



Laramie Region Monthly Summary



“Conserving Wildlife - Serving People”

Lending a hand

Volunteers help stock 20,000 trout in Pole Mountain ponds



Nearly 80 volunteers helped the Laramie Region Fish Division stock 20,000 brook trout in about 150 ponds in the Pole Mountain area in June.

The Pole Mountain area, located between Cheyenne and Laramie, is dotted with hundreds of beaver ponds teeming with brook trout. These ponds offer fast action for anglers. Many portions of streams in the Pole Mountain area do not have the habitat conducive to trout spawning, so to meet angler demands these ponds are stocked annually with 20,000 fingerling brook trout on the first Saturday in June.

Effectively stocking hundreds of ponds scattered over thousands of acres is a labor intensive job, requiring a lot of people. To accomplish this, the Game and Fish Department solicits the help of dozens of volunteers. It's a great family outing and a good way to find a new fishing hole!



It's fishing season!

Summer has arrived and fishing season is in full gear. Laramie Game Warden Bill Haley reported good fishing at Lake Owen, Rob Roy and Twin Buttes Reservoir in June. Lake Hattie was slow because it was still being filled. The rivers finally dropped and cleared and the fishing was excellent. The North Platte River was fishing well with salmon flies during the month of June.

Game Warden David Ellsworth worked at Glendo Reservoir much of the month and reported fishing was quite good at the beginning of June, and slowed down as the water temperatures warmed.

Fishing was phenomenal at Gray Rocks Reservoir at the beginning of June, with limits of walleye and bass achievable. A Northern pike was caught in Grey Rocks and the head was submitted to the fish division in Laramie for analysis.

As the temperatures have increased, recreational activity at Guernsey Reservoir has also increased. Water levels at both Guernsey and Grey Rocks are level with Guernsey at about 60 percent and Grey Rocks now nearly full.

Law enforcement



The majority of law enforcement efforts in June were geared toward watercraft safety and compliance inspections. An increased Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) education effort was conducted throughout the state at major waterways the weekend of the June 21 and 22. Increased law enforcement efforts were also conducted on June 28 and 29, focusing on AIS compliance, fishing violations and Boating Under the Influence (BUI) enforcement. There were several fishing violations, but Game Warden Davis Ellsworth is happy to report AIS compliance was above average and there were no BUIs observed on Glendo during the increased enforcement period.

Bat study

A study to obtain baseline data on bat species diversity and ranges is underway in the Shirley Mountain area. Wildlife Biologists Leah Yandow and Will Schultz, along with Wildlife Technician Krysta Demere, trapped bats at five sites in sagebrush and canyon land habitats in June. The trio captured seven different species of bats in the Pedro Mountains, north of Miracle Mile. The study will continue through the summer.



Big game: It's a great time to be a fawn!

June brings young of the year to big game herds throughout Wyoming and these twin mule deer fawns (above) are a good sign for Wyoming deer hunters. Laramie Game Warden Bill Haley reports elk and deer calving/fawning areas changed slightly earlier in spring due to the snow depth and inaccessibility to those areas where they traditionally have their young. One group of elk tried to go over some lingering drifts to get to their traditional calving grounds but gave up and

returned to a lower elevation. Haley says antelope appear to have a healthy and abundant crop of fawns this year.

Laramie Wildlife Biologist Lee Knox (shown on horse) agrees. In June he flew line transects in the Centennial (hunt area 37, 44, 45) and Cooper Lake (hunt area 43) pronghorn herds to get a population estimate. The prairie was very green due to all the late spring snow and rain and it looked like an excellent time to be born if you're a

pronghorn fawn. Knox also made a few horse trips with fellow biologists and wardens to check out deer and elk parturition range, and habitat conditions throughout his district are looking really good!

It looks like a year for high fawn survival and good horn and antler growth! And if abundant moisture levels keep up throughout the summer, big game animals should go into the fall hunting season in good body condition. Another good sign for hunters.



Teaming up for mule deer

Volunteers remove fence in mule deer habitat

The Platte Valley Habitat Partnership (PVHP) had a busy month getting projects on the ground, assessing new projects for proposal, helping with volunteer efforts in the Valley, and putting on an Aspen Ecology educational event. The volunteer Fence Day was put on by the Saratoga-Encampment-Riverside Conservation District (SERCD) in conjunction with PVHP and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) on Saturday, June 14. Many volunteers showed up from the WGFD, SERCD, PVHP, RMEF, Muley Fanatics, and Bowhunters of Wyoming to help remove old fence in mule deer transition range in the Beaver Hills and the French Creek area.



Platte Valley Aspen Days

The Platte Valley Aspen Days events consisted of an evening presentation on aspen ecology by Dr. Paul Rogers of the Western Aspen Alliance on June 19, followed by a field tour of aspen issues within the Platte Valley. More than 30 people attended the Aspen Day events from the general public, Game and Fish, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, RMEF, Mule Deer Foundation, Voices of the Valley, SERCD, and others.

Mule deer meetings

LARAMIE—The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is organizing a series of public meetings to discuss management of the Sheep Mountain Mule Deer Herd (SMMDH).

The meetings are designed to educate attendees on the basics of mule deer ecology, provide population data (past and present) for the SMMDH, identify and prioritize the current issues facing the herd, and to develop management strategies to address these issues.

The Game and Fish Department is hosting two initial public meetings, one in Cheyenne and one in Laramie. Both meetings are open to anyone interested in mule deer management in the SMMDH.

The Cheyenne meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 5 at the Game and Fish Headquarters building, 5400 Bishop Blvd. The Laramie meeting will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 6 at the University of Wyoming Student Union, 1000 E. University Ave.

For more information call the Laramie Regional Office at (307) 745-4046.

Forever Wild Families

Participants enjoy another day of fishing



It was another day of fishing for the participants of the Forever Wild Families (FWF) program in Laramie. Families gathered at North Crow Reservoir and tried their luck on brook trout, Arctic grayling and splake.

Several people tried fly rods or spinners for the first time, with some success! After working up an appetite for a few hours, everyone gathered on the shore of the lake for grilled hamburgers and hotdogs and a few good laughs.

FWF participants will next meet on July 19 to learn additional outdoor skills, including orienteering, plant identification, landowner relations, and wildlife identification.



Tom Thorne/Beth Williams Wildlife Research Center

and Wildlife Disease Laboratory



TWRC Intern

Our summer intern, Sierra Amundson, began working with us on June 2nd thanks to funding support from Wyoming Workforce Services and the Wild Sheep Foundation. Sierra's main focus is on respiratory disease in bighorn sheep and development of a behavioral management plan for captive bighorn sheep. Every day she evaluates each and every sheep in our study for symptoms of respiratory disease. When sheep are sampled, she follows the samples down to our wildlife disease lab and helps with disease diagnostics and necropsies. When the sheep work is done, she also helps with general facility maintenance and other research pro-

Saved by Kool-Aid!

This summer we had an outbreak of Salmonella in our Cody bighorn sheep right in the middle of lambing season. Unfortunately, treating wildlife—even captive wildlife—can be very challenging. We were unable to handle the sheep for treatment because they had newborn lambs that could be injured when herding the sheep into our handling facility. We decided to treat with antibiotics in their feed and water. And how do you get sheep to drink antibiotic treated water? Just add cherry kool-aid! Turns out that Bighorn sheep have a bit of a sweet tooth and a spoonful of sugar truly helps the medicine go down. Treatment appears to have been effective and no new cases of salmonella have been seen.

Preliminary data reveals surprising results...

During the month of June, laboratory staff kept busy processing bacteriology cultures from the Gribbles Park sheep currently involved in pneumonia research at the Tom Thorne and Beth Williams Research Center. We realize that our monthly reports have been centered on bighorn sheep over the past several months, but things are starting to get more interesting as our research progresses.

Of the seven lambs born, only one is still surviving (6 weeks old in early July). Although this may appear as a dismal end to a failed research project, it is quite the opposite. As previously stated, the goal of this research was to determine which pathogen or combinations of pathogens are truly responsible for lamb deaths. So we separated the ewes prior to lambing so that each lamb could only be infected by its mother. Although there is still a mountain of laboratory work that needs to be completed before we can make any conclusions, preliminary findings indicate that *Bibersteinia trehalosi* may be a more serious pathogen than previously believed. To date, almost every lamb has had this organism in the lungs or liver on post mortem cultures. In the end, this research will aid in our understanding of lamb mortality and how the presence of some pathogens can limit herd growth.



The last remaining lamb in our study. This lamb continues to do well despite the fact that all other lambs have succumbed to respiratory disease.



Way to go!

Game and Fish Department employees honored



Mark of respect

Laramie Game Warden Bill Haley (left) accepts Badge #1 from Laramie Regional Wildlife Supervisor Rick King. As the department's longest tenured game warden, Haley has the honor of wearing Badge #1 until he retires later this summer.



A decade of service

Cheyenne Game Warden Shawn Blajszczak (left) received a certificate for 10 years of service with the Game and Fish Department from Laramie Regional Wildlife Supervisor Rick King. Congratulations, Shawn!

Welcome to the Laramie Region

Rob Hipp is the new Torrington game warden for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. He replaces Andy Roosa, who transferred to Green River.



Hipp was born and raised in Fairfield, Iowa. He first came to Wyoming at age 18. A couple years later he hired on as a ranch hand at the Diamond G Ranch near Dubois, where he worked for five years handling livestock and irrigating hay.

He attended the University of Wyoming, graduating in 2012 with a degree in Wildlife Biology and Management. He was hired as a game warden trainee by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in August of 2012. He completed the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy and while there he was recognized for his ability with firearms.

His first assignment with Game and Fish was in Sheridan where he spent a good deal of time working with boaters at Keyhole Reservoir and Lake DeSmet as part of the reservoir and boat safety crew. He later transferred to Alpine where he continued as a warden trainee for another eight months.

Torrington is Hipp's first permanent warden district and he is settling into the job and becoming familiar with the area. "I'm looking forward to getting to know people of Goshen County and working with them to protect the resource and the great hunting opportunity that the area has to offer," he said.

Information & Education



Personnel from the Laramie Game and Fish office attended orientation for the 300 new students at WyoTech automotive school to provide information about hunting and fishing opportunities.

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