



MASSWILDLIFE

Massachusetts Division  
of Fisheries & Wildlife  
Hunter Education  
Program Newsletter

Inside this Issue:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Retirement                 | 1 |
| 2025 MJCC                  | 1 |
| New Outdoor Edu Specialist | 2 |
| Benefits of Lesson Plans   | 2 |
| Welcome New Instructors    | 3 |
| MassWildlife Events        | 4 |



## MASSACHUSETTS HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

# IN THE KNOW

Volume XXIII, Issue II

June 2025

## THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING (PART 2)

Hello Volunteers,

As we draw closer to the end of the fiscal year, I am completing my time with MassWildlife. After 37 years, 6 different positions and a myriad of wonderful experiences, I am retiring. The majority of those years has been working here in Hunter Education with you. It has been an incredible journey filled with wonderful partners and memorable moments and as I retire I want to express my gratitude for your dedication and for the support I received. Thank you for the shared experiences and the collaboration.

As the agency looks for my replacement, you will be in the very capable hands of

Todd Olanyk who will be the acting program administrator. Todd started as a Basic Hunter Ed volunteer instructor and Todd's first job with the agency was in the Hunter Ed program. He understands the seasonality of the program and its demands. Please welcome him in this interim role.

Other changes include two new employees who are filling vacancies including Jack Bonafini who has taken over the logistics for your courses (see page 2) and a new office specialist who will be starting this summer. I am confident that together, all of you will achieve great things.

I wish you success for the future. Farewell and Best wishes to you all!



## INSTRUCTORS NEEDED FOR MJCC

The MA Junior Conservation Camp (MJCC) offers a hands-on curriculum focused on outdoor skills, conservation, and ethics. It is a two-week overnight camp for girls and boys aged 13–17. It will be held at the Horace Moses Scout Reservation in Russell from August 3-15, 2025.

The MA Hunter Education Program offers Basic Hunter Education at the MJCC. The course is integrated into the camp curriculum. The dates for the 2025 Basic Hunter Ed course are Monday August 4<sup>th</sup> through Friday August 8<sup>th</sup>.

We will have several small groups of students participating in classes each day. To facilitate this schedule, we will have two classrooms set up on Monday August 4 & Tuesday August 5; one classroom on Wednesday August 6 and Thursday August 7; and we will use the cafeteria Friday night August 8<sup>th</sup> to administer the final exam. We will need 4-8 instructors per day. Please consider teaching with us at the MJCC this year! To sign up or for more information contact Jeff Osgood at 857-278-6305 or by email at [Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov)



# IN THE KNOW

## MHEP WELCOMES NEW OUTDOOR ED SPECIALIST



My name is Jack Bonafini, and I have been hired as the Outdoor Education Specialist. I have been with MassWildlife for just over 9 years as a Wildlife Technician in our Central District Office. I am excited to bring my experience and knowledge to the Outreach and Education department as well as connect with our hard-working volunteers. Additional to my Wildlife Technician duties in Central District, I became a Hunter Education Instructor, assisted with teaching in our Learn to Hunt Program and constructed our temporary archery ranges that were deployed in a few locations last year. In my new role, I will be organizing and delivering course materials and equipment for Hunter Education courses, coordinating with partners on the club pheasant and youth hunt programs, teaching hunter ed and R3 courses, and providing logistical support for all outdoor education programs. I am a lifelong hunter and angler and spend as much of my free time as I can on the water or in the woods. I look forward to meeting our Hunter Education teams as we begin to prepare for our courses in the upcoming months. Please feel free to reach out to me any time by email [jack.bonafini@mass.gov](mailto:jack.bonafini@mass.gov), or my office phone at 508-389-7821.

## THE BENEFITS OF USING LESSON PLANS

Whether you are a new instructor or a polished veteran, there are multiple benefits to using lesson plans. Chiefly, lesson plans provide structure for the lesson – Each element in the lesson is planned and sequenced, creating a smooth flow that enhances student understanding and engagement.

Lesson Plans serve as your guide during instruction. You should refer to the plan throughout the lesson to keep track of your teaching progress and ensure that you are covering all necessary material. Basic hunter education is a standardized course. That means the lessons are designed around national performance standards so that earned certificates of completion are reciprocal nationwide. Following a lesson plan as written ensures that the students get the skills and knowledge they need to pass the final exam. Following the lesson plan keeps instructors on track and minimizes “storytelling.” Lastly, following the lesson plan gives our students across the state a consistent learning experience and prepares them for success in the field!

**Instructor Teaching Tip:** Prior to teaching a lesson, read the entire lesson plan and highlight the important content. We suggest that you highlight lesson objec-

tives, key questions, and pay attention to the sequence of the topics. This will help you stay on track while teaching the lesson and will ensure that the students receive the information needed to meet the goal of the lesson. Then during the morning of a course, take fifteen minutes to review this highlighted content along with the specific information in the student manual. If you do this each time before you teach, your instruction will continue to improve, and you will feel more confident that you are teaching the lesson effectively.

You can find all the lesson plans and other materials on the Instructor Resources webpage at [www.mass.gov/hunteredteam](http://www.mass.gov/hunteredteam) and if you have questions about any of these resources, please contact me.

I can be reached by email: [Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov), or by phone at 857-278-6305.





## WELCOME NEW PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS



*New volunteers were joined by the teaching team from Methuen/Lawrence. Pictured L-R: Team Leader Chuck Chory, Team Leader Dale Shultz, Mike McCauley, Clint Phillips, Garrett Fortin, Mike Mears, Dave Pinard and Stas Wuest*

Program Staff conducted another **New Volunteer Instructor Introductory Workshop on May 18th** at the MassWildlife Field Headquarters in Westborough, and we took the opportunity to include existing volunteers and Team Leaders who were rebuilding or restabing their teams so training could be experienced as a group.

Participants learn about program information and policies, curriculum requirements and how to use the instructor manual which includes a review of the lesson plan format. During these workshops we cover all aspects of the program to ensure every new instructor will have the knowledge and skills to be able to participate at a Basic Hunter Education Course straightaway.

Four new instructors joined our program

- **Garrett Fortin from Wilbraham**
- **Michael McCauley from Tyringham**
- **Clinton Phillips from Shelburne**
- **Stanislaus Wuest from Beverly**

This training fully prepares the new volunteer instructors to join an existing team and to immediately help teach a course – no “apprenticeship” time is necessary.

We ask our Team Leaders to invite new instructors living in your area to join the teaching team. We will forward an updated Instructor Directory soon but, in the meantime, you can obtain their contact information by contacting Jeff Osgood at [Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Osgood@mass.gov).

We have spent the recent months training new volunteers, building new teams and updating existing teams. Please continue to invite club members and course participants to join our ranks and send all interested people to us directly so we may expedite the application process. We hope to offer another 3-5 New volunteer Instructor workshops in the coming year.

We also conducted a **Bowhunter Ed workshop on May 31st** for existing instructors who wish to teach **Bowhunter Education**. There are two prerequisites to teach this course. Like all of our disciplines, prospective instructors should successfully graduate from the course, and all should be trained to teach the course. While we relaxed these conditions during the pandemic, we are ready to get back on track to ensure all are well prepared to offer these courses.

The event on May 31<sup>st</sup> covered both conditions. In addition to participating as students, attendees received direction about the course, copies of the course lesson binder, and curriculum requirements. At the end of the day, 15 participants completed the training to become New Bowhunter Education instructors.



*Fifteen volunteers attended the Bowhunter Ed Workshop and are ready to teach courses*

## IN THE KNOW

### MASSWILDLIFE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### JUNE 2025

**June 7–8: Free Freshwater Fishing Weekend, Statewide** – It's the perfect time to try fishing! No license is required to fish any public lake, pond, reservoir, stream, or river in Massachusetts from 12 a.m. Saturday, June 7 until 11:59 p.m. Sunday, June 8. [Click here to learn more.](#)

**June 7: Spring Migratory Bird Walk, Cheshire** – With open shrublands, grasslands, forests, and wetlands, Stafford Hill WMA is a great place to see a diversity of migratory birds. Join MassWildlife experts for a 1-mile guided walk to learn about birds and the habitats they need for courtship, nesting, and raising their young. The walk will take place from 8 – 10 a.m. (weather permitting). Birders of all experience levels are welcome and **registration is required**; [click here to register](#). Email [meghan.crawford@mass.gov](mailto:meghan.crawford@mass.gov) for more information.

**June 7: Evening Whip-poor-will Walk, Hardwick** – Thanks to over a decade of habitat restoration, Muddy Brook WMA is home to one of the largest inland congregations of whip-poor-will in the state. Join experts from MassWildlife and East Quabbin Land Trust from 7 – 9 p.m. to experience the iconic whip-poor-will song on this 1.5-mile moonlit walk (weather permitting). Birders of all experience levels are welcome and **registration is required**; [click here to register](#). Email [meghan.crawford@mass.gov](mailto:meghan.crawford@mass.gov) for more information.

**June 7: Great Falls Discovery Center Family Fishing Festival, Turners Falls** – Join the fun at this free, non-competitive, family friendly, learn to fish event at Great Falls Discovery Center ([get directions](#)) from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Bring your fishing equipment or borrow ours. Limited equipment and bait will be available. This event is open to the public; no pre-registration is required.

Contact Jim Lagacy at [jim.lagacy@mass.gov](mailto:jim.lagacy@mass.gov) for more information. This event is being held in cooperation with MassWildlife's Angler Education Program and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

**June 7: "Our Waters" Festival, Athol** – Join the fun at this free, family friendly, learn to fish clinic as part of the **Our Waters Festival** at Silver Lake Park ([get directions](#)) from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Bring your fishing equipment or borrow ours; limited equipment and bait will be provided. Open to the public; no pre-registration is required.

**June 10: Family Fishing Clinic, Sudbury** – Join the fun at this family friendly, learn to fish clinic at the USFWS Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge in Sudbury ([get directions](#)) from 5 – 7 p.m. All equipment and bait will be provided. Open to the public, **pre-registration is required**; [click here to register](#) or email Jim Lagacy at [Jim.Lagacy@mass.gov](mailto:Jim.Lagacy@mass.gov) for more information. This event is being held in cooperation with MassWildlife's Angler Education Program and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**June 11: Family Fishing Clinic, Franklin** – Join the fun at this family friendly, learn to fish clinic at Beaver Pond in Franklin (Chilson Beach; [get directions](#)) from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Bring your fishing equipment or borrow ours; limited equipment and bait will be provided. Open to the public, **pre-registration is required**; [click here to register](#). This event is being held in cooperation with MassWildlife's Angler Education Program and the Hudson Recreation Department.

**June 14: Birds, Bees, and Wildflowers Walk, East Falmouth** – Get fired up and ready to grow! Join MassWildlife for a 1.5-mile guided walk through the Frances Crane WMA and learn about the many fire-adapted birds, native pollinators, wildlife, and wildflowers that make their home in this amazing grassland. The walk will take place from 9 – 11 a.m. (weather permitting). Birders of all experience levels are welcome and **registration is required**; [click here to register](#).



The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program . . .  
*Partnering to fund conservation and connect people with nature.*

MASSWILDLIFE

1 Rabbit Hill Road | Westborough, MA 01581 | [mass.gov/masswildlife](http://mass.gov/masswildlife)