



## Energy and Environmental Affairs

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### MassWildlife Monthly September 2015

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#### **MassWildlife Salutes Staff Firefighter**

On August 26, 2015 at the Erving State Forest, Jack Buckley, Director of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife), welcomed home MassWildlife Habitat Biologist Rebecca DiGirolomo from a firefighting deployment in Oregon. DiGirolomo, a resident of Worcester, was part of a returning Massachusetts crew of 20 state and municipal firefighters sent to battle blazes in Oregon for the past two weeks. Their deployment was in response to a request the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation received from the U.S. Forest Service and the Northeastern Interagency Coordination Center in Camden, NH. During the deployment, the crew was assigned to the Eldorado Fire, located near Unity, Oregon. Currently, the fire is burning over 20,000 acres and is 35% contained.

"On behalf of both the Fisheries and Wildlife Board and the Division, we salute Rebecca's courage, commitment, and contribution to the western wildfire fighting effort," said Director Buckley. "We are proud to provide the services of our highly trained and skilled personnel in this time of urgent need." Buckley noted that should there be a request for additional deployment, additional MassWildlife staff are prepared and willing to answer the call.

MassWildlife's Habitat Program staff occasionally conduct prescribed burns to regenerate certain habitat types. Staff receive specialized training and are federally certified, having passed a 40-hour wildland firefighting class and physical fitness test. Through a mutual aid agreement with the U. S. Forest Service compact, the requesting state or province pays all expenses for the out-of-state crews, including salary, transportation, lodging, and food.

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#### **Drivers. Brake for Moose and Deer This Fall**

Because fall is the breeding season for both moose and white-tailed deer, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife reminds motorists to be mindful of increased deer and moose activity, especially during early morning and evening hours. Moose, found in central and western parts of MA, breed in September and October. White-tailed deer breed from late October to early December.

Moose on the road are especially hazardous. The dark color and height of moose make them difficult to see in low light; moose eyes rarely shine like deer eyes because their eyes are above headlight level. In addition, long legs and heavy top bodies make moose very dangerous to motorists when struck.

Observe road signs for moose and deer crossings and slow down. Do not swerve to avoid hitting a deer because it may lead to more risk and damage than hitting the deer. Moose are less likely to move from the road than deer, so stay alert and brake when you see a moose in or near the road.

Deer and moose/vehicle collisions should be reported to the Environmental Police at 1-800-632-8075. In the event of a deer/vehicle collision, the driver or passengers of the vehicle involved (MA residents only) may salvage the deer by bringing it to a [DFW Wildlife District Offices](#) to be officially tagged.



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1 Rabbit Hill Road  
Westborough, MA 01581  
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[Mass.Wildlife@state.ma.us](mailto:Mass.Wildlife@state.ma.us)

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### **Outdoor Family Fun at The Big M.O.E.**

Experience the Massachusetts Outdoor Expo ("The Big MOE") at the Hamilton Rod and Gun Club grounds in Sturbridge, MA on Sunday, September 20, 2015 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. This FREE, family-oriented event celebrates outdoor skills, nature, art, and wildlife. With over 45 activity stations, there's something for everyone at The Big MOE! Stations include sporting dog demonstrations, fishing, bird box building, archery, mountain biking, kayaking, trap shooting, and more. For a complete listing of activity stations, please visit [www.FawnsExpo.com](http://www.FawnsExpo.com)

Convenient, off-site parking will be provided at the Sturbridge Business Park at 660 Main Street (Rte. 20) and FREE shuttle bus transportation will run nonstop from the Business Park to the Big MOE throughout the day. On-site parking is reserved for volunteer staff and those requiring handicapped access (plate required).

Are you an enthusiastic, outdoor-oriented individual interested in volunteering at The Big MOE? Is your club or conservation organization interested in helping out or hosting a skill station? Please contact Gary Zima at (508) 389-6314 or by email at [gary.zima@state.ma.us](mailto:gary.zima@state.ma.us) for details.

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### **ATTENTION Divers and Marine Photographers: Sea Turtle Photos Needed!**

MassWildlife is in the process of compiling a *Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Massachusetts*. While we have a substantial selection of photographs of most inland native species on file, we are lacking high quality photos of most of the Sea Turtles. Most of these pelagic animals only visit our waters for brief periods each year, or only occasionally, and spend most of their lives in tropical and sub-tropical waters. We're most interested in photos of the Kemp's Ridley and Hawksbill sea turtles, but will also consider quality shots of the Green, Loggerhead, and Leatherback sea turtles. Underwater photographers or anyone with good quality, identification-rich photos are encouraged to submit their work to us for consideration. We prefer dorsal shots of the entire animal showing carapace (upper shell) and shell scute/head scale patterns. Photos selected must be sharp and of reasonably high resolution. While we cannot pay for the use of any photos we select for publication, we will of course credit the photographer in the publication (including copyright symbol) and will provide a complimentary copy of the book to the photographer when it is published. If you're interested in submitting photographs for consideration, please contact Editor Peter Mirick at [pete.mirick@state.ma.us](mailto:pete.mirick@state.ma.us)

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### **MassWildlife and NSSF Remind You to Hunt S.A.F.E.: Help prevent firearm accidents**

Responsible hunting is a time-honored tradition that plays an important part in managing Massachusetts's wild game populations. Responsible hunting means respecting game animals, hunting ethically and, perhaps most importantly, hunting safely.

Because this is a time of year when a lot of firearms are in use and in transport, MassWildlife and Project ChildSafe are urging hunters take action to prevent firearm accidents in the field, at the range, at home, and everywhere in between. That means remembering that "The Hunt Isn't Over Until Firearms Are S.A.F.E. and Secure."

S.A.F.E. stands for **S**ecure your firearms when not in use; **B**e **A**ware of those around you who should not have unauthorized access to firearms; **F**ocus on your responsibility as a firearm owner and **E**ducate yourself and others about safe firearm handling and storage.

Safe and secure storage of firearms when they are not in use is the number one way to prevent firearm accidents. For more information on safe firearm storage and to find out how to get a free firearm safety kit, including a gun lock, visit [www.projectchildsafe.org](http://www.projectchildsafe.org).

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### **Special Deer Hunting Opportunity for Paraplegic Hunters**

Since 1972, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife has offered paraplegic sportsmen and sportswomen the opportunity to hunt deer in several locations across the state during a special three-day season. This year's hunt dates are October 29 – 31, 2015. Locations include Devens, Reserve Forces Training Area (Harvard/ Lancaster), Quabbin Reservation (Belchertown), two properties in northern and southern Berkshire County, and Otis/Edwards Military Reservation (Falmouth). Licensed paraplegic hunters who have an interest in participating in this hunt should contact Trina Moruzzi at (508) 389-6318 or by email at [Trina.Moruzzi@state.ma.us](mailto:Trina.Moruzzi@state.ma.us) for more details. Please contact Trina by October 23<sup>rd</sup> to ensure you can get your permit in time.

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### **Boat Safely This Fall**

Paddlers in kayaks and canoes must wear life jackets from September 15 to May 15 every year. According to the Massachusetts Environmental Police, most boating fatalities in the Commonwealth result when boaters fail to wear life jackets while in small craft in cold water or cold weather. Waterfowl hunters using canoes or kayaks are reminded that this law also applies to them. [Read more about boating safety here.](#)

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### **Important Reminders for Migratory Game Bird Hunters**

The Fisheries and Wildlife Board approved the 2015/2016 Migratory Game Bird Regulations. [Click here](#) to view regulations, season dates, bag and possession limits, and information on the Youth Waterfowl Hunt.

Woodcock, snipe, rail, duck, and goose hunters must register with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Harvest Information Program (HIP) by taking a HIP survey each calendar year. HIP surveys can only be completed through the online *MassFishHunt* system. Non-resident hunters are reminded they must complete a HIP survey for each state in which they hunt. HIP data gathered from game bird hunters is used by state and federal biologists to evaluate hunter effort and harvest.

Duck and goose hunters must purchase a state waterfowl stamp and are automatically prompted to complete the HIP survey during the transaction. Waterfowl hunters who purchased a state waterfowl stamp to hunt in January and February of 2015 have already completed the HIP survey for the entire calendar year and do not need to take any action. Migratory game bird hunters who ONLY hunt woodcock, snipe, or rail do not need a waterfowl stamp and must complete a HIP survey as a separate step during their hunting/sporting license purchase.

Your hunting/sporting license will indicate whether you have completed a HIP survey. Check near the top of your license for the words "HIP Survey Completed." If you do NOT see this phrase, you can complete the survey through any computer with Internet access via the *MassFishHunt* system (see instructions below). You can also visit any MassWildlife office or license agent location to complete the HIP survey. Be sure to reprint your license after registering.

#### **Instructions for registering with HIP through the *MassFishHunt* system:**

##### **Purchasing a waterfowl stamp and completing HIP (for duck and goose hunting)**

Go to the *MassFishHunt* website and enter your Customer ID number. A page with your personal information will appear; click the **Enter Sales** button. Next, select **Hunting Permits and Stamps**. On the next screen, choose **Waterfowl Stamp**. You will then be prompted to answer eight questions regarding migratory game bird hunting. After answering the questions, click **Accept** and proceed to **Check Out**. Be sure to reprint your license which will now indicate that you have purchased the waterfowl stamp and completed the HIP survey.

##### **Completing the HIP Survey only (for woodcock, snipe, and rail hunting but no waterfowl)**

Go to the *MassFishHunt* website and enter your Customer ID number. A page with your personal information will appear; click the **Enter Sales** button. On the next screen, select **HIP Survey**. You will then be prompted to answer eight questions regarding migratory game bird hunting. After answering the questions, click **Accept** and proceed to **Check Out**. Be sure to reprint your license which will now indicate that you have completed the HIP survey.

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### **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

**September 1 – October 31: Junior Duck Stamp Traveling Exhibit, Athol** – A combination of the top 100 pieces of art from the [Junior Duck Stamp Program](#) will be on display at the [Athol Bird and Nature Club's](#) Millers River Environmental Center in Athol. For more information, contact Dave Small at [dave@dhsmaill.net](mailto:dave@dhsmaill.net). Help support the Junior Duck Stamp Program! Proceeds from the purchase of the \$5 Junior Duck Stamp are used to support the program and go toward youth conservation education, awards for students and/or schools participating in the program, and marketing of the JDS program. You may purchase stamps from the U.S. Postal Service website ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)) or Amplex Corporation ([www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com)).

**September 1- November 7:** Sora Rail and Virginia Rail Hunting Seasons open statewide.

**September 1- December 16:** Snipe Hunting Season open statewide.

**September 8- 26:** First Black Bear Hunting Season open statewide.

**September 8- 25:** Early Canada Goose Hunting Season open statewide.



**September 10: Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee Meeting, Westborough** – The meeting will take place at the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters Office located at 1 Rabbit Hill Road in Westborough from 1:30- 4:30 P.M. in the Southwest Meeting Room, Room #103. Please note: If you have a disability or medical condition and would like to request special accommodations, please contact Susan Sacco at 508-389-6342.

**September 10 – 13: MassWildlife at the Franklin County Fair, Greenfield** – Visit the MassWildlife exhibit while you enjoy the Franklin County Fair. Learn about some of the common wildlife living in your neighborhood and get your wildlife and outdoor recreation questions answered by MassWildlife staff. [Click here](#) for more information about the Franklin County Fair.

**September 12: Harold Parker State Forest Family Fishing Festival, Andover** – This free, non-competitive, family friendly, learn-to-fish event will take place at Sudden Pond in the Harold Parker State Forest from 9:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. Bring your own fishing equipment, or borrow ours- limited equipment and bait will be provided. **\*Open to the public** – Contact the Harold Parker State Forest at 978-686-3391.

**September 14:** Gray squirrel hunting opens in zones 1-9 through January 2, 2016.

**September 18: Kickoff for the Nissitissit River Restoration Project, Pepperell** – The public is invited to an river restoration event on Friday, September 18 at 3:00 PM at the Turner Dam located near 58 Hollis Street in Pepperell. The ceremony marks the beginning of a river restoration project involving dam removal, land protection, rare mussel relocation, fisheries monitoring and watershed stewardship. The restoration effort is supported by a collaborative of state and federal environmental and wildlife agencies as well as local, national conservation and watershed groups.

**September 20: Massachusetts Outdoor Expo “The Big MOE”, Sturbridge** – Experience the Massachusetts Outdoor Expo (“The Big MOE”) at the Hamilton Rod and Gun Club grounds in Sturbridge, MA from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. This free, family-oriented event celebrates outdoor skills, nature, art, and wildlife. Stations include: shotgun, rifle, and airgun shooting; mountain biking; fishing; archery; bird house building; and more! [Click here](#)   for more information.

**September 20 – October 27: Junior Duck Stamp Traveling Exhibit, Easthampton** – A combination of the top 100 pieces of art from the [Junior Duck Stamp Program](#) will be on display at the MA Audubon Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, located at 127 Combs Road, Easthampton. For more information, contact Patti Steinman at (413) 584-3009 x 14. Help support the Junior Duck Stamp Program! Proceeds from the purchase of the \$5 Junior Duck Stamp are used to support the program and go toward youth conservation education, awards for students and/or schools participating in the program, and marketing of the JDS program. You may purchase stamps from the U.S. Postal Service website ([www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)) or Amplex Corporation (<https://duckstamp.com/mm5/merchant.mvc>).

**September 26: Friends of Myles Standish State Forest 8<sup>th</sup> Annual “Take Me Fishin’!” Event, Plymouth** – This event is at Fearing Pond in Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth, 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. This is a free, non-competitive, family friendly, learn to fish event. Bring your fishing equipment, or borrow ours - limited equipment and bait will be provided. **\*Open to the public** – Contact Rose Mellino at [rosemellino@gmail.com](mailto:rosemellino@gmail.com)

**September 26: Youth Waterfowl Hunt, Statewide** – Youth ages 12-15 may participate in the Youth Waterfowl Hunt for ducks, coots, mergansers, and geese. All youths must be accompanied by a licensed adult hunter with valid Massachusetts waterfowl stamp. One firearm only. Adult may not hunt and may carry firearm only when unloaded and cased. No license or stamp needed for youths ages 12-14. License and Massachusetts waterfowl stamp needed or youths age 15. No federal stamp required. All other hunting regulations/bag limits apply.

**September 29: Fisheries and Wildlife Board Meeting, Tyringham** – The September meeting of the Fisheries and Wildlife Board will be held on Tuesday, September 29, 2015, at 10:00 A.M., at the Tyringham Town Hall, 116 Main Road, Tyringham, Massachusetts. Please note: If you have a disability or medical condition and would like to request special accommodations, please contact Susan Sacco at 508-389-6342.

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