



Ducks, Etc...



*Connecticut Waterfowl Association
Fall 2019 Newsletter*

President's Message

Holiday Greetings to all CWA members!

I hope you enjoy this Fall 2019 issue of Ducks Etc... Please take a look at the “before” and “after” photos from a recent project in Nehantic State Forest in Lyme. The project entailed installing a water-control structure to better manage water levels to benefit waterfowl and other wildlife. The CWA and the Connecticut Chapter of Delta Waterfowl co-funded the cost of project materials that were installed by the DEEP Wildlife Division's Wetland Habitat and Mosquito Management Program. Although the control structure may need a minor adjustment, I think the photos (Page 3) clearly illustrate the dramatic improvement in habitat!

For more news about Migratory Bird Conservation efforts in Connecticut, take a gander at the detailed report in the Conservation News section. You will only get this type of information from the CWA, Connecticut's waterfowl organization!

Also, in this issue, learn about the CWA's expanded efforts with the Junior Duck Stamp Program. We are ambitiously setting out to greatly increase participation of schools in the art aspect of the Program, but also adding wetland conservation and waterfowl biology education to schools' curricula. We believe this is the best effort our organization can make to energize youth to become conservation-minded adults. Let's hope it helps!

Finally, I want to thank all members for your continuing support of the CWA! We are making

substantial positive impacts on conservation in Connecticut!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all! And, don't forget to buy a new license and state Duck Stamp by January 1, 2020.

Cheers!

Greg Chasko
President, CWA

Connecticut Conservation News for Migratory Birds



During 2019, CT DEEP's Waterfowl and Wetland Programs have been working on a wide variety of projects. They range from collecting data on single species to protecting tidal marshes.

Waterfowl Program Highlights

The Waterfowl Program has focused its attention on Canada geese, wood ducks, woodcock, and clapper rails. Canada goose banding is an annual



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event. In 2019, Program staff and volunteers, including several from CWA, captured 1,565 geese (931 – New Bands; 634 – Recaptures) at 31 unique sites. To better understand NAP goose migration and harvest, DEEP assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canada Wildlife Service with capturing, banding, and nano tagging geese on Prince Edward Island.

Wood duck nest box monitoring continues to be a priority, with staff assessing usage and productivity. CWA has played a major role in annually constructing new boxes to replace those that are in disrepair.

Woodcock populations were assessed by conducting spring singing ground survey routes. Unfortunately, both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state surveys show a gradual, but steady decline in this species. To help combat this decline, the Wildlife Division, is developing a new management plan for Franklin Swamp WMA, which will focus on creating woodcock habitat. The plan calls for several forest clear-cuts, which will be spaced at 5 to 7-year intervals to ensure long-term habitat availability. Work on this project should begin in 2020.

In an effort to gather migratory staging locations and survival information, clapper rails were captured and fitted with nanotags. These devices and strategic placement of monitoring towers allow biologists to track rail travel routes during their annual migration.

Each spring, Wildlife Division staff sample wetland plots across the state to assess CT's annual waterfowl productivity. These surveys

provide essential data to make informed waterfowl management decisions.

The Wildlife Division, UConn and volunteers are working on a new CT Bird Atlas Project designed to map all bird species in the state during both the nesting and non-nesting seasons.



CWA recently provided funding for the purchase of a DR mower. This equipment has been used to remove vegetation on dike impoundments at 17 WMAs. This assists with maintaining the integrity of dikes and improves access to impoundment control structures that enhance the ability to manage impoundment water levels.



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Wetland Habitat and Mosquito Management (WHAMM) Program Highlights:

Phragmites control continues several areas. Of particular interest is the Lord's Cove WMA and surrounding marsh in Lyme. Over 200 acres of invasive phragmites have had herbicide applied and mowed over the past 3 years by the WHAMM Program and private applicators in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lyme Land Trust, Gateway Commission, Potopaug Gun Club and several private landowners. This beautiful section of the lower Connecticut River is home to bald eagles, rails, several species of ducks and wading birds, and 5 state-listed plant species. Cooperative efforts to keep the phragmites under control will continue.

Nehantic Impoundment Project One Year Later

The project entailed installing a water control structure that flooded the area and allowed water levels to be managed to optimize the growth of aquatic vegetation to benefit waterfowl and other water-dependent wildlife.

Before the installation, the marsh had this level of water.



In December 2019, the water level has been significantly raised.





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Junior Duck Stamp



“Getting the Word Out”

by

Tom Lewoc Jr.

On October 24th 2019, the Connecticut Waterfowlers Association (CWA) had an amazing opportunity to work with Art Teachers at the 2019 Connecticut Art Education Association Conference! The workshop was entitled: “Art and Conservation - The Junior Duck Stamp Program” and helped educators develop lesson plans that would incorporate both artwork and wetland conservation education associated with the Junior Duck Stamp (JDS) program into their classroom activities. The conference also served as an opportunity to unveil the changes coming to the CT Duck Stamp Program. Beginning in 2021, the CT Duck Stamp will be the winner of the Junior Duck Stamp Contest! Thus, a student in CT will provide the artwork featured on the 2021 State stamp and will also be submitted as the State representative and entrant into the Federal Junior Duck stamp contest! The workshop provided a great

opportunity for the CWA to work directly with teachers and educational leaders from throughout the State to explain the history of the contest and, hopefully, greatly increase the number of schools that participate.

Attendees began the day with the history behind the creation of the first Federal Duck Stamp (with the artwork of Jay “Ding” Darling) which was required by all waterfowl hunters as a means of generating funding towards conservation. Moving on, the presentation showed how the annual process evolved from “hand-picked” artists to become a national contest where individuals from around the country could submit their artwork for consideration. Eventually, the individual states began to take interest and eventually also created their own stamps as well as a “Junior” stamp program, to get students and future generations interested and involved with conservation (while generating funds in state)!

From the classroom perspective, teachers are required to follow specific state or federal guidelines known as “content standards” which are implemented into the daily lesson plans. Attendees provided great feedback as to how the classroom concepts of: landscape, shape, structure/form, and medium can all serve as a means of incorporating and promoting the JDS program at their schools. More importantly the Junior Duck Stamp program presentation opened doors into how schools can create interdisciplinary opportunities where the Art classrooms can work with Biology classes (Ecology, life cycles, etc.), Career and Technology Education classes (Wood duck Box Building), Writing, and Business classes (Funding saved for



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Conservation) to look at how the Junior Duck Stamp program can benefit students from a variety of different perspectives.

Fundamentally the workshop provided a phenomenal way for the CWA to illustrate that the goal of the CT duck stamp program is to educate students about waterfowl and wetlands, ultimately resulting in increased support and funding for conservation in CT! What better way to foster this idea than to have a CT STUDENT serve as the 2021 ambassador for the featured artwork! All in all, the workshop helped get the ball rolling on spreading the word and bringing in new schools into the CT Junior Duck Stamp contest. Even if students are not submitting artwork for this year's contest it was great to work with teachers to open the door for communication and provide the understanding that the revenue generated from the sale of the CT stamp provides funding so that the future generations (our current students) can have the opportunity to experience the outdoors as we do today! Even though hunters are the largest contributors to the revenue (due the required purchase for waterfowl hunting), ANYONE can help the cause by buying a stamp! This includes: local bird watchers, conservation minded individuals, hikers, bikers, non-hunting collectors of waterfowl stamps and prints, and even teachers!

CWA Coming Events

Second Annual All Members Meeting

In March, 2019 the CWA held its first ever "All Members Meeting." The event was well attended and a great success! So, we are going to do it again. It will be held in the conference rooms at Cabela's in East Hartford on Saturday, February 22, 2020 beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending when we are all talked out! A free lunch will be provided by CWA at noon. This event is free to all current members and any prospective members. All attendees will receive 10 free tickets that can be used for raffle prizes at our Annual Fund-Raising Banquet to be held on May 3, 2020 at the Westbrook Elks Club.

The goal of this meeting is to encourage more participation in CWA from members so that we can further our mission to conserve wetlands and to protect the interests of waterfowl hunters. The morning will include a presentation from Roger Wolfe, the Leader of the DEEP Wildlife Division's Wetland Habitat and Mosquito Management (WHAMM – love that acronym!) Program.

CWA will seek input from attendees on several topics and offer the opportunity for all to express their ideas on anything related to waterfowl in Connecticut. Also, any input from members on potential habitat improvement projects or other efforts that will improve waterfowl hunting in Connecticut will be appreciated!

Please plan on attending and participating, we need you input! Please RSVP to the CWA email, ctwaterfowlers@gmail.com to let us know if you



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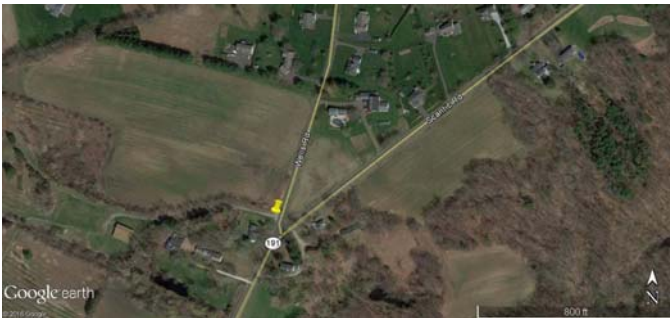
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plan to attend and what issues you would like to discuss! Seating is limited, please respond ASAP.

CWA Wood Duck Box Building Day

The CWA will hold its Annual Box Building Day on Saturday, March 14, 2020 in the Dearborn Barn at the Flaherty Field Trial Area in East Windsor. Work will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end early afternoon.

As always, folks should bring a cordless drill/screwdriver, a #2 Phillips bit and a hammer. Everything else will be provided by the DEEP Wildlife Division.



Please do NOT go to the Flaherty main gate. The entrance to the Dearborn Barn is off Wells Road. Just north of the intersection of Wells Road and Scantic Road Route 191, there is a dirt road between the white house (82 Scantic Road) and a cornfield. Turn onto it and follow to the end and you will arrive at the barn. See the attached map.

Hope to see you there!

Events

- Annual All Members Meeting – February 22, 2020. 10:00am Cabela's, East Hartford.
- Wood Duck Box Building Day – Saturday, March 14, 2020. 9:00 am Dearborn Barn, Flaherty Field Trial Area, East Windsor.
- Northeast Hunting and Fishing Show – March 20-22, 2020. Convention Center in Hartford. Stop by and visit at the CWA booth! Better yet, sign up to help at the booth. If you are interested in volunteering some time, contact us via email, ctwaterfowlers@gmail.com.
- The Junior Duck Stamp Contest Judging will take place in the Meeting Room at the Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area in Burlington on Monday, March 23, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. All CWA members are welcome to attend.
- CWA Annual Fund-Raising Banquet – May 3, 2020. Westbrook Elks Lodge in Westbrook. This is CWA's biggest fund-raising event of the year! Mark your calendar now!
1:00 - 6:00 pm; dinner served at 2:30 pm