



Monthly Report

www.mefishwildlife.com

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July, 2014

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Exciting Times at the Rookery – *Written by Amanda DeMusz*

Biologists around the state are busy this time of year monitoring reproduction of many wildlife species from moose calves and deer fawns, to waterfowl broods and grouse chicks. In Aroostook County, there is only one known active Great Blue Heron rookery and it was just identified this spring. While this colony only boasts two active nests, it is exciting news for a non-game species which was listed as a Species of Special Concern in Maine in 2007.

Over the past 30 years, the population of Great Blue Herons has been steadily declining along the coast where it is monitored closely by biologists. However, inland populations were not monitored as closely until 2009 when IFW ramped up its efforts and enlisted the help of birding enthusiasts to locate and track colonies throughout the expansive inland habitat available to the birds. Inland nesting herons take advantage of the vast network of ponds, streams, and beaver flowages which provide ideal habitat for foraging and nesting. This also adds to the complexity of monitoring since Maine consists of more than 6000 lakes and ponds and is 90% forested.

As the only known active nesting location for the bird in Aroostook County, this new colony, located just south of Presque Isle, is being monitored closely by regional biologists. An initial visit in early June confirmed the presence of five adult birds and three potential nests along a beaver flowage in the industrial forest lands. A second visit in late June confirmed two of the nests were active. One nest boasted a threesome of healthy 1-2 week old chicks, while the second nest showed signs the adults were still incubating. Biologists will continue to monitor the colony through the summer and work with private landowners to be sure the birds are not disturbed during their sensitive nesting period which extends to early August.



Late June active nests. Nest on left has 3 chicks and nest on right the bird is still incubating eggs.



INFORMATION CENTER

In June the front office of the Department received and replied to (approx):

- 3,630 Phone calls
- 1,507 Emails
- 294 Walk-ins



Missed an issue?

To view previous Weekly Reports, please visit www.mefishwildlife.com and select "About Us"



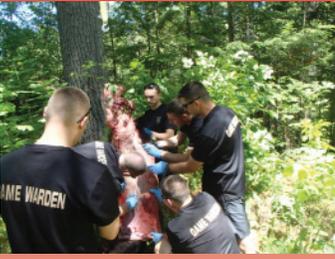
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Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Swan Island

Maine Wildlife Park

MAINE WARDEN SERVICE



- During this past week of the Advanced Warden Service Academy, new wardens received classroom training on ATV enforcement/patrol techniques, Title 12 laws, vehicle checkpoints, and hunting enforcement. Recruits also had hands-on practice field dressing and skinning a nuisance bear which had been dispatched by wardens.

- Warden Carlton Richardson in Division A summoned a male who had 14 brook trout in his possession after bringing fish home and going back for more.



- Warden Preston Pomerleau in Division E has been checking several brook fishermen and states many are keeping fish between 8-10 inches with a few 12-inch brookies showing up. He has addressed several violations over the last two weeks from use of worms in fly fishing only waters to over limit cases.

- Warden Allarie from Division B conducted a Hooked on Fishing detail for the Monmouth Middle School on Cobbossee Lake for approximately 60 students.



RESEARCH & ASSESSMENT SECTION

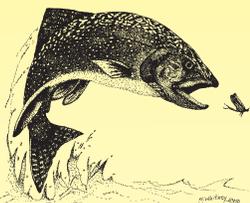
Coastal/Tidal Wildlife Habitat - *Written by Don Katnik, RAS Habitat Group Leader*

Salt marshes, tidal flats, eelgrass beds, and mussel bars all provide important habitat for wildlife. For the last several years, the Department has been working to develop a high resolution map of these habitats. The work to date has involved identifying what habitats need to be mapped and what can be identified from the low-tide aerial photos available from the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR). Field visits to hundreds of sites along Maine's coast have verified that fringe marsh down to ten feet across can be accurately mapped from these photos. They also demonstrated the importance of identifying where freshwater inflows increase the value of tidal habitats. This past year, Habitat Group staff met with species specialists from the Resource Assessment Section and regional biologists from the Wildlife Management Section to discuss what we have learned so far and to develop a set of mapping protocols to standardize what we will map as Coastal/Tidal Wildlife Habitat. We have now begun the process of working through DMR's coast-wide set of low-tide imagery and mapping habitat areas from them. When complete, this comprehensive data set will allow the Department to prioritize coastal/tidal habitats for oil spill response. This data set will also serve as a basis for updating the Department's regulatory "Tidal Waterfowl/Wading bird Habitat" layer. We expect to complete the coastal/tidal mapping by summer 2015.



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Woodcock attended a Fishing Festival in Norway, the Bangor area breakfast rotary and of course, the moose lottery drawing!



STAFF CHANGES



We are pleased to announce that Bonnie Holding will be joining us as the Director of Information & Education. She started her new position on Monday, June 16.

Bonnie is a very accomplished Master Maine Guide with 26 years of experience. She has guided fly fishing at Megantic Fish and Game Club and Tim Pond Camps and has also served as fly fishing instructor at LL Bean. Bonnie has also owned and operated Goldsmith Gallery at Sugarloaf for the past 23 years, and prior to that was the first woman employed as a Sales Associate in the LL Bean Hunting and Fishing Department.

Bonnie has also served as the Coordinator for the Casting for Recovery Program here in Maine for the past 16 years, has been an active volunteer at the Maine Special Olympics Winter Games for the past 20 years and has been a volunteer Fly Fishing Instructor for the Becoming an Outdoors Woman Program for the past 12 years. She has also served as a member of the IF&W Brook Trout Working Group.

Bonnie has been the recipient of a number of awards including the Great Women of Maine Award in 2011, the LL Bean Outdoor Hero's Award in 2010 and the Grassroots Advocate Award in 2009. She was featured in Outdoor Life Magazine in 2005 as one of the top female guides in North America.

We are pleased to have Bonnie join our team here at IF&W. She is widely known and respected in a variety of arenas. She will be a wonderful asset to our department. Bonnie brings a great deal of experience in the outdoor education field, as well as strong leadership and communication skills. Please join us in welcoming Bonnie Holding to IF&W.



We are pleased to announce that Angel Truman started with the Licensing Division here at IF&W on Monday, December 9th, 2013. Angel has nearly 25 years of experience in State government, spending the last 11 years working in the OIT organization. She is an avid outdoors person and is heavily involved with the Boy Scouts. We look forward to having her join the IF&W family.



We are pleased to announce that Lori Pelletier started work in the Licensing Division on Monday, May 5th, 2014. Lori has significant experience working in a variety of jobs including banking, education, hospital services, and most recently at the Augusta Career Center working for the Department of Labor. Lori is married with two grown children and two granddaughters. Her hobbies include camping, ATVing, reading, and baseball. Please join us in welcoming Lori to IF&W.

*It's all about moose at the
Maine Wildlife Park in Gray -
a great place to take the kids!*



mainewildlifepark.com

**Visit Swan Island,
on the Kennebec River,
for a unique camping experience!**



maine.gov/swanisland

Any-Deer Permit Lottery

Application Deadlines
By mail or in person - July 25, 2014
Online - August 15, 2014



*Photo by
Carrie L. Johnson*

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Lake & River
Protection sticker**



FISHERIES & HATCHERIES DIVISION

Penobscot Region Fisheries Report - *Written by Nels Kramer, Regional Fisheries Biologist*



When an angler walked into the Regional Fisheries Office in 1996 to ask if smallmouth bass have always been present in Upper Cold Stream Pond in Lincoln, I suspected that it was a fish identification error on the campowner's part, so I asked him to bring in any of these fish from the lake that he may catch in the future. The very next day he brought in three smallmouth bass between 8" and 10". Because we had not documented bass during our past samplings, and we had no prior angler reports of bass at Upper Cold Stream Pond, this had to be an illegal introduction. At that point I became fully aware that we would be dealing with the consequences of this irresponsible act for many years to come.

Since that conversation in 1996, we have watched with trepidation as the bass population expanded in Upper Cold Stream Pond and spread to Cold Stream Pond in Enfield. We assume the bass migrated downstream to Cold Stream Pond via Smelt Brook, which connects the two lakes. Over time more and more reports came into the office, most from long time area anglers and campowners concerned about having another invasive species to deal with, and inquiring if something could be done to remove them.

My anxiety has centered on the possibility of bass competing with trout and salmon for forage. In many waters and at certain times of the year, we have observed bass stomachs full of smelts; obviously this reduces available food that is so important for healthy landlocked salmon, togue and brook trout populations.

In 2003 we instituted an S-13 regulation (no size or bag limit on bass) at both Cold Stream and Upper Cold Stream Ponds. Anglers have reported an occasional bass while fishing the lake for white perch, and some kids have caught a few off the docks in the summer, but there

hasn't been much interest in bass fishing at either lake. When asked about the possibility for the Penobscot Valley High School Class of 2017 to sponsor a bass derby to raise funds for their "Project Graduation" and to increase awareness of invasive species impacts, I supported the idea. I explained, however, that any bass removed through a "dead bass derby" (in which every bass caught is kept and killed) would likely be a drop in the proverbial bucket, and would probably not remove a substantial proportion of this bass population. There's also good evidence that bass populations respond to high levels of removal by increasing reproduction, thus nullifying efforts at removal. However, we thought it might be a good way to provide a learning opportunity about the dangers of moving any species of fish from water to water.



The Class of 2017 applied for and received a permit to hold a bass derby this past Saturday.

I had very little expectation that they would handle many bass, but thought it might be a good opportunity to collect basic biological information about the bass population at the weigh-in. However, by the end of the day, 46 anglers had entered 813 bass with a total weight of 412 pounds! One angler caught 92 bass with a total weight of 50.4 pounds!

Guess I was wrong about how many bass they'd catch!

This does demonstrate how quickly a non-native species can expand its presence in a new habitat, and how they can change not only the fishing opportunities in those lakes affected, but the watershed's ecology forever!



A baby wood duck recently visited one of our hatcheries. He was discovered wandering amongst the raceways all alone.

They snapped a quick picture then brought him back to Cold Stream to be reunited with his mom.