

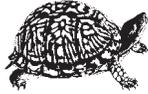


Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Monthly Report

www.mefishwildlife.com

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January, 2016

MAINE WILDLIFE PARK



Maine Wildlife Park staff had a hard time finding 'Pie' in her first snowstorm last week!



Sgt David Craven retired on November 30 after 29 years of dedicated service to the people of the State of Maine. Dave spent the first 11 years of his career as a district warden, patrolling coastal Washington County. In 1998 he was promoted to Sergeant where he served diligently for 18 additional years in the Downeast Region. Dave's wide range of experience as a fisherman, hunter, houndsman, and trapper quickly earned him respect from the public he served and the wardens who served alongside him. In 2003, he was awarded the MWS Supervisor of the Year Award and in 2014 he received an Exemplary Service Award for his excellent 4 years of work as Chairman of the Commissioner's Board for the Licensing of Guides. He was a liaison to the MTA and has left his brand on numerous trapping policies, laws and rules. Dave is likely most remembered for the ease of which he embodied the MWS core values of Honor, Loyalty, Compassion and Trust. No doubt we will see him on the trail. Congratulations, Dave!



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Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Swan Island

Maine Wildlife Park

FISHERIES & HATCHERIES DIVISION

Restoring Quality Brook Trout Fisheries to the Sebago Lake Region - *Written by Francis Brautigam, Fisheries Biologist*

Our agency is sometimes criticized for “not doing enough” to combat the alarming proliferation of illegal fish introductions that threaten Maine’s unique native fisheries, but in reality restoration using the most effective method (chemical reclamation) offers promise in very few situations. This is because the process to remove invasive fish is very complex and time consuming, considering logistical, environmental, and social concerns, as well as funding availability, the use of statewide staff, and landowner support. Only when all these components align can invasive fish be eradicated through the application of an organic chemical called rotenone.

The Sebago Chapter of Trout Unlimited sought to address two potential impediments in the eradication of invasive fish and restoration of brook trout fisheries in the Sebago Lake Region; funding and “boots on the ground” volunteer support. This effort developed into a partnership that came to be known as the “5 in 5” campaign, creating an expectation that the Department would strive to restore five ponds in five years. With the treatment of Round Pond (Albany) this past fall we completed our fifth project under “5 in 5”. What began as a project starter developed into a partnership that benefited the Department, TU, and Maine’s angling community, but before I get to the “warm and fuzzy” stuff let me offer some insight regarding the challenges of our most recent reclamation on Round Pond.

Several small ponds nestled in the foothills of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) support native brook trout fisheries that have been managed by the Department since the 1950s. Unfortunately, other species of competing fish not native to these waters have been introduced, compromising the integrity of the brook trout fisheries and altering the ecology of these small ponds. Unlike the vast majority of other waters in the state that have suffered the same fate, sometimes referred to as biological pollution, a rather unique alignment of priorities and collaboration between state, federal, and private entities have embraced a concerted effort to restore three ponds (Round Pond, Broken Bridge, and Crocker) in the WMNF over the last two years. The success of this collaborative effort is partially rooted in a shared vision and commitment to restore and conserve native flora and fauna.



September 2015 netting of Little Concord Pond reclaimed in 2011



One of over 50 beaver dams temporarily breached at Round Pond.

Round Pond was without question one of the most complex reclamation treatments undertaken by the Department in recent history. Restoring Round Pond necessitated the eradication of hardy brown bullhead and golden shiners from the entire watershed. A long history of beaver and beaver dam construction in the watershed necessitated temporary breaching of more than 50 beaver dams over several years (see photo 1). An expansive drainage area required treatment, including a long inlet and outlet with flowages and numerous boggy inlets. Logistics were further complicated by very limited access for equipment and personnel. The unusually hot air temperatures experienced this fall created atypical safety concerns for applicators working in rough terrain while wearing required personal protection equipment including rubber gloves, full face masks and non-breathable pants/coats.

Available fisheries staff from around the state were... [to read more, click here.](#)

RESEARCH & ASSESSMENT SECTION

The Wood Turtle: A humble symbol of the North Maine Woods - *Written by Derek Yorks and Phillip deMaynadier, Wildlife Biologists*

When you think of quintessential Maine woods wildlife, what likely springs to mind are iconic images of moose, loons, bear, eagles, and brook trout. But what about turtles? The wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*) is a lesser known native Maine species you should add to your vision of the untamed wilderness. Wood turtles are associated with remote streams and rivers across the state, and as their name suggests, do best in forest-dominated settings, generally far from human population centers or areas of land use disturbance.

No other Maine turtle species makes such extensive use of aquatic and terrestrial habitats. For much of the year, wood turtles are found in slow-moving, clear-water streams with a predominantly sand or gravel substrate. During late spring and summer they migrate into surrounding upland forests, floodplains, meadows, and hayfields – sometimes considerable distances from water. From late fall to early spring, wood turtles return to streams and rivers to hibernate underwater in sheltered areas, including deep pool bottoms, under-cut riverbanks, and submerged woody debris dams.

Wood turtles range across the forested Northeast, from New Brunswick to Virginia, as well as parts of the upper Midwest. Across most of this range biologists have expressed concern that populations are declining, which is reflected in their status. Wood turtles are listed as a species of Special Concern in Maine, as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) by all northeastern states (except Delaware where the species is functionally extinct), and are under petition review for federal listing as Endangered or Threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Primary threats to

RESEARCH & ASSESSMENT SECTION (CONTINUED)

wood turtles throughout their range include water quality degradation, riparian habitat loss, road kill, mortality from agricultural machinery, and illegal collection for the pet trade. The wood turtle's late maturity, low reproductive potential, and high nest and hatchling depredation rates all contribute to the species inherent biological vulnerability.

MDIFW's Reptile-Amphibian-Invertebrate Group is currently engaged in survey and conservation planning efforts for wood turtles in coordination with 8 other states. This work is funded by the USFWS Competitive State Wildlife Grants program and aims primarily to identify the highest value wood turtle populations in the eastern portion of the species range. During the first year of this 2-year study, over 100 streams were evaluated statewide using remote sensing analysis, 16 streams were targeted for field survey, and approximately 115 wood turtles were captured, measured, marked, and released. More intensive survey work is needed to fully understand the extent and condition of our wood turtle population, but results to date indicate that Maine hosts some of the best remaining populations of wood turtles range-wide, therefore playing an important role in the future viability of this humble denizen of the North Woods.



Each wood turtle is marked by filing notches into the margins of the carapace that correspond to a unique number. The notches are permanent and allow for identification of individual turtles when recaptured even decades later.

MAINE WARDEN SERVICE

> Ice shown here on Mountain View Pond in Big Moose Township has formed but remains thin for this time of year. This Class A pond contains some great fishing and beautiful views of surrounding mountains.



< Game Warden Kevin Pelkey worked late season hunters and trappers and has begun tagging fur. He has managed to check a few anglers and even some fish. Ice is rare right now, especially for December in Aroostook County. Ice has been ranging from open water to about four inches. One body of water had been completely closed, but the recent warm weather and rain opened it back up. With the weather forecasted any ice found come the first of the year will be very questionable, says Pelkey.



> Game Warden Corporal Glidden spent the last two weeks conducting firearms training from Houlton to Augusta. Training consisted of qualifications along with some firearms skills and drills.



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Each year, participating agencies are asked to select one employee and one manager to receive recognition by the Governor. The Department was pleased to announce this year's award winners....

Employee of the year – Wally Jakubas

Wally's group is responsible for many of the highest profile species statewide both game and non-game, and his work as the technical expert for New England Cottontail (NEC) contributed to the USFWS's decision not to list NEC. Wally's group has significantly increased the scope of work and he has quietly managed this with grace and has shown true leadership.

William Twarog Manager of the year – Chris Cloutier

Major Chris Cloutier has worked as part of the Maine Warden Service administration since 2011. Major Cloutier is an integral part of the leadership team for both the Maine Warden Service and Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. His work ethic, professionalism, progressive thinking and ethical based decision making are the core values that provide him department wide support and respect of his peers, employees and supervisors. Major Cloutier is a credit to the bureau, department and the entire law enforcement profession.

Major Cloutier was recognized for his achievements by the Governor at a ceremony held at the Blaine House on Wednesday, December 16th.

Wally Jakubas, Mammal Group leader was recognized by the Governor at the Blaine House the following day, Thursday, December 17th for his achievements. The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and appropriate staff were in attendance at both ceremonies.