

Wildlines

New Hampshire Fish and Game's quarterly newsletter of the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program



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Thanks for supporting the moose conservation license plate


A hearty "thank you" goes out to all of you who have purchased moose conservation license plates. Because of you, the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program has been able to use its share of license plate proceeds to tremendously support many wildlife species. Take a look at some of the 2002-2003 projects that you have helped make possible:

- A survey of common nighthawks in the Merrimack and lower Connecticut River valleys;
- The Loon Recovery Initiative, which will help the Loon Preservation Committee restore and maintain common loon populations in the state through monitoring research, education and management;
- Tern restoration on the Isles of Shoals;
- Grassland bird monitoring, to study the population, distribution and habitats of the upland sandpiper,

- purple martin and grasshopper sparrow;
- A study of amphibians as indicators of land and water habitat quality in New Hampshire.

The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program is one of six cultural, historical or resource conservation organizations benefitting from sales of the conservation license plates.

If you have not yet purchased your plates, please consider the great benefit they provide wildlife and other assets of our state and show the world that you care about keeping New Hampshire wild and wonderful.

You can find out more about ordering moose plates, as well as all the other past and future projects funded by them, on the Web at www.mooseplate.com. 

Planning for Successful Conservation of New Hampshire's Wildlife

Federal Initiative Provides Funding

The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program is leading a federally-funded initiative to develop the first statewide Comprehensive Wildlife Plan that will take giant leaps toward more effective conservation of New Hampshire's wildlife and habitats.

The U.S. Congress has appropriated money to each state with the requirement to develop such a plan using newly created State Wildlife Grants. States have three years to complete their plans.

The Comprehensive Wildlife Plan will give a complete picture of the state's wildlife conservation priorities by encompassing individual species and their habitats, and it will be based on scientific research.

For New Hampshire, the federal initiative comes at a critical time, said John Kanter, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife coordinator. "With the rapid growth rate of human population in the state, we're going to start losing wildlife species and further degrading significant habitats quickly if we don't act now," he said. "This plan will really lay the foundation of where the highest-priority needs are in New Hampshire."



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Fortunately, New Hampshire's conservation community has already begun taking a comprehensive approach to conservation with the Living Legacy Project, formerly called the Ecological Reserve System Project. This project is a partnership of public and private agencies and organizations, land trusts and communities pulled together for a similar goal: preserve the biodiversity of the state by setting science-based priorities and giving landowners, land trusts and communities the information they need to protect critical areas and to best manage those areas for wildlife.

"We're at the perfect point in time to do this," Kanter said. "We would be doing it anyway without the charge from Congress."

The Living Legacy Project has already identified 60 species and 29 habitats of priority concern in New Hampshire. The next step is to continue to use the

LIVING LEGACY *continued on back page*



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New Hampshire Fish and Game
Department

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N.H. Joins International Bird Conservation Program

The Important Bird Areas Program is an international initiative, with 40 states and 103 countries taking part.



New Hampshire provides habitat for more than 250 bird species that take advantage of the state's diversity, from coastal areas to alpine peaks to forests and fields. To better protect those habitats, New Hampshire is joining an international initiative called the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program.

Partners from the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program, UNH

Cooperative Extension and the Living Legacy Project are working with the state's Partners in Flight committee to identify and conserve areas that are critical to one or more bird species for breeding, feeding, wintering or migration.

The IBA Program will provide valuable information for the state's Comprehensive Wildlife Plan (see related story, page 1).

The partners, coordinated by the Audubon Society of N.H., are looking for nominations for IBAs to be reviewed by the committee for entrance into the program.

"An Important Bird Area could be a very specific area, like Seavey Island, for example, or a broad area like the Great Bay estuary," said Ellen Snyder, the Living Legacy biodiversity coordinator and UNH Cooperative Extension specialist.


Each area must pass rigorous scientific criteria that show the area supports one or more of the following:

- Threatened or endangered species
- High conservation priority species
- Significant concentrations of birds
- Representative, rare, threatened or unique habitats

Forty states and 103 countries are taking part in the IBA Program. It's the first such initiative that tries to take a truly global look at bird conservation. A previous Partners in Flight project was North America-based and focused on land birds; other plans have focused on freshwater birds, and still others emphasized ocean birds.

"IBA is a way to take all the conservation issues coming out of those plans and implementing them on the ground, identifying areas of importance and giving guidelines to landowners," Snyder said.

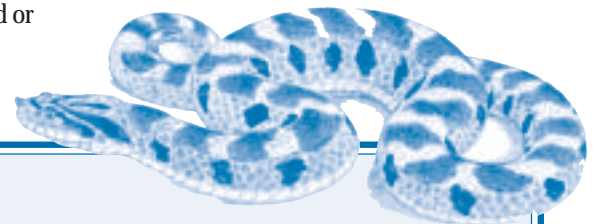
Nominated lands can be either public or private. Private landowners that have lands within a potential IBA will be contacted about how they can help support bird conservation.

Nomination forms and more information about the IBA program are available by contacting Pam Hunt of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire at 224-9909 ext. 328 or phunt@nhaudubon.org. 



NHFG © JON CHARPENTIER

The Seavey Island tern colony is a likely candidate for one of New Hampshire's first IBA.



YOUR SUPPORT PROTECTS NONGAME WILDLIFE

It is with great enthusiasm that we acknowledge the donors below for their support of our efforts to protect nongame wildlife. The generosity of so many wonderful and committed donors provides the optimism needed to build a strong foundation and to support these special species. These contributions represent Annual Fund donations received after we went to print with the last issue of *Wildlines*, as well as other donations.

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Meet Part of the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program Team

The Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program is very fortunate to have staff members on board who are dedicated to using their skills, energy and knowledge to help conserve New Hampshire's wildlife and their habitats. We'd like to introduce you to three staff members in this issue of Wildlines, with more profiles to come in future issues.

Jillian Kelly grew up hunting and fishing in the North Country, so it's fitting that she's now a steward of northern wildlife species as a biological technician based in Lancaster.

For the past year and a half, Jillian has worked to monitor and protect many nongame species, such as the osprey, bald eagle and peregrine falcon. Working with these species means spending countless hours hiking to and observing nests in order to document reproductive successes and failures. This is precisely the kind of activity that Jillian enjoys most about her job.

"I really enjoy getting to know specific nests and specific birds. It's a really neat part of the job," Jillian said.

Besides threatened and endangered birds of prey, Jillian is involved with a wide variety of species, often working with other agencies and organizations on projects involving songbirds, bats, dwarf wedgemussels, pine marten, spruce grouse and northern harriers.

Jillian worked for the N.H. Fish and Game Department for three years as a seasonal field technician, stocking streams with hatchery-reared fish, surveying fish and wildlife habitat and helping to conduct a nuisance black bear study. After Jillian completed her wildlife management degree at UNH, the Nongame Program snatched her up to work full time out of Fish and Game's Region 1 office in Lancaster.

Dan Hayward joined the Nongame Program staff in September after working for the Audubon Society of N.H. for five years.

For the past five summers, Dan has served as the monitor and field technician for the tern restoration project on the Isles of Shoals. Dan lived in rustic conditions at the lighthouse on White Island, spending each day from sunup to sundown documenting tern productivity and ensuring the terns stayed safe from predators, namely gulls. The job has meant spending four months at a time without modern conveniences.

© DAN HAYWARD PHOTO



Dan Hayward's stay at the Isles of Shoals offered unique opportunities to photograph wildlife, such as this young seal catching some rays.

"It's a unique opportunity to live on a secluded island . . . with no electricity, no running water and no stores," Dan said. The seclusion is a challenge at times, he said, but "the work is incredibly fun. All aspects of the project I love to death. It's so much fun you kind of get lost in it."

Now that Dan is a Nongame staff member, he'll get a chance to branch out and work with other species as a biological aide. His duties include collecting field data for ongoing research and conservation projects. He's helping to restore rare Karner blue butterfly habitat in Concord, for example, and he's radio-tracking Blanding's turtles as part of a three-year study in several parts of the state.

Dan earned a bachelor of science degree in environmental sciences with an emphasis on wildlife and a specialization in photography at Unity College in Maine. For two years, he served in the Americorps. Dan grew up in Milford and now lives in Springfield.

Alina Pyzikiewicz came into the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program last year to help with the Karner blue butterfly captive rearing project. This spring she took on a new role as a biological technician, and she now supervises the captive

rearing project along with additional duties.

Captive rearing is a crucial element of the Karner blue butterfly recovery project in Concord. Alina is in charge of collecting eggs for captive rearing twice each year, then feeding and caring for the insects as they transform from eggs to larvae to butterflies.

Alina also reviews wetlands permits and checks them against the wildlife database of rare, threatened or endangered species, maintained by Natural Heritage Inventory, to see whether granting a permit may put a species at risk. She is working with other Fish and Game staff to develop a database and implement a new system to process environmental reviews.

Alina, who earned a degree in environmental forest biology from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, is also responsible for compiling and entering data on New Hampshire's rare, threatened and endangered wildlife.

A career in wildlife conservation was a natural choice, considering Alina's upbringing: "I grew up being in the woods," she said. Her father painted landscapes and wildflowers and often took Alina with him on adventures in the woods. That familiarity led to a love of wildlife and a desire to try to help it, she said. 🐦

Sustaining the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program just got easier

Did you know that you could support the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program and not even have to write and mail a check?



Through online banking, donors can have their checking accounts debited and have a contribution sent in support of the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program. You can do it on a monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly or even on a yearly basis. Online giving is a wonderful and easy way to support nongame and endangered wildlife. For more information, please call Rita Boisvert at (603) 271-5859.

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LIVING LEGACY *continued from page 1*

existing Living Legacy web of partnerships to fill in gaps in knowledge through new research and building a comprehensive database of those high-risk species and habitats, Kanter said.

Ellen Snyder, the biodiversity coordinator of the Living Legacy Project and a UNH Cooperative Extension specialist, will coordinate the Comprehensive Wildlife Plan. Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program staff members Steve Fuller and Tracy Tarr will facilitate and carry out research along with a soon-to-be-hired Nongame Program staff member.

Snyder said the federal initiative creates an exciting opportunity to meet the needs of the land conservation community for research-based information that guides them on where to focus their efforts.

“This is truly much more comprehensive than there has been funding to do before,” Snyder said. “The outcome will be to help guide landowners, communities, land trusts and agencies on how to conserve and manage for wildlife and their habitat.” 

WINTER Wildlife Almanac

January

- Pine martens hunt for small mammals under the snow all winter. One of their main prey species, voles, tunnel under the snow looking for twigs and tree bark to eat.
- Great horned owls and saw whet owls stockpile mice in the winter. When they're ready to eat, they sit on one of their frozen dinners until it's thawed enough to tear apart and eat.
- Small mammals and birds dine on rose hips that adorn wild rose bushes, important winter food sources.

February

- Skunks emerge to mate.
- Listen for spring songs of starlings, chickadees and titmice.
- Listen for great horned owls hooting from wooded areas.

March

- On warm days, watch for flights of mourning cloak butterflies, one of the few hibernating butterflies.

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