



# **MassWildlife News**

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Division of Fisheries and Wildlife*  
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## ***OUTDOOR USERS: THANK A LANDOWNER TODAY***

With the New Year just beginning and our fishing, hunting, or wildlife related adventures becoming special memories, it's time to remember the private landowners who, through their generosity, helped make these experiences possible. "Access to fishing, hunting, hiking, or watching wildlife is a privilege provided by landowners," says Marion Larson, MassWildlife Information and Education Chief. "Let them know you appreciate it. If you have been recreating on local land trust or other private non-profit conservation lands, be sure to include those groups on your thank-you list." Larson offers the following suggestions for hunters, anglers, and other outdoor users when thanking private property owners who allow access for outdoor recreation:

- Be thoughtful and personal in expressing your appreciation, treating the landowner as you would like to be treated. If you are mentoring a new or young hunter, angler, birder or naturalist, include him or her in the process of thanking the landowner.
- Visit the landowner at the end of the season to express your appreciation in person; if possible, provide him or her with some of your fish and game harvest, share images, or a list of the wildlife you discovered on their property.
- Send a personal note or card thanking him or her for the opportunity to use their land. Consider giving a small gift such as a certificate to a local restaurant, a gift basket, or a subscription to Massachusetts Wildlife magazine. In the case of a non-profit landowner, make a donation or join their organization.
- Offer to assist with tasks around the property that would be helpful, or identify, clean up, and properly dispose of any illegal dumping that has occurred.
- Assist the landowner in protecting the property by documenting and reporting suspicious or illegal activities to the [Environmental Police](#) at (800) 632-8075.

"Hunting, fishing, birding, and other wildlife-related activities are traditions that will continue only if everyone follows the basic principles of being a responsible outdoor recreationist," Larson said. "Take a few moments to reflect on our outdoor traditions, including the importance of access to private lands in maintaining these traditions."

What can you in 2013 to ensure that these recreational opportunities will continue to be available to you and future generations of outdoor users?"

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### ***REPORT WATERFOWL FEEDING SITES & WATERFOWL SIGHTINGS***

The Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) is asking for help from sportsmen, birders, and other interested conservationists across the state to report sites where wild ducks and geese (waterfowl) are being fed or to report sightings of ducks and geese they see feeding at artificial waterfowl feeding sites from January 6 – January 26, 2013. Information needed for these reports include town, specific location (address, map, or GPS coordinates), date, number, and the kinds of wild ducks and/or geese observed. Currently, MassWildlife is trying to determine if there is a correlation between artificial feeding sites and waterfowl population size. Feeding site locations or waterfowl feeding reports should be reported to H Heusmann, MassWildlife Waterfowl Project Leader by e-mail at: [h.heusmann@state.ma.us](mailto:h.heusmann@state.ma.us); phone (508) 389-6321; Fax (508) 389-7890; or postal mail at DFW Park Mallard Survey, 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583.

Every five years, since 1973, MassWildlife has conducted a winter waterfowl survey of sites where people feed wild ducks and geese. Designed primarily as a count of wintering mallards, the survey includes information on all waterfowl seen, including Canada geese. The statewide survey covers public and private property in city, suburban, and rural areas. Sites may be located on fresh water, salt water, and estuaries. Other feeding sites include parks, beaches, and backyard bird feeding stations. Because feeding locations change between each 5-year cycle, the most current information on artificial waterfowl feeding locations is valuable.

While MassWildlife discourages feeding of wildlife, there is no state law or regulation prohibiting this activity and the feeding of ducks on some sites has been going on for decades. Some municipalities do restrict or prohibit feeding. Mallards are by far the most common duck seen at feeding sites, but MassWildlife is also interested in obtaining information about other ducks and geese seen feeding at these sites: black ducks are commonly observed along with wood ducks, pintails, gadwalls, wigeons, and hooded mergansers. Canada geese are well known visitors to feeding sites and their presence is often the impetus for towns and cities to pass feeding prohibition bylaws. Results from this year's survey compared to past surveys will be available later in the winter.

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### ***CONNECT YOUTH TO NATURE THROUGH DUCK STAMP ART***

The Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp (JDS) Program is looking for youth artists in to submit a duck stamp art entry in a statewide competition. Art and science may seem to be an unlikely combination, but when blended in the context of the JDS Program, art makes science come alive. This dynamic 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. Registration information is now available for the 2013 JDS Program; *Connecting Children With Nature Through Science and Art* at [www.fws.gov/juniorduck](http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck). Artwork submissions are due by March 15, 2013. NOTE: The address for submitting entries has changed this year: JDS Art Entry, DFW, 100 Hartwell Street Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583.

In celebration of 20 years of success in '*Connecting Children to Nature Through Science and Art*' the federal JDS Program recently redesigned its arts and science curriculum to spark youth interest in habitat conservation and careers in natural resources through science, art, math and technology. Targeted for students in grades 5-8, with suggested adaptations for younger and older audiences, the curriculum encourages students to engage with their natural world and develop a deeper appreciation of natural resources. "A great way to appreciate waterfowl is to spend time outdoors observing and photographing them at your local 'duck pond'," said Pam Landry, MassWildlife

Education Coordinator. The guides meet a number of national educational standards for students in grades K-12. The curriculum may be downloaded at [www.fws.gov/juniorduck/curriculum.html](http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck/curriculum.html).

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Junior Duck Stamp is a pictorial stamp produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to recognize the conservation efforts of students and support environmental and conservation education programs. The first place national winner of the art contest graces that year's JDS and is sold by the U.S. Postal Service ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)) and Amplex Corporation ([www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com)) for \$5. All proceeds are invested in the program to fund environmental education efforts; awards for the students, teachers and schools that participate in the program; and to market the JDS program.

In Massachusetts, the JDS is coordinated by the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (MassWildlife) with support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Massachusetts Chapter of Ducks Unlimited, and the Massachusetts Wildlife Federation. For more information on the JDS go to [www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/education/jds/jds\\_home.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/education/jds/jds_home.htm). For inquiries relating to hosting the Junior Duck Stamp Awards ceremony in April, 2013 or an artwork exhibit in 2013, contact Education Coordinator Pam Landry at (508) 389-6310 or [Pam.Landry@state.ma.us](mailto:Pam.Landry@state.ma.us).

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### ***RESOLVE TO REPORT RARE SPECIES WITH A NEW MOBILE APP***

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) is pleased to announce that a new Android mobile application is now available for citizen scientists, sportsmen, birders, naturalists and other actively involved conservationists to report observations of rare species and vernal pools. The new app is part of the electronic Vernal Pool and Rare Species Information System (VPRS) developed and launched this past November by MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program. The app allows registered VPRS users to capture basic information (species, location, photographs) while out in the field. The captured information is used to create an observation report which can then be completed at a home computer and submitted to MassWildlife through the VPRS system. More information on the app and a tutorial can be found at [www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/species\\_info/vprs\\_home.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/species_info/vprs_home.htm). The VPRS was funded by an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Wetland Program Development Grant with some additional funds provided by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) in support of the Linking Landscapes Program.

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### ***MASSWILDLIFE AT HOME SHOWS AND SPORTSMEN'S SHOWS***

In January and February, consider visiting with Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) staff at home shows and sportsmen's shows across the state. Learn about the common wildlife in your neighborhood at the home and garden shows and share your latest fish story or hunting adventure or buy your license at the sportsmen's shows. The Boston Home Show has moved to a new location at the Cruiseport Center in Boston and kicks off the show season January 26-27, 2013 ([www.thebostonhomeshow.com](http://www.thebostonhomeshow.com)). This year, sportsmen should note that a new producer is mounting the New England Fishing and Outdoor Expo, still at the DCU Center in Worcester, to replace the old Eastern Fishing and Outdoor Expo. Check out the new and improved show, visit with staff, and pick up your 2013 hunting and fishing license, Friday, February 8, through Sunday, February 10, 2013 (<http://www.newenglandfishingexpo.com/>). In the last weekend of February, MassWildlife will be at the Springfield Sportsmen's Show which runs Thursday, February 21, through Sunday February, 24, 2013 ([www.osegsportsmens.com](http://www.osegsportsmens.com)). Other shows may be added as the schedule is finalized. Watch for listings in the agency's web Calendar of Events and next month's newsletter for additional shows.

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## ***2012 PRELIMINARY DEER SEASON RESULTS***

Preliminary reports on the 2012 paraplegic, archery, and shotgun deer season results have been compiled though some game check stations have yet to report their tallies. 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 3,879 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, 1190; and Southeast District checked 1,312 deer. During the statewide shotgun season, licensed deer hunters checked in an unofficial statewide total of 4,945 deer. The breakdown of the total is: Western District, 638; Connecticut Valley District, 731; Central District, 1,074; Northeast District, 911; and Southeast District, 1,591. In addition to the shotgun season total above, the DCR Quabbin Reservation reported 84 deer taken during their deer hunt. Preliminary muzzleloader season figures will be reported later this winter. All reported figures are preliminary; the final, official harvest numbers will not be available until later in 2013.

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## ***PUBLIC COMMENT NEEDED FOR DCR WATERSHED FOREST MANAGEMENT REPORT***

The Department of Conservation and Recreation is seeking public comment on a recently released report describing findings and recommendations made by their Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) regarding DCR watershed forestry. Findings from this report Review of the Massachusetts DWSP Watershed Forestry Program were presented at joint public meeting of the Quabbin and Ware River Watershed Advisory Committees on December 10, 2012 in Barre. Information about STAC and the report is posted at: <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply/watershed/stac.htm>. Oral public comments were accepted at the December meeting and written comments will be accepted through January 18, 2013. Public comments should be directed by email to [dcr.updates@state.ma.us](mailto:dcr.updates@state.ma.us) or by postal mail to: DCR, Office of Public Outreach, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 900, Boston MA, 02114.

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## ***UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS***

**January 10 -- Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Meeting, West Boylston.** The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, January 10, at the DFW Field HQ Office at 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston from 1:30- 4:30 P.M.

**January 16 -- Fisheries and Wildlife Board Meeting, West Boylston --** The Fisheries and Wildlife Board will meet on Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 1:00 PM at the DFW Field Headquarters, 100 Hartwell St, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA.

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

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS—**Visit [www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/calendar/calendar.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/calendar/calendar.htm) for updated listings.

**January 8 -- Wetland Wildlife Habitat Restoration for Landowners in the Housatonic Watershed, Great Barrington** – Private landowners, land trusts, property managers, and other interested conservationists are invited to attend a presentation on Wetland Wildlife Habitat Restoration in the Housatonic River Watershed. Biologists from MassWildlife and District Conservationists from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service will be presenting information about the Working Lands for Wildlife Initiative at the Mason Library, 231 Main Street in Great Barrington. Topics will include habitat restoration for rare and declining species and funding assistance for

private landowners available for habitat management activities. Come learn how you may be able to contribute to the effort. Contact Marianne Piché at (508) 389-6313 or email her at, [marianne.piche@state.ma.us](mailto:marianne.piche@state.ma.us) for more details.

**January 8 - Feb. 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.

**January 15 & 16 -- MassWildlife at the Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Conference, Sturbridge** -- This is the 100th Anniversary for the [MTWFA](#). Tom Wessels, author of the book Reading a Forested Landscape will be the keynote speaker. MassWildlife foresters will be staffing the agency display themed "Habitat Management; When Nature Can No Longer Take Its Course." The conference will be held at the Sturbridge Host Hotel. Registration information can be found at <http://masstreewardens.org/Conference.html>.

**January 22 -- Taking on Invasives, Battles Won and Lost and Their Lessons, Lincoln** -- As part of the Walden Woods Project Stewardship Lecture Series, MassWildlife Restoration Ecologist Tim Simmons will talk about how invasives threaten habitat, the history of invasives, how invasive management projects are selected and explore success and failures and the lessons learned from them. The program is free and will be held at the Thoreau Institute, 44 Baker Farm Rd. Doors open at 7PM for a wine and cheese reception and the presentation begins promptly at 7:30PM. Seating is limited--reserve a seat by calling (781)259-4707.

**January 26 -- Fisheries Management in MA; 100 Years at Lake Wickaboag, Worcester** -- MassWildlife Fisheries Biologist Richard Hartley will be presenting a talk on fisheries management at the winter meeting of the Congress on Lakes and Ponds (COLAP) at the Worcester State University Student Center. A draft agenda for this meeting is posted at: <http://www.lapa-west.org/index.html>. For registration information, contact Carol Hildreth at [hildrethcr4@gmail.com](mailto:hildrethcr4@gmail.com).

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