



# Ducks, Etc...



## Connecticut Waterfowl Association Winter 2021 Newsletter

### President's Message

Now that the past waterfowl season is over it's time to give back to the resource that we so enjoy. One productive way to help out is by installing and maintaining a wood duck box or two. Unfortunately, for the second year due to COVID concerns, CWA was not able to host the wood box building day. I do have a few boxes left over if anyone is interested.

Another way to help out is by attending the CWA Annual Dinner. CWA would like to announce that we will be holding the Annual Fundraising Banquet this year on May 15th at the Westbrook Elks Lodge. We will be at limited seating so buy your tickets early. Remember all money raised at the dinner is money going directly to wetland habitat enhancement, creation, and waterfowl studies here in Connecticut. The Annual Fundraiser is CWA biggest fundraising event so come out and show your support. As usual, we will have numerous carvings from some of the best carvers in the area as well as art work from some of the most renowned wildlife artists including Chet Reneson, Keith Mueller, Michael Braun, and James Prosek. CWA would also like to remind everyone of our Mentoring Program started by past President Greg Chasko, and now spearheaded by Christopher Zins. This Program is an all ages mentoring program specific to waterfowling. CWA is actively seeking candidates for both mentors and mentees. For information see the CWA website or contact Chris at [christopher.zins@uconn.edu](mailto:christopher.zins@uconn.edu). Remember, anyone can contribute by renewing your membership or encouraging someone else that is conservation minded to also join. All membership revenue is

put back into our wetlands. If anyone would like to volunteer for the Dinner committee or for any other CWA function, feel free to contact me or any other of our Board Members. Hope to see you at the Westbrook Elks for our annual dinner, on May 15th.

Regards,  
Chris Samorajczyk  
President  
[csamor16@att.net](mailto:csamor16@att.net)

### Friends of Connecticut Sportsmen



The Friends of Connecticut Sportsmen (FOCS) is a new organization with the mission to inspire and bring together sportsmen to protect and enhance Connecticut's natural resources and our access to hunting, fishing, trapping, falconry and recreational shooting through a common commitment to education, advocacy and communication. Its primary goal is to provide a voice for Connecticut sportsmen in the state legislature.



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The organization was created by the Connecticut Conservation Advisory Council (CCAC), an organization of 25 sportsmen's groups that provide input to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection on natural resource issues. The CCAC recognized that sportsmen needed a stronger presence to counteract the intense lobbying of legislators by animal rights activists.

To accomplish this, the FOCS has hired a full-time pro-sportsmen lobbyist paid by donations from sportsmen. Many sportsmen's groups have already made donations and there have been many individual contributions also.

In addition to counteracting anti-wildlife management groups, the FOCS hopes to proactively push pro-sportsmen efforts.

Examples include:

- Legislation to ensure "No Net Loss" in areas open to hunting.
- Legislation to authorize bear hunting in Connecticut.
- Legislation seeking hunting on Sunday for all implements, all properties and all species.

The FOCS efforts are important to all sportsmen. Unfortunately, many natural resource management decisions are ultimately made by politicians, not natural resource professionals.

If you do a web search for "Friends of Connecticut Sportsmen" you will come to a Go Fund Me site that provides some information

where you can make contributions to FOCS. You can also contribute by mailing a check to:

Friends of Connecticut Sportsmen, Inc.  
PO Box 2351  
Shelton, CT 06484

### **Conservation News 2020 Deer and Wild Turkey Season Summaries**

**Wild Turkey Seasons:** The 2020 wild turkey hunting seasons recorded both increased hunter participation and harvest. Reported spring harvest increased by 25% (1,652 birds total) from 2019. Several factors that may have contributed to this increase include higher sales of Resident Game Bird Stamps, regulation changes, and COVID-19. Regulation changes such as all day hunting (previous hunting hours closed at noon) and combined bag limit on private and/or state lands of 5 birds (former bag limits: 3 private land, 2 public land) allowed hunters more time afield and the potential for increased take on both private or state lands. The Spring Turkey Hunter Survey also indicated that COVID-19 played a role in these increases. Twenty-five percent of respondents indicated that COVID-19 allowed them more time to hunt and 42% indicated that the change in hunting hours increased their ability to hunt more. The fall season also recorded increases in harvest. Fall firearms harvest increased by 45% (58 birds total) and fall archery increased by 35% (107 birds total) from 2019. The statewide brood survey indicated that 2019 annual productivity was poor (1.6 poults/hen) whereas 2020 productivity was better (2.8



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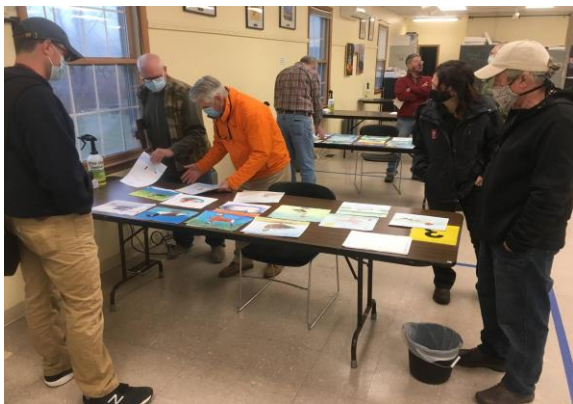


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poults/hen). Connecticut continues to maintain a moderate wild turkey population, albeit at a lower level than the mid-2000's population.

**Deer Seasons:** In 2020, deer permit issuance was up for nearly all seasons, with State-land shotgun (up 12.0%) and Muzzleloader (up 10.6%) having the greatest one-year increases. These increases were likely due to combining state land no-lottery A and B, making for a longer season, and increased interest in muzzleloader hunting due to the presence of snow. The 2020 harvest (10,881) was just under the 2019 harvest (10,908), with the archery season accounting for 53% of animals taken. It is too early to tell what impact COVID-19 may have had on hunters, but the annual Deer Hunter Survey will be going out soon with hopes of shedding more light on hunter effort and impacts felt during the season.

### **2021 Connecticut Junior Duck Stamp Competition**



On March 28th 2021, judging of the 2021 Junior Duck Stamp occurred at "ArtPlace" in Cheshire, CT. Due to State restrictions and social distancing guidelines, the usual format of the

judging was slightly changed from its usual venue. CWA representatives Rick Boucher, Rich Chmiel, Tom Lewoc Jr. and Pete Rivicki worked with members of the State of CT Duck Stamp Committee which consisted of Min Huan & Ken Meltzer (of the CT DEEP), LuAnn Shaw (Delta Waterfowl) and Wayne Roberts (Ducks Unlimited) to judge this year's best of show for the junior contest.

Over 15 different schools and home studios from across Connecticut (for a total of 54 entries) submitted artwork for this year's competition. The contest is open to any CT student from grades K through 12 and is broken in 4 different age groupings, so even the kindergarten students have a chance! Furthermore, the "Best in Show" winner also represents Connecticut in the Federal Junior Duck stamp competition.

Starting this past year (2020) the State of CT Duck Stamp committee decided to forgo the "professional" artist contest and use the "best of show" from the Junior Duck Stamp competition as the artwork for the State of CT Migratory Stamp. The idea was to foster the connection between kids and the outdoors within the state of Connecticut. This is especially significant this past year with so many students at home or in hybrid learning environments due to school restrictions. Building on the concept of "No Child Left Inside" the committee also wanted to further support getting students off of their phones and computers screens and into the outdoors.





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**Congratulations to Ms. Sophie Archer of Old Lyme who's acrylic painting of a drake Wood duck in flight was this year's "Best in Show" winner**



**An example of some student submissions**

**Over the years Rick Boucher has presented the program on behalf the CWA at the CT Art Teacher's Association meeting. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 restrictions the CT Art Teacher's Association meeting did not meet in person this year. Thus, to help with promotion of the event the CWA reached out to over 200 individual teachers to help foster submissions for this year's contest as well as for the future.**

**Thanks to all CWA members for their support of the Junior Duck Stamp program and all of the "behind the scenes" work that goes into making this all come together. Below are the remaining age groupings and top three winners from each category.**

## **Group IV: (Grades 10-12)**



**1st Place - Wood Duck - Sophia Archer - age 17 - Old Lyme - Home Studio**



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## Group III: (Grades 7-9)



**2nd Place** - Merganser Pair - Charles Lin - age 15 -  
Southington - Southington Agriculture Science and  
Technology Program



**1st Place** - Pintail - Evelyn Beckwith - age 14 -  
Bristol - Southington Agriculture Science and  
Technology Program



**3rd Place** - Merganser - Lily Watson - age 15 -  
Cheshire - Home Studio



**2nd Place** - Harlequin - Melanie Verbridge - age 13  
- Pawcatuck - Home Studio





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**3rd Place** - Eider - Kayla Beach - age 14 -  
Southington - Southington Agriculture Science and  
Technology Program



**2nd Place** - Canada Geese - Macayla Samor - age  
10 - Oxford - Oxford Center School

## **Group II: (Grades 4-6)**



**1st Place** - Bluebill - Meredith Berkin - age 10 -  
Wallingford - Home Studio



**3rd Place** - Pintail - Domenic Macini - West Haven



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## Group I: (Grades K-3)



**1st Place** - Bufflehead - Adele Morgan - age 9 -  
Simsbury - Tootin' Hills Elementary



**3rd Place** - "Love Birds" - Demetra Xifaras - age 6  
- Farmington - Home Studio



**2nd Place** - Redhead - Bryn Samor - age 8 - Oxford  
- Quaker Farms School





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### CT Duck Decoy Show & Carving Competition

The Decoy Boys Network & The Valley Shore Waterfowlers

Presented by

Westbrook, Ct Elks Lodge # 1784, Covid Protocols!

- Opens to public at 10:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. \$5.00 admission.
- Dealer and carvers' space set up time 7:30 A.M. \$50.00/ 8x8 space. BYO table/chair
- Carving competition 10:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M. Ribbons awarded 12:30-1:00 P.M.
- Lunch available from ELKS kitchen 11:30--2:00 P.M.
- Discovery Auction 1:00 P.M. \$5.00/bird, bid calling fee
- Connecticut Waterfowl Assn. fundraiser auction and raffles at 3:30

Space Rentals contact Tom Reiley 860-324-4001

Carver entries/questions call, Larry Appleton 203-415-2197

#### Decoy Boys Network space rental form

1, Name, \_\_\_\_\_

2, Address \_\_\_\_\_

3, Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

4, # of spaces 8'x8' \_\_\_\_\_ X \$50.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

5, Dates attending:

Westbrook Ct. ELKS, Sat, May 15, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_

E. Patchogue, LI NY. VFW, Sat, June 5, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_

Portsmouth, New Hampshire ELKS, Sat, July 17, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_

Bring your own table(s) and chair(s) or we can provide for a fee, (\$20.00/ea.) \_\_\_\_\_





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Mail payment to Tom Reiley 120 Lincoln Dr. Glastonbury, Ct. 06033

- Westbrook Ct is a pavilion, dress warm in case.
- E Patchogue is outside where we circle the wagons. Bring a pop-up tent.
- Portsmouth is inside.

Covid protocols are in place according to states.