

# Youth Deer Hunt

New Hampshire Fish & Game press release

Preliminary reports show that young hunters succeeded in harvesting 387 deer during the 2011 Youth Deer Hunt Weekend in New Hampshire, which took place on October 22 and 23.

This year's reported youth hunt total is up slightly from the 2010 total of 376 deer and 2009 total of 363 deer for the weekend, according to Kent Gustafson, the Deer Project Leader for the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. The numbers remain preliminary because all registrations have not yet been verified.

"New Hampshire's youth hunters had a productive weekend with many being successful in taking a deer, perhaps their first. Equally important was the opportunity to learn some deer hunting skills, enjoy the companionship of their hunting mentor, and share the excitement of deer hunting," said Gustafson.

The youth deer weekend gives young

people statewide the opportunity to go deer hunting with an adult mentor. Accompanying adults must be licensed hunters and are not allowed to carry a firearm, so that they can devote all of their time and attention to coaching their young companions. New Hampshire has offered a special youth deer hunt since 1999.

Youth also may hunt in New Hampshire during the regular deer seasons. All youth hunters under age 16 must be accompanied by a licensed adult 18 years or older while hunting. "Accompanied" means "within sight and hearing, excluding electronic devices, when actual physical direction and control can be effected."

New Hampshire also offers special opportunities for young hunters through a youth turkey weekend each spring and a youth waterfowl weekend in September.

For more information about youth hunting in New Hampshire, visit [HuntNH.com/Hunting/youth\\_hunting.htm](http://HuntNH.com/Hunting/youth_hunting.htm).

## Andover Naturally

# Nature Sightings And Other Holiday Gifts

By Lee Carvalho  
Beacon volunteer

While many ferns survive the first frosts of the season, sensitive fern gets its name from its vulnerability to frost. Sensitive fern fronds died back by the end of October this year, but you can still see the erect, brown, fertile fronds covered with dark spheres which give the sensitive fern its other common name, bead fern. The "beads" will mature and dry, and in the spring they burst, sending out thousands of green spores.

### Red-Tailed Hawk

Bud and Diane Rice have been seeing a red-tailed hawk near their place on the ridge (1,000' elevation) at Ragged Mountain Fish and Game Club. Every now and then, crows gang up to chase the hawk away, and that's when Bud and Diane notice it. Bud reports that if this one lingers, it will be the second year that a red-tailed hawk has stayed in the area through the winter.

### Bobcat

In late October Steve Darling was at home way up high on Bridge Road and caught a glimpse out a window of something in his backyard. Assuming it was a small dog, he took another look and realized he was seeing a bobcat. Steve had the luxury of watching the bobcat for about four minutes as it sniffed around the yard, not in any rush to leave. What impressed him was its compactness and suggestion of power.

I read in Stokes (see below) that bobcats are "our only wild predator in the East that regularly kills deer. They kill deer by attacking them on the back of the neck and biting through important veins." According to Stokes, a bobcat only uses that kill for one meal, but foxes and fishers are grateful for the carrion.

### Snow

Mother Nature has certainly taken care of my question last month, "When will the first snowfall occur in 2011?" Not in January, not in December, not in November, but in October!

The nor'easter that dumped over 22.2 inches of heavy snow in Concord on October 29-30 set a new record. Since the late 1800s when the National Weather Service started collecting data,

the all-time high for snowfall in October had been 3 inches, a record set in 1968. The 22.2 inch amount is also the third highest snowfall recorded for any one storm in Concord.

While the question of when the first snowfall will occur is now resolved, you are still encouraged to enter the contest and take a guess at the total accumulation of snow for the 2011-2012 winter. E-mail me your name and your guess at the address below.



The Hillers' game camera trap caught this fox ...

### Gifts For Nature Lovers

If in this holiday season you need a present for a nature-loving friend or relative, here are some suggestions.

*Field Guide to New England* by Peter Alden, published by the National Audubon Society. This handy book has drawings, photographs, and written descriptions for the region's wildflowers, trees, mushrooms, mosses, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, butterflies, and mammals. It also includes information about parks, preserves, beaches, forests, islands, and wildlife sanctuaries.

There is rich background material on the region's geology, habitats, ecology, fossils, rocks, minerals, clouds, and weather. If you can only carry



... and this bear in the woods near their house. Photos: Ed Hiller

one field guide when you are out in the woods, this might be the best.

*Tracking and the Art of Seeing* by Paul Rezendes. This is both a how-to book for the beginner and a solid reference book for the experienced tracker. After an introduction lays out the hows and whys and vocabulary of tracking, the author describes over 50 species – their tracks, trail patterns, sign (includes middens, nests, and scat among other indications of an animal's presence). The pages are filled with helpful diagrams and photographs.

*A Guide to Nature in Winter* by Donald W. Stokes. This 1976 classic looks at the primary aspects of nature in winter: weeds, snow, trees, evidence of insects, birds and abandoned nests, mushrooms, tracks in snow, and woodland evergreen plants. There is as much pleasure

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