc., are official supporting sponsors of the project.

"The Peregrine Watch at Travelers Tower webcam represents a partnership opportunity to broaden conservation and education efforts through the application of internet and computer technology," said DEP Commissioner Arthur J. Rocque, Jr. "The use of the webcam will enable teachers, students, conservationists and birders, from any location, to enjoy a 'live action' Connecticut success story."

Connecticut currently has two falcon pairs nesting, or preparing to nest, in Hartford and Bridgeport. These birds have come to Connecticut from nearby states that have conducted peregrine falcon reintroduction programs.

"This is a truly unique environmental learning experience," said Linda K. Johnson, president and CEO of the Science Center of Connecticut. "Our goal for the webcam is to help bring the sky-high world of Hartford's only peregrine falcon nesting pair down to the thousands of Science Center visitors and internet viewers this spring." The Science Center initiated and organized the webcam project to enhance the educational experience of visitors to *Hunters of the Sky*, an exhibit about birds of prey currently on display at the Center.

Website visitors can find out about the falcons' history in Connecticut, and more, by logging on at http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife, and visiting the Special Features Section where they will find a link to the webcam and a 12-image peregrine falcon slide show depicting the falcon "Amelia," her nest and hatchlings. Additional links offer kid's pages and coloring sheets, the Connecticut Peregrine Falcon Story and fact sheets about this state-endangered species. Linking to the Science Center webcam enables viewers to see "live action" at the nest site with images that are refreshed every two minutes. The Science Center website also provides viewers with access to a peregrine falcon word search, coloring page and other educational activities for children.

An image captured from the *Peregrine Watch at Travelers Tower* webcam shows Amelia perching on the side of her nest box, next to the first egg, which was laid on April 16. Below, she is seen with her full clutch of four eggs. The fourth egg was laid on April 24. Amelia's eggs are expected to hatch in mid- to late-May.

"Travelers has a unique relationship with the peregrine falcons," said Thomas M. Luszczak, Director of Corporate Real Estate and Services at Travelers Insurance. "We have the distinction of being both an historic and current nesting site for them." Before Amelia, the last nesting on the Travelers Tower occurred in the late 1940s. "We are glad Amelia has chosen the Travelers Tower to return to for the past few years," added Luszczak. "We are pleased to sponsor the *Peregrine Watch* webcam so that a wide audience can get an 'up-close-and-personal" peek at these uncommon birds."

"Leaves of Three, Let It Be!"

Written by Laura Rogers-Castro, Public Awareness Program

If you've had it, you know it. If you haven't had it, don't be too sure you won't get it. What is it? Poison ivy! Exposure to just a little bit of the resin in the plant can cause a rash, blisters and intensive itch. About three of every four people are sensitive to poison ivy and it could be considered one of the most common allergies in the country. Surprisingly, all other animals, except a few higher primates, are immune to the plant. And, several animals rely on poison ivy fruits to sustain them through the winter.

Poison ivy is a member of the Anacardiaceae family and is related to cashews, mangos, Japanese lacquer and poisons oak and sumac. It can grow as a vine or shrub and has hairy, aerial roots. Poison ivy is recognizable by its three leaflets (the center leaflet is on a longer stalk) during the growing season and white, waxy berries during fall. The berries will often persist throughout the winter. When it grows as a vine, the hairy roots are obvious and can be seen anytime of the year with careful observation. Poison oak is found in the southeastern and western states and poison sumac, although found here, is encountered less because it grows in swampy areas. Poison sumac has white berries in contrast to the red berries of the more common (and nonpoisonous) smooth and staghorn sumacs.

Poison ivy can cause irritation for people, but it is very valuable for wildlife.

The chemical responsible for poison ivy's infamous itch is called urushiol. It is an incredibly stable chemical as recent research has revealed its potency in botanical specimens several centuries old. Many hunters have experienced this firsthand when putting on last year's orange vest for this year's season and finding later that they have a case of poison ivy. The resin from the plant can remain on clothing, boots, gloves, garden tools and other items for years if they are stored in dry conditions. In addition, the amount of urushiol needed to cause a reaction in people is so small that hundreds of people could itch from the amount covering the letter "I" at the beginning of this article.

P.FUSCO

The yellow-rumped warbler is one of many bird species that will feed on poison ivy berries.

The usual scenario for an individual who is exposed to urushiol is redness and swelling after about 12 to 48 hours, followed by watery blisters and itching. The rash is not spread by the oozing blisters but sometimes appears later on the body in areas that have either absorbed the urushiol at a different rate, been re-exposed by contaminated objects, or have come into contact with urushiol that remained under the fingernails from the initial "scratch." Because the skin must absorb the urushiol before a reaction occurs, immediate washing following a known exposure is key to preventing the rash. Also, if poison ivy is burned, the urushiol can be vaporized, creating a serious situation for any unfortunate individual downwind.

Poison ivy can cause irritation for people, but it is very valuable for wildlife. The plant provides breeding and nesting cover for a variety of animals. The fruits are a good source of carbohydrates and vitamins for over 50 different songbirds, including catbirds, grosbeaks, thrushes, chickadees, robins and flickers. Poison ivy fruits are especially important to wildlife because they are available in winter and they can often be seen when snow is covering many other plants. During summer, various mammals, including black bear, rabbit and white-tailed deer, will browse on the leaves and stems of the plant. Poison ivy is the larval food source for a number of moths and the tangled vines also provide good habitat for many other insects and even a few spiders.

Poison ivy can be avoided by people with a little knowledge about its appearance and growth habit. Anyone who has made contact with poison ivy should wash the area immediately with soap and water to help eliminate or minimize any discomfort later. Those individuals who feel they are immune should still avoid the plant as sensitivity can change over time. And, if you do get it, use a little calamine lotion, take an oatmeal bath or swim in the ocean and, in a couple of weeks, you should be back to normal.

Watching Wildlife with Care

On a crisp autumn day, visitors to Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison are standing on the viewing platform along the Willard Island trail, scanning the horizon with binoculars. They hope to catch a glimpse of a migrating short-eared owl or northern harrier. On a brisk winter morning, another group of people at the Shepaug Bald Eagle Observation Area in Southbury are also armed with binoculars and spotting scopes, as they search for roosting and feeding bald eagles. These people are all taking part in a growing trend throughout the United States – wildlife watching.

By following a few guidelines, responsible wildlife watchers can help ensure the safety of wildlife, conserve the animals and their habitats and respect the rights of other outdoor users.

P.FUSCO

A northern harrier hunts for prey over a Connecticut salt marsh during its fall migration.

Observing, feeding and photographing wildlife are important pastimes for millions of Americans. These activities contribute significantly to both national and state economies. According to the 1996 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, more than 60 million people 16 years of age and older spent over $29 billion on trips and equipment in pursuit of these activities. The 1996 survey also reported that, in Connecticut, 774,000 state residents 16 years old and older participated in wildlife watching activities and spent $453 million on equipment and trip-related expenditures while taking part in wildlife watching.

In response to the growing interest in wildlife watching, the DEP has been developing wildlife viewing areas and platforms at various state parks and wildlife management areas. While encouraging Connecticut residents to take up this popular pastime and head outdoors to enjoy our state's wildlife, it is important to stress that wildlife watching does carry responsibilities. Although most people who participate in wildlife-related recreational activities care a great deal about wildlife and their habitats, they may not always be aware that their actions while observing wildlife may be impacting the animals. By following a few guidelines, responsible wildlife watchers can help ensure the safety of wildlife, conserve the animals and their habitats and respect the rights of other outdoor users.

Keep Your Distance

View animals at a distance they feel comfortable. If your approach causes an animal to change its behavior, you are too close. You should then sit quietly or move slowly away until the animal resumes its activity. Be especially sensitive to adults with young. Any disturbance may result in an animal leaving its young, injuring itself as it tries to escape, not feeding at a time of critical energy need, or displaying aggressive behavior toward the intruder. Get close by using binoculars, a spotting scope or a camera with a telephoto lens. If an animal approaches you, it is your responsibility to move away to maintain a safe distance.

Don't Stalk or Sneak Up on Wildlife

If you stalk or sneak up on an animal, it may react as if you are a predator. Instead, stay in the open, remain quiet, move slowly and don't do anything threatening. Allow the animals to keep you in view. Although animals may look or act tame, they are wild and may change quickly and unpredictably from passive to aggressive behavior. A car is often the best blind for wildlife watching. Many animals will not perceive a vehicle as a threat.

Never Chase or Harass Wildlife

Harassment of wildlife is unlawful. Some animals that are chased by people or pets are forced to use up valuable energy resources needed for survival. Pets should be left at home or in the car. Your viewing experience will be more successful. In addition, free-roaming dogs can chase, injure or kill wildlife.

Never Feed Wild Animals

The potential consequences of feeding wildlife can be dangerous for both people and animals. Some animals become accustomed to handouts and lose their natural fear of humans. They may even become aggressive or a nuisance. An aggressive animal or one that harms a person may have to be destroyed by wildlife managers. In addition, some foods do not meet the nutritional requirements of many wild animals, and it may seriously harm them. Animals that are fed tend to congregate unnaturally in groups, increasing their chances of passing diseases to one another. Wildlife attracted to roads and human habitation due to the presence of food may be killed by traffic or need to be destroyed as nuisances.

(Providing food for birds at backyard feeders is one of the most popular wildlife watching activities. This warning to not feed wildlife applies mostly to animals such as deer, turkeys, waterfowl, bears, raccoons and other furbearers. However, certain guidelines should be followed to ensure the health and safety of birds that are attracted to backyard feeders. See the Jan./Feb. 2000 issue of *Connecticut Wildlife* for information on preventing disease at birdfeeders.)

If You Care, Leave it There

Do not handle "orphaned" or sick animals. Wild animals rarely abandon their young. In most cases, the adults are nearby, waiting for visitors to leave before returning to their young. If an animal appears sick or injured, behaves oddly, or seems tame, leave it alone. A number of wildlife diseases, including rabies, can affect humans.

Respect Private Property

Always ask permission before entering private property to view wildlife and leave no trace of your visit.

Respect Other Outdoor Users

Allow other visitors to enjoy wildlife. Avoid blocking others' views. Be considerate when approaching wildlife that is already being viewed; a loud noise or quick movement may spoil the experience for everyone. Watch other people in the area—are their actions putting you in danger? Remember, you share the outdoors with many other recreationists, including hikers, mountain bikers, hunters and anglers. Many state-owned areas in Connecticut are open to hunting and/or fishing. Information on hunting season dates and regulations is available from any Wildlife Division office or on the DEP website at http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife.

Look for a New Sign at Shoreline Bird Nesting Areas

Visitors to the Connecticut shoreline this summer may see a new sign that asks people to stay away from bird nesting areas. The brightly-colored, fluorescent orange sign contains illustrations of a snowy egret, piping plover and osprey. It tells visitors that the nesting birds are protected by law and if they are disturbed, the adults will leave the nest, subjecting the eggs and young to exposure and possible death.

Several of the signs will be placed at Harkness Memorial State Park, in Waterford, where human disturbance at the beach nesting area used by piping plovers (state and federally threatened) and least terns (state threatened) reduced the productivity of the tern population to zero during the 1999 nesting season. Several park visitors ignored signs at the nesting area, which resulted in five tickets and four warnings being issued to violators. The bird nesting area at Harkness Memorial is part of a larger segment of the park that was recently designated a Natural Area Preserve.

The variety of birds depicted on the new sign will allow it to be used at other proposed Natural Area Preserves, like Duck Island in Westbrook, which is fenced for nesting herons and egrets, and Great Island Wildlife Management Area in Old Lyme, which is a nesting area for ospreys.

Every summer, the Wildlife Division asks beach visitors to respect all piping plover and least tern nesting areas that are fenced or posted for the birds' protection. Plover and tern eggs and young are difficult to distinguish from the sand and can easily be trampled by beach visitors and pets. Visitors are also asked to not approach or linger near piping plovers, least terns or their nests and to not leave or bury trash or food scraps on beaches. Garbage attracts predators which may prey upon piping plover and least tern eggs and chicks.

It is hoped that through the use of nest protection by fencing, sign posting, public education and predator management that Connecticut's piping plover, least tern, heron, egret and osprey populations will experience increased productivity during the 2000 nesting season.

Wildlife Management through the Century

The history and evolution of wildlife management in Connecticut is full of notable accomplishments and significant events, some of which are listed below.

Historical Wildlife Management Facts

1648 Connecticut prohibited deer hunting.
1677 Connecticut law prohibited the export of deer hides and venison.
1813 The wild turkey is extirpated in Connecticut.
1842 Beaver reported extirpated in Connecticut.
1850 Connecticut was one of the first states to enact a law protecting nongame birds.
1866 Connecticut Board of Fisheries began with the appointment of two commissioners.
1883 The first game wardens were appointed.
1893 Connecticut passed a law giving complete protection to deer for 10 years; the law was subsequently extended to 1917.
1895 The Connecticut Board of Fisheries and Game was established.
1899 Land acquisition and development by the Board of Fisheries and Game began with the purchase of land for the Windsor Locks Hatchery.
1900 Lacey Act imposed federal penalties for interstate transportation of wildlife taken illegally.
1906 Connecticut made funds available to landowners with crop damage caused by deer.
1907 Owners or lessees were allowed to shoot deer found damaging crops on their land.
1907 Sale of hunting licenses began.
1907 A law was passed in Connecticut that closed the spring hunting season for waterfowl.
1908 Ring-necked pheasants were first released in Connecticut for small game hunting.
1914 Beaver reintroduction began with the establishment of a colony in Union by a private individual.
1918 Migratory Bird Treaty Act between the United States and Canada extended protection to nongame birds, including herons, egrets, terns and shorebirds, and gave federal governments the power to manage and regulate the harvest of waterfowl.
1932 A comprehensive Waterfowl Restoration Program was established in Connecticut.
1934 The federal Duck Stamp Program was initiated by the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act.
1934 A Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit Program was established at the University of Connecticut in Storrs.
1937 The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (Pittman-Robertson) was passed to provide funds for wildlife management projects and land acquisition.
1954 First annual midwinter waterfowl survey was conducted.
1955 *The Connecticut Wildlife Conservation Bulletin* was first published by the State Board of Fisheries and Game.
1956 A Hunter Safety Program was established in Connecticut.
1971 The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection was established.
1973 *The Connecticut Wildlife Conservation Bulletin* was renamed *The Connecticut Environmental Bulletin*.
1974 The Deer Management Act was passed by the state legislature.
1975 Connecticut held its first regulated deer hunting season.
1975 Wild turkeys were reintroduced in Connecticut by the DEP Wildlife Bureau (now Wildlife Division).
1980 The Bluebird Restoration and Wood Distribution Project was initiated.
1981 The Wildlife Division first published the newsletter SCOPE, which has evolved into the current *Connecticut Wildlife* magazine.
1981 Connecticut held its first spring wild turkey hunting season.
1982 Connecticut's current Conservation Education/Firearms Safety (CE/FS) Program began.
1985 The Division's Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) Program was established by state statute.
1986 The Division's Nonharvested Wildlife Program was officially established by the State Legislature.
1986 Connecticut became the first Atlantic Flyway state in the nation to be granted a liberalized hunting season for nuisance resident Canada geese.
1989 Fisher were reintroduced into northwestern Connecticut by the Wildlife Division.
1989 Project WILD workshops for teachers began to be held in Connecticut.
1989 " An Act Establishing a Program for the Protection of Endangered and Threatened Species" became Connecticut state law.
1991 Raccoon rabies was confirmed in Connecticut's raccoon population.
1992 Connecticut's list of Endangered, Threatened and Special Concern Species became official.
1992 A bear struck by a vehicle in Redding was the first documented case of a vehicle-killed bear in Connecticut.
1992 The first successful nesting of a pair of bald eagles since the 1950s occurred in Barkhamsted, Connecticut.
1993 Connecticut issued its First of State Migratory Bird Conservation (Duck) Stamp.
1994 Connecticut residents were given the opportunity to donate a portion of their state income tax return to the Endangered Species/Wildlife Income Tax Check-off Fund.
1997 A pair of peregrine falcons hatched three chicks in their nest on the Travelers Tower in Hartford. This pair was the first to successfully nest since the 1940s.
1998 Connecticut embarks on a new initiative to acquire open space.
1998 Migratory bird hunter participation in the Harvest Information Program (HIP) became mandatory in Connecticut.
1999 Bear/human encounters increased dramatically in the state.
1999 A second pair of peregrine falcons successfully raised young on a highway bridge in Bridgeport.

CTDEP-WILDLIFE (2)

Below: This photograph of a gadwall nest was taken at Barn Island WMA in July 1962. The gadwall is an uncommon migratory breeder in Connecticut and confirmed nesting sites are few along the coastline.

This photograph of the tidal marsh at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA), in Stonington, was taken around 1950. The State began to acquire property for Barn Island starting in 1945. Funds from the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program were used to purchase a major portion of the area. Today, Barn Island WMA encompasses 756 acres and has a diverse array of wildlife habitats, ranging from uplands, agricultural/ open fields, mixed hardwood forests to salt, brackish and freshwater wetlands. It is a popular area for wildlife viewing and hunting.

Readers Provide Story Behind Historical Photograph

When we published this photograph in the January/ February 2000 issue of *Connecticut Wildlife*, we did not know the story behind it, just the year in which it was taken, 1963. However, shortly after the issue was published, we heard from two of our readers who were surprised to see the photograph and also knew the story behind it.

DEP Conservation Officer William Myers (who was profiled in the Nov./Dec. 1999 issue of *Connecticut Wildlife*) wrote to tell us that the man in the picture was his uncle, Ted Myers. Mr. Myers shot the coyote in January 1963 behind the Kensington Hatchery in Kensington. Officer Myers sent us part of a news clipping that had another photograph of Ted Myers and his brother, Matthew Myers, holding the coyote. According to the news article, the coyote was given to the University of Connecticut for positive identification. This coyote was only the second or third recorded in Connecticut and the first recorded from the middle portion of the state.

CTDEP-WILDLIFE

The other reader we heard from was Al Terapane, from Wallingford, who wrote: "The hunter pictured on page 12 of the January/February issue is Ted Myers, a well-known hunter and fisherman who worked for years with the Federal Soil and Conservation Service. He was also the uncle of DEP conservation officer Bill Myers. I was with Ted the morning he shot the coyote. We were hunting rabbit off the Chamberlain Highway in Meriden, minutes from what is now the Westfield Shopping Mall. Ted's beagle, Chippie, pushed the coyote out of thick brush and directly at Ted...What a surprise!"

Aerial Deer Survey Results Indicate Population Is Increasing

Written by Michael Gregonis, Deer/Turkey Program Biologist

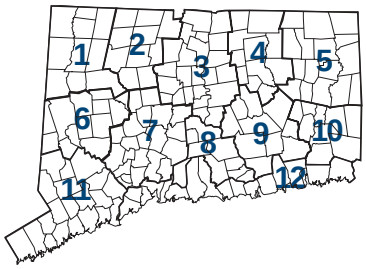
The Wildlife Division monitors the statewide deer population by a variety of methods, including harvest data, deer hunter surveys, deer-vehicle collisions, homeowner complaints about deer damage and aerial deer surveys. A statewide aerial deer survey is conducted by helicopter, once every three years, on calm days with complete snow cover to maximize the visibility of deer.

Survey results indicated that Connecticut's deer population is increasing, with an estimated winter population of 76,344 deer.

When assessing aerial deer survey data it is important to remember that many parameters may affect the visibility of deer, including pilot skill, observer experience, wind speed, temperature, timing of survey and snow conditions. Due to these parameters, there may be a high degree of variability between survey periods. In addition, the aerial deer survey samples about one percent of the total deer habitat in the state. Therefore, trends in aerial surveys should be interpreted using at least three to five survey periods (9 to 15 years) rather than comparing data from one year to the next. The current survey technique and sampling scheme have been used since 1993. The survey technique is most useful as a long-term trend index determining whether the deer population is increasing, stable or decreasing.

The most recent aerial deer survey was initiated during January 1999, but was not completed until February 2000 due to a lack of snow cover. Survey results indicated that Connecticut's deer population is increasing, with an estimated winter population of 76,344 deer. The 1999-2000 aerial deer survey population estimate was higher than the estimates from past aerial deer surveys conducted in 1993 (49,472) and 1996 (53,955). Although the deer population appears to be increasing, additional surveys are required to determine the rate of growth (see graph).

Harvest data, deer hunter surveys, deer-vehicle collisions and homeowner concerns indicate that Connecticut's deer population is stable or slightly increasing. To continue the wise management of Connecticut's deer population it is important to collect a wide variety of biological and non-biological information. The aerial deer survey is an important component of Connecticut's deer management puzzle.



Projected deer densities in Connecticut's 12 Deer Management Zones based on the 1999/2000 aerial deer survey.

Zone	Average deer/ mi²	Est. mi² of deer habitat	Est. deer pop.
1	18.7	376.9	7,048
2	7.0	281.2	1,968
3	24.7	329.7	8,144
4	13.7	281.4	3,855
5	26.7	505.9	13,508
6	27.0	289.7	7,822
7	15.5	299.3	4,639
8	19.7	175.3	3,453
9	24.7	303.9	7,506
10	5.3	228.1	1,209
11	40.3	302.4	12,187
12	19.0	263.4	5,005
Total	**21.0***	**3,637**	**76,344**

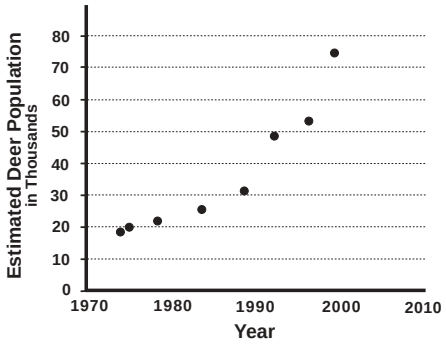
** Mean statewide deer density.*

P.FUSCO

Results from the 1999-2000 survey indicate that Connecticut has an average deer density of 21 deer per square mile. In 1993 and 1996, mean deer densities were 14 and 15 deer per square mile, respectively. In Connecticut's 12 Deer Management Zones, the relative deer densities (deer/ mi^2) ranged from 5.3 to 40.3 deer per square mile. The highest densities were found in zones 11, 6 and 5. The lowest densities occurred in zones 10, 2 and 4. Although some zones have low overall deer densities, these areas can contain pockets with higher deer densities.

To address increases in Connecticut's deer population, the Wildlife Division has lengthened deer seasons, liberalized bag limits and encouraged the harvest of antlerless deer in high deer density areas that have been identified through the data collection process. Wise deer management results in healthy deer populations and productive wildlife habitat.

Deer Population Trend Indices



Mute Swans Counted in Mid-summer Survey

Written by Paul Merola, Waterfowl Program Biologist

A mid-summer mute swan survey, which was initiated by the Atlantic Flyway in 1986, is conducted every three years in Connecticut and the other flyway states (all coastal states from Maine to Florida, plus Vermont, Pennsylvania and West Virginia). The survey seeks to monitor the breeding distribution of mute swans and their productivity within the flyway. Adults, broods and cygnets are counted. Swans are also counted during the midwinter waterfowl survey, which is conducted every January.

The most recent mute swan survey to be conducted in Connecticut occurred in August 1999. An aerial survey was flown along the coast and the lower Connecticut River. Ground surveys of inland water bodies were done by DEP conservation officers.

In Connecticut, the overall mute swan count has been relatively stable since 1986. However, the apparent increase in inland swans reflected in the 1999 survey is a concern to biologists and some birders. Because swans aggressively defend their nesting territories, they often exclude other breeding birds from inland wetlands. Also, studies have shown that swans, through their feeding, can deplete aquatic vegetation, which provides habitat for aquatic organisms and food sources for other wildlife species.

The report for the 1996 mid-summer mute swan survey showed large increases in the mute swan population in the mid-Atlantic states and Chesapeake Bay states. The population in southern New England is also growing; however, in Connecticut, the growth is slower. Overall, the growth rate is nine percent annually in the Atlantic Flyway.

The number of mute swans counted in Connecticut during the Atlantic Flyway mid-summer mute swan survey.

Year	Inland Swans	Coastal Swans	Total Swans
1986	309	1,143	1,452
1989	382	1,566	1,948
1993	n.s.	1,707	1,707
1996	309	1,280	1,589
1999	504	1,105	1,609

n.s. = not surveyed

P.FUSCO

A pair of mute swans raise their young at one of Connecticut's many inland ponds.

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Program

Conservation Through Art

Written by Paul Rothbart, Supervising Wildlife Biologist

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program is an integrated art and science curriculum developed to teach environmental science and habitat conservation. The Program incorporates scientific and wildlife management principles and crosses cultural, ethnic, social and geographic barriers to teach a greater awareness of our nation's natural resources. Concentrating on waterfowl and wetlands gives students an opportunity to experience the beauty and diversity of wildlife as well as the interdependence of wildlife species and habitat. The Junior Duck Stamp curriculum demonstrates that wetlands are not only nature's filter system, but are an overall indicator of environmental health. In reality, a Junior Duck Stamp entry is a "term paper" in which participants select a species of North American waterfowl, do research on the species and its habitat and then depict the waterfowl selected in an artistic medium to show what they have learned.

Funding for the Program is appropriated through the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program Act established in 1994 to develop and market the Federal Junior Duck Stamp and its associated program. Proceeds from the sale of Federal Junior Duck Stamps are used for purchasing land for the National Wildlife Refuge System and to provide a scholarship for the national winner.

The Connecticut Junior Duck Stamp Program is coordinated by Patricia Hochman, President of the Connecticut Waterfowl Association (CWA). The Wildlife Division has been a partner with CWA on many educational and wildlife management efforts in the past and we are proud to be a cooperator in judging and displaying the beautiful art pieces that were entered in Connecticut's program this year. The 39 award-winning entries are presently on display at the Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, in Burlington . For more information, call (860) 675-8130.

Darien High School student Eri Hamajj's oil painting of a drake wood duck was awarded Best of Show in Connecticut's 2000 Junior Duck Stamp Program. Eri's painting has been entered in the federal competition with the winners from all 50 states.

Best of Show was awarded to Eri Hamajj, a 17-year-old student from Darien High School. Eri painted a beautiful oil on canvas drake wood duck entitled "One Morning Wood Duck." His entry has been forwarded to Washington, D.C., for the federal competition with the winners from all 50 states. CWA will present Eri with a framed Conservation Edition of the 1999 Connecticut Duck Stamp, "Canada Geese over Mystic Seaport," painted by Connecticut artist Keith Mueller.

The Wildlife Division extends its congratulations to all Junior Duck Stamp Program participants and the schools which support this activity, as well as to Best of Show winner Eri Hamajj and CWA for its continuing efforts in promoting wetland wildlife conservation throughout Connecticut.

The Wildlife Division will be offering various educational programs for children during the summer at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington. Program topics include insects, butterflies, beavers and summer sounds. See the Wildlife Calendar Reminders *section on page 18 for dates and times.*

Connecticut's Hunter Education Instructors Honored

Written by Peter Bogue, Assistant Director

Connecticut's Conservation Education/Firearms Safety (CE/FS) Program honored its volunteer instructors on March 5 at the 18th Annual Awards and Recognition Dinner held at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville. At the dinner, two instructors from each of the firearms, bowhunting and trapping programs were also recognized for their exceptional contributions during the past year. An award of merit was given to an additional two instructors for their outstanding efforts in teaching classes in all three categories of firearms, bowhunting and trapping. Instructors chosen for these top honors were evaluated on time devoted to CE/FS programs, including classes, workshops and promotional activities. Involvement in community service on related activities, which help to enhance the instructors' relationship with the general public, were considered as credits in the award nominations. The instructor awards are presented on a total cumulative point system. Points are earned by leading and assisting classes, attending training sessions, giving workshops, total hours contributed to programs and other CE/FS-related activities.

CE/FS Program coordinators each chose an instructor to recognize for their innovative contributions to the CE/FS Program. The "Special Recognition Award" will continue to be awarded on an annual basis.

Recognition for their contributions and support to Connecticut's CE/FS Program was also given to the Colchester Fish and Game Club and the Northwestern Connecticut Sportsmen Fish and Game Association. A "Partnership in Industry" award was presented to Knight Rifle, of Centerville, Iowa, and locally to Master Tool and Supply, Inc., of Plainville, Connecticut, for their continued support of hunter education.

P.FUSCO (2)

DEP Assistant Commissioner David Leff (left) and Jason Marshall, President of the Northwestern Connecticut Sportsmen Fish and Game Association, display the award presented to the Association. Also pictured are David Martin, past president of the Association, and Dave Kubas (far right), a CE/FS Program coordinator.

During 1999, 314 certified instructors donated 14,064 hours without compensation to conduct 187 courses for 4,329 students enrolled in basic firearms, bowhunting and trapping programs. The Wildlife Division is proud of the hundreds of instructors who donate their time and expertise to educating Connecticut's sportsmen to be safe and responsible hunters. Connecticut's program continues to be recognized as one of the best in the nation, thanks to the efforts of our outstanding volunteers.

1999 CE/FS Volunteer Instructor Award Recipients

Firearms:
Warren Speh, Francis Wasylink

Bowhunting:
Ronald Varney, Linda Provencher

Trapping:
George Finch, Jr., Robert Kukuck

Award of Merit:
Lawrence King, David Paulus

Special Recognition:
James Traynor, Thomas Renzuella

L to R, 1st row: Bob Kukuck, Ronald Varney, Linda Provencher, Frank Wasylink, Thomas Renzuella, James Traynor, Dave Kubas (a CE/FS Program coordinator). L to R, 2nd row: Bob Kalinowski (a CE/FS Program coordinator), George Finch, Jr., David Paulus, Warren Speh, Lawrence King.

Severe Winter Weather Hampers Midwinter Waterfowl Survey

P. FUSCO (2)

Written by Paul Merola, Waterfowl Program Biologist

Wildlife Division staff conducted the annual Midwinter Waterfowl Survey on January 24 and 28, 2000. The survey is part of an annual, nationwide waterfowl census coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In Connecticut, biologists conduct the survey from a low-flying plane and search the coast, major rivers and selected lakes. Results of the waterfowl tallies indicate the relative abundance of different species and provide an index to long-term population trends.

The survey is normally conducted during the first week of January. However, continuous storms in the Northeast and severe winds during that time period delayed the survey. Two-thirds of the survey was completed, three weeks late, during the last week of January. Because the survey was only partially completed, the results are not compatible with results from previous surveys. However, to compensate for this, the results from the previous three years were averaged and used for that portion of the survey that was not completed.

Severe cold weather and snow during January caused inland waters to freeze. Because of these conditions, it would be expected that waterfowl would move from inland waters to coastal areas, resulting in average to above average counts for some waterfowl species during the survey. However, this did not occur. Rather, the extremely severe weather may have caused waterfowl to leave Connecticut and move to more southern states.

Results for the 2000 survey indicated that the mallard count was slightly above average, while the Canada goose and mute swan counts were below last year's counts and the previous five-year average. Although the black duck count was slightly less than last year's, it was above the previous five-year average. The scaup count was well below last year's count and the previous five-year average. The scaup count in Connecticut can be quite variable. However, the number of scaup wintering from Massachusetts to Long Island has undergone a serious long term decline. The canvasback, goldeneye, bufflehead and merganser counts were similar to last year's.

Connecticut Midwinter Waterfowl Survey Results for Major Species*

Species	2000	1999	5-Year Average
Mallard	1,000	700	900
Black Duck	3,100	3,300	2,800
Scaup	1,500	10,800	5,600
Canvasback	1,500	1,500	1,400
Common Goldeneye	400	800	400
Bufflehead	100	300	400
Merganser	1,500	1,400	800
Canada Goose	2,600	5,800	4,200
Mute Swan	1,000	1,500	1,300

* Count rounded to the nearest hundred

Division Biologist Howard Kilpatrick Receives Award

Howard J. Kilpatrick, a supervising wildlife biologist for the Wildlife Division, was recently awarded the William T. Hesselton Memorial Award at the 56th Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference. The Hesselton Award was established in 1999 by the Northeast Wildlife Administrators Association in memory of Bill Hesselton, former regional coordinator of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Servicie's Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program, to recognize an individual in the 13-state Northeast Region who has furthered the ideals of the Federal Aid Program. Howard was selected primarily for the innovative research and management projects he has implemented on white-tailed deer in Connecticut over the past decade and the many publications he has authored regarding suburban/urban deer population management.

1999 Fall Turkey Hunters Harvest a Record Number of Birds

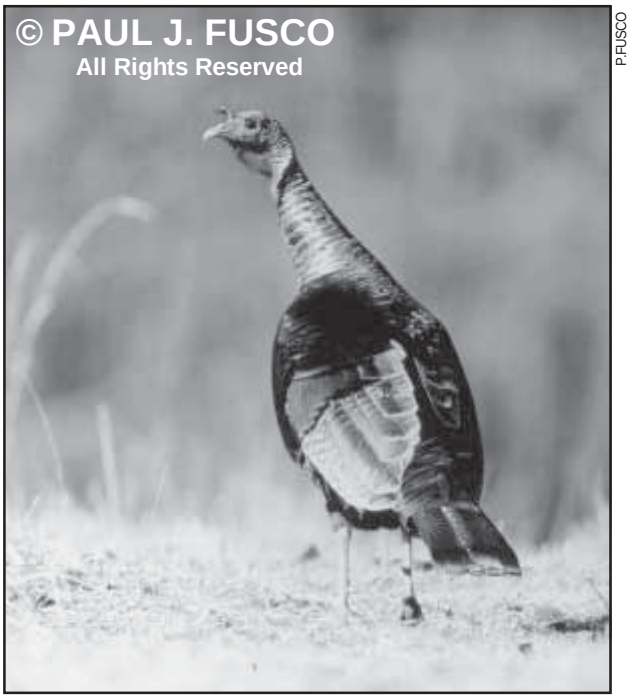
Written by Michael Gregonis, Deer/Turkey Program Biologist

Fall turkey hunters harvested a record number of birds during both the 1999 firearms and archery seasons. The 12-day fall firearms season resulted in a reported harvest of 290 birds, representing an increase of approximately 160 percent over the 1998 total of 112 birds. Overall, 2,304 fall firearms permits were issued and 214 hunters took at least one turkey, for a 9.2 percent success rate. The four towns with the highest harvest were Goshen (12), Lyme (12), Eastford (10) and Warren (10). In addition, turkey management zones 1 (48 birds) and 9 (41 birds) reported the highest harvest. Of the 290 birds taken, 134 were males and 156 were females; 53 percent were adults.

During the fall archery season, 2,187 permits were issued and 64 birds were harvested. This represents a 44 percent increase over the 36 harvested in 1998. At least one bird was harvested by 54 hunters. Therefore, the statewide success rate was 2.5 percent. Wild turkeys were taken from 41 towns, with Barkhamsted and Newtown reporting the highest harvest of four birds in each town. Of the 64 birds taken by archers, there were 36 males and 28 females; 61 percent were adults.

Two variables may have contributed to the increased turkey harvest during the 1999 fall seasons. First, the relatively warm and dry weather conditions during the 1999 spring nesting season enhanced poult survival; therefore, significantly increasing the number of birds in the population. Secondly, the season bag limit was increased from one to two birds during both the firearms and archery seasons. The increase in the bag limit accounted for 24 percent of the harvest increase. The population increases and regulation changes may have also increased hunter interest in the fall season. Permit issuance for the firearms and archery seasons increased by 23 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

Despite relatively low success rates during the fall turkey seasons, it appears that a dedicated group of hunters enjoys the challenge of pursuing wild turkeys during the fall in Connecticut.



1999 Deer Hunters Have a Successful Season

Results from the 1999 deer hunting seasons indicated that 11,342 deer were legally taken by licensed hunters. The harvest was 12 percent higher than the 1998 total of 10,144. Over the past five years, the annual deer harvest has ranged between 10,144 and 13,740. Fluctuations in harvest are due to variable weather conditions and food availability during the hunting season and regulatory changes in the deer hunting season structure. Despite a snow-free hunting season and warmer than normal temperatures in 1999, overall hunting conditions were better than in 1998.

The Wildlife Division has used different harvest strategies throughout the state in response to regional deer management needs. Due to relatively high numbers of deer in coastal and southwestern Connecticut, bow and firearms hunters have been allowed to take additional antlerless deer through the issuance of replacement antlerless tags. In 1999, a total of 352 replacement antlerless tags were issued to increase harvest rates on female deer.

In 1999, bowhunters were allowed to hunt during the shotgun/rifle season in Deer Management Zones 11 and 12 (see map on page 12) in coastal and southwestern Connecticut. These three additional weeks of bowhunting allowed private landowners to permit hunting in populated areas where the use of firearms hunting may be limited and deer populations continue to increase. One-third of the replacement tags used by bowhunters was during the extra three-week period.

In contrast, a decreasing harvest trend in Tolland County and concerns expressed by the public about reduced deer numbers in the area prompted the Wildlife Division to restrict the use of antlerless-only tags in Deer Management Zone 4. Beginning with the 1999 season, hunters were allowed to take only one instead of two female deer with a private land firearms permit in this zone. When the deer population responds and stabilizes, the restriction will be relaxed.

1999 Deer Season Results

# of Permits	60,576
Archery Harvest	2,457
Shotgun/Rifle Harvest	7022
Muzzleloader Harvest	742
Landowner Harvest	1,121
Success Rate	19%

The 1999 Deer Program Summary, with more detailed results from the 1999 season, will be available from the Wildlife Division in Fall 2000. Past Deer Program Summaries are available in the Publications Section of the DEP website at http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife.

CE/FS Program Staff Member Georgie McGlinchey Retires

Georgie McGlinchey, a Program Assistant at the Wildlife Division's Franklin Wildlife Management Area office, retired from state service in April. A member of the Franklin staff since 1994, Georgie worked with the Conservation Education/Firearms Safety (CE/FS) Program, assisting the volunteer instructors with course scheduling and processing student certificates.

A wildlife enthusiast since she was a child, Georgie enjoyed helping the public with questions about wildlife. Georgie's enthusiasm and sense of humor will be missed by all, especially by the Wildlife Division staff and the CE/FS volunteer instructors. We wish her well in her retirement.

P.FUSCO

Georgie McGlinchey (left) poses for a photograph at a CE/FS Instructor Recognition Dinner with her former counterparts in the CE/FS Program (l to r), Winnie Reid, Sandy Jacobson and Trish Cernik.

Wildlife Calendar Reminders

May	Rabies Awareness Month -- Is your pet vaccinated?
	Keep dogs off of Connecticut beaches to avoid disturbing nesting shorebirds.
	Herons and egrets are nesting on offshore islands in Long Island Sound. Refrain from visiting these areas to avoid disturbing nesting birds.
	Woodcock courtship displays at dawn and dusk.
May 3-23	Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Season (For details, see the 2000 Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide, available at town clerks' and DEP offices or on the DEP website: http://dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife)
June 1	Trapping and testing of mosquitoes for EEE and WNV begins.
June 3	BioBlitz 2000, sponsored by the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History at UConn, will be held at Hubbard Park in Meriden. For more information, contact the Museum at (860) 486-5856.
June 3-4	**Connecticut Trails Day 2000**. A wide variety of weekend-long events for all ages is planned across the state. There will be hikes of every description, across ridgetops and along river valleys; cycling and equestrian programs; trail maintenance events; and environmental fairs. Call the Connecticut Forest and Park Association (860-346-2372) to obtain a copy of the Trails Day 2000 brochure, which provides a complete listing of events.
June 10	**Turtles of Connecticut**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 9:00 a.m. Hank Gruner from the Science Center of Connecticut will lead a presentation about Connecticut turtles. See live turtles and be prepared to visit the beaver flowage to look for turtles. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
July 1	Federal Duck Stamps are available at post offices.
July 1	**Insects of Connecticut (children's program)**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 2:00 p.m. Catch insects in a local field and discover those found in the forest at Sessions Woods. Be sure to BYOB (bring your own bug) for a pre-program discussion. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
July 4	While viewing fireworks displays at Connecticut's coastal areas, respect fenced and posted shorebird nesting areas and offshore rookeries.
July 19	**Explore a Beaver Marsh (children's program)**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 9:30 a.m. What animals live in a beaver marsh? Learn about beavers and other wetland animals in this two-hour program. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
August 19	**Butterflies (children's program)**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 2:00 p.m. Discover butterflies as we explore various habitats at Sessions Woods. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.
Sept. 9	**Summer Sounds (children's program)**, at the Sessions Woods Conservation Education Center, in Burlington, starting at 9:30 a.m. Discover who makes all those buzzes, chirps and twills in late summer. Call (860) 675-8130 to preregister.

Just for Kids

Peregrine Falcon

The peregrine falcon can snatch its prey at speeds of up to 200 m.p.h.. Known as the "fastest animal on earth," these powerful fliers have long-pointed wings and a narrow tail. Their prey, other birds, are quickly killed by these skillful hunters.

P.FUSCO (2)

Peregrine falcons are spectacular birds. Adult peregrines have gray backs, pale-colored chests and spots on their lower body. They also have black markings on their face that look like sideburns.

Nesting in Connecticut Again!

This peregrine falcon chick was one of the first born in Connecticut in over 40 years.

City, Open Country and Coastal Birds

Peregrines nest on mountain tops and cliffs overlooking open country and coastlines. They even nest on tall buildings and bridges in cities. Connecticut peregrine falcons have nested on a building ledge in Hartford and a bridge in Bridgeport.

Poisonous DDT

Peregrine falcons were once in danger of becoming extinct. They disappeared from much of their range because of the pesticide DDT. DDT was used in the United States before it was discovered that it was bad for the environment. DDT caused health problems for many animals.

Peregrines are fast fliers. How do other Connecticut animals match up to these speedy falcons?

Peregrine Falcon	*200*	*m.p.h.*
Ruffed Grouse	*40*	*m.p.h.*
Coyote	*40*	*m.p.h.*
White-tailed Deer	*30*	*m.p.h.*
Darner Dragonfly	*30*	*m.p.h.*
Most Kids	*14*	*m.p.h.*

Connecticut Wildlife

The official bimonthly publication of the DEP Wildlife Division

Don't miss out . . . Get *Connecticut Wildlife* for yourself or for a friend! Mail this form, along with a check or money order for a minimum contribution (payable to *Gift to Wildlife*) to: Gift to Wildlife, P.O. Box 1550, Burlington, CT 06013-1550.

☐ *1 Year ($6.00)* ☐ *2 Years ($11.00)* ☐ *3 Years ($16.00)*

Help fund critical programs for the state's nonharvested and endangered species by contributing to the Gift to Wildlife *fund, which is supported solely by voluntary contributions. Please include a tax-deductible donation with your order for* Connecticut Wildlife. *Connecticut's Nonharvested Wildlife Program needs your help!*

My additional contribution for Connecticut's Nonharvested Wildlife:

☐ *$5.00* ☐ *$10.00* ☐ *$25.00* ☐ *Other $* _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ *State* _____

Zip _____ *Tel.* _____

☐ *New*
☐ *Renewal*
☐ *Gift*

Gift card to read: _____

Change of Address: Advance notice of an address change will assure all issues are delivered correctly.

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.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ *State* _____

Zip _____ *Tel.* _____

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.

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

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WINSTED, CT
PERMIT NO. 11

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER