


NEW YORK STATE

CONSERVATIONIST

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DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021



**Offshore Wind:
Generating a
Clean Energy Future**

2021 Calendar INSIDE

**Winter: A great time to prune trees
Outdoor fun at Carlton Hill**

Dear Readers,

One of the most challenging years ever is finally coming to a close. The pandemic has changed the way we live, work, and interact with each other. Some of us have lost friends and/or family members, and most of us have faced high levels of stress trying to keep our families safe.

As we approach the holidays and a new year, I encourage you to maintain a sense of optimism. New York is both tough and resilient, reflecting the spirit of its people. We recognize the need to confront the current problems we face—including a deadly disease and injustice—as well as long-term issues like climate change. I am confident that we can overcome these challenges. Let's get through the next few months, together.

When it comes to the environment, we are all attracted to its beauty. In this issue, we provide a calendar (pg. 9) that includes some great wildlife photos submitted by *Conservationist* readers.

During 2021, DEC will continue its work to address key environmental issues that affect all of us, and is always looking to create a healthier environment and sustainable future. In this issue you can read about New York's efforts to develop offshore wind (pg. 2), a clean energy source that will significantly reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Winter is a time when some people limit their outdoor activities, but I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities to enjoy New York's lands and waters even as temperatures fall. The Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area (pg. 7) clearly lives up to its name. Whether you are a hunter or birdwatcher, a hiker, cross-country skier or snowmobiler, it's a great place to be this time of year. Or you can visit our website at www.dec.ny.gov/62.html for a list of great outdoor activities.

In this issue, you can learn when and how to prune a tree (pg. 34). Trees are an important part of our ecosystem, and also provide a beautiful and calming atmosphere that improves our quality of life. Pruning is a simple and important process, and when you know how to do it right, you can keep trees—and our environment—healthy.

One final note. I am grateful for the hard work of my staff over the last nine months. In addition to keeping the agency running and focusing on our core mission, more than one thousand staff responded to Governor Cuomo's call to help confront the pandemic. It has been my honor to lead them in this tumultuous time. #NewYorkTough

Best wishes to all for a very happy new year.

Sincerely,
Basil Seggos, Commissioner



NEW YORK STATE CONSERVATIONIST

Volume 75, Number 3 | December 2020/January 2021
Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of New York State

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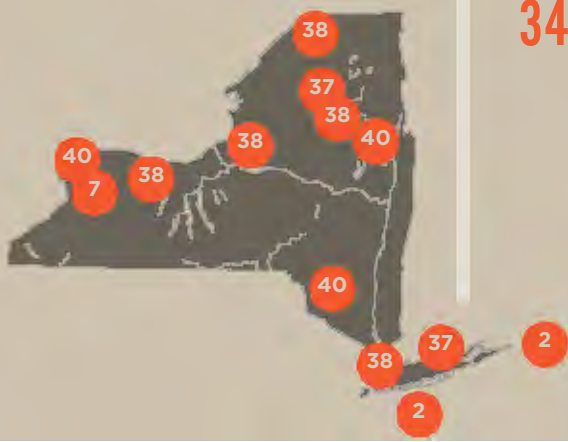
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FRONT COVER: Porcupine by Rebecca Brooks

BACK COVER: Wind turbines by Jan Arne Wold/Woldcam-Statoil

In July 2020, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced that New York State, as part of the largest combined renewable energy solicitation ever issued in the U.S. to combat climate change, was seeking to substantially increase the use of clean, renewable energy, including a dramatic expansion of offshore wind (OSW) projects from approximately 1,800 megawatts (MW) already under contract to up to an additional 2,500 MW of generating capacity.

These renewable energy solicitations, which also include large-scale solar and land-based wind projects, could boost New York's renewable energy capacity by as much as 4,000 MW. These projects will significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels and harmful greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.





WIND ON THE WATER

Tapping a Natural Energy Source for a Clean, Healthy Future

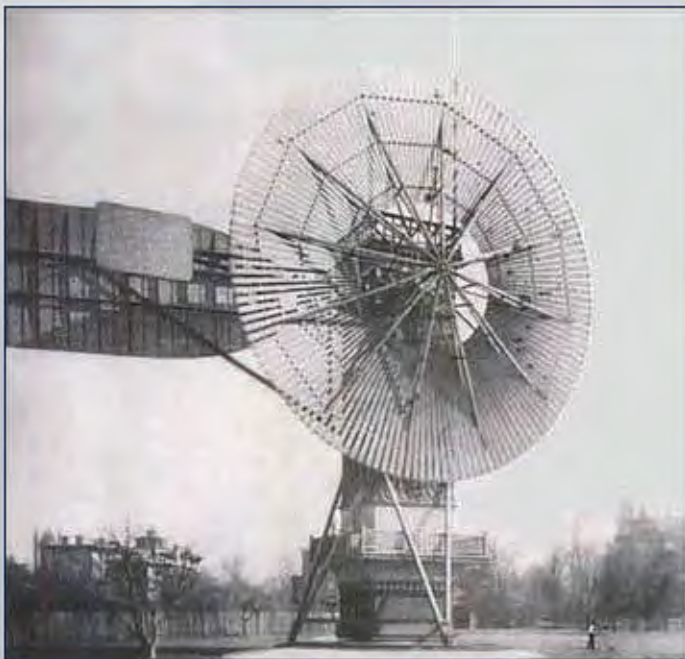
BY PETER CONSTANTAKES

For most of our lives, energy has been easily accessible; so easy, in fact, that we never really thought much about it. We can get all the energy we need by simply flicking a switch, plugging an appliance into a wall socket, turning up the thermostat, or filling up our car or truck at a nearby gas station. It's a quick, simple process: we require energy, we have easy access to energy, and we can get all the energy we need. So, why think about it, other than when it is not available, or how much we have to pay to get it?

But we have learned that we do need to think about energy now, particularly where it comes from, how it is produced, and the resulting impacts. For a long time, people rarely considered the source of our energy or the consequences of it; it's been more about what that energy allows us to do—heat or cool a home, travel for work or play, store and cook food, or simply read a book (or the

Conservationist magazine) in bed. And more people are now talking and thinking about the overall cost of energy; not just its price, but rather its effects on our lives, our environment, and the future of the planet.

It's clear that climate change poses a major threat to our planet and our way of life. The use of traditional energy sources, particularly coal and other fossil fuels, leads to the emission of greenhouse gases that are causing global warming. New York's average temperature has risen 2.4 degrees during the past 50 years, and we are already suffering the consequences of sea-level rise, increased flooding, and more severe weather events. Without dramatic action, it will only get worse—by the 2080s, many regions of the state that averaged less than one heat wave a year will likely experience eight or nine such events each year.



Charles Brush's wind turbine, 1888

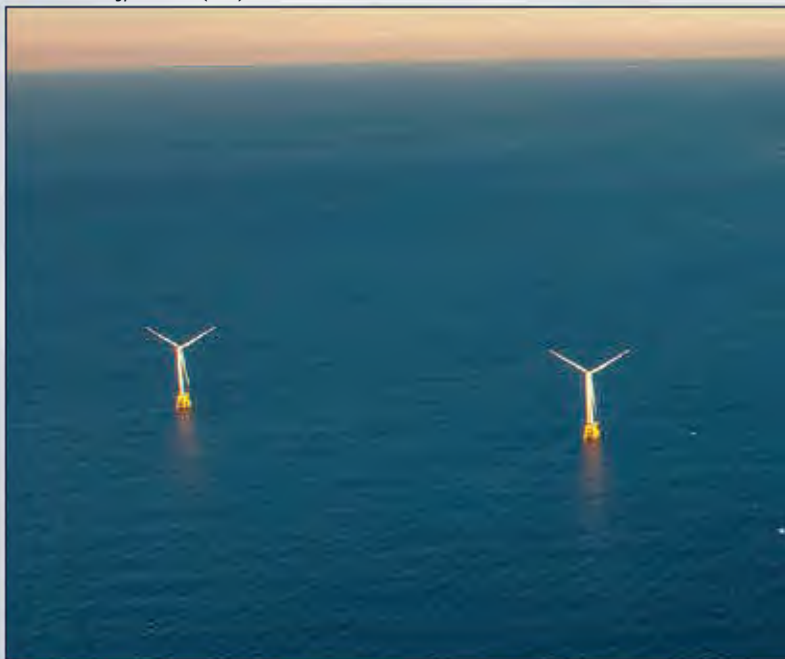
Reducing that threat (and saving our planet) requires that we rethink and revise our energy perspective to create a clean, renewable, sustainable energy system. As New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Seggos noted, “It is critical for New York to promote renewable energy resources and achieve our clean energy goals in a manner that protects our marine resources and commercial fishing industry, while advancing a cleaner, greener environment for generations to come.”

That is happening in New York State. A growing number of people and businesses are adopting alternative energy sources that draw from the sun, the earth (geothermal), or the wind. And New York is committed to making these clean energy “alternatives” the mainstream of our energy system.

In July 2019, Governor Cuomo signed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)—one of the most ambitious climate laws in the world—which requires New York to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent by 2030 and no less than 85 percent by 2050, from 1990 levels. The law also created a Climate Action Council to develop recommendations to meet these targets and place New York on a path toward carbon neutrality. Wind power, including offshore wind, will be a major part of this effort.

Using wind isn't a new concept. Wind was actually used to power sail boats on the Nile River in 5000 B.C., and much later, it powered ships that allowed explorers to cross oceans (e.g., Magellan circumnavigating the globe in the early 1500s or the transatlantic voyage of climate activist Greta Thunberg last year). In addition, windmills were once used to pump water or provide energy to operate grist mills.

American Wind Energy Association (AWEA)



Block Island Wind Farm, the first commercial offshore wind farm in the U.S.

Today's windmills have evolved into more efficient devices, known as wind turbines. Wind turbines can generate significant amounts of clean, renewable electricity. Much larger than terrestrial (land-based) turbines, which produce several kilowatts of power, OSW turbines can produce 10 to 12 MW each. One revolution of the blades is enough to power an average home for a day; and the structure sizes will continue to increase, bringing greater efficiency and reduced costs. Floating wind turbines, a new technology likely coming soon, can be sited in deeper waters than “fixed foundation” turbines, and will open new opportunities for siting.

Recognizing the potential of offshore wind, New York has adopted the nation's largest offshore wind goal: 9,000 MW of generating capacity by 2035—that's enough electricity to power 6 million homes.

To date, the nation's fledgling offshore wind industry has been focused in the Atlantic off the East Coast, due to a combination of high winds, shallow waters, and proximity to high energy demand from major cities near the ocean. Based on numerous studies, fieldwork, and stakeholder input, New York identified specific areas for consideration for wind turbine development that cumulatively total more than one million acres. Key criteria used in choosing these areas included a distance of 15 to 20 nautical miles from shore (based, in part, to reduce visible impacts) and a site that presents the fewest conflicts with ocean uses (e.g., shipping, commercial and recreational fishing, and boating), as well as fish and wildlife, natural resources, and existing infrastructure.



Block Island, RI

The first offshore wind farm in the U.S., constructed in the waters off Block Island, Rhode Island, became fully operational in December 2016. It features five, 3-blade wind turbines, which have a combined electricity generating capacity of 30 MW. The wind-generated electricity is projected to offset carbon emissions by an estimated 800,000 tons over 20 years, the equivalent of removing 150,000 cars from the road. Although the Block Island wind farm is small, it has shown what is possible and set the stage for future offshore wind energy growth.

U.S., now powers the island with clean, renewable energy.

Offshore wind farms that supply electricity to New York will be located in federal waters off the coast of Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey and will be subject to review and approval by the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), part of the U.S. Department of Interior. BOEM is also the federal entity that leases offshore areas for future development, and it works closely with DEC and other state agencies to minimize ocean conflicts and protect natural resources like marine mammals.

Clearly, offshore turbines will not look like the quaint, iconic, land-based Dutch windmills we are familiar with, which date back more than 500 years. The turbines will be much larger, ranging up to nearly 900 feet tall (nearly as tall as the Eiffel Tower), with 350-foot-long blades. The blades are designed to capture the kinetic energy of wind and turn a rotor attached to a main shaft, which will spin a generator, producing mechanical energy (i.e., electricity) that can be transported to shore via transmission cables buried in the ocean floor. The turbines can produce power during peak demand periods, generally late in the day and early evening hours when demand is highest.

OSW turbines have the potential to produce large amounts of clean energy, with the next generation of turbine—which is right around the corner—capable of producing 14 to 16 MWs. By utilizing wind—a clean, renewable resource—the OSW turbines will help curb our reliance on harmful fossil fuel generation, which contributes to air and water pollution, and global warming, and results in more pronounced negative impacts on disadvantaged communities.

New York's commitment to responsibly developing offshore wind will significantly advance efforts to combat climate change and protect our environment. Wind is a carbon-free, non-polluting, sustainable source of energy, and by harnessing it, we can make great strides toward a healthier, more sustainable future.

But why locate wind turbines offshore? There are many reasons, but a crucial factor is that stronger, more consistent winds are found offshore. As we move to capture this power to generate electricity, it is vital that we develop OSW turbines responsibly, in a way that respects, avoids, and minimizes the impact to traditional ocean uses, such as recreational and commercial fishing.

DEC recognizes the importance of commercial fishing and other marine industries in the Long Island region, including recreation. DEC participates in numerous meetings hosted by NYSERDA and BOEM and collaborates with additional advisory workgroups to discuss OSW development with stakeholders, including commercial anglers, and will continue these efforts as the development of offshore wind moves forward.

All of us are dependent on power in our daily lives, just as the many generations of people who came before us. But we now understand that the energy we use can have harmful impacts on air quality, our climate, our health, and even our survival. It is vital that we think about energy—where it comes from and its effects on our environment and our lives. Clean energy options, like offshore wind, are constantly evolving and becoming more effective, efficient, and affordable.



New York is committed to minimizing any potential threats to marine life, birds, and wildlife from OSW development.

Ironically, using wind as a power source has been around for thousands of years, yet how we can use it, and the benefits of using it, have become a major part of our state’s and nation’s current energy strategy. We now recognize the need for clean, renewable energy, and the transition happening now may be a key to saving the planet.

As we look ahead to a cleaner energy future, it’s interesting to note that “saving the planet” was a theme that gained traction in the 1960s and ‘70s and spurred a movement to rethink some things we took for granted, including our environment. A famous Bob Dylan song from that time said, “the answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind.” And New York agrees.

Peter Constantakes is an Assistant Editor with *Conservationist*.

Author’s note: This article was written with input from NYSERDA and DEC program staff.

Protecting Fish, Wildlife, and Other Creatures

New York is at the forefront of developing OSW in a responsible manner to protect the ecological integrity of the ocean and its resources. State and federal agencies that are working on siting of OSW turbines to reduce conflicts with ocean users and disruptions to fish and wildlife populations, include the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), DEC’s Division of Marine Resources, the OSW Fisheries Technical Working Group (www.nyftwg.com), and the Environmental Technical Working Group (www.nyetwg.com) which includes fishing industry representatives. The group is examining local and regional issues related to OSW siting, including impacts on commercial fishing.

Although there is little evidence of population-level impacts due to turbine locations and operation, various State agencies and authorities, including DEC, are working closely with federal partners, academia, and scientists on monitoring and assessment projects. These projects will explore critical topics, such as avian and bat risks, effects of construction and operational noise on mammals and fish, electromagnetic frequencies, changes to benthic habitat, and impacts to species density and displacement.

The information obtained will provide meaningful data on potential fish and wildlife impacts, as well as actions that can be taken to protect species in areas near wind turbine sites, including fish, marine mammals, sea turtles, birds and bats, crustaceans (e.g., lobsters, crabs), other invertebrates (e.g., sponges, oysters, squid), and more. For example, studies are looking at the risk of collisions or displacement of birds and bats due to wind turbines.

New York State is partnering with public and private universities on research and development projects to ensure responsible offshore wind development that minimizes threats to birds, fish, and wildlife. These organizations include the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance, the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance, Offshore Wind Technical Work Groups, and others.



CARLTON HILL MULTIPLE USE AREA

BY EMILIO RENDE

Nestled within the rolling hills of northeastern Wyoming County lies the Carlton Hill Multiple Use Area (CHMUA). The MUA is located in the Town of Middlebury, three miles north of the Village of Warsaw. The 2,500-acre property contains a mixture of grassland, agricultural land, shrubland, and forest, as well as several ponds and two creeks. This diversity of habitat provides good food and shelter for a wide variety of wildlife species.

Agriculture was the primary land use on this property; however, many of the farms were abandoned in the 1920s and 1930s due to the poor soils and harsh growing conditions. The land tracts that comprise CHMUA were purchased with funding from the New York State Park and Recreation Bond Act of 1960. Initially, habitat management was limited to marsh construction and tree planting, but in the late 1980s, more attention was given to grassland management. The Sulphur Springs Hill Cooperative

Hunting Area, which is adjacent to CHMUA, was established through the Fish and Wildlife Management Act in 1981. This Co-op Area provides additional hunting access to private lands and is approximately 800 acres.

The diverse habitats at the MUA support birds such as Cooper's hawk, northern harrier, grasshopper sparrow, blue-winged warbler, Henslow's sparrow, yellow-breasted chat, pied-billed grebe, black-billed cuckoo, and horned lark. In recognition of this, New York State designated the MUA as a Bird Conservation Area in 2006.

DEC manages the MUA primarily for species that use early successional habitat—such as grassland birds, grouse, and woodcock—by periodically mowing the grasslands, maintaining shrublands, and performing some timber cuts. DEC has stewardship agreements with the National Wild Turkey Federation and Pheasants Forever, as well as two agricultural agreements with a local farmer to plant crops and establish and maintain the grasslands.



The area has a mixture of grassland, agricultural land, shrubland, and forest that provides food and shelter for a variety of wildlife species.



Horned lark



Pied-billed grebe



The 2,500-acre property contains two creeks.

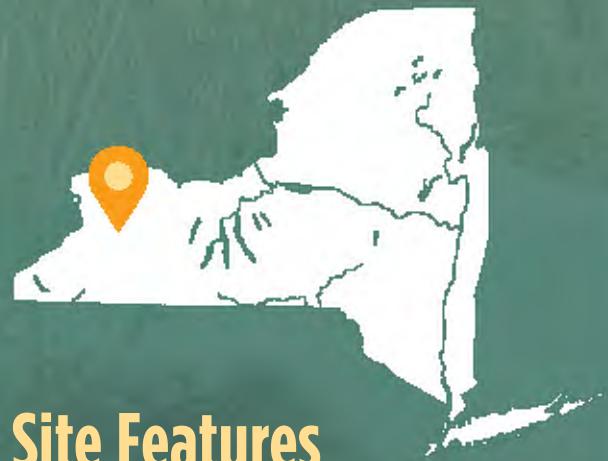
In 2015, DEC launched the Young Forest Initiative to increase young forest habitat throughout New York's forested landscape on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to benefit wildlife. One aspect of the program involves creating habitat management plans for each WMA. The habitat management plan for CHMUA was adopted in 2019 and will guide management of the area for the next ten years.

The area provides incredible opportunities for a variety of recreationists. Visitors can enjoy hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, wildlife viewing, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. Mountain bike riding and horseback riding are allowed; however, these uses are limited by date restrictions and are only permitted on specifically marked trails.

Hunters can pursue white-tailed deer, black bear, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, woodcock, wood ducks, and Canada geese. The MUA is also very popular for ring-necked pheasant hunting. DEC releases pheasants on the 200-plus acres of fields on the property. Trappers can find beaver, muskrat, raccoon, red fox, gray fox, and coyote. Anglers can enjoy several ponds, along with the two streams, found on the area—Little Tonawanda Creek and Middlebury Brook. Bird watchers may encounter bobolinks, savannah sparrows, and several species of warblers, including yellow warbler, magnolia warbler, chestnut-sided warbler, yellow-rumped warbler, and black-throated green warbler.

As you can see, Carlton Hill's diversity of habitats offers many choices to the visitors who wish to enjoy the outdoors in Wyoming County.

Emilio Rende is a Wildlife Biologist in DEC's Allegany office.



Site Features



NOTES: Open year-round. Hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, and wildlife viewing are all popular activities. There are several designated trails open for horseback riding and mountain biking, from June 1 to September 30.



ACCESSIBLE FEATURES: Individuals with disabilities can apply for a permit through the Motorized Access Program for People with Disabilities (MAPPWD) to use an ATV on Trail #1, on the north side of West Middlebury Road, and Trail #2, on the south side of West Middlebury Road. These trails are for ATVs only.



DIRECTIONS: From Warsaw, travel three miles north on Route 19, and turn left onto West Middlebury Road (County Road 47). The site can also be accessed by taking Route 1 north from Warsaw. Several parking areas are available on Bank Road, Casselberry Road, and West Middlebury Road.



CONTACT: For more information call the Region 9 DEC office at (716) 372-0645 or visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/82684.html.

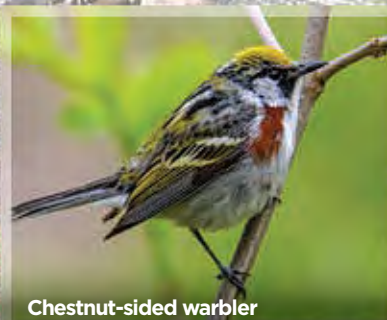
Bill Banaszewski



Gray fox



Visitors can enjoy a range of recreational opportunities in all seasons.



Chestnut-sided warbler



The property's diversity of habitats provides good hunting opportunities.

NEW YORK STATE CONSERVATIONIST

2021 CALENDAR

The *Conservationist* is pleased to share our second annual calendar as part of the December 2020 issue.

Last year, we featured previous covers of the magazine and asked readers to send us photos for consideration this year. We were pleased to receive numerous submissions, many of them worthy of being included in the 2021 calendar; however, as you know, there are only 12 months, so we could only use a few of the many wonderful photos we received.

As promised, all the photos in our 2021 calendar are from readers. It is great that we get to showcase them this year, and we appreciate everyone's support of the magazine. We hope you will enjoy the calendar throughout 2021. And remember, if you have a photo you think would be good for next year's calendar, please email the original image file to magazine@dec.ny.gov.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the coming year.



JANUARY



FEBRUARY



MARCH



APRIL



MAY



JUNE



JULY



AUGUST



SEPTEMBER



OCTOBER



NOVEMBER



DECEMBER



Short-Eared Owl | Photograph by Don Krom

• Short-eared owls are the most diurnal (active during the day) of all the northeastern owls. They are most often observed in the late afternoon and at dawn or dusk.

• When hunting, they dive from perches or fly low over the ground and pounce on prey from above, sometimes hovering briefly before they drop.

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January



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

7	8	9	10	11 ●	12	13 NYS Free Fishing Weekend
14 Valentine's Day NYS Free Fishing Weekend	15 Presidents' Day	16	17	18	19 ●	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 ○
28						

Gray Fox | Photograph by *Melissa Rowell*

- Foxes are members of the canine family and are close relatives of coyotes, wolves, and domestic dogs, but they are often called the "catlike canines."
- The gray fox is the only North American canid capable of climbing trees. It uses its semi-retractable front claws to grasp a tree trunk while pushing upward with its back claws.

January 2021

March 2021

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February



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

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31					

Raccoon | Photograph by Bryan Wilson

- Raccoons are found in North and Central America, Europe, and Japan. They are very adaptable, living in a wide range of climates and habitats.
- Raccoons typically make homes, called dens, in trees or caves, though they will also make homes in barns, abandoned vehicles, and other man-made structures.

February 2021

April 2021

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March



<p>Loon <i>Photograph by Mike Adamovic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referred to as the "spirit of northern waters," the common loon is recognized as a symbol of unspoiled wilderness. They are well-known for their haunting calls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common loons breed on quiet, remote freshwater lakes of the northern U.S. and Canada, and are sensitive to human disturbance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth Day, April 22, is widely recognized as the largest secular observance in the world. It is marked by more than a billion people every year as a day of action to change human behavior and create global, national, and local policy that protects, restores, and/or improves our environment. 				
<p>4 ☾ Easter Passover Ends</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11 ●</p>	<p>12 Ramadan Begins</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 ☾</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 Earth Day</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25 ○</p>	<p>26 ○</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 Arbor Day</p>	<p>3</p>

Notes:
 For detailed information about fishing seasons see: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/fishing.html

March 2021
 S M T W T H F S
 1 2 3 4 5 6
 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
 21 22 23 24 25 26 27
 28 29 30 31

May 2021
 S M T W T H F S
 1
 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
 30 31

April



Coyote Pups | *Photograph by Aaron Winters*

• Coyote pups are fully grown at nine months and eventually disperse after being driven from their parents' home ranges, typically between late October and January. These young coyotes often travel 50 to 100 miles in search of a vacant territory and to find a mate.

• The Eastern coyote does not form a true 'pack' with multiple adults living together like its relative, the wolf. Instead, they are organized as a 'family unit' made up of the adult pair and their pups from the current year.

• Coyotes become more vocal in late summer and early fall, when it is common to hear a family unit of coyotes howling and yipping.

1
Spring Turkey Season Opens
I Love My Park Day
Pike, Pickerel, Walleye Season Opens

2	3 ☾	4 Summer Flounder (Fluke) Season Opens	5	6	7	8																																																																																											
9 Mother's Day	10 ●	11 ● Ramadan Ends	12	13	14	15																																																																																											
16	17	18	19 ☾	20 Adirondack Park Established 1892	21 Most DEC Campgrounds Open Green Your Commute Day	22																																																																																											
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30	31 Memorial Day	<table border="0"> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;"><i>April 2021</i></td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;"><i>June 2021</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>TH</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>TH</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td> <td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> <td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td> <td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td> <td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td> <td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table>					<i>April 2021</i>			<i>June 2021</i>			S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S					1	2	3			1	2	3	4	5	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	25	26	27	28	29	30		27	28	29	30				
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May



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

<p>1</p> <p>Late spring and early summer are when most wildlife have their young. Remember to appreciate wildlife from a safe distance and resist the urge to touch or pick up newborn fawns and other young wildlife. Wild animal parents will often stay away from their young, especially when people are present. Remember, "If You Care, Leave Them There."</p>	<p>2 ☾</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>National Trails Day</p>
<p>6</p> <p>NYS Invasive Species Awareness Week</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>●</p>	<p>10</p> <p>●</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Flag Day</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>●</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <p>Father's Day Summer Solstice</p>	<p>17</p> <p>○</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>●</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Largemouth/Smallmouth Bass Season Opens Juneteenth</p>
<p>21</p> <p>NYS Free Fishing Weekend</p>	<p>22</p> <p>National Pollinator Week</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Black Sea Bass Season Opens</p>	<p>24</p> <p>○</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>NYS Free Fishing Weekend</p>	<p>27</p> <p>NYS Free Fishing Weekend</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>NYS Free Fishing Weekend</p>

Fawn | Photograph by Tom Kosmichi

• A fawn's spots enable it to camouflage itself, with the colors blending well with the surrounding natural environment.

• The white-tailed fawn loses its spots by the end of October of the year it was born, or within three to four months after birth.

May 2021							July 2021						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
30	31												

June



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

Hummingbird Moth | *Photograph by Emily Hewitt*

- Sometimes mistaken for a hummingbird, the hummingbird moth's wings create a buzzing and humming sound.
- The moth has a rapid wingbeat of up to 70 beats per second, enabling it to fly up to 12 mph.

4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8	9 ●	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Oyster Toadfish Season Opens	17 ●
18	19	20	21 NYS Conservation Commission Established 1911	22	23 ○	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 ●

June 2021

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

August 2021

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

July



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 ●	9 Smokey Bear's Birthday	10	11	12	13	14
15 ●	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 ○	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 ●	31	<p>Bluebird <i>Photograph by Aaron Winters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Eastern bluebird was named New York's state bird in 1970. It can spot an insect 100 feet away. Eastern bluebirds live in meadows and openings surrounded by trees that offer suitable nest holes. With the proliferation of nest boxes and bluebird trails, bluebirds are now a common sight along roads, field edges, golf courses, and other open areas. 			

Notes:

Happy 75th Birthday *Conservationist*! August marks the 75th anniversary of continuous publication of the magazine.

July 2021

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2021

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

August



Moose | *Photograph by Rhys Templar*

• The moose is the largest member of the deer family (Cervidae) and the largest land mammal in New York State. Bulls weigh from 600 to 1,200 pounds and stand up to 6 feet tall at the shoulder.

• The breeding season, or rut, occurs in late September and early October. During this time, bulls compete for cows by sparring with each other.

5	6 ● Labor Day Most DEC Campgrounds Close Rosh Hashanah Begins	7	8 Rosh Hashanah Ends	9	10	11 Patriot Day
12	13 ●	14	15 Yom Kippur Begins	16 Yom Kippur Ends	17	18
19	20 ○	21	22 Autumnal Equinox	23	24	25 NYS Free Fishing Day National Hunting and Fishing Day National Public Lands Day
26	27	28 ☾	29	30		

August 2021							October 2021						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31					29	30	31	24	25	26	27
										28	29	30	
												31	

September



Notes:

For detailed information about hunting seasons see:

www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/hunting.html

Fall Colors | Photograph by Howard Jennings

• Autumn in New York is spectacular. Cooler nights and shorter days cause the state's trees to become ablaze with color.

• Enjoy the reds of sugar maples, bright orange of oak trees, and the beautiful yellows and golds of beech and hickory trees – colors only found in the Northeast this time of year.

3	4	5	6 ●	7	8	9
10	11 Columbus Day	12 ●	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 ○	21	22	23 Regular Northern Zone Big Game Season Opens
24	25	26	27 Sustainability Day	28 ●	29	30

31
Halloween

September 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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26	27	28	29	30		

November 2021

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

1	2 Election Day	3	4 ●	5	6
7 Daylight Savings Time Ends (set clocks back 1 hour)	8	9	10	11 ● Veterans Day NYS Free Fishing Day	12
13	14 America Recycles Day	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4 ●	5
6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 ○	20	21	22	23
24	25 Thanksgiving	26	27 ●	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4

White-Tailed Deer | Photograph by Laurie Dirick

- The breeding season (rut) for white-tailed deer in New York runs from October to January, with peak activity occurring in mid-November.
- During the rut, bucks use their antlers to establish social rank—bigger antlers, body size, and aggressive behavior usually lead to breeding success.

October 2021							December 2021						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	26	27	28	29	30	31	

November



SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

Porcupine | *Photograph by Rebecca Brooks*

- Porcupines are covered in about 30,000 quills. They cannot throw or shoot their quills, but because the quills are so lightly attached, they come off easily when a predator encounters them.
- While porcupines spend most of their time on the ground, they are good climbers and regularly climb trees in search of food (and occasionally will build nests in trees). They are also good swimmers.

5	6 Hanukkah Ends	7	8	9	10 ☾	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 ○
19	20	21 Winter Solstice	22	23	24	25 Christmas
26 ☾ Kwanzaa Begins	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2021

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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January 2022

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29	30	31				

December

WINTER

IS A GREAT TIME TO PRUNE TREES

How to Do It Right and Protect Your Trees

BY CHRISTINA MCLAUGHLIN

Did you know that there is a right way to prune a tree?

Pruning a tree isn't quite like cutting your friends hair—if you cut your friends hair badly, it'll grow back, and they'll forgive you eventually. But if you prune a tree incorrectly, you can create a wound that will weaken and may eventually kill your tree.

Trees are living organisms, and you can think of their bark like your skin. Bark protects the tree from insects and disease, and an injury to the bark creates a wound. These wounds can heal, but sometimes they allow disease and decay to enter the tree and weaken it over time.

Maintenance pruning is best done on young trees, where branch wounds left behind are small enough that the tree can easily heal. In mature trees, removing limbs larger than four inches in diameter is not recommended—the resulting wounds are frequently too large for the tree to heal.

If your tree has a lot of damage, dead wood, signs of insect infestation (especially ants or boring beetles), decay, or mushrooms and fungus, you should call a certified arborist for help. Think of arborists as “tree doctors” who can evaluate the health of your tree and give you recommendations for its proper care. Their expertise can be a valuable resource for both you and your tree.

Before starting any pruning yourself, make sure it is safe to do so. Check the tree for hanging branches up in the canopy that could fall while you are working. If the pruning you want to do can't be done from ground level, or involves a chainsaw, we recommend contacting a tree-care professional.



Don't leave a stub like this when trimming branches.

Pruning in late winter and early spring minimizes dieback of the inner bark and helps the wound-healing process. Pruning cuts can dry out some in winter due to low humidity, so waiting to cut a damaged limb until late winter or early spring can improve the tree's healing process.

To prune properly, you must first identify the tree's branch bark ridge and branch collar (see accompanying photo). Find the point where the branch meets the stem. As the branch and the stem have grown, the bark has been pushed up into a ridge; this is the branch bark ridge. The branch collar is the underside of the ridge, a slightly raised part where the stem and branch meet. The goal of pruning successfully is to remove the branch without damaging any of the stem tissue.

If you can't find the branch collar, the joint may not have formed properly and, instead, it makes more of a V-shape as the branch presses into the stem. When the branch collar is not apparent, the pruning cut should be made without cutting into the bark ridge or leaving a stub.

Proper pruning of a mid-sized limb (1 to 4 inches in diameter) involves three cuts: two to remove the weight of the branch and then a final cut, shown in the diagram.

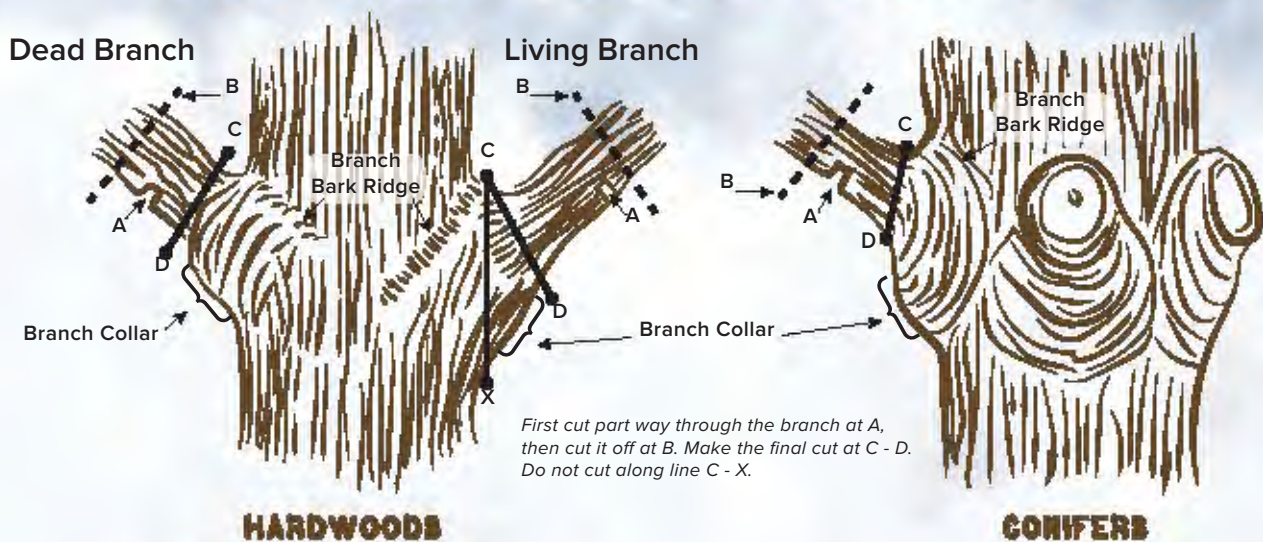
Cut 1: Make a cut on the underside of the branch, a little way up from the branch collar and bark ridge. This cut prevents the bark from ripping when removing the limb.

Cut 2: Make a cut on the top of the limb, cutting down towards Cut 1 until the limb is removed.

Cut 3: Cut off the stub you've created. Start cutting just outside the branch bark ridge and angle down and slightly away from the stem to avoid damaging the branch bark collar.



PROPER PRUNING PRINCIPLES





A Note About Oaks

All oaks require special pruning precautions due to the risk of spreading oak wilt, a deadly fungal disease that can be carried and spread by otherwise harmless beetles. These beetles are attracted to tree wounds and can find an injured tree in as little as 10 to 30 minutes.

If you have an oak that could benefit from pruning, plan to prune it between October and mid-March, when the beetles that carry oak wilt are not active. If an oak is wounded in spring or summer and pruning cannot wait, you should treat the pruning wound with a thin coating of paint—any kind will do. Covering the pruning wound with paint will slow recovery, but it will also prevent the oak wilt fungus from entering the tree. You can learn more about oak wilt and how to recognize it at www.dec.ny.gov/lands/46919.html.

Pruning branches is a little like Goldilocks, in that you don't want to take too much or too little, but just the right amount. If you take too much and cut the branch flush to the stem (flush cuts), you will damage the bark ridge and branch collar, and leave a larger wound; this will drastically limit the tree's ability to heal itself. Keeping the bark ridge and branch collar intact will improve the tree's ability to heal.

Alternatively, if you take too little and leave a branch stub, it can allow decay to enter into the wound, causing it to heal more slowly, and can encourage the tree to attempt to grow new small branches from the stub. These epicormic sprouts will look like they are attached by suckers and will have a weak union to the stub, making them prone to fail.

If you are pruning many branches, try not to remove more than 25 percent of the tree's living crown at once. Remember, trees need their branches and leaves for photosynthesis, and removing branches reduces the total amount of leaves a tree has, thus reducing the amount of food it can obtain until its leaves regrow. If you need to prune a lot off a mature tree, take small amounts over several years. Smaller cuts are better than larger cuts. And if in doubt, contact an arborist for help.

Trees provide many benefits, and it's important to keep them healthy. Pruning done right can help protect your trees and ensure they will provide beauty and other benefits for a long time.

If you need help determining when you need an arborist, or finding one when you do, visit DEC's website "Caring for urban trees" www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120460.html.

If you want more details on when to prune a tree and how to do it properly, you can download the "How to Prune Trees" brochure from the U.S. Forest Service here: www.fs.usda.gov/naspf/sites/default/files/publications/htprunerev2012.pdf.

Christina McLaughlin works in DEC's Lands and Forests office in Albany.



Modernizing Streetlights

In a win-win for the environment and local communities, the New York Power Authority (NYPA) is working with municipalities across the state to modernize local streetlight fixtures, fight climate change, and save taxpayer money. Under the Smart Street Lighting NY program, 500,000 street lights will be converted to LED technology by 2025, which will reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and save taxpayers \$87 million annually. The program is part of New York's aggressive initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, achieve carbon neutrality, transition to clean energy, create jobs, and foster a green economy. To learn more about the Smart Street Lighting NY program, visit: www.nypa.gov/.



Flying Fish

Staff from DEC's Adirondack, Chateaugay, and Rome Hatcheries, with the help of the NYS Police Aviation Unit pilots and the use of one of their "Huey" utility helicopters, stocked 340 remote ponds and lakes in the Adirondack Park with hundreds of thousands of brook trout. DEC runs 12 fish hatcheries, each specializing in raising one or more species of fish, including brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, lake trout, steelhead, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, landlocked salmon, walleye, muskellunge and tiger muskellunge. Each year, DEC releases approximately 900,000 pounds of fish into more than 1,200 public streams, rivers, lakes and ponds across the state. For more information about fish stocking in New York, visit www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7739.html.

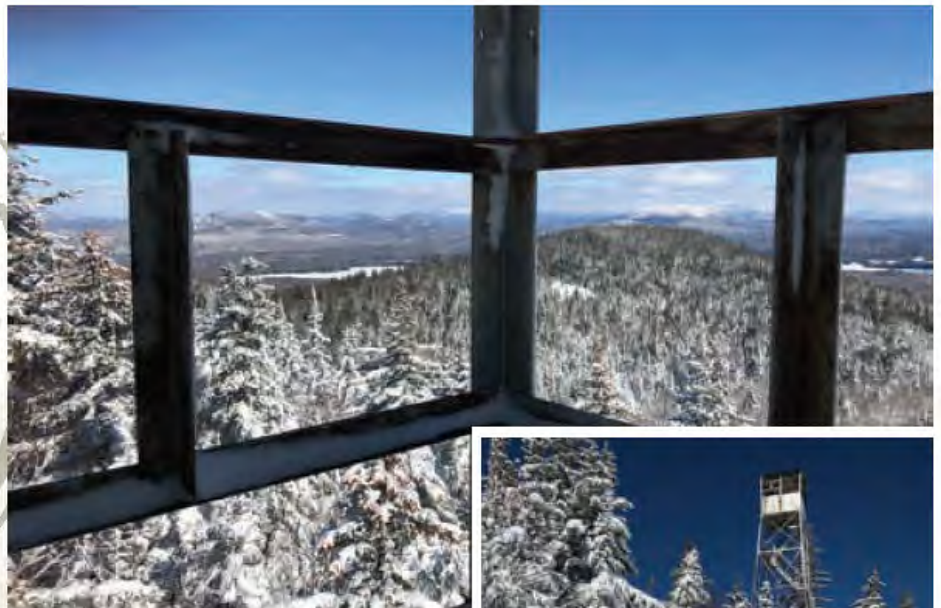
Forest Certification

DEC is part of a growing number of forest landowners throughout the United States and the world whose forests are certified as sustainably managed. DEC has achieved 12 consecutive years of forest certification for more than 780,000 acres of State Forests under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forest Stewardship Council forest management criteria. This ensures that New York's State forests are being managed in a way that protects water quality, respects property owner's rights, provides public recreation and wildlife habitat, and complies with all state, national, and international laws. With this recognition, DEC has demonstrated that the forests under its care are managed to the highest sustainability criteria. For more information on State Forest Certification and management, visit: www.dec.ny.gov/lands/42947.html.



Shellfish Planted

To increase and maximize local shellfish production in Long Island and New York City waters, New York State launched the Restore New York Shellfish program and planted more than 15.7 million shellfish in Huntington Harbor. This effort will build upon the existing private and commercial shellfish industry by stocking and planting shellfish to restore marine environments, improve water quality, support commercial and recreational fishing industries, create new jobs, and build stronger coastlines. DEC will work with Cornell Cooperative Extension, Stony Brook University, municipalities, local businesses, and volunteer organizations to produce, plant, and monitor shellfish and water quality enhancement efforts throughout the project.



Adirondack Beauty

I took these photos on a hike up Owls Head, just northwest of Long Lake. It was a rare blue-sky, deep-powder winter day.

MIKE MCLEAN | POTSDAM

We are all fortunate to live in a state with such natural beauty, no matter the season. Thanks for sharing.



A Young Fan

I thought you'd appreciate this photo of my son Jack enjoying the *Conservationist*!

SHU ZHANG

We always love to see photos of our readers, young and old alike, enjoying the magazine thanks. We hope that Jack will be a lifetime reader of the Conservationist.



Unusual Fisher

This photo was captured recently by my game camera in the woods behind my home on the Great Sacandaga Lake. I have seen fisher in the woods before, but they were all always quite dark. What do you think about the pelage of this animal?

TED MIRCZAK | DAY

This fisher definitely has some interesting coloration! Most fisher do have lighter hair on their head/neck/shoulder areas, but this one is definitely lighter than average. We have seen just a handful in our statewide camera surveys that are blonde like this. A very cool sighting!— Amanda Bailey Watson, DEC Wildlife Biologist

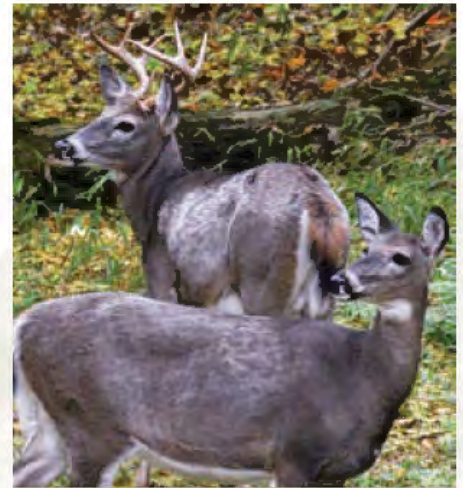


Half-n-Half

I thought you would be interested in seeing my favorite cardinal. He has been here the last four winters, and usually only shows up during snowstorms. The backyard birds are plentiful where I live, but none are as beautiful to me as “Half-n-Half.”

CLAUDIA MACK | RUSH

Thanks for sharing your photo with us. “Half-n-Half” is displaying what is known as leucism, meaning that some of the pigments in his feathers are lacking, resulting in the white plumage. Leucistic birds can display varying degrees of white coloration, ranging from a few feathers to being almost entirely white.



Ask the Biologist

Q: I have been observing and photographing a couple of deer in my area that I believe to be piebald. Do you think they are piebald, or is there something else going on with them?

BILL STRAITE | HERKIMER COUNTY

A: Deer occasionally have a variety of genetically related hair oddities. It could be an odd shedding pattern, but this doesn't look clearly like fall shedding to me. This time of year, deer are replacing their short, thin, reddish summer coat with thicker, longer, darker hair. So I wouldn't expect the deer's coat to look quite like this. Piebaldism is the lack of pigment in some hair follicles. Generally, it is patchy and dense, so all the hair within a patch is white. It also would be consistent between summer and winter coats. If you can, continue to monitor the deer and see if its coloration stays the same over time. If it does, it's likely an odd presentation of piebaldism; if it doesn't, it's likely a unique seasonal molt.

—JEREMY HURST, DEC WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

Sunfish In The Bronx

I wanted to share this photo of a 5-foot-long marine sunfish that recently washed up on a nearby beach.

DARREN ARGUINZONI | BRONX

From the image, the fish appeared to have an injury to its dorsal, consistent with a propeller strike. Sunfish are found in all of New York's marine waters, but are less common in the western Long Island Sound/East River region. They are regularly found at the water's surface, which makes them vulnerable to vessel strikes.
—Stephanie Rekemeyer, Public Participation Specialist, Division of Marine Resources



Survey Reminder

Conservationist celebrates its 75th anniversary next year and we want to hear from you. Tell us what you like and what you want future content to be about. Please take the reader survey and help shape the future of Conservationist. If you have not done so already, please fill out our short survey, which you can find online at www.TheConservationist.org.

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On Patrol

Real stories from Environmental Conservation Police Officers and Forest Rangers in the field



K-9 Assist—Sullivan County

On October 27, two Sullivan County men appeared in court to answer charges related to a poaching incident earlier this year. On March 24, ECOs Wood, Parker, and Doroski received a report from a concerned citizen who saw blood in the snow and on the back of a van. While ECOs Parker and Doroski investigated the van, ECO Wood deployed K-9 Deming. Officers interviewed residents at the location, and the men admitted to shooting a deer from a vehicle, with the aid of a spotlight. The deer and the rifle were seized, and the men were charged with taking deer except as permitted, taking big game out of season, possession of a loaded long gun in a motor vehicle, and taking deer with the aid of an artificial light. The men agreed to a civil compromise in court and were fined \$2,200 plus applicable court fees.

Ill Hiker Rescue—Warren County

On October 31, DEC's Ray Brook Dispatch was contacted with a request for assistance with an ill hiker on the trail in North West Bay on Lake George. Forest Ranger Donegan and members of the Bolton Fire Department and EMS squad responded. Using their fire boat from Green Island, they located the hiker and carried her onto the fire boat. She was transported to a landing zone and airlifted to a local hospital by New York State Police Aviation.

Injured Hunter Rescue—Warren County

On October 26, DEC's Ray Brook Dispatch received a report of an injured hunter on a ski trail near Gore Mountain in North Creek. Forest Rangers Kabrehl, Donegan, and Quinn responded and located the injured man, who had become trapped under a boulder. The Rangers assisted in freeing the man and performed advanced wilderness first aid on his badly damaged leg, which sustained a compound fracture and severe lacerations. The Rangers and members of the North River Fire Department used a litter to carry the 31-year-old hunter to a location with ATV access, where he was transported to a local hospital for further medical treatment.



Salmon Spearing—Niagara County

On October 18, DEC's Division of Law Enforcement was notified that four men were spearing and netting salmon in Eighteen Mile Creek, in the Town of Newfane, Niagara County. ECOs and the Niagara County Sheriff's Office responded to the call. When the Officers arrived, they spotted one of the men bringing salmon and a spear to a vehicle. The suspects face charges of fishing without a valid license, taking fish by means other than angling, illegal possession of a spear on closed waters, fishing during an illegal time, and disturbing of waters with the intent to drive fish. For information on New York State's freshwater fishing regulations, visit: www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7917.html.



Season's Greetings

DEC wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

May the coming year be full of joy.



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