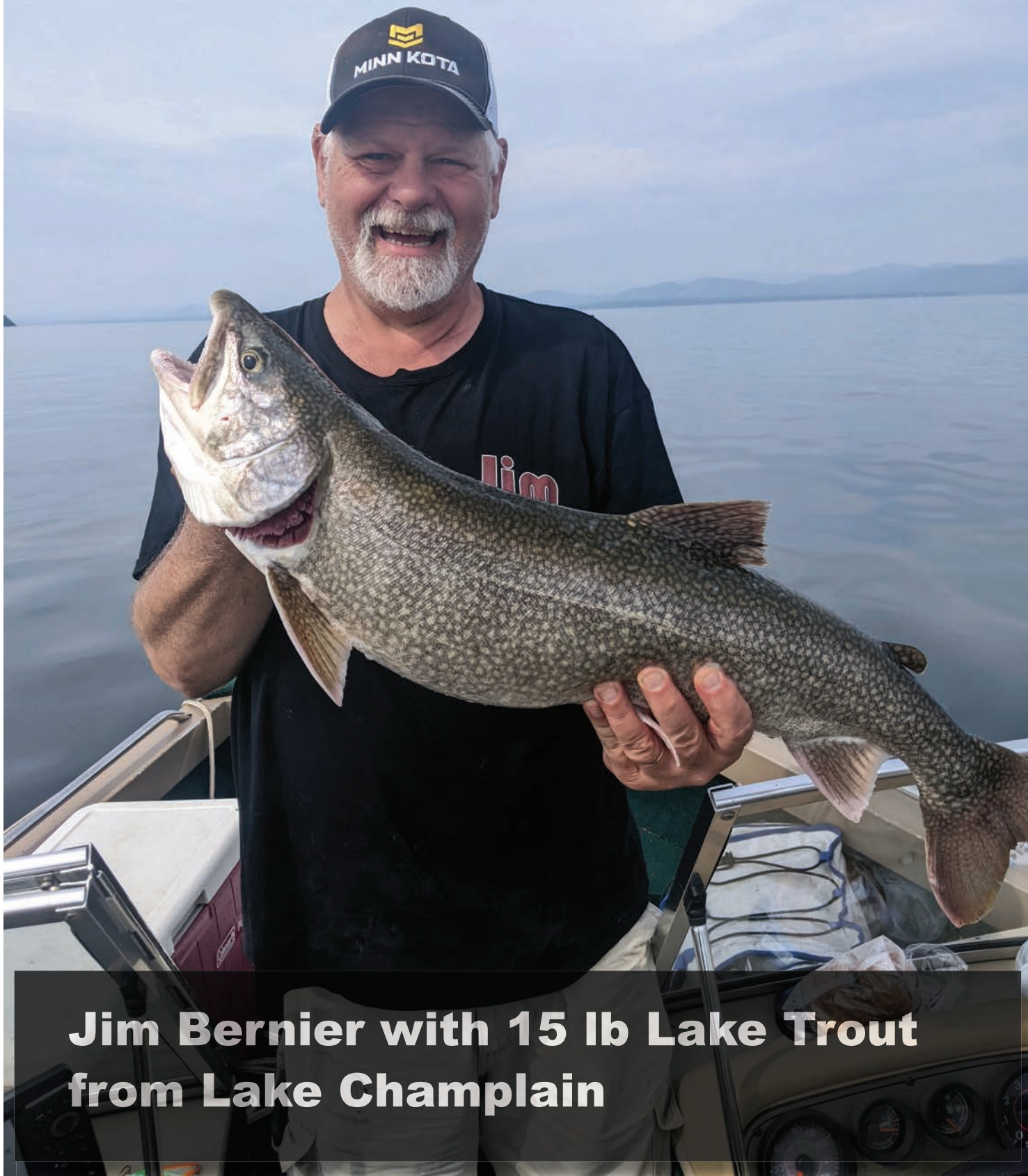


Vermont Sporting Journal

Volume VI, Issue 18 * July 2023



**Jim Bernier with 15 lb Lake Trout
from Lake Champlain**

Fish with a Warden Sessions Offered

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Trying to figure out Vermont fishing regulations? Wondering what kinds of fish are in a lake? Looking for new fishing tips? The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is offering “Fish with a Warden” sessions to help with questions like these.

“We know many anglers have questions they would like to ask a warden, and we know many of our wardens also like to go fishing,” said Education Specialist Corey Hart, “so our Vermont State Game Wardens have teamed up with Forests, Parks and Recreation staff to offer Fish with a Warden sessions this summer.



VTF&W photo

Hart says the purpose of the sessions is to provide an opportunity for the public to go fishing with Fish and Wildlife Department personnel and have their questions answered. These programs are the perfect steppingstone for new anglers that would benefit from a mentored fishing outing before heading out and fishing on their own.

The Fish with a Warden sessions will last an hour or more. Participants need to have their fishing license and bring their own fishing equipment. The state park day use fee has been waived for the duration of the program for participants that have registered in advance.

A list of dates, times and locations for the sessions and pre-registration for up to 30 people for each session are available at this link on Fish and Wildlife’s website: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/fish/fishing-events-and-programs/fishing-clinics-and-events/fish-with-a-warden> and in the list of Upcoming Events on the right side of the home page.

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Bear Activity in South Burlington Raises Concerns for Developed Areas

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Bear activity in South Burlington has jumped this year, highlighting the need to prevent bear conflicts in densely populated areas around the state, according to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

“We have had 14 bear incident reports from South Burlington so far this year, compared to just three for all of 2022,” said Black Bear Project Leader Jaclyn Comeau. “At least two yearling bears and their mother are becoming used to easy meals of birdseed and unsecured garbage in town. This is a dangerous situation for these bears and for people, especially in a densely populated community like South Burlington where many residents may not be used to coexisting safely with bears.”

As recently as the 1970s, black bears were uncommon outside remote parts of the Green Mountains and Northeast Kingdom. Today the species is found statewide except in the Champlain Islands. The population has been stable between 4,000 and 6,000 bears over most of the last decade.

Recent years have seen more bear conflicts statewide, and increasingly in densely populated communities like Rutland, Montpelier, Essex, and South Burlington. According to Fish and Wildlife, the leading cause of bear conflicts is unsecured attractants that teach bears to associate people and easy access to food.

“Black bears in Vermont are a conservation success, and our surveys show most Vermonters want a healthy bear population in our state,” said Comeau. “But that means that if you live in Vermont, you live in bear country and are responsible for taking proactive steps to prevent

conflicts with bears. It also means Vermonters have to grapple with tough questions like whether the Burlington suburbs are really a good place for bears.”

Fish and Wildlife urges Vermonters to take proactive steps to prevent bears learning to look for food near people, especially in densely populated areas. Taking down birdfeeders until there is snow on the ground, securing garbage until collection day morning, protecting backyard flocks with electric fencing, and composting properly can help prevent bear conflicts from developing.

A full list of steps for coexisting with bears is available on the department’s website at: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn-more/living-with-wildlife/living-with-black-bears>

As always, Vermonters who notice bears seeking food in their yards or in public places like campgrounds should report the incident at: <https://anrweb.vt.gov/FWD/FW/WildlifeBearReport.aspx>



Game Wardens and State Police Urge Vermonters to Boat Safely this Fourth of July Weekend

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release



Game Wardens will increase their presence on Vermont's waterways this holiday weekend.

VTF&W Photo

The Vermont Warden Service and Vermont State Police are asking Vermonters to boat responsibly this Fourth of July weekend, as part of the nationwide [Operation Dry Water campaign](#) to reduce alcohol and drug related boating injuries through education and more visible deterrence.

“The July Fourth holiday means time on the water for boaters in Vermont and across the United States,” said Game Warden Sergeant Jenna Reed. “And with an increased public presence on the water, [data from the U.S. Coast Guard](#) show an increase in the number of boating incidents and fatalities that take place during this time.”

From July 1-3, the Vermont Warden Service and State Police are partnering with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators and the U.S. Coast Guard to focus on educating boaters about safe boating practices, which includes sober boating.

Operating a vessel under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal on all bodies of water and can lead to serious injuries, death, property damage and legal consequences. The Vermont Warden Service reminds boaters to always boat sober and to wear a life jacket when on or around the water.

Over the July Fourth weekend, boaters will notice an increase in officer patrols on the water. This combined effort of the Warden Service and State Police aims to remove impaired operators from Vermont's waterways, providing a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone on the water.

“The tragedies that happen on our waterways because individuals choose to boat while impaired are preventable,” said Reed, adding that alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in recreational boater deaths nationally. “As law enforcement, it is our job to do everything we can to ensure the safety of our recreational boaters and paddlers.”

Electric Fencing Offers Protection Against Chicken Predation

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Keeping a small flock of chickens at home to provide eggs and meat has become increasingly popular, but many first-time small-scale poultry farmers are discovering that several species of wildlife like the taste of chicken as much as we do. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department urges poultry owners to use [electric fencing](#) and follow other precautions to protect their birds from predation.

“We are receiving reports about bears, foxes, raccoons, fisher, coyotes, skunks, and bobcats preying on chickens,” said Jaclyn Comeau, Vermont’s bear biologist. “Many of the calls will be coming from people who are new at keeping chickens and who do not provide sufficient protection for their birds.”

“In 2022, we received 178 reports of bears getting after chickens. This number has been increasing in recent years with an average of 31 reports per year from 2011 to 2017 and an average of 126 reports per year from 2018 to 2022.”

Comeau urges people to keep their chickens contained inside electric net fencing and to make sure any wire fencing is secure. Use of one-quarter-inch hardware cloth, especially along the bottom of an enclosure will block most small predators. Weasels can get through a one-inch opening. The electric netting, however, is good extra protection even outside the wire netting – especially against black bears which are strong enough to break into most unprotected chicken coops. Several types of electric net fencing are available. The netting is portable and can easily be used with moveable chicken pens.

Here are additional tips to help keep your chickens safe:

- Baiting the fence is necessary to guarantee bears touch the fence with a sensitive part of their body. Apply bacon grease or peanut butter to a spot on the electric fencing..
- Cover the tops of pens with wire or plastic netting to guard against attacks from avian and climbing predators.
- Bury galvanized hardware cloth or netting 12 inches deep around the perimeter of the pen to prevent access by digging predators.
- A motion-activated light to illuminate the coop after dark will discourage some predators. Motion-activated alarms also can help deter them.
- Store poultry feed in a secure indoor location in tight containers, and only feed poultry the amount that can be consumed in one feeding.
- Keep the grill clean, and remove any other attractants such as bird feeders, pet food and garbage.



Vermont Fish and Wildlife urges poultry owners to use electric fencing and follow other precautions to protect their birds from predation.

VTF&W photo by John Hall

Vermont Fish and Wildlife has more helpful information about [Living with Black Bears](#) on their website www.vtfishandwildlife.com. If you are having a problem with bears, please fill out the [Bear Incident Report](#) form on that page.

Vermont's Migratory Game Bird Seasons Are Announced

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release



The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department has announced the 2023-2024 migratory game bird hunting season dates and bag limits.

A printable copy of the Migratory Bird Syllabus can be downloaded from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com) under "Hunt" – "Waterfowl." A printed version also will be available from license agents and post offices in August.

A statewide Vermont open hunting season for resident Canada geese will occur September 1-25. The daily bag limit is five Canada geese in the Connecticut River Zone and eight in the rest of the state during this September season. The purpose of the September season is to help control Vermont's resident Canada goose population prior to the arrival of Canada geese migrating south from Canada.

A second Canada goose hunting season for resident and migrant geese will be held October 14-November 27 in the Lake Champlain and Interior Zones with a daily bag limit of three Canada geese in the Lake Champlain Zone and Interior Vermont Zone.

In the Connecticut River Zone, the second Canada goose season will be October 5-November 3 and November 22-December 21 with a daily bag limit of two Canada geese.

Duck season this fall opens on October 7 in the Lake Champlain and Interior Vermont Zones and on October 5 in the Connecticut River Zone. The Lake Champlain Zone has a split season (October 7-11 and November 4-December 28). The Interior Vermont Zone has a straight season (October 7-December 5). The Connecticut River Zone has a split season (October 5-November 3 and November 22-December 21).

Scaup daily bag limits are a hybrid season this year. The Lake Champlain (October 7-11 & November 4-December 8) and Interior (October 7-November 15) zones allow the harvest of one scaup daily. The remainder of the season you are allowed two scaup daily. Within the Connecticut River Zone, you are allowed only one scaup daily for the entire season.

Vermont's youth waterfowl hunting weekend will be September 23 and 24. Resident and nonresident hunters 17



Vermont 2023 migratory game bird hunting information can be downloaded from the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com) under "Hunt" – "Waterfowl."

VTF&W photo

years of age or younger on those dates may hunt ducks and geese within the Lake Champlain and Interior Vermont Zones during this weekend while accompanied by an adult 18 or older. In the Connecticut River Zone, youth must be 15 years of age or younger on those dates. Both adult and youth must have Vermont hunting licenses. The adult may not hunt or carry a firearm. Youth ages 16 and 17 must have a Vermont Migratory Waterfowl tag and federal duck stamp.

Woodcock hunting season is September 30- November 13 statewide with a three-bird bag limit.

In addition to a hunting license, a waterfowl hunter 16 or older must carry a current federal duck stamp and Vermont Migratory Waterfowl tag to hunt waterfowl in Vermont. Federal stamps are sold at post offices, federal refuges, or online at www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp/e-stamp.php. State Migratory Waterfowl tags are available on Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website and from license agents. The hunter must sign the federal duck stamp.

All migratory game bird (woodcock, ducks and geese) hunters must also be registered with the Harvest Information Program (H.I.P.) in each state they hunt. You can register on Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's website or call toll-free 1-877-306-7091. After providing some basic information, you will receive your annual H.I.P. registration number, which is then recorded on your hunting license.

The hunting season dates, bag limits and related regulations for all migratory birds are set annually within a framework established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and in coordination with New York and New Hampshire.

Waterfowl season dates and bag limits are set in three zones: Lake Champlain, Interior Vermont, and Connecticut River. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department sets the season dates and bag limits for the Connecticut River Zone.

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PUTTING IN THE HOURS

By Ken Jones

We often think about the perfect turkey hunt. You know, he's roosted the night before or maybe not. Maybe you're able to slip under him and it all comes together. He answers your subtle tree calling. Then he flies down and eagerly marches to your gun gobbling all the way. But what about the days when it doesn't play out perfectly?? Which it's been this avid turkey hunters experience is more often the case.

After filling both my tags in Vermont before the season was half over, I had two weeks and tags for Massachusetts and New York left. With the next Saturday being the last day in Massachusetts and having only hunted the first day down there and New York proving to be tougher than most I decided why not give Massachusetts a last day chance.

Public land was my only option, but I'd scouted a couple pieces and had seen signs or heard birds there. I arrived

at the first place just as the sky was lighting up and as I was gathering gear, I heard birds gobbling in two spots but way off. One spot was on private and the others by the time I'd gotten out in their neighborhood, they'd gone quiet, and I was unable to raise a response.

Using a mapping app on my phone I located another public piece a short distance down the road and decided to check it out. There was a nice agricultural field on the bottom of the piece and as I drove to the other end just checking boundaries, I spotted a gobbler walking through the timber and the game was afoot!!

My plan was to position myself in front of this gobbler by circling from below him and moving up to his level. I parked the truck a hundred yards or so above the ag field and when I got out and started into the timber my ear grabbed some noisy crows over the ag field and suddenly, they raised a gobble in the ag field!! The bird I had just seen was above me so now I know there's two birds in

this piece. I quickly blew on a crow call and sure enough, the bird I had seen from the truck reported above me.

Locking the bird on the ag field in the memory bank, I hustled to get up with the bird in the timber. This all happened at 8:00am. After getting where I thought I could do something with this bird in the timber I pleaded to him for an answer but was unable to insight a single gobble from him. Being patient, I called





periodically from that position for nearly two hours with no response.

Now it's 10:00 and my interest turns toward the bird on the ag field. He has been in ear shot of my calling all morning but hasn't answered either. So I was kind of turning this into a little deer scouting mission because this place had all the makings to be a good place to deer hunt in.

Still calling periodically as I worked towards the field, time was working against me and we were headed to the last hour of the Massachusetts season. Having exhausted nearly every call in my vest and about blowing my crow call apart, I decided to try something different. I pulled an 11am owl hoot and he answered it not far off the field!! The only problem was, the edge of the field was the end of the public land.

Realizing I couldn't take a direct approach to this bird, I made my way across the field and into the timber on the other side where I had more room to work. After setting up I called with both a mouth call and the Hanks Game Calls latest glass call the Bloodhound. I didn't get an immediate response but some two minutes after announcing my presence, he gobbled. I responded and he cut me off and had moved significantly toward the field. Another attempt to yelp at him was cut off again.

A minute or so later he gobbled three times on his own and I could tell he was in the field. I knew time wasn't really on my side and I didn't have enough to let him come find me so I eased back to the edge of the field to meet him half way.

As I found a good place to hide and was sitting down, I saw the bird in the field running toward the top of the field. Had I blown it?? Had he seen me, and I'd ruined a really good hunt?? After calling myself a few choice names unfit for print, I picked up the Bloodhound and scratched out a few yelps. Boom!!!

He gobbled. I thought now, just shut up and let him sweat. I looked at the time. 11:20, buddy you got 40 minutes to get here.

The field in front of me went out about 40 yards and dropped into a sort of gully. The grass was littered with dandelions that had gone by and there were a million puffy white balls on the surface. Suddenly one of those white balls was moving frantically in my direction. The white skull cap bobbed and weaved along and then rose into that beautiful white head running down into bright red waddles. A few more steps and he was up out of the gully and closing. I needed him to clear a bit of front cover to get a clear 25 yard shot and it was like we were in each other's heads. He marched to exactly where I needed him and at 11:28 with 32 minutes left in the season I had recorded my first game animal in the state of Massachusetts!!

I wasn't left with a lot of options and maybe that's why I hung it out in there but, I will often do the same thing on home turf if I know there are birds around. Hunting to the bell when you can often leads to that bird that either finds himself alone late in the morning or, he's tired of strutting for the hen that's ignored him all morning and he's looking for a fresh prospect.

Just remember, it never hurts to put in the time.



JUNIOR WATERFOWL HUNTER TRAINING PROGRAM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2023 (8:00am – 4:30pm)

Sportsman's Club of Franklin County

The Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge Junior Waterfowl Hunter Training Program is being offered to young hunters who want to learn more about the sport of waterfowl hunting and experience a high quality waterfowl hunt. The program is offered to youngsters 12 to 17 years of age who have an adult waterfowl hunter to serve as a mentor.

The Junior Waterfowl Hunter Training Program is a joint educational effort of the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl, the Sportsman's Club of Franklin County and volunteers to teach young hunters about waterfowl hunting. The program focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to become responsible, respected individuals who strive to learn all they can about waterfowl and to become knowledgeable in firearms safety, hunter ethics and wildlife conservation.

Mentors and youths who would like to participate in this year's program must pre-register with the Refuge by Friday, August 4. Participation in the program will be limited to 30 enrollees.

All mentors and young hunters must attend the one-day training session on Saturday, August 19, with instruction beginning at 8:00 AM at the Franklin County Sportsman's Club on Route 36 (Maquam Shore Road) in St. Albans. The training session will be held rain or shine, so participants should dress appropriately. All youth participants should bring the shotgun they intend to use for hunting to the training for a patterning session.

Junior Hunters and their mentors, once they complete the training, are awarded exclusive use of several premier hunting areas at Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge for the first four weekends of the waterfowl hunting season. Juniors are only permitted to shoot for the first two weekends, mentors will be permitted to shoot alongside their juniors the last two weekends of the junior hunt. Blind sites and hunting dates for the Jr. Hunters are determined by a lottery conducted at the annual training session.

To register for this year's program, call refuge headquarters at 802-868-4781. Please include the mentor's name and youth's name and age, address and telephone number.

The mission of the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov

Muzzleloader Antlerless Deer Permit Applications Available

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release



The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department reminds hunters that muzzleloader season [antlerless deer permit applications](#) are available its website and from license agents. A link to the information and online applications is on the home page.

Hunting for antlerless deer will be allowed statewide during the archery season. One deer of either sex will be allowed during the October 21-22 youth and novice weekend hunt.

The muzzleloader seasons on October 26-29 and December 2-10 will have antlerless permits available for 19 of Vermont's 21 Wildlife Management Units.

Landowners who post their land may not apply for a landowner priority muzzleloader antlerless deer permit. They are eligible to apply in the regular lottery for an antlerless deer permit.

“Recent management efforts have successfully balanced deer numbers with what the habitat can support in many parts of Vermont,” said Nick Fortin, deer and moose project leader for the Fish and Wildlife Department. “As a result, the goal is now to maintain current deer numbers in most of the state.”

Deer populations in eight wildlife management units, primarily in the

Champlain Valley, remain above their respective population objectives. The goal is to reduce deer numbers in those areas.”

The deadline to apply for a muzzleloader antlerless deer permit is August 2. The lottery drawing for permits is scheduled for September 14.

Vermont's muzzleloader season antlerless deer hunting permit applications are available on Vermont Fish and Wildlife's website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com).

VTF&W photo



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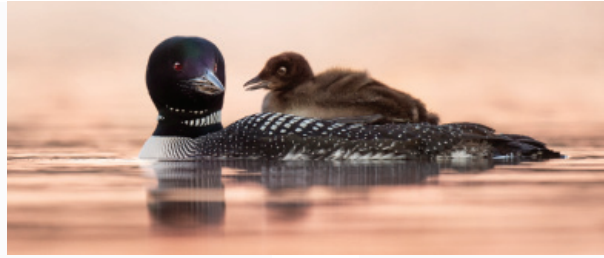
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Protect Nesting Loons and Loon Chicks

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

Few birding experiences rival hearing the haunting call of the loon or seeing them glide by in protected coves on a lake. However, for the birds' protection, Vermont Fish and Wildlife is asking boaters and anglers to enjoy loons from a safe distance this summer.



“Loons were removed from Vermont’s endangered species list in 2005, but they face continued threats from human disturbance during the breeding season and ingestion of fishing gear,” said Rosalind Renfrew, wildlife biologist with Vermont Fish and Wildlife.

“Many areas where loons nest on Vermont’s lakes are surrounded by signs reminding people to give loons the space they need, but not all nesting areas are marked. We’re asking people to enjoy loons from a distance rather than approaching them, whether you are in a boat or on shore.”

Renfrew also reminds people to avoid using lead fishing tackle. Every year Vermont loons die from lead poisoning after swallowing fishing tackle. Lead sinkers weighing one-half ounce or less are prohibited in Vermont, but larger tackle still has the capacity to slough off lead into the environment over time. Renfrew also recommends anglers to be careful to not attract loons to their bait and lures, and especially to not leave any fishing line behind as it can entangle and kill loons.

Eric Hanson, biologist with the Vermont Loon Conservation Project and Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE), asks anglers to reel in for a few minutes if loons are diving nearby. To give anglers a place to discard their lead tackle, VCE will be placing collection tubes for lead tackle and discarded fishing line at over 20 boat access areas beginning this summer. VCE coordinates the loon project in partnership with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department.

Hanson and his colleagues monitor Vermont’s loon population and have put out game cameras around loon nests to monitor the behavior of people around them. Hanson says most people are respectful of nesting loons

and give them space, but people sometimes inadvertently harm loons without meaning to.

“Loon chicks can be difficult to see, so we ask motorboaters to note where loon families are and to avoid those areas,” said Hanson. “We also ask that motorboaters obey ‘no wake’ laws within 200 feet of shorelines because boat wakes can flood and destroy shoreline loon nests.”

As Vermont’s loon population continues to increase and canoeing and kayaking continues to become more popular, there is greater potential for people to come into conflict with loons. Hanson reminds boaters to avoid pursuing loons in a canoe or kayak, especially loons with young.

“Occasionally a loon will be curious and approach people, and if that happens, just enjoy it,” said Hanson. “However, loons that are constantly swimming away from you are stressed and may abandon their young if they feel they are in danger.”

Hanson also urges shoreline property owners to maintain appropriate habitat for loons, including shrubby and forested areas along shorelines, where loons can nest. Having shrubs and trees instead of lawns along shorelines also improves water quality which is essential for healthy lakes, aquatic insects, fish eggs, fish, and loons.

Volunteers interested in monitoring loons for the Loon Conservation Project should contact Hanson at loon@vtecostudies.org. Volunteers can monitor lakes all summer long with a focus on lakes with loon pairs and nesting.

Volunteers can also survey one or two lakes on [Loon-watch Day](#), being held on July 15 this year, between 8 and 9 a.m. The goal is to survey all lakes greater than 20 acres at the same time, which provides a population count and checks on small lakes that are surveyed less often during the rest of year.

Trap Talk

By Randy Barrows

I hope all is well with everyone. Summer is finally here and it's hot and wet. I cannot wait for the cool weather again. I am not a high heat fan, thank God for air conditioners.

If you are a nuisance trapper you must be busy. My phones rings many times a day, same story, skunk under deck, woodchucks in the garden and coons in the coop. WE are finally starting to see the results of diminished fur trapping.

The deadline for submitting comments to the Fish and Wildlife reference upcoming trapping regulations passed June 30th. By attending the Board meetings there is still a chance to be heard.

I know some of you are saying boy this guy is a broken record, and I agree. I also feel if these rules are passed trapping as we know it will forever change in Vermont. So here goes!

The new proposals are as follow: all base plates must feature a center mount chain with swivel and free moving chains that allow mobility for animals caught, all traps must have adjustable pan tension, traps must be anchored with a minimum 12 inches of chain and a maximum of 18 inches, foothold traps must be padded or offset, laminated, or have jaws with a minimum thickness of 5/16s of a inch, no foothold trap with a spread of 61/4 inches. Also if you are using any type of bait it has to be covered at the time the trap is set, and no bait coni bear traps are allowed

on the ground, but can be used five feet above the ground. Oni bear traps placed on the ground have to have the triggers recessed 12 inches from the opening.

Now my question to all of you is..... are you currently compliant? I can tell you right now I am not close. Of the hundreds of traps I own I have one trap with offset jaws and that is only for teaching purposes.

As far as I am concerned these new laws are going to create issues for all sportsmen and women in Vermont. Do you turkey hunt, duck hunt, partridge hunt, rabbit hunt??? How much small game will never ss adulthood with the huge increase in predators on the planet??

I , for one, will not change a single trap that I own. I have trapped with these traps for 55 years and they work fine.

The simple fact that once a year we must listen to POW regurgitate their yearly regurgitations of fact less rhetoric is why we are where we are at. They do not need to submit studies or proof of their yak, but we must defend our right. Year after year this happens. Last year they got the attention of the folks of our Natural resources committee under the golden dome, 6 folks who know nothing about a trap or trapping to get to where we are today.

Everyone last year said if we worked with these folks, they will leave us alone. I laughed out loud when I heard this. Before we even hammered out

these new regs the same group filed a new bill to END ALL TRAPPING PERIOD!!!

So, I am sitting back, being very vocal, waiting to see how this will all sugar out. Hopefully the fish and wildlife board will see through the smoke and change nothing.

If this does not happen, I will sit back and remember how much fun I had trapping for 55 years, and laugh my ass off as I watch the countryside get overrun with sick critters due to over population. I have contact with many other trappers who feel the same as I do and will stop trapping.

Guess the antis win, lookout hunters, you are next!!

I will close now before I say something I regret if I have not already. Sorry I am so passionate about trapping. Have a good summer.

WRITERS WANTED



Have you always wanted to write for an outdoor publication? Now is your chance.

Contact
vermontsportingjournal@gmail.com

Vermont Turkey Brood Survey Starts July 1

VERMONT FISH & WILDLIFE - Press Release

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is seeking the public's help with monitoring wild turkeys.

Since 2007, the department has run an annual online survey in August for reporting turkey broods. Beginning in 2021, the survey was expanded to include the month of July. The use of "citizen scientists" in this way facilitates the department's ability to collect important turkey population and productivity data from all corners of the state.

If you see a flock of turkeys in Vermont during July and August, the department asks you to go to the turkey brood survey on its website (www.vtfishandwildlife.com) and report your observations, including where and when you observed the turkeys with the number of adult and young turkeys you observed. The value of the data collected improves when more people partici-

pate.

"Information gathered from this survey helps us monitor long-term trends in the productivity of Vermont's wild turkey population," said Vermont Fish and Wildlife's turkey biologist Chris Bernier. "It also helps us assess the impacts of spring weather on the survival of poults and adult turkeys which is an important consideration in the management of turkeys."

"We monitor and manage wild turkey numbers annually in order to maintain a healthy, abundant and sustainable population of these iconic and ecologically significant birds throughout the state," added Bernier.

"Please help us scientifically manage the turkey population by reporting your Vermont turkey sightings during July and August."



during the month to provide information about their sightings via a survey on the department's website.

Turkey Season 2023 Recap

by Brett Ladeau

Keeping this month's article short, sweet, and to the point. The 2023 spring turkey season was absolutely fantastic.

Started the season in Virginia with my good friend Jeff Hoke. The third visit was the charm. We hunted some wonderful public land that Jeff had scouted some birds on and it turned out to be a great hunt.

Hunted with TJ and Chase for a successful Maryland youth hunt with our friend Ryan. The next day found me in North Carolina where I hunted with Matt Van Cise and Sandy Brady. An afternoon hunt turned out perfect and I got my first North Carolina turkey. The story is I woke up from a woods nap with turkey in front of me and got lucky.

After a travel day I hunted with a new friend Nathan Cox and just about the time we were calling it quits we saw a turkey and about 20 minutes later I was putting a tag on my second North Carolina turkey, and a mountain bird at that.

Jeff and I headed to Oklahoma and Kansas for a few days and we were both fortunate to get a couple of beautiful Rio's in Oklahoma, and I got to call one on for Jeff in Kansas.

Massachusetts produced two birds on a one-day hunt with Justin Gladu. He had the birds figured out and we made short work of it. The most memorable aspect of the hunt was calling the second bird in with a wingbone Carl LaRue, from Virginia, made me with some bones of given him. When I switched to the wingbone the response from the hen and longbeards ramped up considerably.

Vermont produced some awesome hunts with friends and family. I was able to fill both tags by mid-season while assisting on some other successful hunts. They are all pretty memorable but my hunt with Sydney was one for the ages. Not much of a battle but an off the roost hunt that couldn't have happened any better if I had written the script.

New Hampshire was terrific as well. After an exciting youth hunt with TJ and Chase I helped a friend from Colorado check New Hampshire of his list. He ended up tagging 2 birds over the course of the same morning. I was fortunate and filled both my New Hampshire tags. I usually save one for a fall hunt but I will be gone much of the fall season so I decided to take advantage of the opportunity. All the New Hampshire hunts were memorable as well. Most with hard gobbling and responsive birds.

Had two great days in New York this season as well. One early and one late season. Matt Van Cise and I hunted with TJ Jordan and were on birds all morning. Matt filled a tag early and I got mine late in the morning. The late season I spent a day with TJ, Chris, and Chris's son Chase. Chase ended up having an epic hunt with TJ and punched his tag in the last our or so of our hunt. A beautiful long spurred stud too.

I snuck back to Maryland to hunt with my friend Mel, who I met through my best friend from High School. I arrived on a Thursday for an afternoon hunt that lasted about 15 minutes. We set up on a known travel area and barely had time to get set up before we had birds responding to the call. The next morning we doubled on a great off the roost hunt.

I made a mad dash to Ohio to take advantage of the last weekend of their North Zone hunt. Hunted with Brett Berry and his nephew Griffin. Ended up calling in a late season flock and filled my tag on the last day.

The last several years I've finished my season in Maine around the first weekend in June. This year was no exception. Hunted with Rugged Country Guide Service again this year. Jeff and I had a hard time shooting straight but both ended up getting fine June longbeards.

That recap was a little longer than I thought but I tried to condense a lot of action into a few paragraphs. To say the spring 2023 season was memorable is an understatement. Looking forward to 2024 already.

Vermont Part I



Vermont Part II



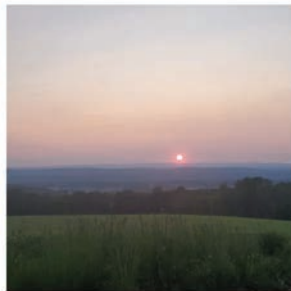
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