



Ducks, Etc...



*Connecticut Waterfowlers Association
Fall 2017 Newsletter*

President's Message:

CWA Website

If you have not been to our Website recently, please make a visit! It is dramatically improved and has a lot of information of interest to CWA supporters and waterfowlers, in general! There many new features including a Current News section, Members Photos, a list of upcoming CWA events, the forms for the Mentor Program, past Newsletters and much more. You can now renew Memberships and pay with a credit card online. Also, you can purchase the new super-cool CWA T-shirts and hats! Coming soon will be a Classifieds page and a Connecticut Carver's page featuring our state's best decoy carvers. Please check it out! (all this fine work has been accomplished by our new Web Master, Joe Alix. If you or someone you know needs Website development and/or maintenance, please contact Joe at joe@joesportshop.com).

If you would like to submit a short article or photos, please send them to gchasko@snet.net.

New Black Duck Bag Limit

I'm sure most readers are already aware that the Black Duck bag limit has been increased from one to two. Some CWA members have expressed concern about this change. Keep in mind that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is typically very conservative about increasing bag limits. All data suggest that Black Duck population numbers are limited by available habitat, not harvest. Also, typically when bag limits are

increased from one to two birds, harvest increases around 30%. It could be a little bit higher for Black Ducks, especially since Mallard populations have declined in recent years. The effect of this regulatory change will be closely monitored by the Feds and states and adjusted, if necessary. You can help in these monitoring efforts by reporting any banded birds you harvest and, if you are selected to participate in the Federal harvest questionnaire or parts survey, please do so!

Here's wishing all a safe and fun season! See you out there!

Greg Chasko
President, CWA





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Waterfowl Hacks

Waterfowlers! Put Your Name on Your Decoys!

For many years I have been putting my name and cell phone number on my decoys and other waterfowling gear. This helps avoid confusion when you hunt with your buddies and you have the same decoys, stools, blind bags and other gear.

With decoys, I write my name and phone number on the bottom with a permanent felt marker. It lasts for years. On two occasions, I have had lost decoys returned to me!

The first time was several years ago when unbeknownst to me, I knocked a couple of decoys overboard while flailing around in my boat in the dark trying to get a reluctant outboard to run. Those decoys were later found by CWA member Rich Chmiel. We did not know each other at that time, but he recognized my name as a DEP biologist. Rich did know Paul Capotosto (also a DEP employee) and contacted him and I got my decoys back!

The second time, I was hunting a small creek from the shore, setting and retrieving the dekes by hand. I had the decoys tied short as I was in

shallow water. Well, I had one tied too short and it got away from me. A couple of weeks later, I answered the phone and on the other end was a young man (a teen-ager) who found the decoy! After, a pleasant conversation, I discovered that he was a novice hunter with very little waterfowling gear. Yet he was kind enough to volunteer to return the fancy GHG decoy instead of simply adding it to his meager spread. So, while a single decoy was hardly worth the time and fuel to go to his house and pick it up, I did it anyway. I brought and gave him a dozen of some old, but decent decoys. I wanted him to learn that no good deed goes unrewarded! I got my own reward seeing the huge grin on his face when I gave him those old dekes.

Now, if the guy that found my six new beautiful black duck decoys that I left at a launch on the Connecticut River recently, would just give me a call, I'd be three for three!



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Recent Events



"Living Legend" Billy Wolf, who won a prize in Class A, gets ready to crush another clay!



Looks like the shooter is going for the right bird first!



High overall female shooter Jackie Alix gets ready to smoke another target!



Ashley Weekly receives her prize for her fine shooting!

Connecticut Hunting & Fishing Day

Saturday September 23 10AM to 4PM

- Hunting & Trapping Tips
- Fishing & Boating Displays
- Archery Shooting
- Fly-tying and Casting
- Hunting & Fishing Clubs
- Conservation Organizations
- Birds of Prey
- Kid's Activities
- Fish & Wildlife Exhibits
- Equipment Vendors
- Laser shot, Dart gun, Blow pipe
- BB Gun Shooting Range
- Hunting Dog Demonstrations

The Connecticut Waterfowlers Association had several visitors to its booth at the Annual DEEP National Hunting and Fishing Day, held at



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Cabela's on Saturday, September 23, 2017. CWA members Rich Chmiel and Pete Revicki, both excellent decoy carvers, put on a carving demonstration that garnered a lot of attention. It was a fun day and our booth was visited by several folks, including some long-time CWA members. This day is a fun event with a lot of activities! Watch CWA's website for next year's date (in September) and come on out and have some fun!



The scene at Cabela's.



Greg at work.



CWA in conjunction with the Connecticut DEEP's Wildlife Division, conducted a Waterfowl Hunter Training Day on September, 10, 2017 at Sessions Woods WMA in Burlington. Twenty-six people signed up, eleven actually showed up. Despite the low attendance, the event went very well. Attendees were mostly folks in their mid-twenties, and several had some waterfowl hunting experience. As a result, there were a lot of good questions and discussions. It was a fun morning and all attendees went home with some used, but serviceable decoys, graciously donated by CWA members!



Selling t-shirts.



CWA President Greg Chasko (back facing the camera - his better side!) describes various set-ups for goose decoys.



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Instructor Pete Johnson (back facing camera) describes various aspects of setting duck decoys.



Instructors used the existing duck blind at Sessions Woods Wildlife Management to discuss duck hunting with attendees.



Descriptions of wetland conservation projects conducted in 2017 by the DEEP’s Wildlife Division and other conservation partners.

Lord’s Cove is a 400-acre brackish marsh on the lower Connecticut River in Lyme. A large portion (265 acres) of it is the state-owned, Lord’s Cove Wildlife Management Area (WMA). There are also substantial tracts of private land. It is an important habitat for waterfowl and other water dependent wildlife. Unfortunately, much of it (about 200 acres) now exists as a monoculture of the invasive plant, Phragmites which has very little value for wildlife. A coalition of Partners came together to initiate a Phragmites control project including: CT DEEP, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, the Connecticut River Gateway Commission, the Lyme Land Trust and several private landowners. This coalition has initiated a three-year project to eliminate the Phragmites. The area has been herbicided and mulched this year and will receive “touch up” treatments for the next two years.

The DEEP Wildlife Division’s Wetland Restoration Unit (WRU) also conducted small scale Phragmites control projects this year at Beaver Brook Marsh in People’s State Forest in Barkhamsted and in Greenwich on the Bond Preserve owned by the Greenwich Land Trust. About four acres were treated at each site.



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Specialized equipment used by the WRU to restore and enhance wetlands.

Note that the vehicles with tracks exert very little ground pressure allowing work to be conducted without damaging the surface of the marsh.



The WRU continues to do great work with very few staff.

Projects scheduled to begin in 2018.

At Barn Island WMA in Stonington there is a dike that separates the tidal marshes from Long Island Sound. Water flow into these marshes comes through a series of culverts through the dike. Next year, several faulty culverts will be replaced with new larger diameter pipes to increase flow into the marshes. This will enhance the health of these habitats. The increased tidal flow should also increase the salinity which naturally helps control Phragmites as it cannot tolerate high salinities.

This is a large project that will enhance approximately 142 acres.

CWA is a Partner on a water control structure replacement project scheduled for Papineau Marsh in the Natchaug State Forest in Eastford. The new control structure will better allow water levels to be controlled to benefit waterfowl and other wildlife at the 26-acre marsh.

Similarly, a control structure project will occur at the 25 acre Del Reeves Marsh in the Meshomoc Sate Forest in Glastonbury. If there is a need for additional funding for this project, CWA stands ready to support it!

These are all great projects that benefit waterfowl!



For Sale: 13 1/2-foot Southbay Duck Boat with Cox trailer. Many extras. No motor. \$2,500.00. Contact Richard Cash 860-442-1644 or scash343@aol.com