



MassWildlife News

Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
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FREE FISHING ON FRESH AND SALT WATER JUNE 1 & 2

Get hooked on fishing with your friends and family in the great outdoors! Go fishing for free in Massachusetts on lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, or the ocean during the statewide Free Fishing Weekend of June 1 & 2, 2013. Fishing offers family and friends a great way to spend time together and create fun memories that will last a lifetime. If you don't know how to fish, consider attending fishing festivals or other free fishing-related events sponsored by MassWildlife's Angler Education Program this month and into the summer! Below is a current listing of fishing events being held in June. For further details, contact Jim Lagacy at jim.lagacy@state.ma.us or call (508) 389-6309.

- June 1 – Great Falls Family Fishing Day, 10 AM – 2 PM, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls (Montague)
- June 1 – Disabled American Veterans Fishing Festival, 10 AM – 2 PM, Open to disabled vets only. Riverside Rod & Gun Club, Hudson
- June 2 – 22nd Annual Horn Pond Family Fishing Festival, 9 AM – 1 PM, Woburn
- June 8 – Spot Pond Family Fishing Festival, 9 AM – 1 PM, Stoneham
- June 22- Family Fishing Day at Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge, 10 AM – 2 PM, Sudbury

Aid fish and wildlife work in Massachusetts and buy a freshwater fishing license or recreational saltwater fishing permit for the rest of the 2013. Go to www.mass.gov/massfishhunt for license purchasing information or visit a local license vendor or MassWildlife office. License and permit fees support fish management programs, fishing access improvements, habitat development and protection projects, conservation education programs and other fish and wildlife programs.

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NEW WEBSITE LOOK

In early June, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) website will have a new look; part of an ongoing statewide effort that results in a standard “look and feel” among all state government agency websites. You’ll also see this new look on the websites for the Department of Fish and Game, Division of Marine Fisheries, Office of

Boating and Fishing Access and the Division of Ecological Restoration. New and useful features for the new format include wider pages, enhanced “breadcrumb” navigation, and mobile phone/tablet viewing readiness. The DFW main web page address remains the same www.mass.gov/masswildlife and the information from the old address will have been moved to the new website. You will need to update any favorites, bookmarked, or saved searches on specific DFW web pages as those links will no longer work. Does your club, organization, or municipality’s website show links to different Division web pages? If so, ask your webmaster to update those links. We look forward to continuing to provide you the fish and wildlife information you need!

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YOUTH ARTIST FROM WESTFORD WINS JUNIOR DUCK STAMP CONTEST

Xiaomei Chen of Westford Academy, a 17-year old high school student, won top honors among youth artists in the 2013 Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Her acrylic painting of a Northern Pintail was selected from 321 entries as Massachusetts' Best of Show in the Junior Duck Stamp (JDS) Contest. Chen’s award winning work represented Massachusetts in the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Across the state, students from kindergarten through 12th grade submitted original works of art depicting waterfowl in the appropriate wetland habitat, sharing both their talents as youth artists and their knowledge of the importance of wetlands conservation for wildlife. The awards ceremony for the top 100 winning artists was held by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) at the Bancroft School in Worcester. The top 100 artists received medals, ribbons, certificates, a field guide to North American waterfowl species and a Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp canvas art supply tote bag.

A collection of the top 100 pieces of art will be on exhibit throughout Massachusetts during 2013-2014. Borderland State Park in Easton will host the first JDS exhibit during the month of August. Check the JDS webpage in the Events and Education area of the new DFW website.

Educators may be interested in learning that in celebration of 20 years of success in ‘*Connecting Children to Nature Through Science and Art*’ the JDS Program arts and science curriculum has been redesigned to spark youth interest in habitat conservation and careers in natural resources through science, art, math and technology. Focused on students in grades 5-8, with suggested adaptations for younger and older audiences, the curriculum encourages students to engage with their natural world and develop a deeper appreciation of natural resources. The guides meet a number of national educational standards for students in grades K-12. The Educator, Youth, Homeschool, and Nonformal education guides can be downloaded at www.fws.gov/juniorduck/curriculum.html. For further information about the winners, participating in the JDS, or inquiries relating to hosting the traveling art exhibit in 2013/2014, contact Education Coordinator Pam Landry at (508) 389-6310 or Pam.Landry@state.ma.us. For official 2014 JDS entry information, visit www.fws.gov/juniorduck.

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TURTLE CROSSINGS

June is a month when normally aquatic female snapping, painted, spotted, red-bellied, Blanding’s, and other turtles leave the safety of their water world and venture overland in search of nesting sites. The major threats to turtles are human-caused, which also means that people can work together on turtle conservation issues and help ensure the continued survival of these ancient creatures. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) is involved in turtle conservation efforts with [Partners in Reptile and Amphibian Conservation](#) (PARC) in part to inspire citizens, natural resource managers, scientists, and other turtle enthusiasts address the conservation issues and to help ensure long-term survival of turtle species and populations. Here are some tips on ways you can help turtles this year and into the future.

- **Learn About Turtles and Share Your Knowledge** - You can hone your turtle identification skills with DFW’s A Field Guide to Reptiles of Massachusetts by making a \$3.00 check out to “Comm. of MA-DFW” and sending it to: Field Guide to Reptiles, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, 100 Hartwell Street, West Boylston MA 01583. Posters on both Adult and Hatchling turtles are available at DFW district offices.
- **If It’s Safe, Help Turtles Cross the Road** - Be sure to assist a turtle only when it is safe to stop - pull over to the shoulder (if you are driving), and move the turtle across the road. Always move the turtle in the

direction was headed, even if that direction is away from water. It knows better than you where it wants to go!

- **Please Don't Take a Wild Turtle Home or Move it Elsewhere** - Keep wild turtles wild! In Massachusetts, it is illegal to possess most native turtles as pets. It takes many years for turtles to mature and lay eggs. Removing or moving turtles to some other location can be a problem for the survival of the remaining local turtle population.
- **Help DFW Locate Popular Turtle Road Crossings** - [Linking Landscapes for Massachusetts Wildlife](#) offers opportunities for citizens to report online reporting turtle (and other wildlife) road mortality through a Google Maps interface.
- **Identify and Report Rare Turtles** - If you see a state-listed turtle: take a photo, visit the Natural Heritage area of DFW's website www.mass.gov/naturalheritage and find the new electronic Vernal Pool and Rare Species information system. Fill out the form and electronically submit your report to DFW's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.

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CITIZEN SCIENCE: HELP COUNT TURKEY FAMILIES

Got turkey families in your neighborhood? Sportsmen and -women, birders, landowners and other wildlife enthusiasts are encouraged to assist the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) count turkey flocks only containing hens and their young poults (broods) this summer. DFW conducts an annual wild turkey brood survey from June through August. "The brood survey serves as a long term index on reproduction," explains Dave Scarpitti, Turkey Project Leader. "It helps us determine productivity and allows us to compare long-term reproductive success." Scarpitti also points out that citizen involvement in this survey is a cost-effective means of gathering useful data, and he encourages all interested people to participate. A turkey brood survey form has been posted on the agency website. Information needed includes date, town, number of hens seen, and number of poults and the poults' relative size compared to the hens. Multiple sightings of the same brood can also be noted. The survey period runs from June 1 - August 31. Completed forms should be mailed to: Brood Survey, DFW Field Headquarters, 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583.

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ANTLERLESS DEER PERMIT APPLICATION DEADLINE JULY 16

Deer hunters wishing to hunt antlerless deer must possess a valid antlerless deer permit. The deadline for applying for that permit is July 16, 2013. DFW reminds applicants that with the **MassFishHunt** electronic system there is no public permit drawing based on the last digit of the hunting/sporting license number and the Division does not mail any information to deer hunters. There are two steps to be completed by all hunters wishing to try to obtain an antlerless deer permit.

1) Apply for an antlerless deer permit by July 16. If you are not sure you submitted an antlerless deer permit application, you can either check your hunting license in the *Item Purchased* section where you will see a line item that reads: "Antlerless Deer Permit Application- /Zone xx" if you have already applied OR you can log on to the **MassFishHunt** website at www.mass.gov/massfishhunt and check your customer inventory. If you have not yet applied, you can submit your application for an antlerless deer permit either through a computer or at a license vendor. There is no fee to apply for an antlerless deer permit.

- **Applying from any computer(i.e. home, office, library)--** Go to the **MassFishHunt** website at www.mass.gov/massfishhunt and enter your Customer ID number. A page with your personal information will appear. Click on the blue "Enter Sales" button at the bottom right of your screen. Click on "Hunting Permits and Stamps" in the menu at the left side of your screen. Click on "Antlerless Deer permit application" and then select a zone. Click the blue "check out" button on this screen and then click check out again on the next screen. Even though the application has no cost associated with it you must proceed all the way through checkout for the application to be submitted. Note that if you have already applied for an antlerless deer permit you will not see that deer permit option listed.

- **Applying at a license vendor or MassWildlife Office** -- Tell the clerk that you need to apply for an antlerless deer permit. They will need either your customer identification number or your birth date to look up your information. Be sure to tell them the zone that you wish to apply for and double check that it is correct. No changes to the application can be made after the July 16th deadline has passed.

2. August 1-- return to *MassFishHunt* to participate in the new Instant Award process. Beginning August 1, 2013 and continuing through the end of the calendar year, antlerless deer permit applicants must return to the [MassFishHunt website](#) from a computer, any authorized license agent location, or any MassWildlife Office to try to win their antlerless deer permit in the zone for which they previously applied.

- Enter your last name and Customer ID number. A page with your personal information will appear. Click on the blue "Enter Sales" button at the bottom right of your screen. Click on "Hunting Permits and Stamps" in the menu at the left side of your screen. Click on "Antlerless Deer permit" and you will see the zone for which you originally applied. Click on the "add" button next to your zone and you will instantly receive a message that informs you if you have won your permit or not. Winning permits will be placed in your shopping cart where you can pay the \$5.00 permit fee immediately and print the permit, or leave the winning permit in the shopping cart where it will remain until payment is made or until the permit expires at the end of 2013.

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REPORTING SUMMER FISH KILLS

With the warm weather here, lakes and ponds are warming up and fish kills may be discovered in some bodies of water. The sight of dead and dying fish along the shores of a favorite lake, pond or river can be distressing and can trigger concerns about pollution. Fish do act as the "canary in the coal mine," so it's natural to think a fish kill is an indicator of a problem with human caused pollution. However, the vast majority of summer fish kills reported are natural events.

Natural fish kills are generally the result of low oxygen levels, fish diseases, or spawning stress. Depletion of dissolved oxygen is one of the most common causes of natural fish kills. As pond temperature increases, water holds less oxygen. During hot summer weather, oxygen levels in shallow, weedy ponds can further decline as plants consume oxygen at night. This results in low, early morning oxygen levels that can become critical if levels fall below the requirement of fish survival. In addition to reduced oxygen levels, late spring and early summer is when many warmwater fish such as sunfish, bluegill, pumpkinseed, and largemouth bass begin to spawn. At this time, large numbers of these species crowd into the shallow waters along the shore vying for the best spawning sites. These densely crowded areas become susceptible to disease outbreaks, especially as water temperatures increase. The result is an unavoidable natural fish kill, usually consisting of one or two species of fish.

When a caller reports a fish kill, a DFW fisheries biologist determines if the kill is due to pollution or is a natural event. Generally, pollution impacts all kinds of aquatic life, therefore the most important piece of evidence for the biologist is knowing the number of fish species associated with the fish kill. Fish kills in which only one or two species are involved are almost always a natural event. When it is likely a fish kill is due to pollution, DFW notifies the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). DEP takes the lead on a formal investigation which includes analysis of water and fish samples to determine the source of pollution. DFW provides DEP with technical assistance by identifying the kinds and numbers of fish involved.

To report a fish kill Monday - Friday between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM, contact Richard Hartley at (508) 389-6330. After normal business hours or on holidays and weekends, call the Fish Kill Phone at (508) 450-5869 or contact the Environmental Police Radio Room at 1(800) 632-8075.

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UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS AND HEARING

June 13 – The Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Advisory Committee will meet at the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Field Headquarters, 100 Hartwell Street in **West Boylston** on Thursday, June 13, 2013 from 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM. The building is handicapped accessible. Call (508) 389-6360 for further information and directions.

June 21 – Fisheries and Wildlife Board Meeting and Hearing, Bourne – The Fisheries & Wildlife Board will meet on Friday, June 21, 2013 at 1:00 PM at the Worcester Surf Casting Club located on 40 Old Monument Neck Road, Bourne. At 3:00 PM, on the same day and location, **the Fisheries and Wildlife Board will be holding a Public Hearing** to establish and amend rules and regulations governing the Classes of Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Licenses. Call (508) 389-6342 for directions or further information.

Both meetings are open to the public.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS—Visit the *Calendar and Events* area at www.mass.gov/masswildlife for more listings.

June 1 – Birding and Land Management Walk, Florida – Natural resource professionals from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (Mass Wildlife), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Pantermehl Environmental Services will lead an informational bird walk from 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM through old field, shrub land, thicket and mature forest habitats at the Bakke Family's 800-acre property on Bliss Rd. in Florida, MA. Learn about the tools and techniques for creating and maintaining these habitats, including timber harvesting and mowing. Funding sources available through NRCS for habitat work on private property will also be discussed. Bring your binoculars. Wear comfortable shoes for walking and bring bug spray and raingear. This is a FREE event and will be held rain or shine. For more information, contact The NRCS office in Pittsfield at 413-443-1776 x 3, or email: Kate.Parsons@ma.usda.gov.

June 4 – Anadromous Fish of the Westfield River, Agawam – Dr. Caleb Slater, DFW Anadromous Fish Biologist, will be giving a talk to the Pioneer Valley Boat and Surf Club at 7:30 PM at the Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club located on 1210 River Rd in Agawam. For more information, contact Bob Ruzsala, President, hrc40@aol.com.

June 13 – Club Shooting Range Grant Opportunity, Westfield – The Massachusetts Shooters Foundation in conjunction with the Westfield Sportsmen's Club and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife will be hosting an informational meeting on available grants for shooting range development and enhancement. Thomas O'Shea, Assistant Director of Wildlife for the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) will be making the presentation. Since 2001, through the Massachusetts Hunter Education Program, DFW has assisted shooting clubs in range development and improvement activities in order to provide public access to range facilities for hunter education and shooting sports purposes. Club representatives are invited to attend at the Westfield Sportsmen's Club, Furrowtown Road in Westfield at 7:00 PM. There is no cost for this event but pre-registration is requested. Call the Massachusetts Shooters Foundation at (508) 393-5133 and leave your name, address, and contact information.

June 28 – Save This Date For Land Celebration, Conway – The public is invited to join state wildlife and environmental officials, local officials, and the Franklin Land Trust to a dedication of a new 160-acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on Flagg Mountain located in Conway on Friday, June 28, 2013 at 2:30 PM. The property will be open to passive recreation such as fishing, hunting, canoeing, hiking, and nature observation. More details on meeting location will be finalized at a later date, announced and posted on the DFW website calendar of events.

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