

First Bald Eagle Nest in Southern WV Found

Friday, March 19, was a big day for Jim Phillips, Wendy Perrone and other bird enthusiasts in southern West Virginia. That was the day Perrone, director of the nearby Three Rivers Avian Center, noticed two young bald eagles (eaglets) in a nest that had been discovered by Phillips along the New River in December. A group of 15 volunteers had been monitoring the nest since its discovery. The nest is located on an island within the New River Gorge National River.

Phillips had been coordinating annual bald eagle sighting forays for five years. "Bald eagles have been seen year-round in this part of the state since 2003," he said. Bird lovers believe it is likely

another nest or two exist in this area. During the March foray this year, 19 bald eagles were seen.

It remains to be seen whether the eagles remain in the area year-round or whether they migrate south for the winter. Even if they head south, they should return next winter, as bald eagles often use the same nest for many years, sometimes for decades.

Most of the bald eagle nests discovered since the first nest was found in 1981 have been in the Eastern Panhandle along the Potomac River tributaries, and more recently along the Ohio River. Last year, the first nest on the Cheat River was documented. In 2009, 38 young eagles were successfully fledged.



Charles Nichols of the WV Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation presents DNR Director Frank Jezioro with a \$20,000 check to purchase acreage for Beury Mountain WMA.

NWTF Donates \$20,000 to DNR

At the Natural Resources Commission meeting earlier this year, the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation presented DNR Director Frank Jezioro with a \$20,000 check. The money will be used to buy nearly 1,600 acres on the rim of the New River Gorge near the Rt. 119 bridge to be added to the Beury Mountain Wildlife Management Area. The property had been originally purchased by The Nature Conservancy, which is selling it to the DNR with financial help from organizations such as the Wild Turkey Federation.

Calendar of Events

AUGUST

- 7 **Walk Between the Parks**
Canaan Valley Resort State Park
Naturalist guided 8-mile hike between Canaan Valley and Blackwater Falls state parks. Call 304-866-4121 ext. 2788 for more information.
- 7 **Bluestone Turnpike Hike**
Pipestem Resort State Park
A 10-mile hike along the Bluestone River. For more information and to register, call 304-466-1800 ext. 344.

SEPTEMBER

- 11 **Margaret Dennison Fall Nature Walk**
Kanawha State Forest
Various guided hikes include fall wildflowers, fungi, pond/stream life, birds, trees and nature photography. For more information, call Shirley Schweizer at 304-925-2771.
- 17-19 **Becoming an Outdoors Woman Workshop**
Watoga State Park
A full weekend aimed at introducing women to outdoor activities or improving outdoor skills. Approximately 30 classes from which to choose. Contact Billie Shearer at 304-558-2771, billie.j.shearer@wv.gov or go online.

- 25-26 **National Hunting and Fishing Day Celebration**
Stonewall Resort State Park
Hunting and fishing demonstrations, displays, vendors and hands-on activities for all ages. Contact Jerry Westfall at 304-558-2771, jerry.a.westfall@wv.gov or check www.wvdnr.gov.

For more events, go online to www.wvdnr.gov

Five Arrested in Poaching Case

Officers Calling Incidents “Thrill Kills” of More Than 30 Deer

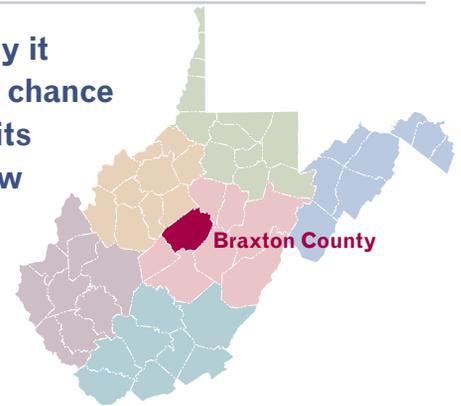
Three adults and two juveniles from Braxton County have been arrested and charged with multiple violations of West Virginia wildlife laws in what Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Law Enforcement officers are calling “thrill kill” deer poaching incidents.

In October 2009, DNR conservation officers began finding numbers of dead deer adjacent to several roads in Braxton County. The locations, position of the carcasses and in some cases information supplied by the local citizens led the officers to become suspicious of what might have been written off as deer struck by vehicles. However, upon closer examination of the carcasses, the officers determined that the animals had wounds consistent with being hit by a low velocity projectile that officers later learned were slugs fired from a .410 shotgun.

By late October, the officers got a break in the investigation. Deputy Rob Brady of the Braxton County Sheriff’s Department overheard a remark by a juvenile who then showed the deputy a

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Capt. M.A. Waugh
DNR District 3 office in Elkins



large set of deer antlers and allegedly initially remarked that the deer was “shot the other night” but later changed his story, stating that another individual killed the deer with a bow on Nicholas Run.

Conservative estimates based on the suspects’ statements and the evidence was that more than 30 deer may have been killed by this alleged poaching ring during a two-month period.

The skills and tenacity of Conservation

officers K.W. Bingaman and D. Duffield, along with the cooperation of concerned citizens and an alert Deputy Brady, resulted in the senseless destruction of the citizen’s natural resources being stopped,” said Capt. M.A. Waugh of the DNR District 3 office in Elkins. “Anytime wildlife is taken illegally it robs the honest sportsman of the chance to lawfully harvest game and limits the opportunity to introduce a new generation of young people to the outdoor sports.”

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Plant ID Error

Talented (and sharp-eyed) West Virginia artist Chuck Ripper sent me a note last June saying that the flowering plant on the back cover of the Spring 2009 issue of West Virginia Wildlife was not flame azalea as we noted. Without a close-up image of the flower or a specimen in hand for certain identification, our botanists agree with Chuck that the plant is either the pink azalea or the early (rose) azalea. I apologize for not printing a correction earlier. It’s nice to find out for sure that folks are really looking at the magazine.