

New Wildlife Management Area Dedicated in Logan and Mingo Counties

The DNR Wildlife Resources Section has established a new Wildlife Management Area in Logan and Mingo counties. The Elk Creek WMA consists of 6,004 acres of forested, steep-sided hills owned by Heartwood Forestland Fund II, L.P. The WMA consists of two separate parcels of land, one totally in Logan County. The other tract straddles the Logan/Mingo county line, and is adjacent to the western boundary of R.D. Bailey Lake WMA.

Frank Jezioro, DNR Director, said, "Heartwood Forestland Fund II is to be commended for developing this lease agreement which will assure that the property will be enjoyed by current and future generations of hunters, anglers and trappers." Heartwood leased the property to the DNR for 10 years at no cost.

Logan and Mingo counties are open to archery hunting for deer and several trophy bucks have come from the vicinity of the WMA. The population of black bears is increasing in the area so hunting opportunities for bear are good. Wild turkeys also live on the area, and squirrel and raccoon are the main small game species present. Initial management activities will include installing information and boundary signs and developing road closures where needed.

Access to the Elk Creek WMA is by way of state Route 80, and Elk Creek and Spice Creek roads. Individuals interested in obtaining additional information about the area may contact the DNR Wildlife Resources Section District office at 304-675-0871.

West Virginia Wildlife Television Segment Wins Emmy

West Virginia Wildlife, a weekly segment seen on WCHS and WVAH television stations, recently won a regional Emmy award. After more than 13 years of working with local television stations, this is the first time the local franchise has won what is arguably the most prestigious award for which the series is eligible. The judging committee looks at many different aspects of journalism and story-telling when choosing who will bring home the familiar statuette. The combination of Brad Rice's videography, the expertise of WRS biologists, and West Virginia's beautiful, diverse wildlife made my job of telling a good story almost effortless.

West Virginia Wildlife was judged on five stories submitted by the stations. Two stories dealt with two dedicated science teachers from South Charleston Middle School who came out with us one cold March day to get first-hand

knowledge of bears and their month-old cubs in dens. Brad and I had a chance to meet with the students later and check out their projects. We could tell they really enjoyed hearing the first-hand stories and lessons their teachers brought back with them.

We also included stories on barn owls and using mist nets to catch bats – not something you see every day! We concluded our submission with coverage of Isaac Ryan. Isaac is a brave little boy in a fight for his life against leukemia. The folks from Catch a Dream, a Mississippi-based organization, heard about Isaac and his desire to go fishing. They made it happen and even brought in

a professional bass angler to give him some tips. I'm sure that story touched the hearts of the Emmy judges almost as much as it did ours.

Submitted by
Patrick McMurtry, WCHS/WVAH TV



From left to right: District Wildlife Biologist Gary Sharp, DNR Commissioner Ken Wilson, and Terry Elkins of American Forest Management, Inc. at area dedication ceremony.

Bob Fala



Steve Shaluta

Timber Rattlesnake Named Official State Reptile

At a ceremony in the Governor's reception room on April 3, 2008, Governor Joe Manchin III signed a bill designating the timber rattlesnake as the State Reptile. Attending the ceremony were approximately 60 students from Romney Middle School, who initiated the designation as part of a class project in social studies. Also "attending" the ceremony was a live rattlesnake brought in by Jim Fregonara of the DNR Wildlife Resources Section.

The 7th-grade students were studying how bills become law and were assigned to produce a mock piece of legislation. While working on the project, the students decided to follow through and have their mock legislation become law.

After failing to get it passed in 2007, they tried again this year and were successful in rallying support for the measure with the help of their local delegate, Ruth Rowan. Their teacher, Ron Wolford, thought the box turtle would be a good candidate; but the students came up with the timber rattlesnake, and he deferred to their idea.

West Virginia is the first state to have the timber rattlesnake as its state reptile and joins only three other states to designate a snake as such. The timber rattlesnake is one of two poisonous species of snakes in the Mountain State, the other being the copperhead.

DNR Hosts Annual State Archery in the Schools Tournament

The Division of Natural Resources hosted its third annual West Virginia Archery in the Schools Program State Tournament at Summersville National Guard Armory on Saturday, March 1, 2008. Approximately 30 schools and 500 students from across West Virginia participated in the event.

"Participation in West Virginia Archery in the Schools state tournaments is growing at a phenomenal rate," said Frank Jezioro, DNR Director. "The first year's tournament at Capitol High School had 280 students; the second year's tournament at Braxton County High School had 350 students. The Summersville National Guard facility allowed us to accommodate a much higher number this year."

"We at the DNR are very encouraged about the success of the Archery in the Schools Program," said Jerry Westfall, Program Coordinator with Wildlife Resources Section. "The Program is really geared to generate participation rather than competition. However, we are aware that competition generates a lot of excitement in the program. Keep in mind, this may be the only time in some of these student's lives they will wear school team colors and compete in front of a thousand or more spectators."

"Thanks go to the army of volunteers required to score, register and assist these students. Without the continued support of these volunteers, state tournaments at this level would not be possible. As we continue to expand, we will need more help next year," said Westfall.

For more information on the West Virginia Archery in the Schools Program, visit our Web site at www.wvdnr.gov/archery. Click on News/Links to see the top individuals and teams in this year's tournament.



Senior Female Class Winners:
Second Place - Anna Houben, Ripley High (left)
First Place - Jana Sims, John Marshall High

DNR photo



Student take aim to win at the State Archery in the Schools Tournament.

DNR photo

New Fish Species Identified in the Elk River

A West Virginia University professor has discovered a new species of fish in the Elk River near Charleston. Stuart Welsh, assistant professor in the Wildlife and Fisheries Resources Program, named the new species *Crystallaria cincotta*, or diamond darter. His findings were published in *Zootaxa*, an international journal.



The diamond darter was recently identified as a new fish species.

The adult diamond darter is three to five inches long and is translucent, meaning light passes through it. It is a close relative of the crystal darter which lives in the drainage basins of the Mississippi River. The name references the sparkle from reflected light when viewed with lights during nighttime collections. It also fits the analogy of a diamond as a rare crystal.

The population was originally discovered around 1980 but it wasn't until January 2008 that genetic tests and examination of other characteristics identified it as a distinct species. Historical records indicate the species lived in the Green and Cumberland rivers in Kentucky and Muskingum River in Ohio until the early 1900s when it disappeared from those waters.

"Discovering a new species is directly linked to discovering the diversity of life," said Welsh. "If there is one fun and exciting thing about science, then it is the discovery of new things."

The new species was named after Dan Cincotta, a DNR Wildlife Resources Section fisheries biologist, in recognition of his contributions toward management and conservation of the biodiversity of fishes in West Virginia.

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Calendar of Events

May 30 - June 1

Whistles, Wings, & Wildflowers
Cass Scenic Railroad State Park
Variety of birdwatching hikes, wildflower walks, and train rides. Call (304) 456-4300 for more information or go to www.cassrailroad.com.

June

- 7-8 Free Fishing Days
Statewide
Fish without a license! Call (304) 558-2771 for more information.
- 7-8 IBO World Qualifier and Big East Challenge Archery Event
Coopers Rock State Forest
For more information call (304) 594-1561
- 6-8 2nd Annual Southern Boreal Bird Festival
Canaan Valley State Park
Participate in daily walks, workshops and seminars about birds usually found further north in North America. Call (304) 866-4121 for more information.
- 7 Kids Fishing Derby
Bowden Fish Hatchery
Call (304) 637-0245 for more information.
- 7 Kids Fishing Derby
Little Beaver State Park
Begins at 9 am. Participants receive lunch, t-shirts, and prizes. Call (304) 763-2494 for more information.
- 21 Celebration of Summer
Cathedral State Park
Bird and wildflower walks to celebrate the first days of summer. Call (304) 735-3771 for more information.

July

- 12 Walk Between the Parks
Canaan Valley Resort State Park
Naturalist guided hike between Canaan Valley and Blackwater Falls state parks. For more information call (304) 866-4121.
- 26 NWTF Women in the Outdoors Field Day
Kanawha State Forest
For more information contact Billie Shearer at (304) 558-2771.

August

- 2 Fishing with a Friend
North Bend State Park
Free fishing rodeo. For more information contact Sheriff Ron Barniak (304) 643-2262