

Vermont Sporting Journal

Volume V, Issue 5 * March 2021



**Charlie Martin
with his
7 point buck**



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Every Camp Needs a Randy

Many of you reading this publication, in fact I would venture to guess most of you, have had the pleasure of being part of the annual tradition of deer camp. For those who have never attended a deer camp, it can be hard to understand the rituals, camaraderies, and sense of belonging that go along with it; although I would venture to guess it's akin to what folks find in sports teams and social clubs. However, those of you who are regular deer camp attendees know exactly what I'm talking about. While there are many unique differences among camps, part of what makes them so fun to visit, there is one thing I can be completely certain of. That is that in all the camps across all the class 4 roads and trails in all the backwoods of in this country, every camp needs a Randy.



A Randy is a camp member difficult to describe, yet easy to identify when you meet him. He's a man who will drive to camp a day or more early to get a fire going and make sure things were comfortable for everyone else's staggered arrivals after an anxious and unproductive Friday at work. He's a man who won't hesitate to take you out in the woods as a youngster when your father was working. He's also a man who won't hesitate to give you a stern earful when you come walking past his spot with 20 minutes of legal light left because you got cold sitting a few hundred yards down the hill. He's a man whose arrival to camp is always easily identified by the sound of classic rock turned up a few clicks beyond what most would consider normal billowing from the cracked windows of his well-loved and ...mostly... roadworthy pickup truck. A man who will spend just as much time in the woods as he will tackling major mechanical projects in the snow just outside the front door of camp, and, when finished will beckon every other member to hop in for a ride down the hill to the neighboring camp

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Every Camp Needs a Randy . . . 1
- Hunters Take 6,136 Turkeys . . . 3
- Vt Bear Hunters Had a Record Season in 2020 4
- Thar She Blows!!! 5
- VTF&W Urges Us to Remember Nongame Wildlife Tax Checkoff 7
- March Madness 9
- Trapping Talk 11
- Waterfow Season Virtual Public Hearings March 9 & 11 . . . 13
- VTF&W's Big Game Management Plan for 2020-2030 is Available Online . . 14
- Reminder to Remove Ice Shanties 14
- Start Scouting Now for Success This Spring 15
- Special Snow Goose Hunting Opportunity 17
- VTF&W Proposes Simplifying Fishing Rules 18
- Lawsuit 19
- How to Interpret Your Soil Test 20
- Hunt Proposed to Improve Health of Vermont's Moose 21
- A Successful Year for Vt Habitat Stamp Program 22
- Springfield Man Cited for Attempting to Elude on a Snowmobile & Providing False Information to Police . 23

for some apple pie. Of course, that doesn't take much convincing, and of course, every camp needs a Randy.

A Randy is a man whose presence beckons you like the warmth of a hot woodstove after a long day of tracking whitetails across a Vermont landscape freshly painted with cold, damp snow. A man whose energy and passion for life is as exhilarating as the sound of snapping branches after many long, dreary hours watching leaves chase each other in the wind like schoolkids at recess. A Randy is a man who can come back from hunting, rifle slung on his shoulder, face and body bloodied and swollen, just to tell you a vivid and impassioned story of a bull moose attack on a remote section of trail that he narrowly survived. He's also a man to tell you a few minutes afterward the real version of the story; the version where he replaces the moose with an ATV he rolled onto himself trying to break through what was largely known as an impassable section of trail.

A Randy is a man who helps anyone at any time. Period. A man who will track a camp member's wounded bear for as long as it takes to recover it... even if that means finishing it off with a point-blank shot as it lunges from behind a blowdown, teeth barred with a growl and claws swung fast towards his airborne legs. A Randy is a man who will make any hunter feel ten feet tall after a harvest, regardless of its place in the record books, and a man who felt true and honest pride in others accomplishments even more so than his own. He's a man who can be heard for miles with a screaming "YEEHAAAW" as he leads the ATV parade back to camp after a harvest, and a man who looks forward to camp just as much for spending time with friends and family as hunting. Every camp, needs a Randy.

A Randy is a man who values deer camp so much that he never fails to make it happen. Whether it means plowing out at camp with a piece of plywood strapped to the bumper of a pickup truck, finding a camp for everyone to stay in when everyone else had given up, or even obtaining a large camper and towing it up a class four road in November just so everyone would have a place to stay together (and then sleeping on the floor to accommodate everyone else). One way or another, he makes it happen. He



simply loves to be there; just hanging out, playing cards, and making up some of the most vulgar lyrics to popular songs you can imagine. A Randy never slacks on camp chores, but makes damn sure to remind you when you are, and a Randy is happy to lend a hand to anyone who needs it (particularly if they didn't ask). He's a man who enjoys the solitude of the woods as much as sitting around the knotty pine slab table, dividing out the remainder of the mornings reheated coffee from the percolator and planning a seating arrangement for a pitch game after lunch.

And finally, a Randy is a man who never stops fighting. A man who can be diagnosed with terminal cancer and make his entire family howl with laughter as they choke on their tears while he explains the horrifying details to them. A sharp moment he can somehow soften with his honest and unfiltered sense of humor that stays with him until the very end. He's a man who can be bedridden at home in his final weeks of life, weakened after months of fighting, and yet still manage to get out of the house to investigate a vehicle collision with a black bear outside his yard. He's a man who wants to spend some of his final moments re-watching videos from camp so that he could be there with everyone one last time, if only in his heart. A Randy is a man whose presence at camp exists long after he can't physically be there anymore, and who's impact on those who had the privilege of knowing him lets them be better people for the rest of their lives.

We lost our Randy in September of 2020. After a long and heroic fight with cancer we have been left with only his memory and stories of his antics to keep us company at the camp table as we pour the mornings re-heated coffee from the old blue percolator into dirty disposable cups. It's tough to think about waking up on the next opening day of deer season without his booming voice jolting through the chilled cabin air yelling "COFFEEEEEEEE" while the steam of freshly percolated java dances around the drafts in the walls. Although his absence leaves something empty in all of us, his memory fills a place in our hearts with love that is stronger than ever before. Every camp needs a Randy, and I look forward to someday being able to all gather around an old pine-wood slab card table once again, deal a hand of pitch and have a few more laughs with ours. ■



Hunters Take 6,136 Turkeys in Vermont in 2020

VERMONT FISH
& WILDLIFE
Press Release



A preliminary report from Vermont Fish and Wildlife shows that hunters brought home 6,136 wild turkeys during 2020, including 627 turkeys taken during the April youth weekend hunt, a total of 4,791 gobblers taken during the regular spring season, and 718 birds during the fall.

“Although 2020 will undoubtedly be remembered as the year of many challenges, at least one thing remained the same – Vermont hunters took to the woods to enjoy some restorative time afield and were again rewarded for their efforts,” said Vermont Fish and Wildlife turkey biologist Chris Bernier. “Second only to 2010, a near record number of turkey licenses were sold during 2020, resulting in an impressive turkey harvest that closely tracked the average harvest reported over the past ten years.”

Hunter success rates remained high with 20 percent of resident hunters taking birds during the spring hunt,

and 32 percent of those successful hunters taking a second bearded bird. Youth hunters also enjoyed a remarkable 29 percent success rate during the April youth weekend season.

“The 6,136 turkeys represent an estimated 140,000 servings of locally sourced, free-range, wild turkey meat as well as countless memories and an enduring connection to the land,” added Bernier.

Turkeys were hunted statewide and were harvested in 241 of Vermont’s 255 towns. The northern Lake Champlain Valley and the Connecticut River Valley continued to be productive regions for turkey hunters with the highest harvests again recorded in these parts of the state.

“Vermont’s long history of careful and considerate management of wild turkeys has positioned us to maximize the benefits we all receive from this remarkable bird. Beyond the simple

enjoyment and sustenance people get from watching and hunting wild turkeys, these birds play a critical role in the environment as an important prey item and influence the populations of many other species.”

Conservation of wild turkey habitat continues to play a key role in the health and vitality of their population. Bernier notes that a patchwork of fields and forests provide most of what a turkey needs to survive. He says the efforts to protect and manage habitat by private landowners and volunteer-based conservation groups like the National Wild Turkey Federation help ensure Vermont has a sustainable and abundant wild turkey population for the future.

Everyone can help support conservation and good habitat for wild turkeys and other wildlife on state Wildlife Management Areas by purchasing the [2021 Vermont Habitat Stamp](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com) at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. ■

Vermont Bear Hunters Had a Record Season in 2020

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department reports that bear hunters in Vermont had another safe and successful hunting season in 2020.

Preliminary numbers show that hunters took a record 914 black bears during the two-part early and late bear seasons. The previous highest harvest ever recorded in Vermont was 750 in 2019. Fish and Wildlife also says there were no hunting-related shooting incidents.

The average number of bears taken over the previous 10 years was 608. The hunting season results are consistent with the goal of maintaining the bear population to within 3,500 to 5,500 bears, according to Forrest Hammond, Fish and Wildlife's bear biologist.

In 2020, hunters took a majority of the bears, 823, in the early season and only 91 in the late bear season, which overlaps with the November deer

season. Most bears were taken with modern firearms, while 16 percent were taken by archery and 17 percent with the use of bear hounds.

Hammond noted that participation in the early bear season increased substantially with 13,866 hunters choosing to purchase a \$5 early season bear tag.

"In addition to an abundant population and the potential of harvesting delicious and nutritious bear meat, larger numbers of bears were harvested due to several factors," said Hammond. "It was a poor year for natural bear foods, and we saw a surge in hunter numbers brought about by the COVID -19 pandemic and perhaps a corresponding increase in the number of hunters spending more time in the outdoors hunting than in past years."

Hammond says 2020 was challenging for bear management in Vermont with game wardens and bear

project staff responding to more than double the number of reports of bear-human conflicts than any year in the past. Despite the large number of bear problems and the high number of bears harvested by hunters, Hammond points out that these numbers tend to vary each year and that the bear population remains within the 2020-2030 Big Game Plan bear population objective.

Bear hunters continue to provide information that is valuable for managing the species including bringing their bear into one of 150 game check stations and by completing hunter effort surveys.

Each hunter is required to submit a pre-molar tooth from their bear which will provide information on the age of the animal. Bear ages will be posted on Fish and Wildlife's website in early May. ■



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Thar She Blows!!!

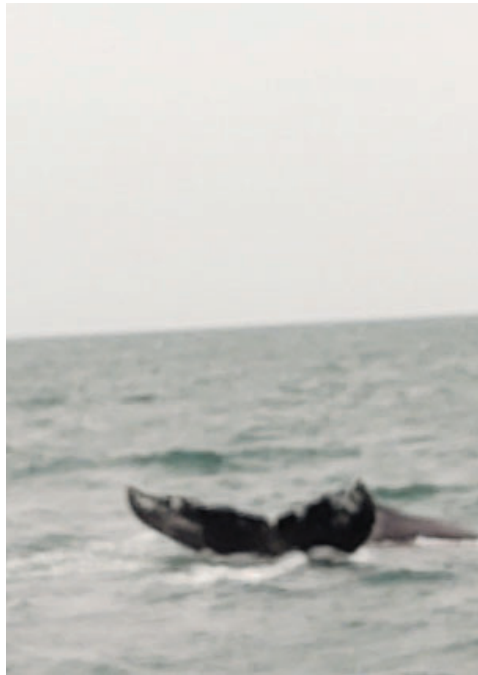
by Ken Jones

In the quaint and quiet town of Gloucester Massachusetts lies the oldest seaport in the United States. Since the late 1600s ships of differing variety and with multiple purposes have come and gone from ports around the world. In its town park with a beautiful view of the Atlantic ocean, the draw bridge is a tourists favorite as it stops traffic long enough to let a few boats here and there leave one of the small harbors around town. In the summer around the Fourth of July hundreds of American flags line the railings of the walkway where people can see the memorials for all the fishermen lost at sea over the years or the fisherman's wife memorial. So much history.

As you cruise into the heart of the town you'll see a sign just over the rise from the Gorton fish packaging plant for Cape Anne whale watching. Cape Anne is the name for the inlet of the Atlantic that holds the town's of Gloucester, Essex, and Rockport.

If you're taking the morning run, the calm quiet of the port is very soothing. The water in the bay is usually flat as glass and the boat traffic hasn't picked up yet. You start to feel the place wake up. As you board the Hurricane two, you try and get somewhere near the front of the boat where you feel you'll have the quickest views when in reality, you'll see everything no matter where you end up.

It's really amazing how far away town feels once you hit the docks. It's a stone's throw to the hustle and



bustle of town but back near the water, it all disappears. As you embark on your adventure, usually one of the interns will give a little guided tour of the different businesses that use the docks and how the ocean keeps this town alive. You'll see the Cape Pond

Ice plant and the dock that was used in filming the movie "The Perfect Storm" then you'll head out passed Ten Pound Island and the last big getty and the light house on Thatcher Island.

After an hour or so steam, you'll reach Stellwagen bank or another destination called Jeffery's ledge. If you watch the TV show "Wicked Tuna" you would recognize these places as where the tuna fishermen fish for Giant blue fin. As a fan of the show I'll often watch the slips or boat parking spaces on our way out of the harbor to see if I can spot any of the boats from the show. We have seen many of them both at the docks and on the water. You see, these waters the grand banks and Jeffery's ledge are natural collectors of food fish for the tuna and the whales of the Atlantic.

According to head Naturalist Jamie McWilliams the whales come here in the early spring after spending the winter months in the warmer waters of the Caribbean and out to the gulf of Mexico where the females give birth and raise their calves until they are ready to make the journey north to feast in the bayleean rich waters of the north Atlantic. After feeding here for the summer, they return to the warmer waters for the winter months.

Species most likely to be seen are Hump backs and Minke whales dolphins and tuna you'll see occasionally also. Not many if any toothed whales like Orcas will be seen. The bayleean whales are predominantly the norm.

Many different behaviors can be enjoyed from little dorsal fin rises to full breach leaps into the air. Although in twenty plus whale watches I've only seen two full breaches. Neither was I fast enough to get on film. Logging which Jamie and other naturalists believe is in fact the whales napping on the surface is very cool because they will drift quite close to the boat and you can really see how enormous they are. Fin slapping, tail throwing are fairly regular antics of these wonderfully graceful and seemingly gentle giants. Looking for the tell-tale spray or blow from the whales is a big part of the fun as well. On our last watch, at one point at various distances I think I counted ten different whales around us. They seem to have no fear of the boats but I've never felt like they were interacting with us either. They will go about their daily feeding and will come right along-side at times and even duck under the boat and come out the other side as if we were a crack in the sidewalk. These watches are not just for our viewing

pleasure either. Either Jamie has a camera in hand or they have a couple photographers that come along and take constant photos especially of the whales diving. When a whale dives it arches it's back, takes a deep breath and when it dives the last thing to go under is it's fluke or tale. On the underside of the tale they will normally have some white markings and these markings will be different on each individual allowing the naturalists to identify the whales. The whales are actually given names and many of them have returned for decades!! They don't give them people names but some examples of whales we've seen are Zeppelin, shuffleboard and Cajun. In fact we've seen cajun and calf for a few years now. The whales get close. The photos along with this article were all taken with my android phone. So don't worry if you don't own an expensive camera with a giant lens. You'll get up close and personal with these magnificent creatures.

I truly enjoy our trips to the ocean each summer. I believe if I wasn't born and lived in mountainous Vermont I'd want to be around the ocean. The salt air, the allure of the vast open sea is intriguing and beautiful.

If you're looking to put something different in your summer vacation, why not try a whale watch. My wife and I have been on them from Booth Bay Maine, to Provincetown Massachusetts on Cape Cod. Anywhere on the northeastern seacoast and from our home in Vermont it can be done as a day trip. You can enjoy the vast wonders and beauty of the ocean and some of its fine inhabitants.

I know this hasn't been my usual hunting story but one I felt I needed to share with you all. At least to get us thinking of warmer days to come. As I write this we are some 67 days till spring turkey season opens in Vermont. Until then, be safe have fun and shoot em up!!! ■

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VT Fish & Wildlife Urges Us to Remember Nongame Wildlife Tax Checkoff

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Vermonters interested in conserving wildlife should donate to the Nongame Wildlife Fund on their state income tax form this year, according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. The fund helps protect some of Vermont's most threatened wildlife such as bald eagles, lake sturgeon, spruce grouse, and Indiana bats.

Donations are leveraged by matching federal grants, meaning that a \$35 donation can help secure up to another \$65 in federal funds for wildlife conservation in Vermont.

"The Nongame Checkoff donations, along with hunting, fishing and trapping license revenue, have helped recovery efforts for Vermont's peregrine falcons, loons, ospreys, bald eagles, American martens, Indiana and northern long-eared bats, spiny softshell turtles, and other species," said Director of Wildlife Mark Scott. "We are also supporting surveys of



Ospreys are no longer an endangered species in Vermont thanks to recovery efforts supported by the Nongame Wildlife Fund.

VTF&W photo by Bill Crenshaw

Vermont's pollinators so we can determine their conservation needs and manage our Wildlife Management Areas for their benefit."

"The common loon, osprey and peregrine falcon are no longer endangered

species in Vermont due to management that continues to benefit those species, and we hope the bald eagle can be removed from Vermont's endangered species list in the near future."

Steve Parren and other fish and wildlife biologists manage nongame wildlife projects for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. Their work is diverse and includes mammals, birds, turtles, fish, frogs, bees, freshwater mussels, and plants, as well as the habitats and natural communities they need.

"The Nongame Wildlife Fund has helped some of our great wildlife success stories in Vermont," said Parren. "Thanks to the generous donations of thousands of Vermonters, we are restoring many of the iconic species of our Green Mountain State." ■



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March Madness

by Brad Roy

While early ice is always an exciting time of year to get out on the hard water, late season ice fishing can be packed full with just as much—or more—action! As the days start getting noticeably longer, and early mornings are brightened by the sound of spring birds chirping in the otherwise lifeless trees, the action on local lakes and ponds really starts heating up. With a good run of very cold temperatures lately, the Northeast is poised to maintain good ice cover for some time to come. If your back hasn't worn out from carrying firewood around all winter yet, then March can provide some of the best fishing all year long!

One of my all-time favorite parts about ice fishing is targeting the big runs of white perch in the late winter/early spring. The white perch, which is actually a member of the temperate bass family *moronidae*, was non-existent in Lake Champlain until the mid-1980's. This invader typically thrives in brackish water, with populations ranging from South Carolina to Canada, but was able to establish itself quickly in Champlain once it found its way there. Although there is still some debate about how this meaty gamefish originally found its way into Champlain, they took to their new location very well. This is not an uncommon trait for these hard-fighting fish, which can readily populate new areas quite efficiently despite competition from existing species.

Feasting on just about anything they can get in their mouth, white perch will happily eat minnows, plankton, invertebrates, and much more. It has been documented that these invasive fish will greedily eat up eggs from native species like walleye, among others. The white perch is such a noble invader in fact, that as of 2003, Quebec researchers found that they vastly outnumbered native perch in Missisquoi Bay. By now this may be the case in many other areas of the lake as well. With a population bolstered by females that can deposit up to 150,000 eggs in a spawning season, these fish are here to stay.

So, what can be done about such a prolific invader? Well...Eat them! White perch are a delicious lake fish that you can prepare just as you would any other freshwater fish. The meat is flakey and white, with a slightly stronger flavor than our beloved Yellow Perch. Because these fish grow big, with the largest of the species toppling the scales at around 5 pounds and 20 inches in length, it doesn't take long when the action is good to bring home a family meal's worth.

The White Perch's insatiable schooling appetite is what makes them so much fun to target through the ice. When these fish move into shallow spawning areas in late winter, they often become active for "Bursts" throughout the day, with catches of five or ten fish over just a few minutes not uncommon. Look for spawning flats around 20 feet deep directly adjacent to deeper water. These fish seem to have no problem with flat and muddy bottoms, and can usually be discovered in late-winter by looking for areas with massive crowds of people displaying a frequent upward arm movement!

While many people like to sneak off to a quiet location to fish solo, white perch fishing lends itself easily to more of a party-like atmosphere. I have always found I catch more



white perch when I'm around other people, and wouldn't hesitate to call a group over when the bite starts getting hot. In fact, if you were to time lapse a group of white perch fishermen over the course of a day, you would likely see a constant "inward" dance of people getting closer and closer together, pinpointing the hottest spot. These fish swim in massive schools, and keeping the feeding frenzy active with lots of lures for them to attack seems to help maintain the frenzy for much longer than one or two people could by themselves. I like to use a variety of tungsten jigs and larger, flashy spoons fished just off the bottom. Having a heavy lure is also really helpful in getting back "into the fish" from the surface as quickly as possible, which seems to be key in keeping the bite going.

When targeting these aggressive and hard-fighting fish through the ice, I would recommend using at least a six-inch auger. Although you can get by with smaller sizes, having fish pop off at the hole after getting caught on the bottom edge of the ice becomes quite common. Any old yellow perch rig will work, but you will immediately no-

tice a difference when these larger fish get a hold of your tackle!

Another great part about white perch is that because they are larger than yellows, they fillet very easily. Whipping through a half bucket of average-sized whites with an electric fillet knife goes fast, and you're rewarded with beautiful boneless fillets that are just waiting to hit a pan of hot oil. My all-time favorite preparation for white perch is to make fish cakes with them. Finely chop up your fillets into tiny pieces, or use a food processor to do the same, then mix with finely minced onion, fresh parsley, salt and pepper, as well as any other spices you might like. Add in an egg or two and just enough powdered mashed potato mix to combine, then press into cakes. I like to dust these cakes with cornmeal, flour, or breadcrumbs, and fry them up in hot oil until they are golden brown and cooked-through. Serve with some fresh lemon juice and tartar sauce, and sit down next to a warm fire enjoying the fruits of your labor. ■

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Trapping Talk

by
Randy
Barrows

Hope your trapping season was a good one. We had a good one going until the inch and a half of rain and then brutally cold temps. Chopping frozen ground gets old quickly.

With low fur prices we did a lot of experimenting on this year's line. Did you know you can bait a set, put a trap on top of the ground not covered and still catch critters?? Well you can and we proved it.

I always end my columns with asking you to take a kid with you when you go. This month I want to explain why I ask this and how it can work.

In 2011 Logan Tinker, my nephew asked if he could tag along on the line. Logan at the time hated school; hated the bus and had a bad attitude on life in general. Me being the ornery gent I am sat him down and laid out the law. If Logan wanted to tag along, he had some things to do. First of all, he had to lose the bad attitude and improve his grades in school. He did both of these to the point where he is a A plus Senior.

Having Logan on the line saves this old codger many steps every year. He is ready and waiting every time I go to pick him up. Logan has emersed himself in every aspect of outdoor life. In the past couple of years, he has successfully passed his trapper ed, hunter ed, and boater safety classes.

In 2013 Logan announced that he wanted to set his own traps. The stream in front of my house is good for a couple of muskrat and mink every year so I told to go ahead and set some traps.

Over the bank he went with a couple of 110 conibears in his hands. After a week of empty traps, he asked for assistance. Logan had done everything right, almost.

The stream was a foot and a half wide and the 110 only covered a third of it. I showed him how to do some fencing to direct the critters to the trap. The next day Logan came up over the bank with a prime Vermont muskrat. You could not wipe the grin off his face for weeks.

Logan had done little fur prep up to this point so he asked for some help. I explained I would coach him but he was going to do this on his own, which he did. An hour later he had the fur fleshed and stretched and off to the taxidermist for tanning. A keepsake for life!

Over the next few years Logan excelled in every aspect of trapping. I hold a couple of trapper ed classes every year and Logan was always front and center. I also attend a couple of outdoor shows every year and Logan is always at my side. I get many comments like, "this kid knows his stuff, he is good, and on and on."



In 2012 Logan had a mandatory science project and Logan chose you guessed it, "Trapping in Vermont". His teacher advised this subject be he stuck to it and continued on. The project showed all the different types of traps and all of the animals they are used to catch, why we trap, and all of the uses for the fur caught. He even added recipes for the edible critters. He received a A on the project and received high praise from all involved.

2015 was a banner year for us at Arrowhead Trapping Supply. Being a fur buyer, we had a ton of fur to handle. I even bought carcass fur and fur in the grease, so the days were long. Every night there was a pile of critters by the front door that needed skinning, bagging and put in the freezer. It got so bad my wife Diane came out to help. She is good at skinning muskrats!

Every night after homework and dinner Logan showed up and was ready to go. Due to school Logan could only stay until tenish, weekend went into the wee hours of morning. Logans only requirement was we needed to have country music playing. A small price to pay for all of the help.

I kept track of the hours he put in every year and tried to pay him and he flatly declined. He did pick up a few supplies he needed as pay. We shipped 497 furs that year and I could not have done nearly any of this alone.

Last year Logan got right into fur handling. One night I threw a 60 plus pound beaver on the table and told him to have at it. He laughed and said" no way". I am a firm believer in hands on learning so away he went. One and a half hours later he had that beaver skinned, fleshed and tacked out to dry. WOW!!!!And oh yeah, the castor was cleaned and on the drying rack.

This last season we decided to focus on K-9 trapping > Logan chose the traps and locations and went to work. Two days later he caught his first fox. He went from cloud nine to zero when he found out the fox had a bad case of the mange. Being the trooper, he is he carried on and ten days later caught a prime male red fox. In the next week if he did not say" that is so cool" 500 hundred time he did not say it once. F.Y.I. that fox is at the taxidermist for a full body mount, and the skull has been boiled for another keepsake.

I am pretty sure I have a lot less sunrises and sunsets behind me than I do ahead of me but it's been a pleasure to coach Logan along and more importantly to become an excellent trapper and fur handler.

Enjoy the rest of the water trapping season and TAKE A KID WITH YOU!!!

Update; Carter Abel, 15, called and advised he just shot his first coyote and needed some help skinning it. I skinned and fleshed it and its headed to Moyle Mink for tanning. He also has boiled the skull for a keepsake. He did his online trapping class in one day and is setting out some otter traps tomorrow. I donated some traps to him and he is on his way. He wants to learn everything he can about fur trapping and fur prep. The tradition of trapping will live on, I hope. Good luck Carter. ■



Waterfowl Season Virtual Public Hearings

March 9 & 11

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release



Virtual public hearings on the status of migratory game bird populations and proposed 2021 migratory game bird hunting seasons for the interior zone of Vermont and Lake Champlain zone in New York and Vermont will be held Tuesday, March 9 and Thursday, March 11.

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board virtual hearings will start at 6:30 p.m. on March 9 and March 11, 2021. Information to access the hearings is as follows:

Tuesday, March 9

Direct link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87254650972?pwd=c2FEQ2htYXpoM3RqVzNXaWs4UG9hdz09>
Meeting ID: 872 5465 0972
Dial in Phone Number: 1 (929) 436-2866
Passcode: 529516

Thursday, March 11

Direct Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87170690147?pwd=akJSV3pkNnJQL0F5T0tvejJ6cm1pQT09>
Meeting ID: 871 7069 0147
Dial in Phone Number: 1 (929) 436-2866
Passcode: 255897

Waterfowl and webless migratory game bird hunters are encouraged to attend one of the hearings and share their preferences and opinions about the proposed seasons.

Under Federal regulations, waterfowl seasons, bag limits, and shooting hours in the Lake Champlain Zone must be uniform throughout the entire zone. Waterfowl seasons in New York's portion of the Lake Champlain Zone must be identical to the waterfowl season in Vermont's portion of the Zone.

The [proposed 2021 migratory bird hunting seasons](#) are available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com). Comments can be sent to ANR.FWPublicComment@Vermont.Gov or by leaving a message for up to three minutes at this telephone number: 802-265-0043

Comments received, as well as input and recommendations from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, will be reviewed by the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board in making final 2021 hunting season decisions. ■

Vermont Fish & Wildlife's Big Game Management Plan for 2020-2030 is Available Online

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Vermont's Big Game Management Plan for 2020-2030 is now available on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website www.vtfishand-wildlife.com.

"The department has a long history of managing Vermont's big game species using the best available science that is informed by a robust public input process," said Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. "For the past twenty years, the management of Vermont's four big game wildlife species – white-tailed deer, black bear, moose, and wild turkey -- has been coordinated by a comprehensive Big Game Management Plan, and this is our latest, proactive guide for the next decade."

The plan, updated every ten years, identifies the primary issues that these species face, establishes sustainable population and management goals and then prescribes the strategies needed to achieve these goals. Combining wild turkey with moose may seem strange on the face of it, but a multi-species approach is appropriate, according to Porter, because all four species face overlapping chal-

lenges and, as a group, they represent the backbone of Vermont's hunting and wildlife-viewing opportunities.

"In the end," Porter said, "the plan's primary goal is to safeguard healthy and sustainable big game populations and all the benefits they confer to Vermonters, our economy, other wildlife and our landscape."

The [2020-2030 Big Game Management Plan](#) prescribes nine strategies to address the eight overarching issues that are expected to impact all four species in the next decade, including maintaining the high support for big game hunting, conserving vital habitat, and improving day-to-day data collection. An additional 81 strategies target species-specific issues. Some, like ensuring deer populations remain in line with what the habitat can support, and at levels Vermonters will tolerate, are perennial issues and included in the two previous plans. Others, such as the dramatic rise in bear-human conflicts and the impacts of disease and parasites on moose, are new or emerging threats.

"The 75-page plan includes detailed

descriptions of all of the issues and the strategies as well as a summary of the public comments we received and our responses to them," said Porter. "Anyone interested in learning more about how Vermont's deer, bear, moose, and wild turkeys are being scientifically managed should go to our website to read the plan." ■



A Reminder from F&W to Remove Ice Shanties



VTF&W photo by Corey Hart

Vermont state law requires that ice fishing shanties be removed from the ice before the ice weakens, according the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

The shanty must be removed before the ice becomes unsafe or loses its ability to support the shanty out of the water, or before the last Sunday in March -- the 28th this year -- whichever comes first. All contents, debris, wood, and supports must also be removed so they do not become a hazard to navigation in the spring.

The fine for leaving your ice fishing shanty on the ice can be \$1,000, and shanties may not be left at state fishing access areas.

Start Scouting Now for Success This Spring

by Brett Ladeau



Now is the time to start getting ready for spring turkey season. I scout turkey year-round and turkey hunting is never far from my mind, but I really start ramping up my scouting for spring mid-February forward.

Obviously, things will change drastically between February and May, but I am looking for winter flocks in February to see how the birds are doing. Turkey are usually grouped up in large mixed flocks and concentrated in certain areas this time of year. This allows me to see how the hatch was last year and take an inventory of sorts. It allows me to see if we will have a heavy jake or longbeard population in the spring. This can make a difference in my approach to the season. Based on anecdotal evidence and personal observation we should have had a tremendous hatch in 2020, which will mean we will have a bunch of jakes on the landscape this spring.

Conversely, our hatch wasn't nearly as good in 2019. Based on my historical observation that will mean the gobble may not be as strong as years when we have a bunch of two-year-old toms running around. The spring of 2020 was one of the better springs for gobbling since our 2018 hatch was strong and the 2019 hatch wasn't. That's not to say there won't be plenty of longbeards running around this spring. I've personally seen at least one group of 17 toms running together not far from an area I hunt and have heard of a few other big male flocks in other areas too.

Winter flocks also give me a good starting point on where to concentrate my efforts come April and beyond. Turkey disperse as the winter flocks break into smaller groups in the spring. However, there will be a certain percentage

that stick around their wintering areas. This is particularly true if winter hangs on through most of April.

In April, I start riding roads looking for birds and listening for roosting areas. I wake up early to ride around and stop in many locations listening for birds to gobble on the roost. After fly down, I am checking fields and other areas to put my eyes on turkey.

I have turkey hunted some areas for about 25 years and have several "go to" spots that produce year in and year out. In those areas, I will usually check to confirm there are birds there again this year. However, I am always expanding to new areas as well.

Once I have picked a new area or two out, I will step up my scouting in those areas and will spend time getting as much permission as possible. Getting permission early in the spring is always a good idea. The more access to property you have the better your chances of success are come turkey season. Having too many places to hunt is always better than not having enough. There may be places I never hunt in a year but if I have permission and happen to see a turkey on the property during season, I would not hesitate to give it a try.

Once I have my permission squared away, I will walk those areas to learn the terrain, roosting areas, strutting areas, and look for feeding sign as well as any dusting areas. I do most of my feet on the ground scouting up in the day to avoid spooking birds as much as possible. However, if I am looking for new roosting areas, I might pick a high ridge and climb to it before daylight and listen for gobblers on the roost. As I am scouting and finding sign,

I mark these areas on a mapping system, such as OnX, and use this information as I plan my hunts. These tactics have proven successful over many years of trial and error.

I have not used trail cameras scouting turkey very often, but I believe that would be another tool to help pattern where the birds may hang out during certain times of day. I am seriously considering adding a camera or two to my scouting this spring. Especially in areas that are a little farther from my core hunting area.

Scouting should pick up during the month of April in most New England states, as flocks start to break out of the winter groups. As the season approaches my scouting really picks up. I am out just about every morning and every evening in my chosen areas, listening and observing. The more I am out the more I learn and the better prepared I am for the season.

I practice my calling year-round but for someone not quite as addicted to it as I am now would be a good time to start practicing. I always have a mouth call or two in the truck and practice while I am riding around scouting or heading to work. I have several sound files of real turkey and listen to those as I ride around as well. I run friction calls at home almost every day. I try to practice outside as much as possible or wait until I am the only one home. I have had enough dirty looks from the family and the dog to know when to stop. I do get away with a little more in the

house now but a quick glance from one of my kids or wife and I will either move outside or put the calls down. My goal is to sound as much like a real turkey as possible. I feel this also enhances my chances of success.

My scouting doesn't end when turkey season starts either. I think in season scouting is important as habits and patterns change throughout the season. I try to roost a bird or two every night by using an owl hoot-



er or some other locator call. For me, knowing where a gobbler is first thing in the morning always gives me that extra motivation

to wake up at turkey hunting hours. It just gives me a confidence boost knowing I will be in the game right off the bat. Most of the time those roosted birds get away, but I always have fun giving it a try. Plus, I might learn something for the next time I hunt that bird.

I also try to have a hunting partner join me. Whether it be family, a friend, or someone I just met, having someone to meet makes getting out of bed easier too.

Otherwise, I might sleep in and take the morning off. The days I take off, which aren't many, always get under my skin after the fact because there are only so many days to turkey hunt and I hate missing any of them.

Hopefully some of these tips help with your success this spring and many season to come. ■



Special Snow Goose Hunting Opportunity

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Vermont's spring snow goose hunt will be held from March 11 through April 23.

Since 2009, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has annually issued a "Conservation Order" to allow the reduction of the population of migrating greater and lesser snow geese as well as Ross' geese. The numbers of these geese have grown so high that they are destroying habitat for themselves and other species.

Eight states in the Atlantic Flyway (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Vermont) will hold a similar Spring Snow Goose Conservation Order in 2021.

The Vermont 2021 Spring Snow Goose Conservation Order will occur statewide. The daily bag limit is 15 snow geese, and there is no possession limit. Waterfowl hunting regulations in effect last fall will apply during the 2021 Spring Snow Goose Conservation Order with the exception that unplugged shotguns and electronic calls may be used and shooting hours will be extended until one half hour after sunset.

A 2021 Spring Snow Goose Harvest Permit is required and is available at no charge on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website at <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt>. Hunters may also call the Essex Junction Office (802-878-1564) to request a permit.

Hunters will need a 2021 Vermont hunting license (residents \$28, nonresident small game \$50), a 2021 Harvest Information Program (HIP) number, a 2020 federal mi-

gratory hunting stamp (\$25), and a 2021 Vermont migratory waterfowl stamp (\$7.50).

Hunters can register with the Harvest Information Program by going to Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website or by calling toll free 1-877-306-7091.

Hunters who obtain a permit will be required to complete an online survey after April 9 and prior to May 23, 2021, whether they hunted or not. Hunters without access to the internet may obtain a copy of the survey by calling 802-878-1564.

"The breeding population of greater snow geese has grown from approximately 50,000 birds in the mid-1960s to 714,000 birds today," said David Sausville, Vermont's waterfowl project biologist. "This increase has resulted

in damage to agricultural crops and marsh vegetation in staging and wintering areas from Quebec to North Carolina. Hunting pressure to date has aided in reducing the population from its high point of just over one million birds during the period of 2000-2010. The Atlantic Flyway has established a goal of 500,000 greater snow geese to bring populations in balance with their

habitat and reduce crop depredation."

During spring migration, snow geese typically move through the Champlain Valley in late March and early April. They usually pass through Vermont quickly in route to their spring staging areas along the St. Lawrence River Valley. They remain there for about a month before moving on to their nesting areas in the Eastern Canadian Arctic. ■



Vermont's spring snow goose hunt will be held from March 11 through April 23.

VTF&W Proposes Simplifying Fishing Rules

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Simpler fishing rules designed to protect fish and encourage fishing

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department wants to make it easier for people to go fishing by simplifying its fishing regulations.

Fishing regulations have become increasingly complex over time as amendments were added, making the rules more difficult for anglers to understand and challenging for the department to administer and enforce.

“We want to make fishing rules easier to understand while continuing to protect Vermont’s abundant fisheries resources,” said Vermont Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Louis Porter. “Our fisheries biologists and wardens have proposed changes to our primary fishing regulation that will simplify and standardize the rules, rather than having them be slightly different, depending on what lake or stream section you are on.”

The proposed changes to the [Fish Management Regulation](#) (10 V.S.A. Appendix §122) can be seen on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife website

www.vtfishandwildlife.com by searching for Board Rules in the top right hand corner of the home page. The Fish and Wildlife Board reviewed the proposed changes at its January 20 meeting.

Public comments may be emailed to ANR.fwpubliccomment@vermont.gov. Virtual public hearings will be announced in March. ■

FROM THE VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Vermont 2021
Fishing Guide
& Regulations

Panfish-Palooza!

Wild Brook Trout: Still Thriving
in Vermont's Coldwater Streams

2020 Vermont Angler Survey

www.vtfishandwildlife.com

VERMONT

Lawsuit

The Supreme Court of Vermont has ruled in two separate lawsuits that the Vermont firearm magazine ban that was enacted on April 11, 2018 is constitutional.

The Court used the “reasonableness test” in determining the legality of this law, rather the more stringent Intermediate Scrutiny or Strict Scrutiny standards. The Court used the level of review most favorable to the state, apparently did not consider Common Benefits challenge in deciding the criminal case and applied that ruling to the VTFSC case.

VTFSC case written opinion: https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/sites/default/files/documents/eo20-155_0.pdf

Bennington County criminal case opinion: <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/sites/default/files/documents/op19-266.pdf>

The Vermont Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs (VTFSC) will review the written opinion with legal counsel to determine if there are viable legal options.

The VTFSC is also party to an Amicus brief in a case before the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals challenging a California firearm magazine ban law. There are many routes to pursue in engaging in constitutional litigation to protect the rights of individual liberty.

Vermont’s law enforcement and laws play a major factor in the state’s proven continuously low violent crime rate.

In previous issues of this column, I commented on the needlessly hasty passage of S.119 in the very last days of 2020 legislative year. S.119 was a bill that greatly altered use of force by police officers. The bill was drastically amended in the House Judiciary Committee. The Vermont Commissioner of Public Safety and local police chiefs stated they had serious concerns with the bill with the bill as it had been amended.

FBI crime statistics prove that Vermont is consistently one of the lowest violent crime rate states in the nation. Vermont’s law enforcement plays a significant role in the safety of our citizens.

Gun rights advocates closely tracked S.119 through the legislative process. The bill amended in 13 V.S.A. 2305 is entitled Justifiable Homicide. In Sections (1) and (2) of this statute defines when private citizens can legally use deadly force in defensive a action.

S.119, as amended in the House Judiciary Committee and passed the senate on a voice vote on September 24. Not a roll call vote. The bill did not pass the senate with a strong voice vote. The bill was unwanted product for which nobody want to get stuck with the blame.

Governor Scott did not sign the bill, thus, S.119 passed into law without his signature.

S.119 (Act 165): <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/ACTS/ACT165/ACT165%20As%20Enacted.pdf>

The Legislature returned in January. They have introduced and taken up H.145, that is a more deliberate bill, getting more considered input without the pressure of the past «impending election that was weeks away, as with the September 2020 bill S.119. Laws should not be created in the haste to get «something» pushed out in an election year.

H.145 <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0145/H-0145%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

As the legislature returned to Montpelier, the gun control bills began to emerge. One of the worst is S.30, bill with lead sponsor Phil Baruth (D/P) of Chittenden County. This is a bill that would ban firearms in certain types of locations throughout Vermont.

Senator Baruth has long been very clear on his contention with citizens bearing arms for self-defense.

S.30 has structural problems that have been discussed at great length in several hearings in the Senate Judiciary Committee. What is most compelling is that numerous existing state laws work much better. Laws that do not trample on the rights of peaceful citizens.

S.30: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/S-0030/S-0030%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

Throughout the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, most of the members of the committee have raised serious questions about the bill. On February

3, an effort to salvage his bill, Senator Baruth proposed new language to the bill that would greatly complicate and expand the banning of firearms throughout Vermont.

When a bill is in trouble the obvious answer to Senator Baruth is to complicate and greatly expand the power of the bill. S30 is a defective solution in search of a problem.

You can watch the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing of Feb. 3rd on S.30 at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYsHeyVv_3U

Senator Baruth has been very clear in a goal of Vermont enacting New York City or Massachusetts type gun control laws that drastically limit or ban citizens keeping and bearing arms for self-defense.

Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine have histories of consistently low violent crime rates. These

three states have remarkably similar gun laws, that do not infringe on the rights of peaceful citizens. In contrast, New York and Massachusetts, which both abut Vermont, have draconian gun control laws. NY and MA also have violent crime rates that are nearly double the violent crime rates in VT, NH and ME.

Those who hunt, fish, shoot and trap should be forewarned that their sports are also to be considered with new legislation in Montpelier. H.167 would create an Environmental Stewardship Board that would control Vermont F&W and the F&W Board. In essence, the Environmental Stewardship Board would finally grasp control of Vermont F&W and the F&W Board. Just what our state needs: another bureaucratic body. H.167 is fourteen pages of creating more crushing over regulation.

H.167: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/Docs/BILLS/H-0167/H-0167%20As%20Introduced.pdf>

Gun control advocates have a constant agenda of working to have our state adopt the gun control laws of NY and MA. Why would our state adopt the laws of two adjacent states that have nearly double our violent crime rate?

It has long been the position of the Vermont Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs that laws should enact sound policy and be in compliance with the Vermont and U.S. Constitutions. A reasonable standard. A common sense standard that does not infringe on the rights to which the founders of this nation endowed to U.S. citizens.

You can track the bills of interest to you at the VTFSC web site at: www.vtfsc.com or

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/csbtvtfsc/pages/1/attachments/original/1612643033/2021-22_legislation.pdf?1612643033 ■

How to Interpret Your Soil Test

If you missed our article on "Why Do a Soil Test" in the Sept. issue no problem you can go back and view. "How to Interpret Your Soil Test" is a follow up article to help you figure out the amounts of lime and fertilizer needed for your plots.

The first thing you need to concentrate on is your pH level. If the pH level is low the availability of phosphorus or ability of the plants to take in nutrients will increase the amount of fertilizer you have to use which costs money. As the pH rises the amount of fertilizer you need could be cut in half. You may get

a test that comes back that requires anywhere from two-five tons of lime per acre. Keep in mind the test target pH is a 6.2 and most seed likes a pH of 6.5-7.0. Chances are whatever is recommended you will be doing it two years in a row, maybe three. Also keep in mind that the soil can only intake three tons/acre in one season so don't overdo it. I like to use pulverized lime which doesn't spread easily unless you have a cone spreader with our 200# vibrator and mounting bracket and wiring harness. The most often used lime is pelletized because it's easy to spread but it cost more, takes longer to breakdown, and just

isn't as good in my opinion because of the waste that's needed to form the pellet. Whether you use 40# or 50# bags of lime here is a quick formula to help you with your calculations. First determine the size of your plot (Square foot of your plot divided by 1 acre, 43560 = plot size). Area finder apps or Garmin Rino's work great for odd shape plots also. Let's assume your test comes back and calls for 3 tons/acre and your plot size is ¼ acre (.250). Using 40# bags, 50 x plot size = lime need for 1 ton/acre,

➔
Continued on page 23

Hunt Proposed to Improve Health of Vermont's Moose

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

A limited moose hunt in Vermont's Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) E in the northeastern corner of the state is proposed in order to reduce the impact of winter ticks on the moose population.

The proposal was presented by the Fish and Wildlife Department to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Board at its February 17 meeting.

"Moose density in WMU E remains well above one moose per square mile, significantly higher than any other part of the state," said Nick Fortin, Vermont Fish and Wildlife's biologist in charge of the moose project. "Moose densities greater than one per square mile support high numbers of winter ticks which negatively impact moose health and survival."

The Fish and Wildlife Department recently partnered with University of Vermont researchers to conduct a study of moose health and survival in WMU E. The results of this study, in which 126 moose (36 cows, 90 calves) were fitted with GPS tracking collars, clearly showed that chronic high winter tick loads have caused the health of moose in that part of

the state to be very poor. Survival of adult moose remained relatively good, but birth rates were very low and less than half of the calves survived their first winter.

The goal of the Fish and Wildlife Department's 2021 moose season recommendation, that was accepted by the Fish and Wildlife Board at their February 17 meeting, is to improve the health of moose in WMU-E by reducing the impact of winter ticks.

"Research has shown that lower moose densities, like in the rest of Vermont, support relatively few winter ticks that do not impact moose populations," said Fortin. "Reducing moose density decreases the number of available hosts which in turn decreases the number of winter ticks on the landscape."

The department would issue 60 either-sex moose hunting permits and 40 antlerless moose hunting permits in WMU-E for the moose seasons this October. That would result in an estimated harvest of 51 to 66 moose, or 5 percent of the more than 1,000 moose currently estimated to live in WMU E.

"This permit recommendation will help address winter tick impacts on moose in WMU-E by reducing the density of moose, but it does so slowly, over a period of several years," added Fortin. "This allows future moose permit allocations to be adjusted as new information becomes available. Given the poor health of the moose population in that area and a clearly identified cause, we need to take action to address this issue. Without intervention to reduce the moose population in WMU-E, high tick loads will continue to impact the health of moose in that region for many years."

No moose hunting permits are recommended for other regions of Vermont.

The [2021 Moose Season Recommendation](#) and related information about moose research and management are available on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. Comments may be provided until March 31 by emailing ANR.FWPublicComment@vermont.gov or by calling and leaving a message on the Vermont Fish and Wildlife public comment voicemail at 802-265-0043. ■

The high number of moose in the northeastern corner of Vermont has stimulated a dramatic increase in winter ticks, causing moose health to severely decline. As many as 90,000 winter ticks have been found

on one moose. More than half of moose calves have died in recent winters due to blood loss caused by the winter ticks. VTF&W explains that reducing the number of hosts (moose) will reduce the number of parasitic ticks and improve moose health.

VTF&W photos by Jake DeBow, Josh Blouin



A Successful Year for Vermont Habitat Stamp Program

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Vermonters Encouraged to Help Conserve Crucial Wildlife Habitat in 2021

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is encouraging outdoor enthusiasts to include the [2021 Vermont Habitat Stamp](#) among their donations, continuing to build on the fund's momentum in 2020.

“The first few years of the Vermont Habitat Stamp program have been a success and 2020 continues that trend,” said Louis Porter, commissioner of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. “Since 2015, and thanks to the many donors to the program, the Vermont Habitat Stamp has contributed to the conservation of several thousand acres of land, restoration efforts on numerous streams and rivers, and the removal of dysfunctional dams for fish passage.”

Thanks to the generous donations last year from Habitat Stamp supporters -- the highest number of donors and donations since the program began in 2015 -- the Habitat Stamp raised more than \$241,968 in 2020 and used that money to leverage more than \$490,802 in federal funds for habitat conservation in Vermont. The new 2021 stamp is available on the Fish and Wildlife Department's website and is also available as a voluntary add-on to hunting or fishing licenses when purchased online at www.vtfishandwildlife.com.

Habitat Stamp funds helped the department complete a variety of projects with conservation partners in 2020 to improve streambank and shrubland habitat on 70 acres in Charlotte and Hinesburg. With an eye on golden-winged warbler,

American woodcock, deer, and other species that depend on streambank parcels and shrublands, these projects removed invasive plants and planted native shrubs that provide food and cover for birds and other wildlife.

The funds also enabled the department to assist landowners on 45 properties covering more than 7,165 acres to improve wildlife habitat for songbirds, bats, bear, deer, moose, and other wildlife, with benefits to pollinators, amphibians and more.

With Habitat Stamp support, the department worked with landowners to protect trees along streams and rivers, reduced invasive knotweed on state lands along the Little River and White River, and continued floodplain restoration on a 35-acre department-owned streambank parcel along the White River in Bethel.

Habitat Stamp funds were used at the department's Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) throughout the state to mow grasslands benefiting bird habitat, maintaining wildlife openings, controlling invasive plants that impact native shrub habitat, releasing fruit and nut producing trees, and restoring riparian habitat by planting native trees and shrubs.

On August 4, 2020, the Town Farm WMA in Shrewsbury was dedicated as Vermont's 100th WMA as the department leveraged its Habitat Stamp program to assist local supporters in raising funds to

acquire the property which is now part of a large forest block providing habitat connectivity for wildlife in south central Vermont.

“The Fish and Wildlife Department is uniquely positioned to conserve habitat in Vermont because we can leverage every dollar donated for several additional dollars in federal funds,” said Porter. “Even a small donation makes a big difference for habitat conservation. As forests and fields in Vermont yield to development, the Habitat Stamp will allow us to continue to protect the critical open spaces that Vermonters enjoy.”

The [2020 Habitat Stamp Annual Report](#) highlighting the conservation work done through the program is available online at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. Matching funds for habitat projects sponsored by the stamp have come from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.



*VF&W photo by Chris Ingram
The Vermont Habitat Stamp program enables Vermont Fish and Wildlife to improve habitat for birds and other wildlife by working with private landowners and conservation partners and by increasing habitat on state lands.*

Springfield Man Cited for Attempting to Elude on a Snowmobile and Providing False Information to Police

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE Press Release

Vermont State Game Wardens have charged Christopher Thomas, 29, of Springfield, VT in connection with a snowmobile violation that occurred Friday evening, February 5.

A Fish and Wildlife Warden was conducting a snowmobile safety checkpoint at the CCC Camp in Grafton. At about 8:00 p.m. the warden was approached by three snowmobiles while displaying his flashing blue light to indicate the checkpoint. One of the snowmobiles, an older model green Arctic Cat, did not stop and fled east on VAST trails.

The warden was able to determine that the riders had started riding from a residence in Rockingham. The warden responded to the residence in Rockingham with the assistance of Vermont State Police. There, they located a vehicle that was registered to Christopher Thomas of Springfield as well as vehicles belonging to the riders that had stopped at the checkpoint.

Officers then went to Mr. Thomas' residence in attempt to locate him and were unsuccessful.

Later that evening, the warden returned to the residence where Mr. Thomas' truck was parked and found Mr. Thomas' truck was no longer there. A snowmobile matching the description of the one that had fled from the checkpoint was found parked in the garage of the Rockingham residence with fresh tracks leading into the garage. The snowmobile was seized as evidence with the assistance of the Springfield Police Department, and Mr. Thomas eventually admitted to not stopping at the checkpoint.

Christopher Thomas faces a maximum two years in prison and more than \$2,500 in fines. He was cited to appear in Windham County Superior Court on March 30 to answer to the charges of attempting to elude on a snowmobile, providing false information to police, and having a modified muffler on his snowmobile. ■

Continued from page 19

then multiply by 3. Example: $50 \times .250 = 12.5 \times 3 = 37.5$ bags (1500#). Using 50# bags, $40 \times \text{plot size} = \text{lime needed for 1 ton/acre}$, then multiply by 3. Example: $40 \times .250 = 10 \times 3 = 30$ bags (1500#). Always incorporate your lime for best results.

Fertilizer is where it gets a little tricky because of the variables but I'll do my best to explain. I put the fertilizer down after I seed normally. NPK or better known as Nitrogen, Phosphate, Potash is what we are going to talk about. If your lime is low and you in-

tend on adding lime I usually cut the Phosphate recommendation in half but for my examples let's assume that our pH isn't too bad for ease of explanation. It takes two 50# bags of fertilizer to equal the number on the bag. Two bags of 19/19/19 equals 19# N, 19# P, and 19# K. Let's assume your test comes back and calls for 40# N, 40# P, and 40# K/acre. If two bags equal 19#'s of each NPK then four bags equals 38#'s of each NPK. Here's an example that is a little trickier. Let's assume our test comes back and 40# N, 40# P, and 70# K is needed. You would use four bags of 19/19/19 and one bag of 0/0/60. The

four bags of 19/19/19 = 40# N, 40# P, and 40# K/acre. To get the extra 30# of K we use one bag of 0/0/60. Which gives you 38#'s N, 38#'s P, and 68#'s K/acre. There you go but no worries if you buy More Wildlife seed products and you do a test using State of Vt. UVM Extension through our site I'll figure all this out for you free!!! www.morewildlife.net

HAPPY PLANTING!!! ■