

June 2025

12 Months of Wildlife Management

From Joe Roy, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist



Figure 1. Bobolink

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Grassland Management

While Maine may be 89% forested, our non-forested communities provide important habitat features to our wildlife species. Some of the species that use these plant communities may only use grasslands/hayfields as part of a larger matrix of habitat types. Examples could be deer and turkey leaving the woods to use the grasslands to forage or stache young. Some of our species need the grassland as their primary habitat during the breeding season. These are species like the bobolink or eastern meadowlark. These species need mature grassland communities until at least July 15th to fulfill their nesting requirements and get their young fledged.



Figure 2. Eastern meadowlark

When managing grasslands or hayfields, delayed mowing is likely going to provide the best benefit for our wildlife. This allows the grass to grow taller, produce seed heads, and helps promote an increased insect load. For species like bobolink, delaying until at least July 15th is key. This is when the young chicks are

June tends to be the first frost free month for much of the state, and we can see that reflected in our plant communities statewide. It's a great time to be out working on the landscape, even though our black flies will be coming in thick. Some of our early blooming shrubs and flowers have already shown us the best and the brightest flowers they have to offer, while others are starting to show now, and some are still months away.

This is a busy time for our breeding birds. Lots of our temporary visiting birds who are just migrating through will be at points further north, but many of our nesting birds will have their young still in the nest and starting to fledge this month.

This is the time of year where we see lots of moose calves and deer fawns on the landscape, and anglers will already have had great success chasing brook trout, salmon, and togue in the prior month. Our grassland communities will begin to get taller, and our pesky invasive plant species will be showing themselves more and more. During these coming months we really get to enjoy the benefits of our previous work as we watch our landscapes grow, and this is a great time to monitor our work.

old enough that they can sustain strong flight to avoid mowing decks. If you cannot delay mowing through all of June, working with a biologist to identify the most important areas in your hayfield or grassland can be beneficial to avoid the highest priority resources. Often this is the center of the field but looking to see where nesting activity is taking place also shows us the critical areas. When you do decide to mow, keeping your mowing deck high and leaving 4-6 inches of stubble remaining can be beneficial to maintain better cover.

Monitor Your Plantings



We have talked a lot about preparing for spring planting, and much of that occurred last month. Now it's important to monitor our planting. Whether that be our food plots, our trees, or our transplanted shrubs. During this time, we want to check to see if the planting is holding up well. You may need to provide supplemental water, or if it is being heavily browsed, you will want to erect an exclusion device. If you are trying to avoid browsing, tree tubes are going to be helpful. You can also construct a perimeter fence around individual plants. In the instance of a perimeter fence I would recommend a chicken wire fence that circles the entire plant. You want it to be tall enough that it keeps deer from reaching over the top, wide enough that the plant has room to grow, and a deer can reach its tongue in, but not so wide that a deer can jump the fence and have room to roam. I recommend a perimeter fence that gives 9 inches of room around the plant.

Invasive Species Control



Figure 3. Invasive Japanese Knotweed

You can accuse me of sounding like a broken record, but invasive species monitoring and control should be on your to-do list during the entire growing season.



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This newsletter article was originally written for our partner Small Woodland Owners of Maine.