



Ducks, Etc...



Connecticut Waterfowlers Association Winter 2018 Newsletter

President's Message

On January 20, 2018, Connecticut's waterfowl hunting community lost two of its members in a tragic boating accident. Joseph Formica Jr., 33 of East Haddam and Joseph Grzelak 31, of Griswold both died. Justin Besade, 29, of Uncasville survived.

There was a small craft warning that day for the coast, and although the wind was mild early, it came up to a sustained 20-30 by late morning. This sad event serves as a reminder of the caution that all waterfowlers need to take while participating in our passion using boats. The Connecticut Migratory Bird Hunting Guide had a new section this year stressing steps to take while hunting on the water. It was excellent. However, I would add that all cold weather hunters should have a rescue bag in their boats that includes, at least: towels, clothing, fire starting materials and space blankets. And, obviously, PFD's should be worn at all times while on the water.

The risk of hypothermia cannot be overstated. Several years ago, a young friend called me early in the morning saying "I need your help! I fell in setting decoys. Can you meet me at the boat launch and bring me towels and clothes?" I said "I'll be right there." He only had to go about 1/2 mile in the boat. By the time I got to the launch, he had made it there safely, and was in his truck drying out. I noticed his boat on the ramp, the engine still down and getting scraped by movement from waves. My friend said, "When I got to the launch, I was delirious and did not have the strength to lift the engine." He was clearly in

the early stages of hypothermia. This from a big strong young man in his early twenties. He fell in 2 feet of water and was never completely immersed, he just got wet underneath his waders! It was cold (in the twenties, but not extreme). The point is, we all need to be extremely cautious hunting in cold weather!

Donations can be made in memory of the hunters. For Joe Formica, an account has been set up for his son Giovanni, at Charter Oak Federal Credit Union, 1055 Hartford Turnpike, Waterford, CT 06385. Joe Grzelak's family asked that memorial donations be made to either Boy Scout Troop 20 of Jewett City, CT 06351 or to the Griswold Booster Club, 267 Slater Ave., Griswoldville, CT 06109. The CWA has made substantial donations in memory of both Joes.

Greg Chasko
President



CHET RENESON FRAMED ORIGINAL PAINTING RAFFLE

Chet has been a long-time supporter of CWA. This year, he kindly donated a full-sized (36" X



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24") ORIGINAL painting to CWA to be used for a raffle to benefit wetland conservation in Connecticut! Note that there will be no prints made of this painting. Reneson originals sell for thousands of dollars! Other Chet Reneson originals can be found [here](#).

Only 100 raffle tickets will be sold, first come, first served! Tickets are \$50.00/apiece. Buy now before they are sold out!

Tickets can be purchased online at CWA's Website (www.ctwaterfowlers.org) or you can send checks to: CWA, 29 Bower Hill Road, Oxford, CT 06478. The winning ticket will be drawn at CWA's Annual Banquet, April 15, 2018. Winner need not be present.



Connecticut Conservation News

The DEEP's Wildlife Division (WD) is moving closer to implementing replacing culverts in the dikes at Barn Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Stonington. This project is funded by a

federal North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. Hopefully, work will begin this summer to replace the old undersized culverts with new larger ones. This will enhance tidal flow and improve the health of the marshes behind the dikes. The additional flow of salt water will also help provide natural control of Phragmites, as the reed cannot tolerate high salinity.

The WD is seeking to hire additional staff including a 3-year appointment of a Wetland Biologist who would work on the many state-owned inland impoundments and assist with wetland permit work and GIS work. This position would be funded 1/3 through state Duck Stamp funds and 2/3's by federal Pittman-Robertson funds. The WD is also creating a 5-year contract with Ducks Unlimited to accomplish a variety of wetland conservation projects. This would be funded by state Duck Stamp funds.

These efforts represent wise use of Duck Stamp funding. Also, encumbering these monies now could avoid a future "sweep" of those funds by the Legislature, as has happened previously.

Also, these efforts will help offset the Wildlife Division's WHAMM (Wetlands Habitat and Mosquito Management) Program loss of personnel. WHAMM has gone from seven full-time employees to three in recent years! Yet, the Program keeps moving ahead. They were part of a group of Conservation partners that recently completed the first year of treatment of Phragmites in Lord's Cove WMA in Lyme. Typically, when an area is treated for Phragmites control, the first year gets most of it, but follow-up treatment of small patches is usually required



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for the following two years. WHAMM also completed several small Phragmites control projects throughout the state. This coming year they will be working on a project to clear clogged channels at Haddam Meadows State Park in Haddam to facilitate the northern pike breeding program. This area is also of great value to waterfowl.

An ambitious effort involving the WD and several Conservation Partners, "The CT Bird Atlas Project" will kick off this spring. This Project will both document the distribution of breeding, wintering, and migrating birds across the state and provide population estimates for most species. The last Atlas effort goes all the way back to the mid-1980s, so this project is long overdue. Of interest to waterfowlers, is that this project will identify the status of some of the rare duck breeders in Connecticut, such as blue-winged teal, green-winged teal and gadwall. If you are a birder, or anyone in your family, please consider volunteering to help by going to <http://www.ctbirdatlas.org/> and signing up.



Coming Events

- March 15, 2018 - Deadline for submissions for the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest.
- March 15, 2018 - Deadline for EARLY PURCHASE Banquet Tickets.
- March 15, 2018 – CWA Board Meeting at Cabela's in East Hartford.
- March 21, 2018 - Judging for the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest at Cabela's in East Hartford.
- April 15, 2018 - CWA Annual Fund Raiser Banquet at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville.
- September 9, 2018 - Annual Waterfowl Hunter Training Day.
- October 7, 2018 - Sporting Clays Shoot Guilford Sportsmen's Association



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April 15, 2018 - CWA Annual Fund Raiser Banquet Aqua Turf in Plantsville

You are invited to attend the premiere waterfowl banquet in Connecticut! Enjoy an afternoon with a great group of waterfowlers and help CWA continue its 51-year history of raising and spending funds for wetland conservation in Connecticut!

Our raffle items are AWESOME!

- **Several hand carved decoys by the best carvers, including several outstanding Connecticut carvers!**
- **Several quality firearms!**
- **Beautiful prints from top artists including Connecticut's own Chet Reneson!**
- **Great waterfowl and other hunting gear from top manufacturers!**

The winner of the raffle for the Chet Reneson ORIGINAL painting will be announced!

And you will experience the Aqua-Turf's fine dining with a choice of NY Strip Sirloin or Chicken Valdestone, beer and wine included with your purchase of a banquet ticket!

Register through our web site or use the banquet form at the end of this newsletter. Early registration ends march 15th.



Migratory Bird Hunting Season Regulations Meeting

**Saturday, March 31, 2018; 2 PM - 4 PM
Franklin Swamp WMA
391 Route 32, North Franklin.**

The meeting provides interested parties an opportunity to comment on the proposed hunting season regulations for the 2018-2019 migratory bird seasons. DEEP will present proposed regulations and take all public comments. Final hunting season dates will be formulated shortly after the comments are compiled and evaluated. Hunters are reminded that DEEP accepts comments on the migratory bird hunting regulations year round; however, this meeting serves to finalize the regulations and is held immediately after the federal frameworks are set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



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on October 7th. We need 50 shooters. Non-CWA members receive a CWA Regular membership through April 15, 2019 and existing members have their membership extended to April 15, 2020!

Website: Please be sure to check out CWA's greatly improved Website! There are regular updates on items of interest to waterfowl hunters in the News section and elsewhere. Take advantage of our Marketplace ads to sell anything related to the outdoors. A Marketplace ad recently resulted in the sale of a duck boat. Your ad will reach a targeted and interested audience!

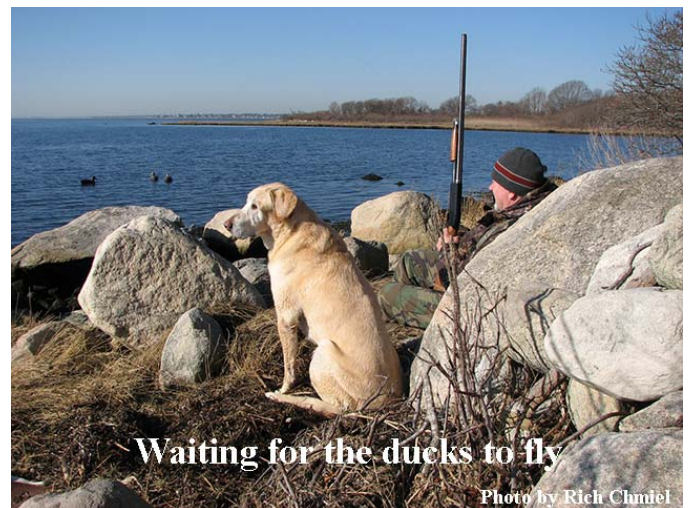
Decoy carvers: Please take advantage of the new "Carvers" page on the Website. Visit there for details. Artists are welcome also.

Testimonials: A new section will soon be added containing Testimonials from CWA members or anyone wishing to express thanks for efforts that CWA has made on their behalf. Feel free to submit yours!

Elections: CWA's Nomination Board is working on a slate of candidates for Officers and Board of Directions for the July 1, 2018 election date. Contact CWA officers if you are interested or would like to nominate someone. (see Website for contact info)

Sporting Clays Fun Shoot: Please go to the Members Surveys page on our web site and indicate whether you are planning to participate

CWA Member Photos





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Louie the lab fetches some pheasants.

Photo by Rich Chmiel

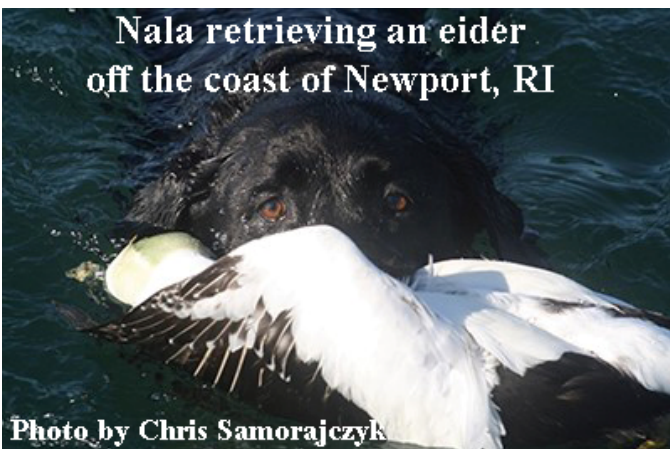


Plump Wood Ducks and fine wine are a great combination!

Photo by Rick Boucher

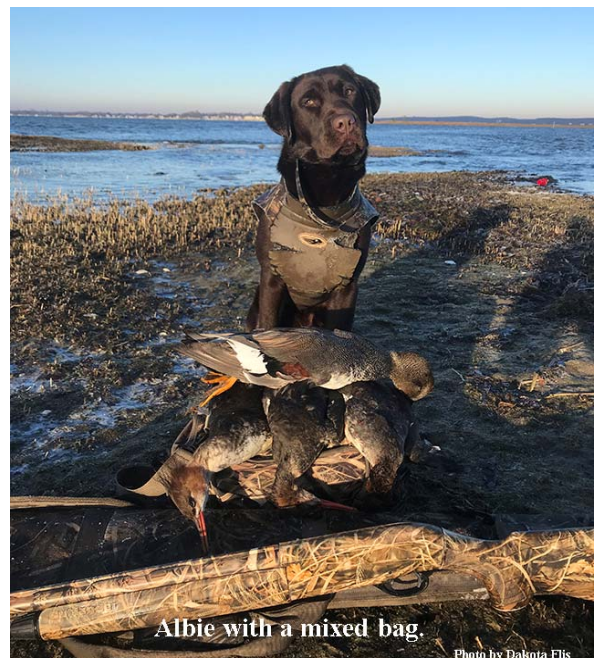


CWA Members, Greg Chasko, the handsome one on the left, and Rick Boucher, do their inept best to protect sensitive arctic ecosystems from damage by over-populations of snow geese.



Nala retrieving an eider
off the coast of Newport, RI

Photo by Chris Samorajczyk



Albie with a mixed bag.

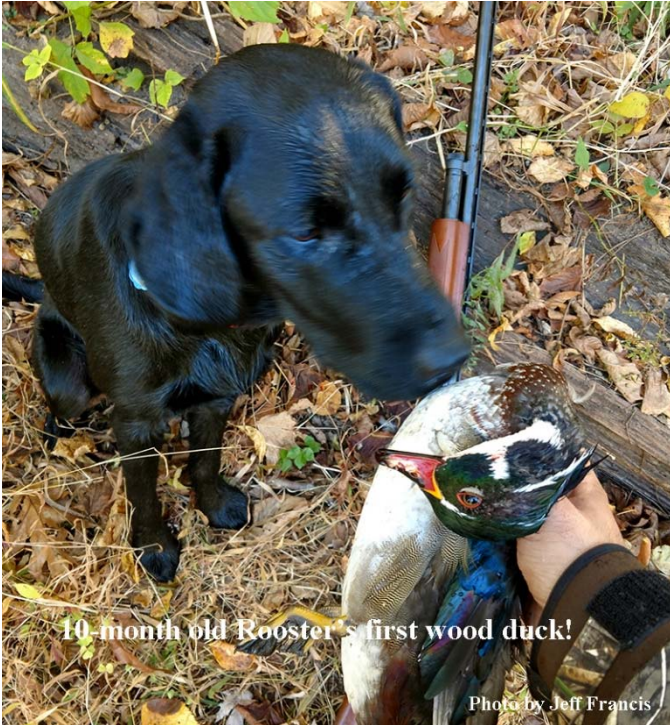
Photo by Dakota Flis



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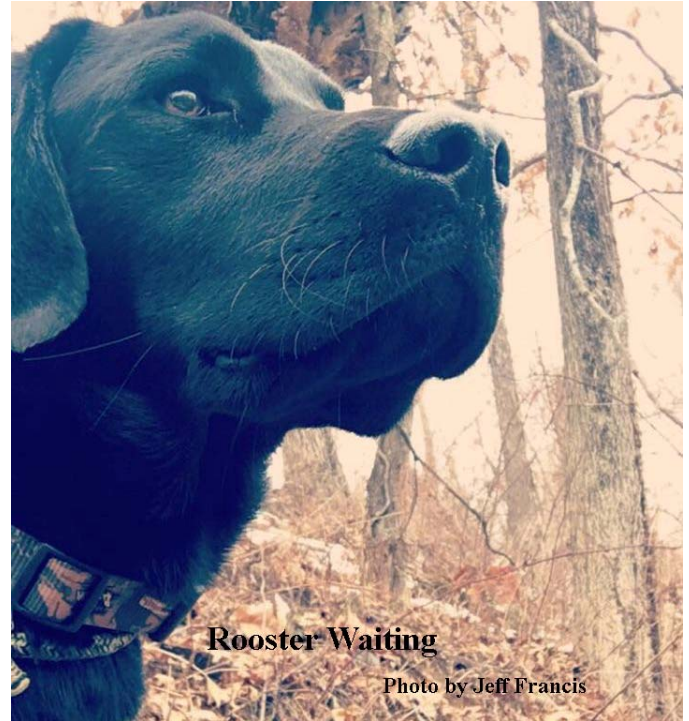


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10-month old Rooster's first wood duck!

Photo by Jeff Francis



Rooster Waiting

Photo by Jeff Francis



Jeff Francis and Rooster



Molly - Because everyone loves puppies!

Photo by Joe Allen



Annual Fund Raiser Banquet

Sunday April 15, 2018, Aqua-Turf in Plantsville

Time: 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm in the Wagon Room, Limited Seating!

NY Strip Sirloin or Chicken Valdestone, Beer and Wine included.

Early bird special: RSVP by March 15 and be entered into special drawing for a custom framed print.

NAMES: _____ steak or chicken (Circle Choice)

GUEST: _____ steak or chicken

GUEST: _____ steak or chicken

GUEST: _____ steak or chicken

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GUEST: _____ steak or chicken

GUEST: _____ steak or chicken

Eight to Ten people per table – Please note whom you want to sit with.

Number of Adults-----before 3/15___ \$50.00---after 3/15___ \$55.00 = \$ _____

Couples-----before 3/15___ \$75.00---after 3/15___ \$85.00 = \$ _____

Number of Children (under 12)-----\$30.00 = \$ _____

Annual Regular Member Dues or Renewal *-----\$25.00 = \$ _____

(*please note member names above for dues) TOTAL = \$ _____

Make check out to CWA and mail by March 15 (Early Bird)

or April 10 (last deadline) to: CWA, 29 Bower Hill Road, Oxford, CT 06478

Please charge my Credit Card Visa__ MC ____

Credit Card # _____ 3 digit # _____

Expiration Date _____ on back of card

Name on Card _____

Signature _____