



MassWildlife News

Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
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PLAY IT SAFE ON THE ICE

Due to the recent fluctuating freeze and thaw cycles, the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (DFW) urges ice anglers, skaters, and other outdoor enthusiasts to play it safe and check ice carefully before venturing onto ice-covered waters. A clear layer of 4-inch ice is a good, safe thickness for foot traffic. An [ice strength table](#), [ice safety tips for outdoor enthusiasts](#) and [a link to an ice safety video](#) can be found on the DFW website.

How can you tell if ice is safe? There are no guarantees -- always consider ice to be potentially dangerous. Assess ice safety by using an ice chisel to chop a hole in the ice to determine its thickness and condition. Make sure you continue to do this as you go further out on to the ice, because the thickness of the ice will not be uniform all over the pond or lake. Be aware that ice tends to be thinner on lakes and ponds where there are spring holes, inlets or outlets. Don't venture on to ice bound rivers or streams because the currents make ice thickness unpredictable. What if you fall through the ice? As with any emergency, don't panic! Briefly call for help. It doesn't take long for the cold water to start slowing your physical and mental functions, so you must act quickly. Air will remain trapped in your clothes for a short time, aiding your buoyancy. Kick your legs while grasping for firm ice. Try to pull your body up using ice pins or picks that should be hanging around your neck. Once your torso is on firm ice, roll towards thicker ice. This will better distribute your weight. Remember that ice you have previously walked on should be the safest. After you reach safe ice don't waste precious time, you need to warm up quickly to prevent hypothermia. Go to the nearest fishing shanty, warm car, or house. Don't drive home in wet clothes!

If a companion falls through the ice remember the phrase "Reach-Throw-Go." If you are unable to reach your friend, throw him or her a rope, jumper cables, tree branch, or other object. If this does not work, go for help before you also become a victim. Pet owners should keep pets on a leash. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue the pet, go for help. Well-meaning pet owners can too easily become victims themselves when trying to save their pets. Additional ice safety information is also available from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) at: www.mass.gov/eopss/docs/mema/mema-issues-ice-safety-precautions.pdf.

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YOUTH ARTISTS! ENTER THE JUNIOR DUCK STAMP CONTEST BEFORE MARCH 15

“There is still time to enter the Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp (JDS) contest,” advises MassWildlife’s Education Coordinator Pam Landry. “Any student, from kindergarten through grade 12, regardless of whether they attend public school, private school or are home-schooled, can submit original artwork for this fun and educational competition. Even if someone decides not to enter the art competition, the related information can be valuable in the classroom.” The entry deadline is March 15, 2013.

The JDS program links the study of wetlands and waterfowl conservation with a national waterfowl art project. Students in grades K-12 learn about the habitat requirements of various kinds of ducks and geese (waterfowl) and then express their knowledge of the beauty, diversity, and interdependence of these species artistically, by creating a drawing or painting and submitting it to the Massachusetts Junior Duck art contest. The art is judged in four age group categories in a statewide competition, and the entry judged Best of Show moves on to represent Massachusetts in the national JDS competition. Art teachers, science teachers, and parents who home-school and want JDS information packets and entry information can visit:

www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/education/jds/jds_materials.htm.

Landry noted there are opportunities for aspiring artists to see artwork from last year’s contest:

- Between February 1 and 15, 2013, young artists in the southeastern part of the state can visit the Buttonwood Park Zoo in New Bedford to view an exhibit of 2012 JDS art. Bring family and friends to see these terrific works of art by children of all ages!
- In early March, in the central part of the state, an exhibit of JDS art will be available to view at the Notre Dame Academy in Worcester.

For more information contact Pam Landry at (508) 389-6310, or pam.landry@state.ma.us.

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FRESHWATER SPORT FISHING AWARDS WINNERS

Freshwater anglers from Cape Cod to the Berkshires who reeled in the biggest freshwater fish from Massachusetts lakes, ponds, and streams will be honored by the state fish and wildlife officials at the New England Fishing and Outdoor Expo in Worcester on Saturday, February 9, 2013. Among the dozens of fish enthusiasts to be honored is a new state record holder, Shane Felch of Shrewsbury, who successfully landed a 46 pound, 5 ounce carp using a crossbow in Lake Quinsigamond in Shrewsbury. The Freshwater Sporting Fishing Awards 2012 Angler of the Year is a teenager, Jake Souza of Berkley. The Angler of the Year Award is given to the angler who weighs in the largest number of species that qualify under the Freshwater Sport Fishing Awards Program. Souza landed 11 different species in bodies of water in southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod. The 2012 adult and youth award winners are posted on line at: www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/fishing/awards/2012_sportfish_winners.htm

MassWildlife’s Freshwater Sport Fishing Awards program presents bronze pins to adult and youth anglers who catch fish of certain minimum weight requirements for 22 species, and gold pins and commemorative plaques to those who catch the largest fish in each category.

“The annual Freshwater Sport Fishing Awards Program highlights the terrific fishing opportunities the Commonwealth has to offer anglers of all ages,” said MassWildlife’s Richard Hartley, Awards Coordinator and Fisheries Biologist. “I want to thank everyone who participated in the 2012 fishing competition and encourage others to get involved this year by taking a friend or family member fishing!” For more details on how to submit an entry to the 2013 Freshwater Sport Fishing Awards contest, go to:

www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/fishing/awards/sportfish_awards_program.htm

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BROODSTOCK SALMON ON ICE

Hard water anglers across the state will be able to take advantage of a late January stocking of broodstock Atlantic Salmon. The Division received 350 retired broodstock salmon ranging in size from 3-11 pounds from the Nashua National Fish Hatchery in Nashua, New Hampshire. Due to the challenge of stocking fish through iced-over waters, only selected waters were stocked. Call your local MassWildlife District office or go to www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/fisheries/anadromous/broodstock_salmon_stocking.htm for a listing of the most recent broodstock salmon stocking information.

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UPDATED DEER SEASON RESULTS

Updated unofficial reports on the 2012 paraplegic, archery, shotgun, and primitive deer season results have been compiled. During the special three-day deer hunting season for paraplegic hunters, 4 deer were taken. For the archery deer season, an unofficial statewide total of 3,880 deer were checked at game check stations. The Western District office tallied 314 deer while Connecticut Valley District office reported 408. Central District stations checked 655 deer; Northeast District, 1,190; and Southeast District checked 1,313 deer. During the statewide shotgun season, licensed deer hunters checked in an unofficial total of 4,966 deer. Western District stations checked in 638; Connecticut Valley District, 731; Central District, 1,073; Northeast District, 930; and Southeast District, 1,594. In addition to the shotgun season total above, the DCR Quabbin Reservation reported 84 deer taken during their deer hunt. During the statewide primitive arms deer season, licensed deer hunters checked in an unofficial statewide total of 2,074 deer. Western district stations checked in 215; Connecticut Valley District, 281; Central District, 449; Northeast District, 605; and Southeast District, 524. The preliminary total harvest for all seasons was 10,920. All reported figures are preliminary and only summarize deer checked in at each check station (i.e., not all deer were checked in within the same district they were harvested). The final, official harvest numbers, summarized by Wildlife Management Zone, will be available later in 2013.

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MARCH TO CONSERVATION CONFERENCES

Registration is now open for several annual conservation conferences taking place in March. These meetings would be of interest to conservation commissioners, educators, youth group leaders, bird enthusiasts, and other conservationists. MassWildlife staff will be participating at most of these meetings. Registration is now open for these meetings.

March 2 - Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions Conference, Worcester - The 2013 MACC Annual Environmental Conference will be held at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. Several DFW staff will be making presentations at this meeting. Registration information is at http://maccweb.org/edu_aec.html or call MACC at (617) 489-3930.

March 6 - Massachusetts Environmental Education Conference, Worcester - The 2013 Massachusetts Environmental Education Society (MEES) will be holding its annual conference at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. This year's theme is "Strengthening Communities; Branching Out, Reaching In." This conference is useful for educators in both formal and non-formal educational settings. More details at www.massmees.org.

March 16 - MassAudubon Birders Meeting, Waltham - The 20th Annual Birders Meeting will be held at Bentley University, Waltham. Novice and experienced bird enthusiasts will enjoy the varied offerings at this conference. Registration information is at: www.massaudubon.org or call (781) 259-2136.

March 23 - Massachusetts Land Trust Conference, Worcester - The 23rd Annual Mass Land Conservation Conference will take place at the Worcester Technical High School. DFW staff will participate in roundtable session

titled "Deer Populations on Land Trust Lands". Registration is limited. Details on the conference and registration can be found at www.massconservation.org.

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UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

February 14 -- Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Meeting, West Boylston. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, February 14, at the DFW Field HQ Office at 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston from 1:30- 4:30 P.M.

February 21 -- Fisheries and Wildlife Board Meeting, West Boylston -- The February meeting of the Fisheries & Wildlife Board will be held on Thursday, February 21, 2013 at 10:30 AM at the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife Field Headquarters, 100 Hartwell St, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA.

Both meetings are open to the public and the meeting location is handicapped accessible. PLEASE NOTE NEW FHQ ADDRESS. For directions go to www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/facilities/westboro.htm or call the Field HQ at (508) 389-6300.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS—Visit www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/calendar/calendar.htm for updated listings.

February 1-15 -- Jr. Duck Stamp Traveling Exhibit; Connecting Children with Nature Through Science and Art! New Bedford -- Interested in submitting artwork to the 2013 Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp Contest? Take inspiration from traveling exhibits featuring top youth entries from the 2012 [Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp](#) (JDS) Contest at the [Buttonwood Park Zoo](#). For directions and more information, contact Gail Janeczek at (508) 991-6178.

February 1 -- The Amazing Antioxidant, Apogamous, and Amorous Genus Aronia, Cambridge-- At the New England Botanical Club's February meeting, State Botanist Bryan Connolly will be sharing information on his dissertation about this group of deciduous shrubs (chokecherries). This meeting (open and free to the public) is held at Harvard University in Haller Lecture Hall, Room 102 in the Geological Museum on 24 Oxford Street. [More information.](#)

February 2-3 -- 34th Southeastern Massachusetts Sportsman's Show, East Bridgewater -- Visit the MassWildlife exhibit at this show, share your latest fishing or hunting story and buy your license while enjoying the show located on the grounds of the [Standish Sportsman's Association](#) on Burr Lane in East Bridgewater. More information about the show is listed on the Standish Association's website!

February 2 -- Snows Pond Ice Fishing Festival, Charlton -- Learn how to fish the "hard water". The Charlton Conservation Commission and MassWildlife's [Angler Education Program](#) will be co-hosting this family friendly event from 10 AM - 2PM. Dress for the weather--warm boots a must! Unsafe ice date will be Saturday February 16. For more information, contact Todd Girard at (508) 248-2257 or email him at todd.girard@townofcharlton.net.

February 8 - 10 -- MassWildlife at the New England Fishing and Outdoor Expo, Worcester -- Visit the MassWildlife exhibit at this show, share your latest fishing or hunting story and buy your license while enjoying the show. This year, a new producer is mounting this show at the Worcester DCR Centre, replacing the Eastern Fishing and Outdoor Expo. [More show information.](#)

February 12 -- Is There Life After Salmon? Holyoke -- A presentation about the Division's Anadromous Fish Program will be given by Dr. Caleb Slater at the Pioneer Valley Trout Unlimited meeting at the Elks Lodge on 250

Whitney Avenue in Holyoke. The meeting (open to the public) starts at 7PM and is preceded by a fly tying demonstration. For more information contact Bill Donnelly at bdonn90123@aol.com.

February 21-24 -- MassWildlife at the Springfield Sportsmens Show, West Springfield -- Visit the MassWildlife exhibit at this show, share your latest fishing or hunting story and buy your license while enjoying the show located on the grounds of the Big E. [More Show information](#).

February 23 -- Flying WILD Workshop for Educators, Stoneham -- If you work with middle school audiences and are interested in helping students understand the importance of migratory birds and their conservation through classroom activities and school bird festivals then attending this workshop at the [Middlesex Fells Reservation](#) would be a feather in your cap. Learn about teacher led classroom activities, volunteer & student led festival activities, and service learning projects. The material you glean will help students lead hands-on experiments, create educational exhibits, stage performances, and accomplish bird conservation projects. This workshop will be a fun filled, interactive, hands-on experience in conducting activities and implementing the Flying WILD (www.flyingwild.org) program while also learning how to become a City Partner. Registration is required--[Registration materials](#). For more information, contact Pam Landry at pam.landry@state.ma.us or call her at (508) 389-6310.

February 26, 28, March 5 & 7--Basic Fly Tying Course, Charlton -- Learn how to tie flies for flyfishing in the spring. The Charlton Conservation Commission and MassWildlife's [Angler Education Program](#) will be co-hosting this workshop from 7PM - 9PM. Space is very limited and pre-registration is required. To register and for more information, contact Todd Girard at (508) 248-2257 or email him at todd.girard@townofcharlton.net.