



MassWildlife News

Commonwealth of Massachusetts – Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
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BIOMAP2 TOWN REPORTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) is announcing to conservation commissions, planning boards, land trusts, environmental organizations and agencies, and others involved in conservation land protection, planning, and policy that updated *BioMap2* Town Reports are available online at www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/land_protection/biomap/biomap_townreports.htm and through the *BioMap2* Map Viewer at <http://maps.massgis.state.ma.us/dfg/biomap2.htm>. Hard copies of town-specific *BioMap2* Town Reports, along with an accompanying wall-size *BioMap2* town map, have been mailed by postal service to conservation commissions in the 349 Massachusetts towns which contain *BioMap2* Core Habitat and/or Critical Natural Landscape.

BioMap2, a joint project between the Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, DFW's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program and The Nature Conservancy, is designed to guide strategic biodiversity conservation in Massachusetts over the next decade by focusing land protection and stewardship on the areas that are most critical for ensuring the long-term persistence of state-listed and other native wildlife and their habitats, natural communities, and a diversity of ecosystems. The *BioMap2* maps and Town Reports are non-regulatory and designed for planning purposes. "Protection and stewardship of *BioMap2* Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape is essential to safeguard the diversity of species and their habitats, intact ecosystems, and resilient natural landscapes across Massachusetts," said Sarah Haggerty, DFW's Natural Heritage Information Manager. Haggerty noted that the *BioMap2* Town Reports are designed to provide local biodiversity information to municipalities and conservation organizations to aid them in their conservation efforts.

BioMap2 Town Reports replace the original *BioMap* and Living Waters Town Reports from 2004 and are the best sources of local biodiversity information to assist in specific conservation efforts at the town or regional level. The Town Reports include information on the important species, natural communities, habitats, and landscape elements of *BioMap2* found within a specific town and its surrounding area. Electronically, readers can access hyperlinks to fact sheets describing the various elements of biodiversity in the town, links to the online *BioMap2* Map Viewer, and links to the *BioMap2* Summary and Technical Reports.

Since the development of the first BioMap in 2001 and Living Waters in 2003, the NHESP biodiversity conservation plans have been widely accepted and used by conservation planners across the state. Several funding programs for land acquisition projects incorporated elements of the first BioMap and Living Waters plans, and now include *BioMap2* elements, into priority ranking systems. Towns have incorporated the information into Open Space Plans, and state agencies, land trusts, and other nonprofit organizations have used the information in their natural resource planning and habitat management decisions.

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SURVEYING BIOMAP 2 USERS

MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program and The Nature Conservancy's Massachusetts Program are conducting a survey of *BioMap2* users to understand how *BioMap2* is being used to advance conservation efforts in Massachusetts. The survey is also designed to identify any barriers to use and implementation of *BioMap2*. *BioMap2* users are asked complete the 10-minute survey which can be accessed through www.surveymonkey.com/s/biomap2survey. Survey responses are designed to be anonymous and must be completed by April 8, 2013. To assist efforts to increase survey responses, users are also encouraged to publicize information about the survey to others who may use *BioMap2*. User input is vitally important to help improve *BioMap2* usefulness, enhance communication and education tools, and to design future products. For more information, questions, or concerns, please contact Julia King, The Nature Conservancy at Julia.king@tnc.org or (617) 532-8391.

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NEW SPRING EAGLE COUNT IN EARLY APRIL

Eagle and other wildlife enthusiasts are asked to save April 5, 2013 to participate in a new statewide spring eagle count. This effort will include a concentrated survey of the major rivers, lakes, and reservoirs across the Commonwealth. Organized by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) the survey will be conducted by agency staff and volunteers. Teams will be checking known eagle territories and exploring areas with potential eagle habitat to try to locate "new" eagle nests. If inclement weather prevents the survey on April 5, the backup date is April 12, 2013. Additionally, the Division encourages anyone to submit eagle sightings throughout the year by email to natural.heritage@state.ma.us or by postal service to "Eagle Survey", MassWildlife, Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston, MA 01583.

The new spring Bald Eagle Survey will replace the Division's long-standing Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. "Although MassWildlife has participated in the winter eagle surveys for over 30 years, the federally administered Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey was designed to monitor the North American population of Bald Eagles," said Andrew Vitz, State Ornithologist. "Now that Bald Eagle numbers have greatly increased and have been removed from the Federal Endangered Species List, the need to monitor nationwide populations has been reduced. At the same time, as the number of eagles has increased across the Commonwealth and a spring eagle count meets the Division's need to more closely monitor eagle breeding status and distribution in Massachusetts."

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FILL OUT THE ELECTRONIC HUNTER SURVEY

Beginning in mid-February, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, through Novi Systems, a third party online survey company, has been sending out an electronic hunter survey to approximately 32,000 licensed hunters. The

survey is designed to understand hunter effort and preferences and to collect important local "on-the-ground" information for managing game in the Commonwealth. The survey takes approximately 5-15 minutes to complete and all responses will remain anonymous. Identifying information such as email and IP address will not be recorded. Within the next few weeks any sporting or hunting license holder with an email address in the *MassFishHunt* system should receive an email invitation from Novi Survey with a link to the invitation. Surveys are being sent out in batches through the end of March to prevent them from being treated as spam.

Hunters should check their junk or spam folder for any emails from Novi Survey. The link is specific to each email address therefore hunters should not forward the invitation others as it can only be filled out once. A reminder will be emailed to those license holders who have not responded within a week. Division staff thanks those who have already taken the time to fill out the survey. In order to receive future surveys, anyone who does not have a email address entered in their customer profile in the *MassFishHunt* system is urged to log in to www.mass.gov/massfishhunt and provide their email address.

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FLY TYING AND TURKEY HUNT WORKSHOPS FOR WOMEN

Adult women with an interest in learning how to tie a fly for fly fishing or pursue turkeys with a shotgun, camera or binoculars should sign up for workshops scheduled in March. On March 23, the first session of a two-part Turkey Hunting Workshop will be held in Shirley. Designed for the beginning adult hunter, the March 23 Seminar will focus on turkey behavior, turkey hunting tips, firearms handling and preparation for the second part of the workshop, a guided turkey hunt in nearby Devens on May 6. Wildlife photographers and birders will gain useful tips for finding turkeys at the March 23 seminar. If you've taken hunter education and want to try turkey hunting, this entire workshop is a good next step. The workshop is taught by friendly and knowledgeable volunteers with extensive turkey hunting experience. Turkey Hunt participants are required to take the Seminar segment if they want to participate in the Hunt. Turkey Hunt participants must also have a valid gun license, shotgun, valid MA 2013 hunting license, and turkey permit. Registration for the Turkey Hunt gives preference to participants new to this hunt program. Participants may choose to take part in one session or both. The deadlines for registering are March 18, 2013 for the Seminar & Hunt; April 26, 2013 for the Hunt only. Registration materials for the workshop are posted at www.mass.gov/masswildlife.

A Fly Tying Workshop for novice adult women (18+) will be held on March 30 in Belchertown. Early spring is a good time to create fishing flies for the upcoming fishing season. Jim Lafley of the Federation of Fly Fishers will instruct participants on how to get started in fly-tying with assistance by Jim Lagacy, MassWildlife's Angler Education Coordinator. Attendees will have the opportunity to tie at least two patterns during the class. All materials and equipment will be provided for the class session and the instructor will answer questions about the basic equipment to get you started on your own. Space is limited, sign up right away. The registration deadline for this workshop is March 21. Registration materials are posted at www.mass.gov/masswildlife.

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TURKEY BAG LIMIT CLARIFICATION

The 2013 MA Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping omitted information regarding bag restrictions in the spring turkey season. The printed version did not include a reference to the bearded bird requirement in the spring season. The correct bag limit is: (a) 2 bearded birds in spring season (1 per day) with NO fall bird allowed, or (b) 1 bearded bird in spring season, and 1 bird of either sex in fall season. No hunter may take 2 birds in the fall season. The bag limit information has been corrected in the online 2013 Guide to Hunting, Fishing and Trapping at <http://www.eregulations.com/massachusetts/huntingandfishing/wild-turkey/>.

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UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS

March 7 -- Fisheries and Wildlife Board Meeting, West Boylston -- The March meeting of the Fisheries & Wildlife Board will be held on Thursday, March 7, 2013 at 1:30 AM at the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife Field Headquarters, 100 Hartwell St, Suite 230, West Boylston.

March 14 -- Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Meeting, West Boylston -- The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee will meet on Thursday, March 14, at the DFW Field HQ Office at 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, West Boylston from 1:30- 4:30 P.M.

Both meetings are open to the public and the building is handicapped accessible. For directions go to www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/facilities/westboro.htm or call the Field HQ at (508) 389-6300.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS—Visit www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/calendar/calendar.htm for updated listings.

March 1-31 -- Jr. Duck Stamp Traveling Exhibit; Connecting Children with Nature Through Science and Art! Worcester -- Interested in submitting artwork to the 2013 Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp Contest? (**DEADLINE MARCH 15**) Take inspiration from traveling exhibits featuring top youth entries from the 2012 [Massachusetts Junior Duck Stamp](#) (JDS) Contest at the [Notre Dame Academy, Flagg Gallery](#). For directions and more information, contact Mary Zywar at (508) 757-6200 x253.

March 2 -- Uncommon Natural Communities in Massachusetts, Wales -- As part of a series of Winter Talks offered by the [Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary](#), MassWildlife's Natural Communities Ecologist Pat Swain will talk about the natural (common and uncommon) communities in the Wales/Monson area. The free presentation begins at 1:30 PM. Reservations are required. Please call (413) 267-9654 or email Lduthie@norcrossws.org for reservations.

March 2 -- MassWildlife at MACC Conference, Holy Cross College, Worcester – MassWildlife staff will be presenters at this conservation commission conference on the following topics: New Conservation Tools: The Vernal Pool/Rare Species Information Reporting System and BioMap2 Town Reports; Managing White-Tailed Deer Populations in MA; and Defusing Landowner/Conservation Conflicts: Protecting Habitat for Endangered Species.

March 6 -- Native Brook Trout Tagging Tales, Norwell -- As part of the Water Watch Lecture Series sponsored by area conservation groups, DFW District Fish Biologist Steve Hurley will talk about brook trout, local trout restoration efforts, and research involving fish tagging and DNA to track their recovery. This free presentation will be held at the [South Shore Science Center](#) on Jacobs Lane in Norwell at 7 PM. For more information go to www.nsra.org.

March 9 -- Fire Ecology, Wales -- As part of a series of Winter Talks offered by the [Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary](#), MassWildlife's Restoration Ecologist Tim Simmons will talk about fire ecology and management throughout the Northeast, with an emphasis on managing habitat for imperiled species and their habitats. The free presentation begins at 1:30 PM. Reservations are required as seats are limited. Please call (413) 267-9654 or email Lduthie@norcrossws.org for reservations and information.

March 15 – Deadline to Submit Artwork for the Junior Duck Stamp Contest! – Young artists must submit their entries by this date in order to be judged in the 2013 [Junior Duck Stamp Contest](#). Remember to submit entries to the new MassWildlife address at: JDS Artwork, MassWildlife, 100 Hartwell Street, Suite 230, W. Boylston, MA 01583.

March 15 -- MassWildlife at Harvard Forest Seminar Series, Petersham -- As part of the Harvard Forest Seminar lecture series, MassWildlife's State Ornithologist, Andrew Vitz will be giving a presentation on his research on forest songbird fledglings. The talk, "Post-fledging ecology of forest songbirds in a managed landscape" will be given at the Harvard Forest's Fisher Museum in Petersham. This is a free lecture. For more information contact Audrey Baker Plotkin at aabarker@fas.harvard.edu.

March 15 -- Wildlife in the Landscape, Jamaica Plain -- The [Ecological Landscaping Association](#) is hosting a talk about wildlife in the landscape to be presented by Marion Larson, MassWildlife Information & Education Chief. Whether you are trying to attract backyard wildlife, coping with the effects of wildlife damage in the landscape, or would like to improve or enhance habitat on a landscape scale for wildlife, understanding wildlife needs and behavior is the first step. Registration is required. For more information contact ela.info@comcast.net or call (617) 436-5838.

March 23 -- MassWildlife at Westfield River Watershed Association Symposium, Westfield The [2013 Westfield River Watershed Association Symposium](#) theme this year will be "Our Urban Watershed". Visit MassWildlife's Anadromous Fish Project Leader Caleb Slater in the Exhibit area at the Scanlon Banquet Hall and attend sessions about the Westfield River Watershed. The symposium is co-sponsored by the Westfield River Watershed Association and Westfield State University. [More information.](#)

March 23 - Endangered Species in Massachusetts, Sharon - The Sharon Friends of Conservation has invited MassWildlife's Tom French, Assistant Director of Natural Heritage and Endangered Species to talk about the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act. This meeting is open to the public, for more information, contact Kurt Buerman at (978) 784-4625.

March 30 - Saving the Bald Eagle, Barnstable - Learn about the Eagle Restoration success story from DFW's Tom French, Assistant Director of Natural Heritage and Endangered Species, at MassAudubon's Long Pasture Sanctuary, 345 Bone Hill Rd, Barnstable at 11 AM. Open to the public, there is a nominal entry fee, registration not required. More information at: www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Long_Pasture/index.php

March 30 - Saving the Bald Eagle, Wellfleet - Learn about the Eagle Restoration success story from DFW's Tom French, Assistant Director of Natural Heritage and Endangered Species, at MassAudubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, 291 State Highway Rte 6, Wellfleet at 2 PM. Open to the public, there is a nominal entry fee, registration not required. More information at: www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Wellfleet/index.php

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