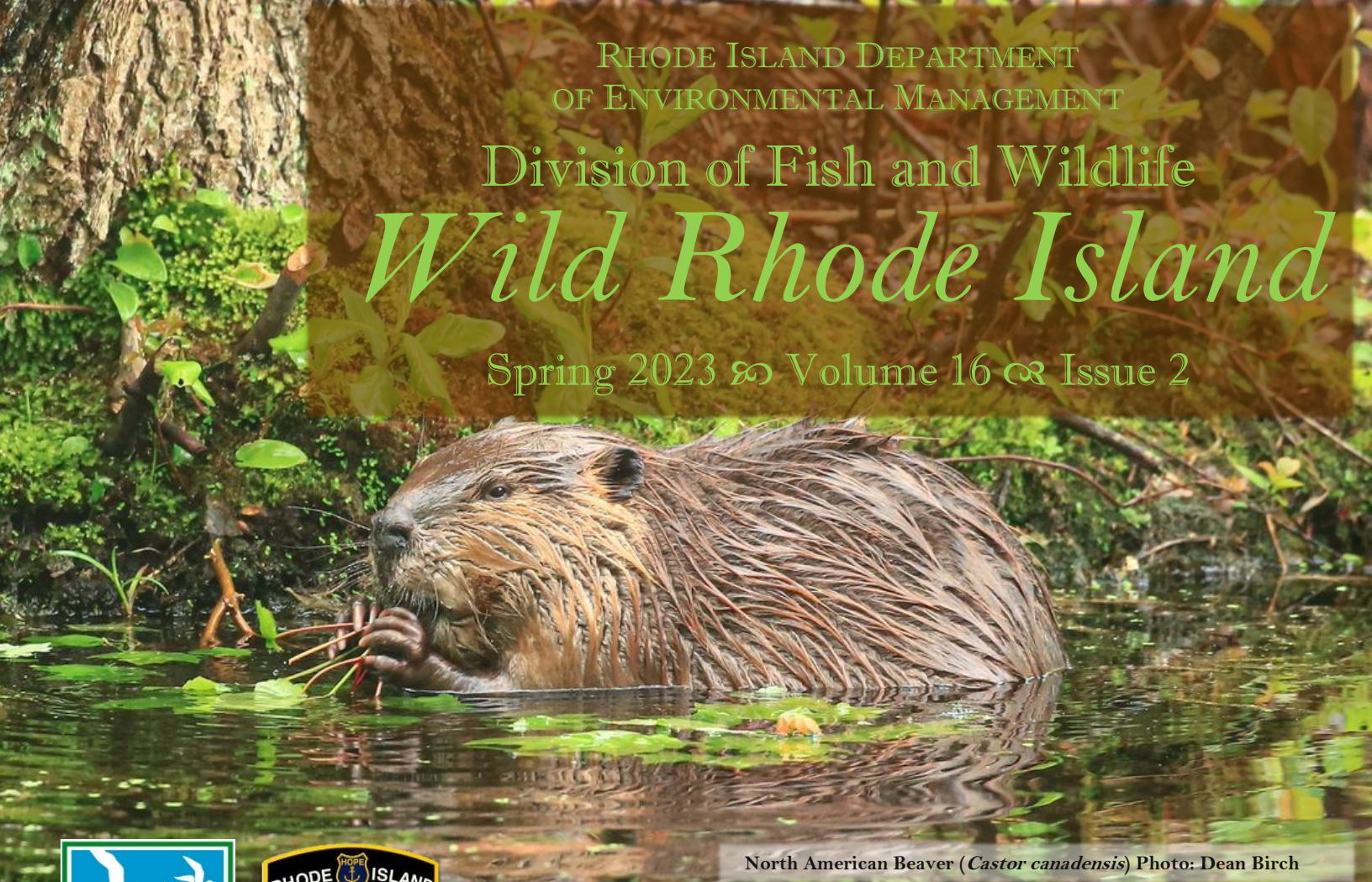
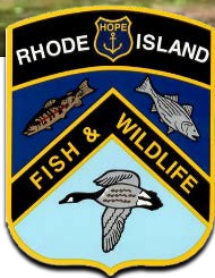


Division of Fish and Wildlife
Wild Rhode Island

Spring 2023 ∞ Volume 16 ∞ Issue 2



North American Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) Photo: Dean Birch



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RI DFW LOOKS FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE REPORTING WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS

The RIDEM Division of Fish and Wildlife requests the public's assistance in reporting observations of wildlife throughout the state. Observations from community scientists help our state biologists understand the distribution, abundance and health of our native wildlife.

To report your observation online, go to [RIDFW Wildlife Reports](#). If you expect to report observations frequently, we recommend downloading the FREE [Survey123 app](#) on your smartphone. You only need to download the app once. Click on the appropriate survey button below and select "open in the Survey123 Field App", the application will automatically download and you can enter future observations from the application on your phone!

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Left: Painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*)
Photo: Gabby DeMeillon, DFW

THE DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to ensure that the freshwater, wildlife, and marine resources of the state of Rhode Island will be conserved and managed for equitable and sustainable use.



Photo: Dean Birch



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RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT Terrence Gray, Director

Dr. Jason McNamee, Deputy Director

RIDEM, DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE Phil Edwards, Chief

Sarah M. Riley, WRI Editor/Designer Chief Implementation Aide

Veronica Masson, WRI Editor Federal Aid Coordinator

Mary Gannon, WRI Editor Wildlife Outreach Coordinator

Gabrielle DeMeillon, WRI Editor Wildlife Outreach Technical Assistant

Melissa Curry, WRI Editor Seasonal Technical Support Intern

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This Issue Features:

- REPORT WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS TO DFW.....1
HELP DFW BIOLOGISTS BY REPORTING SIGHTINGS OF DEER, TURKEY, TURTLES, SNAKES, FROGS, AND MORE!
DURFEE HILL MANAGEMENT AREA.....3
LEARN ABOUT THIS MANAGEMENT AREA AND ALL THAT IT HAS TO OFFER FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.
DFW TRAPPING CLASS A SUCCESS!.....5
READ MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S TRAPPING CLASS AND WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED ABOUT NEW ENGLAND'S HISTORY OF FUR TRAPPING.
DMF PROTECTED SPECIES RESPONSE.....7
DMF HAS PROVIDED INFORMATION ABOUT RESPONSES TO FINDING INJURED OR BEACHED ANIMALS, AND THE CORRECT CONTACTS FOR RESPONSE.
DMF: ANGLER'S CATCH: LOGBOOK.....8
HELP THE RI DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES CLOSE FISHING DATA GAPS AND IMPROVING MANAGEMENT BY REPORTING YOUR CATCH.



CHECK OUT THE LATEST ISSUE OF WILD RHODE ISLAND EXPLORER!

- Visit our Facebook page @RIFishWildlife
Follow us on Instagram @RI.FishandWildlife
Follow us on Twitter @RhodeIslandDEM

Featured State Land:

Durfee Hill Management Area

By: John Veale, Habitat Biologist, DFW

Durfee Hill Management Area lies in the Northwestern part of Rhode Island, along the Connecticut border in the town of Glocester. It is only a 35-minute drive from Providence and neighbors George Washington State Forest, Pulaski State Forest and several town forest properties, making for a large collection of conservation areas within a short drive.

The property's 2,063 total acreage has come from many small acquisitions, beginning in 1940 with a 95 acre transfer, with the most recent acquisition in 2018. Its largest addition of 539 acres came in 1974 with the acquisition of the Burlingame Reservoir and its surrounding area. Within Durfee Hill are several different habitat types, offering a variety of opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking and exploration. Habitat management activities have largely been focused on two aspects of the property: the upland fields, and the waterfowl impoundment they flank.

Grassland fields have been a focus of active management here since they were acquired, and methods have changed over the years. In the past, many of these fields had been planted in switchgrass. This provided fast growing and thick cover for stocking pheasants, but became a dense monoculture that was difficult for hunters to move through and wasn't a favorable habitat to many wildlife species. Focus now is on creation of native grasslands with a mix of both warm season grasses and wildflowers to still provide excellent cover for stocking pheasants, while creating habitat for grassland nesting birds, pollinator species, as well as game species such as turkey and American woodcock. With the current seed mix, and semi annual mowing, the fields will be able to provide a more favorable habitat type and in the future, the Division will be employing prescribed fire as an additional



management tool. This will further help favor native warm season grasses, encourage plant species diversity and discourage invasive plant species.

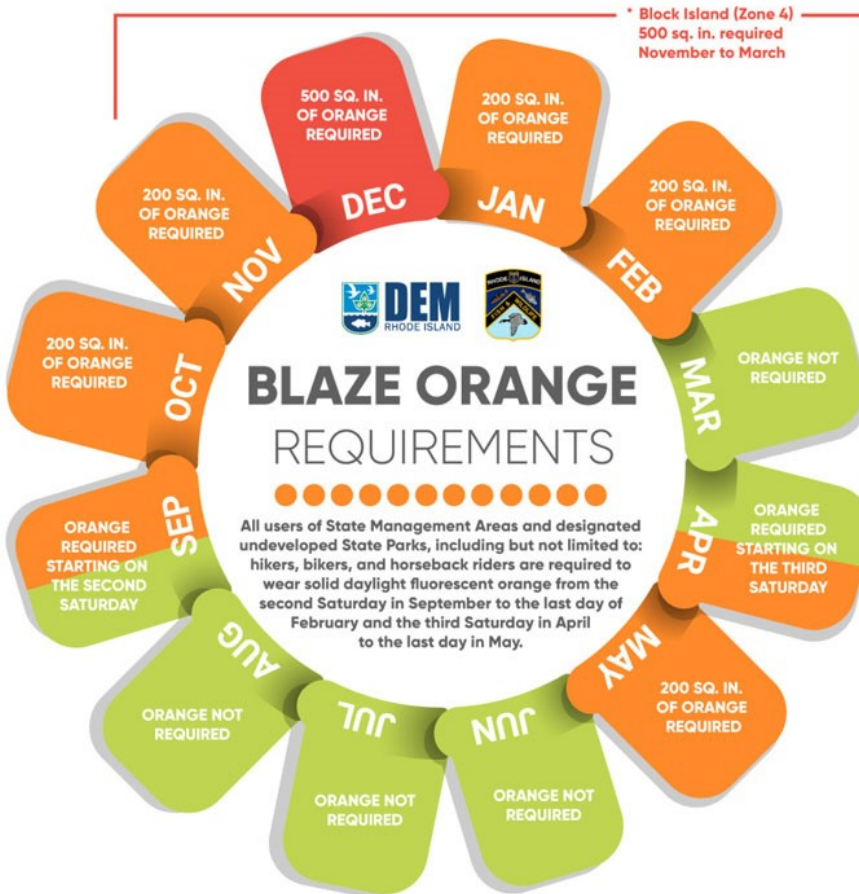
Directly adjacent to these grasslands is the Durfee Hill Impoundment. This was originally installed in 1965 then replaced with a more modern structure in 2006. Its purpose is to create waterfowl habitat for nesting and migration, as well as waterfowl hunting opportunities. Biologists monitor water levels throughout the year, and use the water control structure on the southeast side of the impoundment to manipulate them depending on the season. In early spring, water levels within the impoundment are allowed to drop, exposing mudflats that had been flooded. Wetland vegetation now exposed to the sun is able to emerge and grow throughout the summer, creating nesting habitat for waterfowl. In fall, the impoundment is flooded again. The additional water area provides a more attractive resting spot for migrating waterfowl, and the vegetation that had grown through the summer is covered by a few inches of water making it accessible

Durfee Hill Management Area continued from pg. 3

as a food source to dabbling ducks.

Durfee Hill Management Area is so much more than just these two habitat types, and they only cover a fraction of its total acreage. Much of Durfee is forested with mature secondary hardwood forests, pine forests, and shrubland. Deer hunting within this management area is very popular, and if the line of trucks at the check station each year is any indication, success rates are high.

For more information, and to get maps of this and other Wildlife Management Areas throughout Rhode Island, go to the RIDEM website Data & Maps page: <https://dem.ri.gov/online-services/data-maps> or email DEM.DFW@dem.ri.gov.



DEM.RI.GOV/ORANGE



DFW Trapping Class Informs Public on History of Trapping in New England

By: Morgan Lucot, Furbearer Biologist, DFW

It can be overwhelming diving into New England's long and important history. This region has contributed so much to the beginning of our nation. When delving into the many long-standing and culturally important traditions one in particular stands out to me: fur trapping. As Rhode Island's furbearer biologist I am willing to admit that I may be biased, but the economic and cultural importance of our fur trapping history cannot be ignored. We at the Division of Fish and Wildlife are devoted to the continuation of fur trapping in the state. Our efforts this winter included a beginner's fur trapping course taken in person by a group of hopeful new trappers. We spent a productive Sunday learning about the history of trapping in North America, biology of furbearing animals, trap types, and safety. The course was a hit and will be offered again in the future. In case you missed it this time read on to discover a little about fur trapping here in Rhode Island.

When Europeans first came to the continent, Indigenous Peoples had been trapping furbearing animals for thousands of years. The European trade in North American fur started in the 1600s, shortly after the first settlements were founded. In fact, the fur trade was an important tool for early colonists to pay off the large debts they owed to investors back in Europe. Soon trading posts were established across coastal New England primarily for trading fur.



The fur trade helped to fund the development of the colonies, and later the newly formed United States. Wars fought for access to furbearers had long lasting effects on tribal power, land ownership, and the economies of Europe. This influential trade lasted some 250 years before petering out in the mid to late 1800s due in part to over harvesting of furbearing animals. While the major trade of furs has ended, fur trapping is still practiced all over the US and furs can be sold internationally.

Fur trapping is a heavily regulated activity in Rhode Island. These regulations are designed to keep trappers and others safe, reduce animal suffering, and limit harvest of certain species. Today animals like beaver have made a tremendous comeback, and again occupy all of Rhode Island's watersheds. Beaver can be used for several resources including food and clothing. Beaver castor, a substance produced by specialized glands near their back end, can be used in perfume and as a vanilla substitute (yes, really). Fur trapping is an excellent activity to spend more time outdoors, harvest food in a sustainable way, and connect with your community. Keep an eye out for more fur trapping courses offered by DFW <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlifewildlife-hunting>



REPORTING WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Photo: G. DeMeillon

Report your sightings of frogs, toads, salamanders, snakes and turtles to our State Herpetologist to provide information on the distribution of reptiles and amphibians in RI.

[Read our factsheet on how to submit data.](#)

Report Sighting: <https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/fish-wildlife/wildlife-hunting/report-wildlife-observations>

View collected observation data at www.dem.ri.gov/herpstorymap

[Wild Turkey Brood Survey](#)

July 1st–Aug 31st

Report your summer sightings of wild turkey hens, toms, and poults (chicks) to RIDEM biologists. Turkey brood observations help provide information for the reproductive success and health of turkeys in our state.

[Read our factsheet on how to submit data.](#)

[Summer Deer Survey](#)

Aug 1st–Sept 30th

Report sightings of white-tail deer seen from August 1st through September 30th to help state biologists obtain fawn to doe ratios and an index of reproduction rates through time.

[Read our factsheet on how to submit data.](#)



THE 2023 FRESHWATER FISHING REGULATION GUIDE IS AVAILABLE NOW

Pick up a copy at bait & tackle or sporting shops around the state, at the RIDFW Great Swamp office, or online using your computer or mobile device. Stay informed of fishing season dates, changes to laws, improvements to fishing areas, and much more.

GET THE REGULATIONS GUIDE ONLINE:

WWW.EREGULATIONS.COM/RHODEISLAND



Protected Species Response: Marine Animals

From the RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries

The Division of Marine Fisheries collaborates with several partners toward the conservation of marine protected species, including marine mammals, sea turtles, and endangered fish species. The Division's role in protected species has included both as first responders, removal of stranded species, and releasing rehabilitated animals.

Reporting on standings for such species are critical in both preserving those that can be rehabilitated and furthering our understanding on what causes these events to occur. Below is contact information for specific areas of interest. Alternatively, to report a sighting you can also contact the Department at (401)222-3070 and the Division of Marine Fisheries at 401-423-1923. For further questions on the Division's involvement with protected species, contact * [Scott Olszewski](#)

Sea Turtles & Small Whales - All sea turtle and small cetacean reports should be reported immediately. Call with exact location, description of the animal, and contact information -- [Mystic Aquarium](#) (860) 572-5955, Press 0 for an operator or ext. 107.

Seals - If the seal is not injured, remember that seals routinely haul out (beach themselves) and no response is warranted until after 24 hours. If the seal remains beached after that time, or is otherwise injured/sick, call with exact location, description of the animal, and contact information [Mystic Aquarium](#) (860) 572-5955, Press 0 for an operator or ext. 107. Do not approach the seal, even briefly, and keep people and pets far away.

Photo: Dean Birch

Large Whales - The [Large Whale Disentanglement Network](#) is coordinated by the [Center for Coastal Studies](#) (CCS). This network has the necessary authorization from the [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) (NMFS) and the communications and logistical support of the U.S. Coast Guard. The speedy and accurate reporting of entangled whales by all boaters is essential to the process.

Entanglements - Call the [Center for Coastal Studies](#) (800)-900-3622 for emergencies, and (508) 487-3622 for non-emergency calls and notify the [U.S. Coast Guard](#) by phone or VHF Channel 16. Provide the position, description, and behavior of the animal and a description of the gear and entanglement. Leave your contact number with them. You may be requested to stand by the whale on a voluntary basis. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DISENTANGLE without NMFS authorization and instructions through the NETWORK.

Stranded / Floating Dead - Call the [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) (NMFS) at 866-755-NOAA.

Right Whale Sighting - Call the [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) (NMFS) at 866-755-NOAA with the location of the animal (Lat./Long. or LORAN bearings) and the time sighted.

Sturgeon – All reports on endangered species of sturgeon should be reported immediately. Call with exact date, location, and description of the animal and contact information to the DEM Division of Marine Fisheries at 401-423-1923.

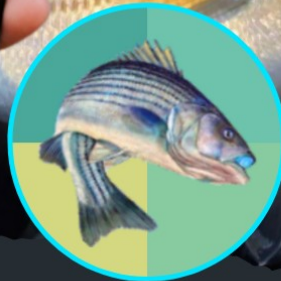
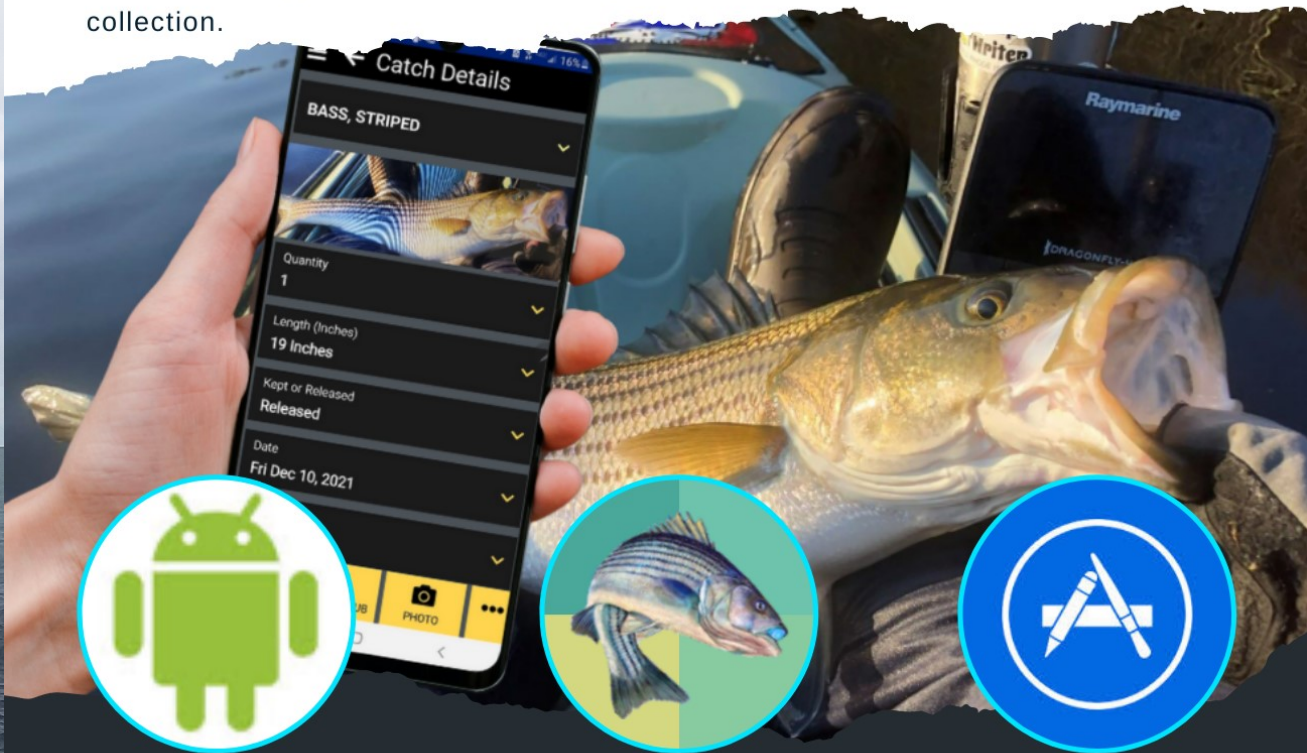


AnglerCatch

FISHERMAN'S LOGBOOK

helping close fishing data gaps

AnglerCatch works with RI DEM and RISAA to provide fisheries managers with accurate, up-to-date info on fishing in New England. AnglerCatch helps to improve fisheries management decisions through better data collection.



AVAILABLE IN
Android Play Store

AnglerCatch

Look for the logo and download for a better fishing experience

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Apple App Store

MORE INFO:

(484) 548-0740

harborlightsoftware.com

MAKING A BETTER FISHING EXPERIENCE
WHILE HELPING MANAGE THE RESOURCES



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AnglerCatch Fisherman's Logbook: Better Data, Better Fishing

The Ocean State offers some of the best saltwater fishing around, so it's no wonder that recreational fishing is such a popular pastime in Rhode Island! Whether fishing from shore in Narragansett Bay or venturing out into the coastal waters off Block Island, there are many opportunities for anglers to land a diversity of species. Recreational fishing is significant to the RI economy, contributing over \$130 million each year and over 175,000 anglers participating throughout the state. To ensure sustainable fish populations and abundant opportunities for future generations, it is crucial for fisheries managers to have catch and effort data for making informed decisions. Recreational anglers are important stewards to their local waterways, and so collaborative efforts between the fishing community and the RI DEM Division of Marine Fisheries are fundamental to successful management. One of the newest and most exciting of these collaborations is a free fishing app called AnglerCatch! RI DEM teamed up with the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Associations and Harbor Lights software to create this innovative volunteer catch reporting app that is free for any angler to download. Fisheries managers will use the aggregated data to make informed decisions about current fish habitats and populations, guiding saltwater fishing policy for the future (but don't worry; you won't have to share your secret fishing spots!). This is community science! By participating, you will directly help protect future saltwater fishing in Rhode Island.

AnglerCatch not only helps fill data gaps, but it helps you fish better! In addition to keeping a log of all your catches, it also includes local weather, wind, tide, solunar, and buoy data. These free tools will help you plan the perfect fishing trip, all from one easy to use app. Over 1000 anglers have already downloaded the app and logged over 400 catches across the state. Last year, AnglerCatch was also used as part of the reporting for the Rhode Island Tog Classic: New England's largest 1-day tautog fishing tournament! Participants were able to record their tournament activity easily and seamlessly right in the app.

Whether your next trip is from the beach or from the boat, AnglerCatch has useful tools for every angler. Download now for better fishing today and better fishing tomorrow! Available for Android and Apple.

Connect with us on social media!



@RI.fishandwildlife



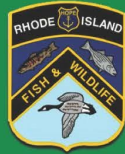
@RIfishwildlife



@RhodeIslandDEM



dem.ri.gov/fishwildlife



Not only can you visit our website, www.dem.ri.gov/fishwildlife, to find out about local wildlife, conservation initiatives, management research, and more, but you can now connect with us on social media to stay updated on events and what's new!

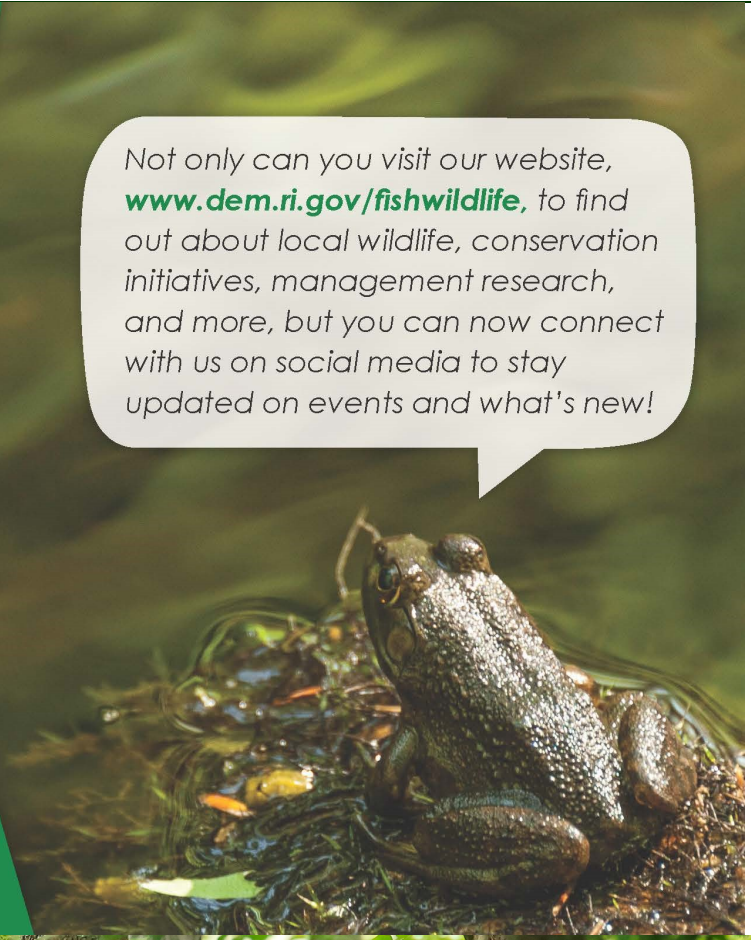


Photo by M. Stultz at Durfee Hill Wildlife Management Area, Gloucester, RI

Photo: Dean Birch



Thank you for your continuing support of the Rhode Island DEM Division of Fish & Wildlife!