



Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

Weekly Report

www.mefishwildlife.com

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Thursday, April 26, 2012

MAINE WARDEN SERVICE

- Friday morning, I was called by a concerned citizen about a deer that was alive near a field. Both of the deer's back legs were broke and the body of the deer was bruised and lacking a lot of hair. It was easy to tell that someone had chased and ran over this deer in the field the night before with a vehicle. Sgt. Humphrey, Warden Pelkey/ K-9 Badger, and Warden Pilot Barry assisted gathering evidence at the scene. On Saturday Sgt. Humphrey and I located the suspect and his vehicle. The vehicle was seized and the investigation is still on going. Warden Martin did not mention that he had a suspect and evidence to link the truck to the crime. He then got a full confession to the crime. The violator is facing substantial penalties. It was obviously a good team effort all around.
- As we were leaving Silver Lake, Warden Tripp received an OGT complaint of a subject fishing somewhere near Ellsworth, keeping bass alive with a plan to transport them to a farm pond in Hope and release them. With very little information Tripp, the Littlefields and Sergeant Ralph Hosford waited for the subject to travel thru Bucksport. More information was passed along by Warden Mark Merrifield that included a plate number and vehicle description. The vehicle was located, stopped and searched for fish. The subject possessed 6 small mouth bass in a cooler and 3 horned pout in a 5-gallon pail. The subject admitted to his plan to release the fish in the farm pond and received a summons.

BE THE MATCH

marrow.org



On Wednesday, April 25 the Maine Warden Service Association partnered with the University of Maine Football team to hold a Bone Marrow/Stem Cell donor drive on the University campus in Orono. MDIFW staff along with UMO football players volunteered at the event, which resulted in 273 completed tests. The event also increased the awareness of the National Bone Marrow Donor registry. Major Gregory Sanborn from the Maine Warden Service is currently undergoing treatment for T-Cell Lymphoma and is in need of a stem cell transplant. A worldwide search for a match is currently under way. For those who are interested in joining the registry you can order a home kit by visiting marrow.org.

INFORMATION CENTER

Last week the front office of the Department received and replied to:

- 892 Phone calls
- 448 Emails
- 54 Walk-ins



Missed an issue?

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

LICENSING DIVISION

Licensing Division personnel packed and shipped ATV registration materials for the new registration year to approximately 500 IF&W registration agents throughout the state. These agents will start selling new year ATV registrations starting May 1, 2012. ATV registrations may also be done online at www.mefishwildlife.com or at our main headquarters in Augusta. Each year, approximately 62,000 ATVs are registered in Maine. It is estimated that ATV riding contributes \$200 million annually to Maine's economy.



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FISHERIES & HATCHERIES DIVISION

Rudd: A 'Quiet' Invasive fish species - By Bobby VanRiper

Last week, while Chet and Andrew Coulombe were fishing for black crappie on Cobbosseecontee Lake, they made an unusual catch. Andrew hooked what appeared to be a big one. Once they brought it in, they looked at one another in disbelief. Andrew exclaimed, "Dad, I think I just caught the state record golden shiner!" The fish was 16 inches long and looked to be over two pounds. And, it had red fins. On further examination, it didn't look 'entirely' like a golden shiner to either of them. After considerable discussion, they decided to bring the fish to the Department for a positive identification. Ultimately, that task fell to Chet's wife.



Once at the Augusta Headquarters, the fish quickly became an object of interest. The fisheries folks were called in and made the identification: it was a rudd. A what?? What the heck kind of fish is that?

The rudd is a member of the minnow family. Its home range is most of Europe and Western Asia, where it is a common fish in lakes, ponds and larger rivers. It can grow up to 19 inches in length and weigh several pounds. In its native range, humans use rudd as bait and in some areas it is used as a food.

So then, how did it get here?

That's a good question. No one really knows the true story, but the big picture culprit seems to be 'bait bucket release'. However, rudd have been documented as being introduced into waters in 20 states, from Maine to as far west as Kansas. One thing for sure is that it did not swim here!

Looking back into the history of possible ways the fish found its way to America, the literature notes two time periods that introductions were discovered. The first was some time after 1890 and before 1920. The first verifiable record is from 1916 when 300 from the New York Aquarium were transferred to Lake Oconomowoc in Wisconsin. No reason for 'why' is explained. But where did those fish come from? An earlier, but unconfirmed report indicates that rudd were found in Central Park Lake! The story gets pretty murky before that time. One explanation offered was that many immigrants to the New York City area often brought what we today might think of as 'ethnic food' from their home regions and kept a few of the fish alive on the Atlantic crossing, then dumping them in the local ponds when they got to America. Rudd were also found in ponds and streams in New Jersey and on Staten Island around 1920.

The second series of records begins in the early 1950's when rudd were discovered in a creek near Ithaca, New York. Then in 1973 the first rudd was caught out of Cobbosseecontee Lake. The origin of that fish is unknown. Near the same time, a bait farmer in Suffolk, Virginia was found to have been raising and selling rudd, these from an unknown source. At the time too, interest increased in using rudd as bait for striped bass. From the 1970's on, there have been recorded escapes from aquaculture facilities and farm ponds, and presumably dispersal into local waters.

What effects do these fish have on our native fisheries? For the most part, the effects are largely unknown. Considering that they look like a great big golden shiner and that few are caught on hook and line, we don't see many of the fish. The younger age classes consume mostly mollusks and invertebrates while the older fish move to a more vegetarian diet, so they may compete with other fish species that utilize similar food sources. They are able to survive in very poor water quality, so they may fare better than native fishes in waters that are eutrophic or highly productive. They are reproducing, but we are unsure about population size.

After they caught the fish, Chet and Andrew took it to the Wayne General Store to have it weighed on a certified scale – a whopping 2.24 pounds! That's one big (invasive) minnow.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



Commissioner Woodcock was guest speaker at the Boothbay Region Fish and Game Association last evening at the Clubhouse on Adams Pond. DIF&W staffers also in attendance with the Commissioner were Director of Landowner Relations, Mark Latti; Regional Recreational Safety

Instructor, Reggie Read; Sergeant Mark Warren and Warden Doug Kulis who received special recognition and a round of applause from the Club members for his 25 years of service to the Department and to the people of Maine. Left to right: Sergeant Mark Warren; Commissioner Woodcock; Boothbay F&G Association President, Dennis Blackman; and Warden Doug Kulis

Congratulations and best wishes Sergeant Mark Warren! A job well done!

INFORMATION & EDUCATION

- On Sunday, April 22 Emily MacCabe conducted a Hooked on Fishing - Not on Drugs Instructor Certification at Cabelas in Scarborough, Maine.

Our callers can be quite funny!

- A lady called that wants to apply for a moose permit and asked what areas were good for mountain goats.
- "When does black-fly season start...I want to miss it!"
- "I have a nuisance grouse!" This person called back this week, still being attacked.
- "I want to get a trapping license, so that I can trap a bear and wrestle it!"

WILDLIFE DIVISION

Wildlife Biologist Rich Hoppe participated in the 2012 Boston Marathon, this is his story:

Extremely challenging! That's the word I would use to describe this years Boston Marathon. This Marathon was one of the top 10 hottest in the 116 year running of the race with temperatures from 81 degrees at start to a high of 90 degrees by noon.

My worries started two days prior to race day with the Boston Athletic Association (BAA) offering one year deferments for next years 2013 Boston Marathon to those runners who qualified and may want to opt out due to the extreme heat. They also issued an advisory to all qualified entrants that "any runners who are not acclimated to heat, we advise not to run" This comment did not hold well with those Mainers who train in extreme winter weather conditions and rarely run over 70° F.

The day of the Marathon starts by getting up at 5 a.m., catching the T to Boston Commons and jumping on one of 600 school busses that will ferry the 26,000 plus runners for an hour ride to Hopkinton and the Athlete's Village where the race starts. All athletes gather in the Village where we wait close to three hours prior to the start which tends mentally draining, but I learned from past experience to just sit, relax and take your mind off the race. This is easier said than done, especially this year with the buzz around the village of the heat and the concern with dehydration and heat exhaustion. As the 10:20 a.m. starting time approached I already knew this was going to be a conservative run for me and by the 5 mile mark on the course I reevaluated my goals of obtaining a time to qualify for next year's Boston. I reconciled with myself to "just finish" and concentrate on hydration and my health.



As the race progressed I was able to hydrate appropriately and take in additional electrolytes to avoid cramps and heat exhaustion. As runners started the ascent up Heart Brake Hill at 20 mile I noted hundreds of runners slowing, some to just a walk while others were unable to continue due to fatigue. I credit my finishing time of 3:52:22 by reducing my pace per mile by about 40 seconds and having a support crew, friends, family, Boston spectators and volunteers all rooting for me. This is one marathon that I will long remember. The day ended while I celebrated at the hotel with complimentary beverages with my fellow Aroostook County marathoners.

Cory Stearns, MDIFW Regional Biologist writes:

In Maine, the amount of early successional and grassland habitat is declining, because it is maturing into forest, or is being developed. Accordingly, species associated with these habitats such as the New England cottontail, American woodcock, and eastern meadowlarks are declining in numbers. By managing state owned Wildlife Management Areas to promote these habitats, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MIF&W) can help conserve the habitats and their associated species.

Wildfire plays an integral part in the functioning of many ecosystems. For example, fire provides important ecosystem functions such as: restarting succession (by opening up space for grass, shrubs, or young trees), stimulating growth of new vegetation, increasing habitat diversity, returning nutrients to the soil, and other benefits.

Following extensive planning and preparation (including writing a burn plan, locating available equipment, recruiting fire trained personnel, and mowing fire breaks around the perimeter of the burn units) by MIF&W Region A Wildlife staff and John Leavitt of the Maine Forest Service (Department of Conservation), a prescribed fire was conducted at Scarborough Wildlife Management Area on April 19, 2012. Two grassland units were burned, covering a total of approximately 8 acres. The goals of the burn were to:

1. Regenerate native annual grasses.
2. Improve old field habitat for nesting birds such as bobolink, eastern meadowlark, and song sparrow.
3. Promote the occurrence of milkweed, providing an important food resource for monarch butterfly larvae.
4. Reduce and eliminate (if possible) invasive shrubs, vines, and woody plants.

The prescribed fire went smoothly (the fire stayed within the burn units), and provided a good, thorough burn. The burn units will continue to be monitored to determine the response of vegetation and wildlife to evaluate the effectiveness of the burn in meeting our goals. Fourteen people participated in the prescribed fire, including MDIFW staff (biologists, game wardens, and hatchery personnel), John Leavitt and Ken Canfield of the Maine Forest Service, Jon Bailey of the Nature Conservancy, and Tim Bickford of the Maine Army National Guard.

