

January 2020



Fighting for Fisherman's Access to Beaches, Ponds, Rivers and Harbors

Falmouth Fishermen's Association
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December Christmas Party

The FFA Christmas party turned out to be a great time with plenty of food and great stories throughout the night.



January's Speaker:



Guest speaker for January is Mike Laptew. Mike Laptew is known as the "Diving Fisherman". Mike has been diving for over half a century, and fishing since shortly after his first steps. A one-time competitive spearfisherman, he lay down his gun 21 years ago, and has shot fish exclusively with a camera over the intervening two-plus decades. He admits how lucky he's been to shape a career around his driving passion.

Mr. Laptew's footage may be found in the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA) Museum in Dania Beach, FL, as well as at aquariums and universities nationwide. Laptew has contributed underwater footage of sailfish, striped bass, fluke, bluefish, and roosterfish—among many other key gamefish—to such televised programs as National Geographic's Wild Chronicles and Strange Days on Planet Earth; Days of a Sportsman, Saltwater Sportsman, Walker's Cay Chronicles, Out There, Fishing New England, along with numerous documentaries and PBS productions. His writing and photography have been featured in an array of national and regional fishing magazines including Field & Stream, Saltwater Sportsman, Gray's Sporting Journal, The Redbone Journal, On the Water, Offshore/ Northeast Boating, Center Console Angler and The Fisherman Magazine.

Mike will be presenting a multimedia presentation, **Focus on Fish**, it's an underwater look at our most prized game fish including striped bass, bluefish, tautog, fluke, false albacore and many of the prime prey items they feast on. No matter how or where you fish, you'll gain valuable insight that will help you score more and larger fish. I'll offer my perspective on changing environmental factors that affect species abundance and distribution. Join me for a celebration of the sport we love with images that will motivate you to patch those waders, change that fishing line, order a new reel, tie some flies, or take that trip to some exotic location.

Mike Laptew websites, Facebook pages, and a description of his presentation.

<https://www.facebook.com/mike.laptew>

<https://www.focusonfish.com>

<https://www.laptewproductions.com>

<https://www.mikelaptewfineartimages.com>

<https://vimeo.com/channels/focusonfish>

FFA Upcoming Events:

- January 24 – 26, 2020 Jim Worthings Smelt Camp, Maine



First thing you need to do when ice fishing is to find the best spot!

Other Cape Fishing Information:

Barnstable County League

2019/2020 Legislative Watch List - This list includes a list of bills in the Legislature that the BCL supports or opposes. This may be of interest to FFA members.

MassWildlife

Get your 2020 licenses today!

Hunters, anglers, and trappers can now purchase 2020 licenses, permits, and stamps. Give one as a gift or treat yourself! Use care when purchasing during December, as both 2019 and 2020 licenses are available.

2019 Lake Trout Survey Complete

272 lake trout were sampled this fall during MassWildlife's ongoing survey of Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs.

Each fall, MassWildlife samples the Quabbin and Wachusett Reservoirs to monitor lake trout populations. With the help of DCR, MassWildlife surveys lake trout to examine population characteristics. The 2019 fall sampling is complete and crews on Wachusett Reservoir captured and released 142 lake trout including a 37-inch, 18 pound fish. Crews at Quabbin Reservoir captured and released 130 lake trout, 34 at Goodnough Dike and 96 at Windsor Dam. The largest lake trout encountered was originally tagged in 2015 and then recaptured in 2017. That fish, pictured above, measured 33.5 inches and 13.3 pounds. In addition to lake trout, several large landlocked salmon were captured at Quabbin weighing between 6 and 7 pounds.

To capture lake trout, field crews set nets on spawning areas starting at sunset and check them about every 20 minutes. Captured fish are removed from the nets and placed in a livewell. Next, biologists record length, weight, and sex and implant a small Passive Integrated Tag (PIT) in the fish. Prior to release, the adipose fin is clipped to provide an external mark indicating that the fish has been captured before. Data collected provide biologists with an understanding of the current condition of lake trout populations. If fish are recaptured from previous tagging efforts, biologists can calculate individual growth rates. Lake trout are long lived and slow growing and it is not uncommon for a tagged fish to be recaptured 10 years later. In fact, the longest recapture interval recorded was 24 years! When other species like landlocked salmon, smallmouth bass, rock bass, and white perch are captured, biologists record information including length, weight, and

sex but do not implant PIT tags.

Lake trout typically spawn in late October and November when the surface water temperatures are around or below 50°F. The spawning grounds are typically shallow, rocky waters on windy shores of the Reservoirs; spawning occurs mostly after dusk. Night sampling on big waters can be cold and icy in November, but the information it provides biologists is well worth the effort. Sampling efforts like this are just one way that MassWildlife monitors the health of the fish resources of the Commonwealth.

MassWildlife

In 2019 MassWildlife carried out a record number of burns this year to benefit wildlife and restore habitats.

MassWildlife reached a new benchmark this year by safely carrying out 14 prescribed burns on over 761 acres of fire-influenced lands within our wildlife management areas (WMAs) across the state. Another 115 acres of municipal conserved lands were treated with prescribed fire thanks to funding from MassWildlife's Habitat Management Grant Program. These burns, all conducted on lands open to the public, benefit a multitude of plants and wildlife and help restore important grasslands, heathlands, shrublands, and woodlands.

Bringing fire back to the Massachusetts landscape is challenging and requires partnerships at multiple levels of government and the private sector. Prescribed burns require careful planning, permitting, and skillful implementation under specific weather and fuel conditions to meet resource objectives, ensure public safety, and avoid impacts to sensitive resources and the surrounding community. MassWildlife is thankful to our dedicated prescribed burn crew and fire management partners who made this a successful burn season. Those partners include the DCR Bureau of Forest Fire Control, Massachusetts Army National Guard at Joint Base Cape Cod, U.S. National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Municipal Fire Departments and Natural Resource Programs, Northeast Forest and Fire Management L.L.C., and the many volunteers and neighbors across the state.

Prescribed burns were successfully carried out on the ridge top heathlands of Leyden WMA, the pine and oak barrens of Montague Plains WMA, and the extensive grasslands of Southwick WMA. Moving eastward, prescribed burns were used to help restore native warm season grasslands at Herman Covey and Muddy Brook WMAs. We also conducted forest and open woodland burns at Muddy Brook WMA to improve oak and hickory regeneration and enhance habitat for wildlife and plants. Numerous prescribed burns were safely carried out within the scrub oak barrens, pine and oak woodlands, coastal sandplain grasslands and heathlands of the Southeast Pine Barrens WMA, Frances A. Crane WMA, and Penikese Island Sanctuary.

The beneficial effects of prescribed burning are tremendous. Properly timed and carried out, these burns produce spectacular results in grasslands promoting native warm season grasses such as little bluestem and eliminating woody encroachment and undesirable plants. These burns remove the thick layer of thatch, promote native grasses and wildflowers, and create important cover as well as nesting and feeding habitat for rare and declining grassland birds, such as the grasshopper sparrow and upland sandpiper. Prescribed burns in pine-oak barrens, woodlands, and heaths improve habitat for huntable wildlife such as ruffed grouse, wild turkey, American woodcock, white-tailed deer and a multitude of rare and declining species such as whip-poor-will, northern harrier, and Eastern meadowlark. Black bear and New England cottontail also benefit from the increases in blueberries, acorns, and palatable browse. Recent research has shown that prescribed fire not only increases the regeneration of certain desirable trees and shrubs like oak and hickory but has also shown a dramatic and lasting increase in the nutritional value of the browse within leaves and palatable stems. Many fire adapted herbs and shrubs increase with burning and provide important nectar and food sources for rare butterflies, moths, and bees. Wild lupine, New England blazing star, orange milkweed, and New Jersey tea are just of the few of the many plants dependent and benefiting from prescribed fire. Periodic fire also helps control plant and animal parasites, including ticks and forest pests such as the southern pine beetle. Selecting the proper size, frequency, and timing of burns is critical to successful fire management to improve wildlife habitat and restore plant communities. Surveys and monitoring the effects of prescribed burns allow us to adapt and tweak our management approaches as we move forward.

Fire ecologists recognize that fire is an important factor that helped shape the vegetation encountered by many of the first European explorers in Massachusetts. Whether caused by lightning or humans, many woodlands, barrens, shrublands, grasslands, and specialized wetlands evolved with fire. Native Americans were adept at using fire as a management tool for thousands of years in Massachusetts. Although prescribed fire is not considered a new management tool, in some places it has been absent on the landscape for over a century and its selective reintroduction requires careful planning and often pre-treatment of vegetation such as forest thinning and mowing to reduce the build-up of hazardous vegetation (such as flammable brush, dead and down woody materials, vines, and more densely packed trees) which cause hotter and more intense fires. Prescribed burns also help reduce the chance of unplanned wildfire events and their damaging effects to natural resources, air quality, people, and property. MassWildlife works with our many partners to ensure forestry, mowing, invasive plant control, rare species protection, and monitoring are addressed, and that restoration and prescribed fire activities are coordinated and appropriately carried out.

Vineyard Wind

~~~~~Email from Vineyard Wind ~~~~~

Dear Fishermen,

Revised to Include Buoy Characteristics. Please be advised that the Vineyard Wind Lighted Research Buoy (VWM-01) was deployed at the below coordinates on May 16, 2019 and is expected to remain on site through 2020. The VWM-01 buoy collects met-ocean data for the Vineyard Wind project. The buoy is located approximately 43 nm from the port of New Bedford and approximately 17nm off the coast of Martha's Vineyard. Fishermen and mariners are requested to note the buoy location and to maintain a safe distance during fishing and marine activities. The buoy is moored using open link chain, with a heavy chain anchor.

~~~~~ End of Email from Vineyard Wind ~~~~~

Steve Ferreira
Newsletter Contact

**Falmouth Fisherman's Association
P.O. Box 832
Falmouth, MA 02540**

2020 Dues & Merchandise Payment

Name:

Spouse's Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Annual membership dues are billed the first of the year and are due by April 1. The amount is \$50.00, for regular membership. (Includes fishing tournaments).

1. Complete and mail this form and return, with your check payable to Falmouth Fishermen's Association, at the above address.
2. Pay by cash or check, at a monthly meeting.

- Annual Membership Dues - \$50.00 (Includes fishing tournaments) \$ _____
- Merchandise \$ _____
- Donation \$ _____

Amount Paid \$ _____

Cash / Check _____

Thank you,

Bruce H. Bumpus
Treasurer

1 January 2020