

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – OCTOBER 21, 2015

Chairman Compton called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Approval for the October 21, 2015 Meeting Agenda

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gulbrandsen moved to accept the October 21st Wildlife Advisory Commission Meeting Agenda.
 2. Commissioner Gregor seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval for Minutes from August 19, 2015 Meeting

- Motion:
 1. Commissioner Gregor moved to approve the August 19th meeting minutes as presented.
 2. Commissioner Gulbrandsen seconded.
 3. All in favor. Motion passed.

Natural Heritage Program Update – Maryland Bird Conservation Initiative – Presentation given by Gwenda Brewer, Science Program Manager.

- Associate Director Jonathan McKnight was unable to attend due to a conference in Maine. The entire leadership team for the Natural Heritage Program was in attendance. Gwenda “Gwen” Brewer is the Science Program Manager; Lynn Davidson is the Conservation Technology Manager; Tim Larney is the Habitat Conservation Program Manager; Glenn Carowan is the Farm Resources Conservation Coordinator.
- Gwen Brewer, Science Program Manager provided an update on recent projects related to rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats. Staff members also work on non-game species. **[ATTACHMENT A]**
- The Natural Heritage Program has 25 full-time equivalent staff.
- The Data collection element has been completed for the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas “MARA”. The collection started in 2010 and ended in 2014. The Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas has over 30,000 records and over 40,000 hours from volunteers. This project helped staff to locate reptiles and amphibians in the State. This information will be compiled in an Atlas book that will probably be available in 2017.
- Science Program Manager Brewer outlined some of the exotic species that were recorded. **[ATTACHMENT B]**
- The URL for the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas database is <https://webapps02.dnr.state.md.us/mara/>. The specific page showing the distribution maps, by block, for each species is <https://webapps02.dnr.state.md.us/mara/default.aspx?strSelection=Map4>.
- Staff recently worked on a study on the Eastern Hellbender, which is a State listed endangered species. Eastern Hellbender is the largest aquatic salamander in the United States.
 1. Eastern Hellbender numbers have been declining in the last decade. Eastern Hellbender can live up to 30 years.
 2. Eastern Hellbender becomes sexually mature approximately 5 to 7 years old; can be found in the Casselman and Allegheny Rivers; and require swift water with lots of oxygen and great water quality.
 3. Staff reviewed and tried new methods; such as, nesting boxes for the hellbenders. The nesting

boxes will give the hellbenders a boost - by collecting some of the eggs that were laid in the nest boxes. With the help of Fisheries, staff reared and released some of the young animals at a size that would not be eaten by predator species. The eggs are not being eaten by something else; they are protected in this head-starting conservation effort.

- The Eastern Golden Eagle is another project that the Natural Heritage Program (NHP) has been working on.
 1. Many of the Eastern Golden Eagle migrated down to mid-Appalachians including Western Maryland to spend the winter. Staff was able to find this out by participating in a regional camera “traps”. This study has been going on from 2011-2015 in Maryland. Many of these sites are on State Forests and Wildlife Management Areas. These sites were managed by Wildlife and Heritage Service “WHS” staff. Staff members were able to provide new carcasses and collect the data from the cameras.
 2. The images in the presentation were from Western Maryland.
 3. Staff found discovered the Eastern Golden Eagle is wintering in Maryland.
- Maryland completed the Wildlife Diversity Conservation Plan in 2005, which was something that all states needed to do. Staff members are working on the revisions of the State Wildlife Action Plan.
 1. This was a requirement from Congress to receive a particular funding source.
 2. The funding source is helping our staff do some real comprehensive conservation planning.
 3. Natural Heritage Program (NHP) is supported by this funding source.
 4. The link to the State Wildlife Action Plan is
http://dnr2.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/plants_wildlife/SWAP_home.aspx.
- Natural Heritage Program has a new partnership called Maryland Bird Conservation Initiative. The mission statement is “Marylanders working together to conserve birds and the habitats that support them.”
- Farm Resources Conservation Program Coordinator Carowan outlined his responsibilities. Mr. Carowan’s primary responsibility is the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which is a cooperative program between the State of Maryland and U.S. Department of Agriculture.
 1. Maryland has a goal of 100,000 acres and in the past Maryland has enrolled as high as 74,500 acres. Re-enrollments started in 2007 and are still recurring. This is during a time period when commodity prices were higher and the farming community was changing. Staff saw a significant reduction in the number acreage that was being reenrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Currently, the current acreage is around 59,000 that are re-enrolled in Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. It has been difficult in retaining acreage as well as identifying new acreage.
- A hand-out, entitled “Nitrogen Incentive Payment Pilot Overview”, was developed by Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department Agriculture, and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

[ATTACHMENT C]

1. Maryland modified its agreement with U.S. Department of Agriculture to increase the incentive payments for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; especially, for riparian forest buffers. There are some areas in the State that are still reluctant to install riparian forest buffers. Staff decided to develop the Nitrogen Incentive Payment Program because riparian forest buffers have a significant impact on the nitrogen reduction depending on the location. The Chesapeake Bay Model predicts that the riparian forest buffers would reduce loadings by 48.6%.
2. The Department of Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture submitted a grant proposal to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for \$500,000, and staff members were successful in receiving that grant.

3. Farm Resources Conservation Program Coordinator Carowan proceeded to highlight points from hand out "ATTACHMENT C". Keep in mind, this is a pilot program and staff needs to assess how this program is received from the target riparian.

- Question and Answer Section followed.

Break 10:40 AM to 10:50 PM

Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) Update – Presented by Matt Tefteau, Assistant Director of the Maryland Farm Bureau.

- Matthew Tefteau described deer management permit workshops for the agricultural community that were conducted by Wildlife and Heritage Service staff. Mr. Tefteau scheduled one of the workshops for November 2nd in Baltimore County. Mr. Tefteau thanked Associate Director Pete Jayne and Deer Project Leader Brian Eyler for their delivery of the substance in the workshop. The material is for the members of the Maryland Farm Bureau.
- The Maryland Farm Bureau is in their policy development stage. Wildlife management is one of the focus points.
- The Maryland Farm Bureau will be revisiting the commercial sale of venison along with the alternatives for reducing crop damage around the State. The Maryland Farm Bureau will be revisiting the Southern Maryland issue related to the use of rifles under deer management permits, rifles being used all year round instead of just during the hunting season. The farmers in Southern Region would like to use rifles all year around under deer management permits.
- Commissioner Michael suggested that the topic related to habitat for non-game species should be added to the workshops because there are farmers that may be interested in that topic.
- Commissioner Michael also suggested that the Maryland Farm Bureau legislative proposals should be in context of statewide and not county-by-county scenario.
- Commissioner Gulbrandsen asked if Carroll County is the model county for Sunday hunting for other counties to follow suit because it allows the Service to determine the Sunday hunting dates.
- Director Peditto added Carroll County allows Sunday hunting between October 1st and January 31st as determined by the Department. Frederick County adopted something similar to Carroll County.
- Mr. Tefteau mentioned that the Maryland Farm Bureau policy review is from the county up.
- Discussion ensued about setting a time of day for Sunday hunting. There are hunting hours already determined. During the 2015 General Assembly, the discussion about hunting hours for Sunday hunting came up as a form of a compromise. The Commission discussed different scenarios that could be a potential issue for deer hunters.
- Chairman Compton moved the Sunday Hunting Discussion to New Business.
- Chairman Compton recalled a letter to Secretary Belton from the Maryland Farm Bureau about the proposal of viewing deer as vermin in certain areas; including references to getting rid of deer by poisoning. Chairman Compton asked Mr. Tefteau if the Maryland Farm Bureau is considering these alternatives.
 1. Mr. Tefteau indicated he did not think there was any effort on the poisoning of deer.
- Mr. Tefteau asked about the funding for the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry.
 1. Director Peditto signed the grant for \$80,000 in September. These funds are allocated from the General Funds that the Wildlife and Heritage Service receives.
 2. Mr. Tefteau explained that a lot of farmers are upset because does harvested under crop management permits are not eligible for the Doe Harvest Challenge.
 3. Director Peditto indicated that the Doe Harvest Challenge is not a program that is managed by the Department.

Natural Resources Police (NRP) Update – Presentation given by Captain Edward Johnson.

- There are 22 cadets who will be graduating from the academy, which is scheduled for October 31st at Chesapeake College. These new graduates will be going through field training that each graduate must pass.
- The fleet vehicles for Natural Resources Police are bad. Natural Resources Police are in need of new vehicles.
- There was a fatal hunting accident on Eastern Shore at a Regulated Shooting Area.
- Central Region Natural Resources Police officers have been involved in several poaching deer cases. Actually, a lot of the information is coming from Facebook.
- Question and Answer Section
 1. Commissioner Michael asked about the operations related to the poaching deer, it is mostly for trophy deer or sale of venison.
 - a. It is mostly due to harvesting a trophy deer, and then you have some who just wanted to kill as many deer as they can.
 2. Commissioner Compton asked about some people targeting bucks in Worcester County. Commissioner Compton did not see a press release. Captain Johnson did not have information on it but will report to the Commission at the November 18th meeting.

Old Business

- No old business.

New Business

- No further discussion on Sunday hunting at this time.
- Director Peditto asked Mr. Tefteau about the timeframe for the release of policies review from the counties discussion.
 1. Mr. Tefteau responded that the Maryland Farm Bureau scheduled the Sub-Resolution Committee meeting on November 10th and that is when the Board of Directors evaluates all the counties policies that were submitted. The Board of Directors decides to approve or not approve the counties policies. The policies that were approved are taken to the Delegation at the December convention.
 2. Mr. Tefteau will have those final policies around December 10th.

Public Comment Period

- No public comment.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 A.M.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 A.M. on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 in the Tawes State Office Building, C-1 Conference Room; Annapolis, Maryland.

Attendance

Members:	L. Compton, T. Gregor, S. Boyles Griffin, E. Gulbrandsen, J. Michael, and R. Weinberg
Absent:	G. Fratz and J. Schroyer
Guest:	M. Tefteau
Staff:	G. Brewer, G. Carowan, L. Davidson, T. Larney, P. Peditto, and T. Spencer

DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service

Maryland Natural Heritage Program





Science Program

Habitat Conservation Program

Conservation Technology Program

Farm Resources Conservation
Program





Connect Maryland Secure x 20+ Inbox (24) - lynn.davidson x Brewer, Gwenda L. - Goog x The Natural History Societ x

marylandnature.org/mara/

Apps Google PA County Natural ... twc weather.com - Map ... Global Forest Change Room Request Date... NatureServe Explore... National Atlas Data ... eBird Other bookmarks

Home Join/Donate Events Our Sponsors Contact Us MARA Nature Connections Member Login

Connect with us.
Connect with nature.



Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas

The Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas (MARA) is a five-year, joint project of the Natural History Society of Maryland and Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

MARA Home • [MARA Resources](#) • [Get Involved!](#) • [County Coordinators](#) • [Submit Observation](#)


Thank you to all the volunteers who contributed to the Maryland Amphibian & Reptile Atlas!!! Your efforts made the Atlas a success.

Data collection for the Maryland Amphibian & Reptile Atlas concluded in all counties, except Garrett County, December 31, 2014. Data collection in Garrett County will continue through 2015. Any amphibian and reptile sightings from Garrett County will be accepted through 2015. Sightings may be submitted to the [county coordinators](#) for Garrett County.

The goal of the MARA project was to document the current distributions of Maryland's amphibian and reptile species using a systematic and repeatable approach. The Atlas will establish a baseline for future efforts to determine changes in the distribution of amphibians and reptiles in Maryland. The information gained through volunteer effort will be used to promote the conservation and protection of Maryland's amphibians and reptiles. Understanding the current distribution patterns of amphibians and reptiles within the state is needed to create effective conservation strategies.

View [Project Results and Status](#) or [MARA Database](#)

[Connect with MARA on facebook](#) and follow the amphibian study updates and news.



Are you a Naturalist?

Facebook icon

MNHP at WAC 2015.ppt BBA Books_small.jpg BBA Books_large.jpg unnamed.jpg Limpert Septemberdoc Show all downloads...

Connect Maryland Secure x 204 Inbox (24) - lynn.davidson x Brewer, Gwenda L. - Goog x MDDNR-Maryland Amphi x New Tab x

← → ↻ <https://webapps02.dnr.state.md.us/mara/default.aspx> ★ 📧 ☰

Apps Google PA County Natural ... twc weather.com - Map ... Global Forest Change Room Request Date... NatureServe Explore... National Atlas Data ... eBird » Other bookmarks


Version 3.3.2

strSelection: Home
User Id:
Role(s):

Home

.....MARA Project

- Home
- Getting Started
- Project Contacts
- Block Locator
- Project Status
- Login



*WELCOME to the
Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas Database*

The Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas (MARA) is a 5-year survey (2010-2014) to systematically document amphibian and reptile distributions throughout the State. Not only will MARA map the current distributions of amphibians and reptiles, but it will become an important monitoring tool by establishing a baseline to compare similar efforts in the future. MARA will also promote the conservation and protection of amphibians and reptiles by engaging citizens throughout Maryland to learn about these species and to assist with the atlas.


SPONSORS: Coordination for this project is provided by the Natural History Society of Maryland, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and many interested individuals.

USE POLICY: The data presented herein may be used by anyone for educational purposes. However, if the data are to be reproduced as part of a research project or other publication, including on the internet, the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas must be attributed to the Natural History Society of Maryland (NHSM) and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDDNR). The NHSM and MDDNR desire notification about publications making use of their data. These data are not to be used for commercial purposes, including resale. Also, they are not to be used as a final authority on the presence or absence of species on any particular tract of land. Atlas data are subject to biases that limit their exhaustiveness and usefulness, and until completion of data entry in 2015 do not constitute a complete dataset. Nonetheless, these data provide a valuable source of information on the distribution of amphibians and reptiles in Maryland.

PHOTO CREDITS: All photos uploaded to the MARA Database as part of the MARA project remain the property of the photographer. They will be used only for determining the identity of the species. If we would like to use the photo for any other purpose, a request will be made to the photographer for permission.

CITATION: MARA Database (online resource). 2010 Maryland Department of Natural Resources. <https://webapps02.dnr.state.md.us/mara/default.aspx> Data compiled from: Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas 2010-2014. Natural History Society of Maryland. Interim results used with permission.

Click here for the MARA PROJECT WEBSITE link: <http://www.marylandnature.org/mara/>

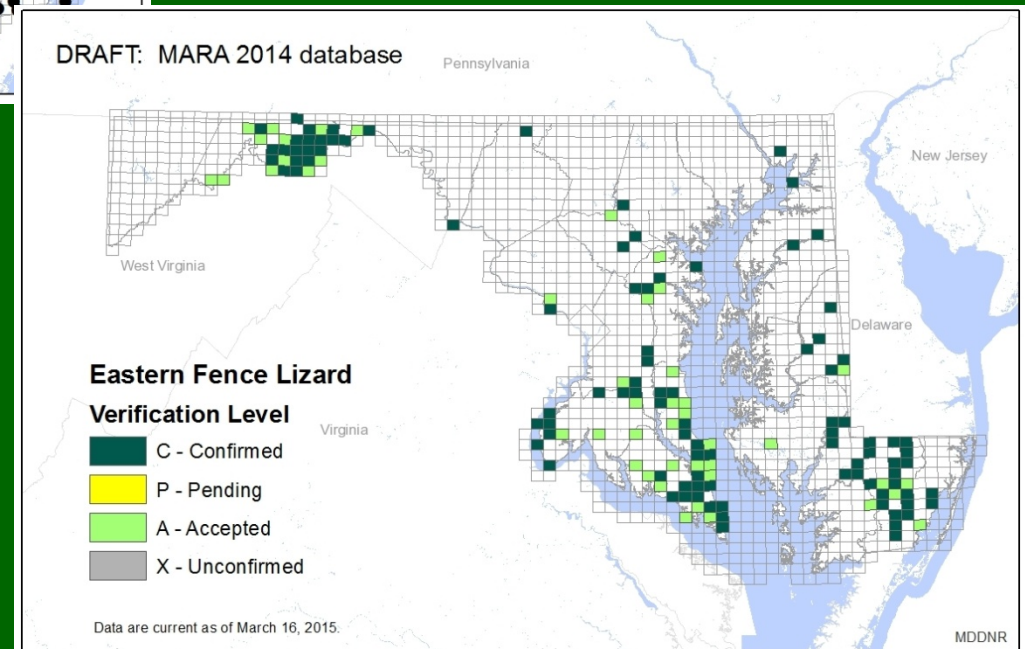
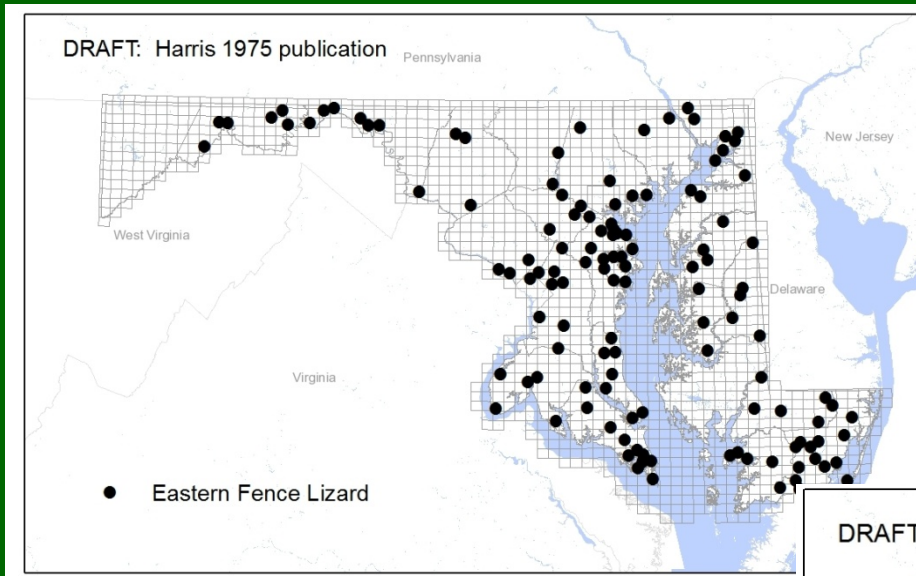


BBA Books_small.jpg BBA Books_large.jpg unnamed.jpg Limpert Septemberdoc Knapp Septemberdocx

Show all downloads...

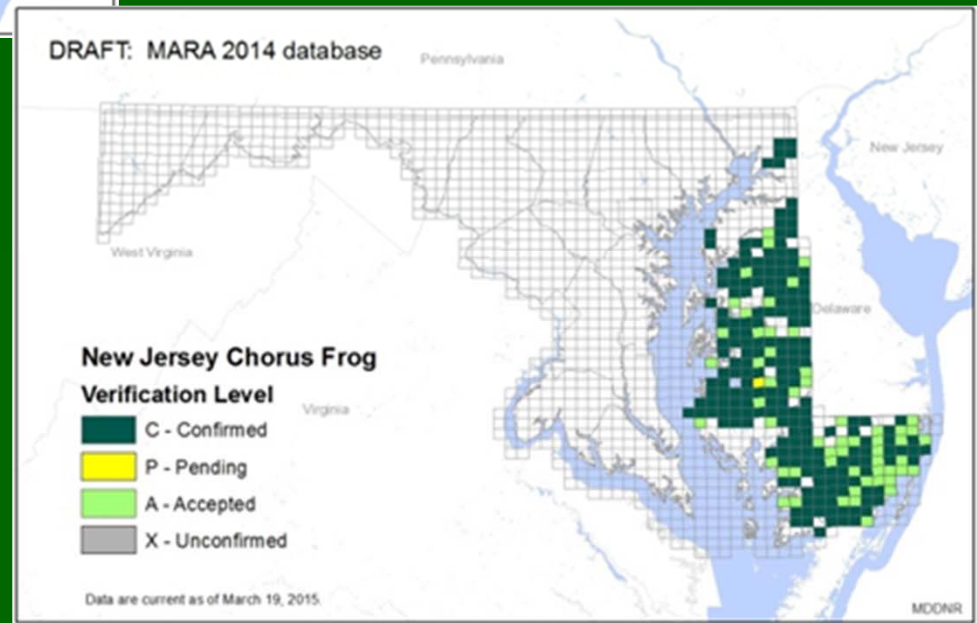
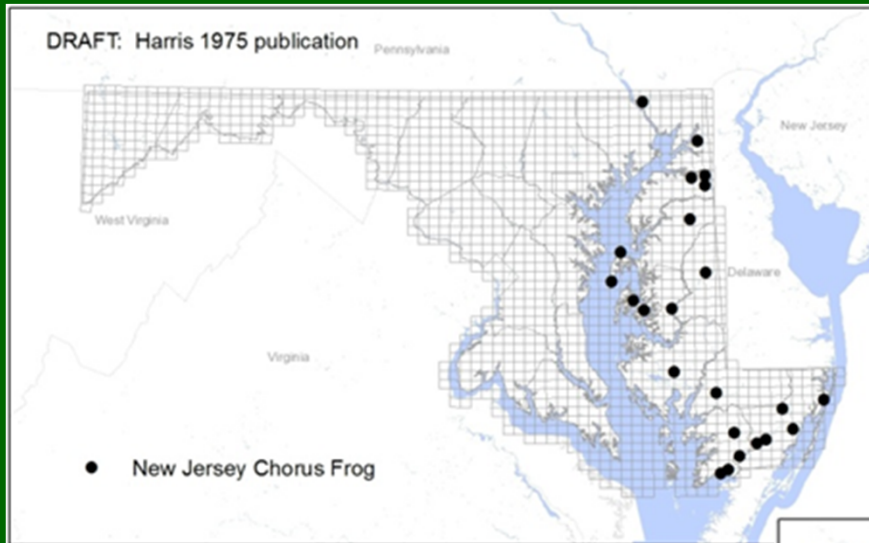
Compare 1975 to 2015

Eastern Fence Lizard



Compare 1975 to 2015

New Jersey Chorus Frog

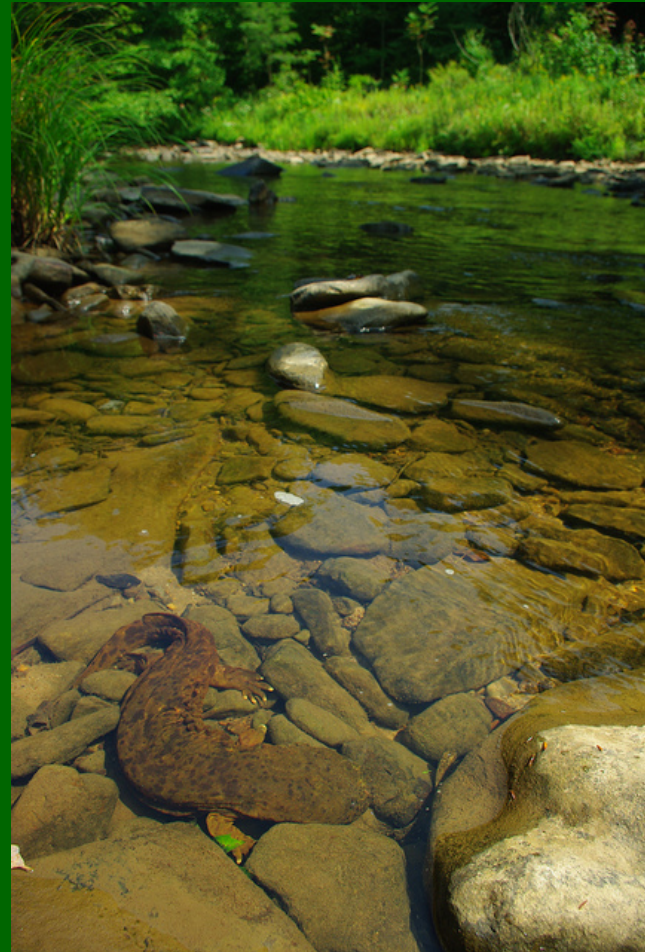


Eastern Hellbender

Cryptobranchus alleganiensis



Habitat



Head-starting for Conservation



25 Nest Boxes Placed in Casselman River



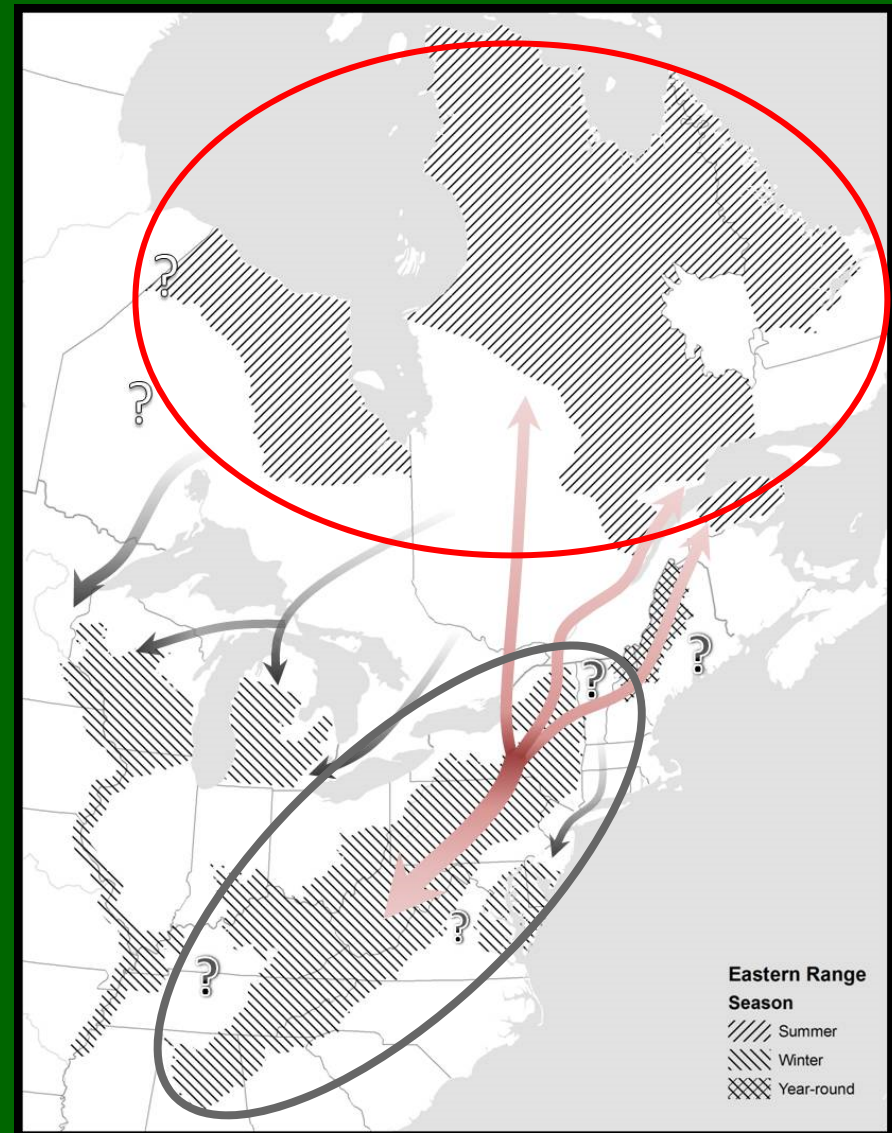
Egg Masses Collected for Captive Rearing



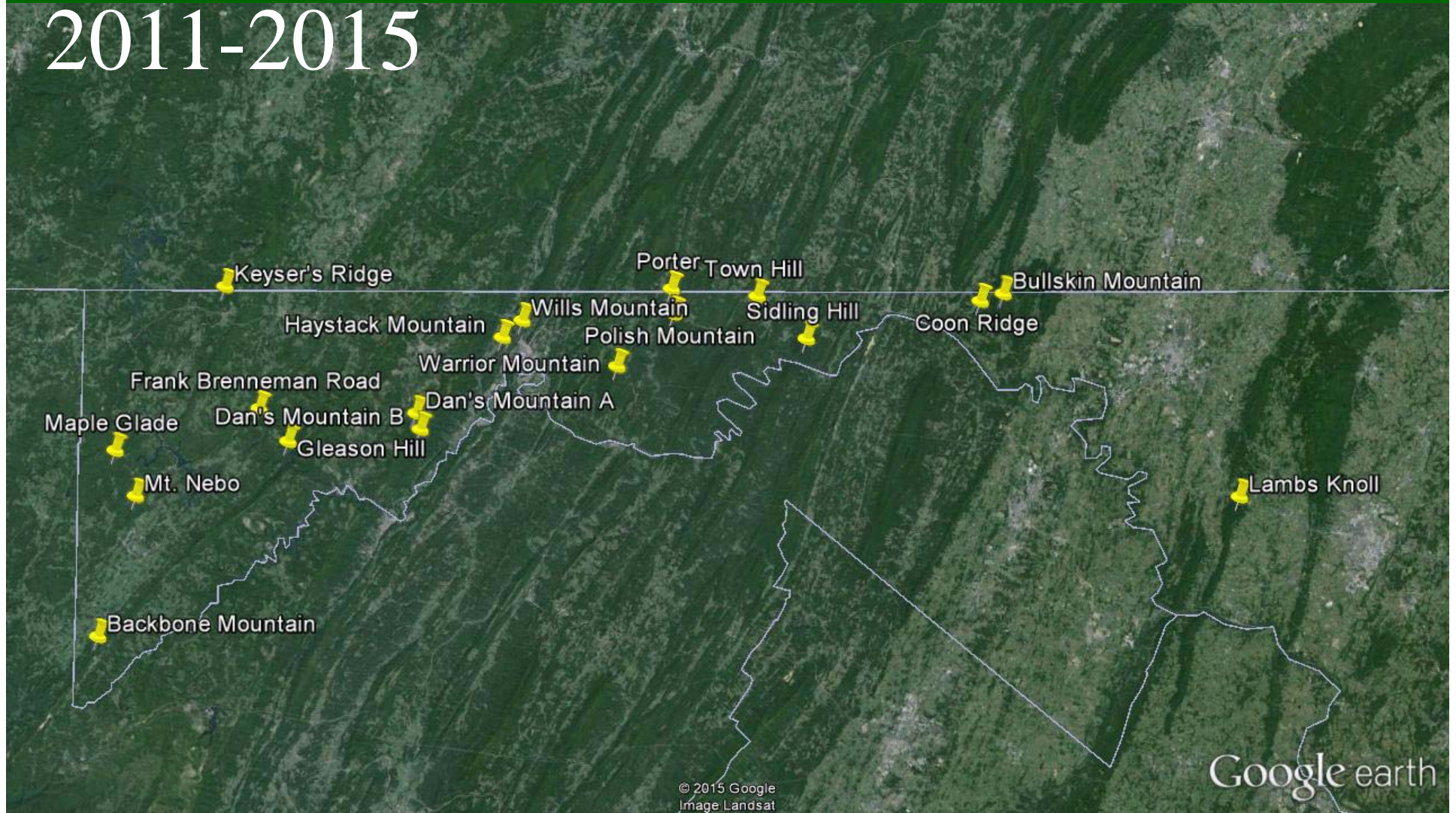
Juveniles Returned to Rivers



Eastern Golden Eagles migrate through the Northeast to winter in mid-Appalachians



Camera “traps” placed in Maryland 2011-2015



18 Sites



41°F



02/07/2015

01:07PM

BACKBONE



25°F



02/06/2015

04:14PM

BACKBONE



31°F



01/19/2013 08:43AM FRANK BREN



29°F



02/21/11

10:29AM

LAMB KNOLL



Stealth Cam

020 F

02-02-2011 21:54:48



A surprise in nearby West Virginia!



01/22/11 08:19 PM PETERSMT

Using New Technologies



Surveys for
Sensitive Joint-
Vetch



State Wildlife Action Plan Revision

MARYLAND WILDLIFE DIVERSITY CONSERVATION PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Annapolis, Maryland

September 2005



www.dnr.maryland.gov

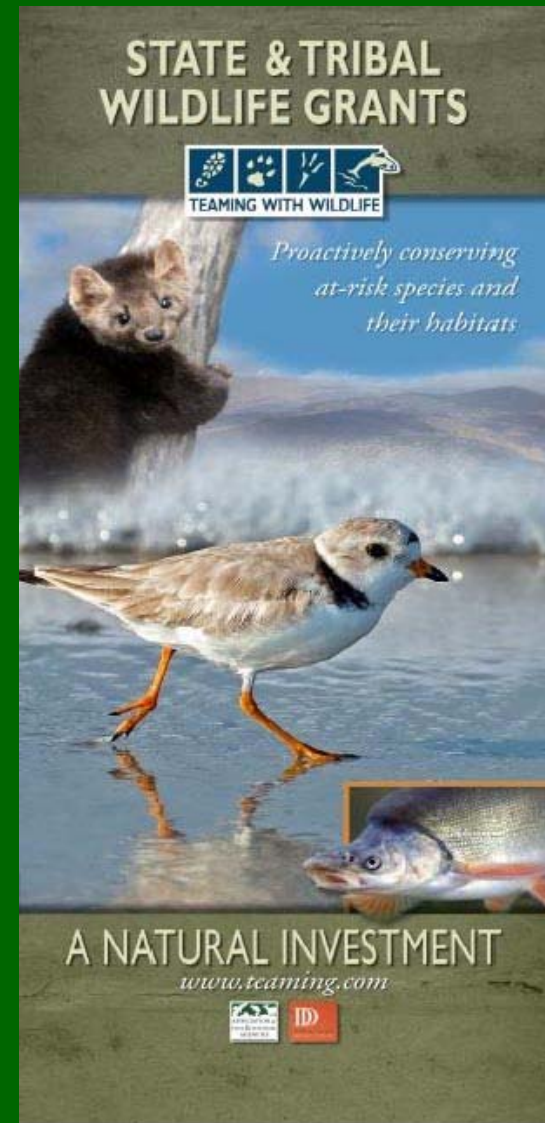
What is a State Wildlife Action Plan?

- Comprehensive conservation plan required by Congress for each state
 - Protect and restore endangered species and their habitats
 - Prevent species from becoming listed as endangered
- Plan includes:
 - Species of greatest conservation need
 - Key habitats
 - Threats
 - Conservation actions
 - Public and stakeholder participation and input

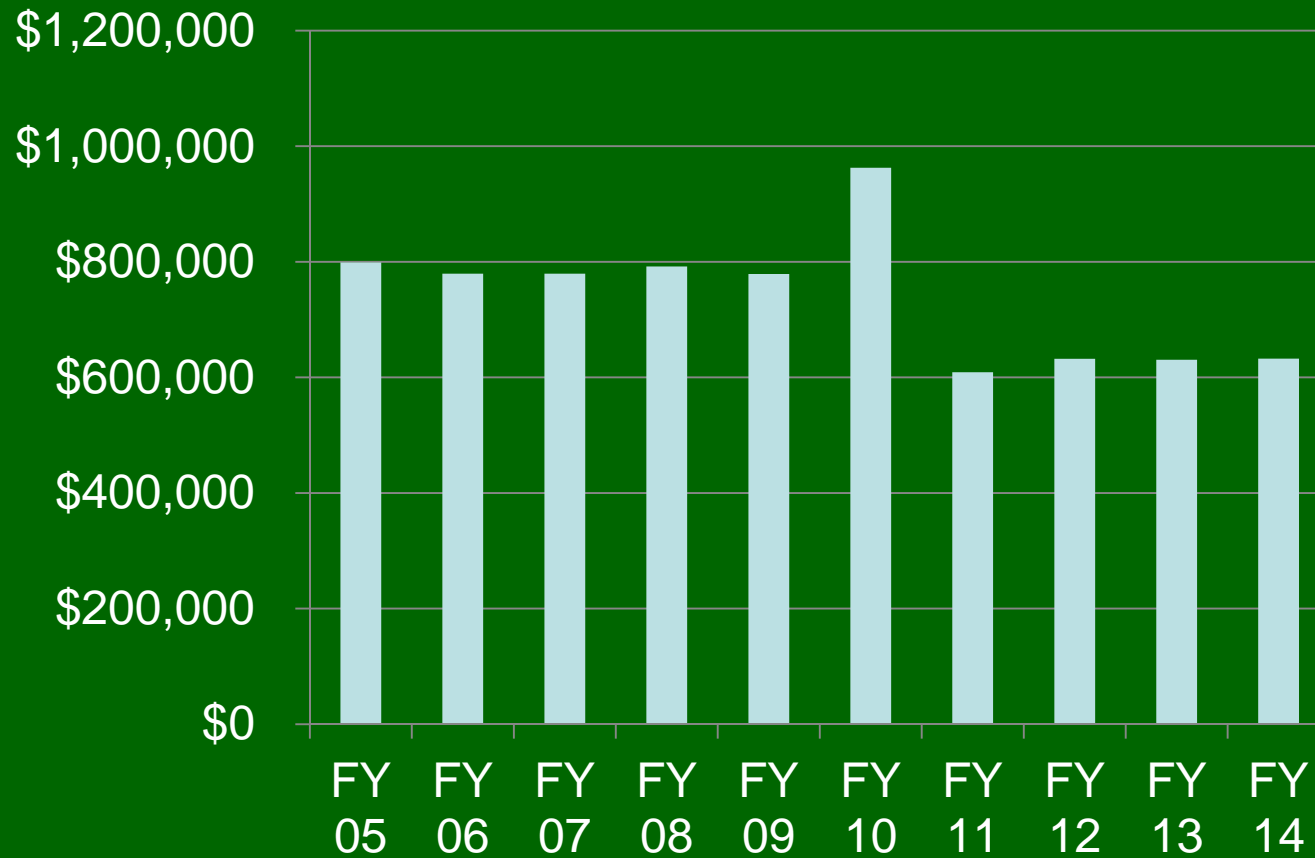


What is a State Wildlife Action Plan?

- Must be revised at least every 10 years
- Required for continued receipt of State Wildlife Grant funds
- Drives DNR's focus AND is a guidance document for partner work in the state



State Wildlife Grant Funding



State Wildlife Action Plan: What's Next?

- Complete required sections
- DNR review
- Review by conservation partners
- 30-day public comment period to open in February/March 2016
- Website:
 - Link on DNR Wildlife and Heritage Service webpage (Wildlife tab)

Partnerships

Maryland Bird Conservation Initiative:

“Marylanders working together to conserve birds and the habitats that support them”

- Broad coalition
- Build public interest/support
- One-stop shop for bird information in Maryland
- Bald Eagle nest monitoring project February 2016



An aerial photograph of a landscape featuring rolling hills with distinct terracing patterns. The hills are covered in vibrant green vegetation, and the terraces create a series of dark, shadowed lines that contrast with the bright green slopes. The overall effect is a rhythmic, wavy pattern across the entire frame.

Farm Resources Conservation Program



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Mark Belton, Secretary
Joanne Throwe, Deputy Secretary

List of “Other Species*” documented by the MARA project (as of Feb 2015)

Turtles

1. *Agrionemys horsfieldii* (Russian Tortoise)
2. *Apalone ferox* (Florida Softshell Turtle)
3. *Geochelone sulcata* (African Spur-thighed Tortoise)
4. *Graptemys pseudogeographica kohnii* (Mississippi Map Turtle)
5. *Graptemys versa* (Texas Map Turtle)
6. *Macrochelys temminckii* (Alligator Snapping Turtle)
7. *Pelodiscus sinensis* (Chinese Softshell Turtle)
8. *Pseudemys concinna* (Eastern River Cooter)
9. *Trachemys scripta scripta* (Yellow-bellied Slider)

Lizards

10. *Anolis carolinensis* (Green Anole)
11. *Anolis sagrei* (Brown Anole)
12. *Hemidactylus turcicus* (Mediterranean Gecko)
13. *Varanus exanthematicus* (Savannah Monitor)

Crocodilians

14. *Alligator mississippiensis* (American Alligator)

Snakes

15. *Boa constrictor* (Boa)
16. *Coluber constrictor priapus* (Southern Black Racer)
17. *Lampropeltis getula californiae* (California Kingsnake)
18. *Lampropeltis triangulum hondurensis* (Honduran Milksnake)
19. *Pantherophis obsoletus lindheimeri* (Texas Ratsnake)
20. *Python molurus bivittatus* (Burmese Python)
21. *Python regius* (Ball Python)

Salamanders

22. *Ambystoma gracile* (Northwestern Salamander)
23. *Siren* sp. (Unknown Siren)

Frogs & Toads

24. *Hyla squirella* (Squirrel Treefrog)
25. *Osteopilus septentrionalis* (Cuban Treefrog)

*“Other Species” refers to species not on the standard list of Maryland’s native amphibians and reptiles when the MARA project began.

NIP Pilot Overview

What is Nitrogen Incentive Payment (NIP)?

NIP is a pioneering new performance-based concept. It is a voluntary incentive payment NIP to encourage increased enrollment of forested riparian buffers in the locations where they are most helpful to reduce nitrogen loading to the Chesapeake Bay. NIP is a one-time payment to a producer/landowner based on the projected amount of nitrogen that is reduced, the length of time the conservation practice is installed and a projected societal value of nitrogen. The producer/landowner receives a NIP soon after he/she installs a forested riparian buffer under the Maryland CREP program. The more nitrogen that is kept out of the Chesapeake Bay, the greater the payment to the producer will be.

Funding and NIP timeframe:

The Maryland Department of Agriculture recently received a \$500,000 grant from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to demonstrate the concept in two high priority target areas. Implementation will begin fall, 2015. ***Note: NIP is currently being developed and some of the following programmatic details may change as this program is being finalized.***

Eligibility requirements:

The land offered for NIP must be located in: Dorchester County, Fredrick County or Wicomico County. The producer must enroll a forested riparian buffer in the Maryland CREP and may also enroll in a long-term easement offered by the State of Maryland.

Payment rates:

The payment rates are based off of the amount of nitrogen the Chesapeake Bay model predicts will be reduced based off of the land use (cropland vs. pastureland), the location of the land (soils, slope, geology, etc play a role in nitrogen loading) the time period that the time period the practice will be maintained (10-15 years or long term easements) and the societal value of nitrogen (\$x/lb). Producers that voluntarily enroll into a long term easement with the State of Maryland to protect the buffer will be eligible for a significantly larger NIP payment because of the enduring conservation benefits.

Example:

In Dorchester County the Chesapeake Bay predicts that cropland in the Little Choptank Watershed will generate about 13.9 lbs. of nitrogen per acre per year. In the Lower Wicomico River Watershed the cropland estimate is 31.2/lbs of nitrogen per acre per year. The model predicts that the a riparian buffer will reduce loadings by 48.6%.

The payment for a 15 year contract would be:

The net present value of 15 years of payments based off of: (watershed nitrogen yield X riparian buffer reduction X societal value of nitrogen.

In the case of the **Lower Wicomico** the payment would be:

Cropland Nitrogen yield (31.2 lbs/acre/year) X RFB nitrogen reduction (48.6%) X societal value of Nitrogen (\$5/lb) = \$75.82 /year

or a lump sum payment of **\$879/acre for a 15 year contract.**

If a 15 year contract had been offered on the **Little Choptank** (lower nitrogen yield) the payment would be: **\$392/acre for a 15 year contract.**

NOTE: The societal value of the nitrogen reduction is still being determined. The \$5/lb value is in the range of values being used for nitrogen credits that are used in Long Island Sound.

Legacy of Pilot:

The NIP Pilot has the potential to create interest and experience in the nutrient trading concept by providing an incentive based on nitrogen reductions. It fills a badly needed gap by incentivizing participation based on RFB performance, not just acres enrolled. Experience shows that some of the areas that are most critical for water quality benefits are precisely the locations that are hardest to obtain robust levels of participation in. If successful, this pilot could have broad relevance and applicability throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.