



Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Sheridan Region May 2015 Newsletter



Sheridan Region

Regional Wildlife Supervisor:

Joe Gilbert

Regional Fisheries Supervisor:

Paul Mavrakis

Office Managers:

Lori Roe
Kathy Boyles

Clerical Specialists:

Wendy Balkenbush
Stephanie Bomar

Game Wardens:

Dayton: Dustin Shorma
Sheridan: Bruce Scigliano
Buffalo: Jim Seeman
Kaycee: Grant Gerharter
N. Gillette: Jackie Otto
S. Gillette: Dustin Kirsch
Moorcroft: J.D. Davis
Investigator: Scott Adell

Public Information Specialist:

Bud Stewart

Wildlife Biologists :

Wildlife Management Coordinator:
Lynn Jahnke
Sheridan: Tim Thomas
Buffalo: Dan Thiele
Gillette: Erika Peckham
Terrestrial Habitat: Todd Caltrider

PLPW Program Coordinator:

Troy Tobiasson

Fish Biologists:

Bill Bradshaw
Andrew Nikirk
Aquatic Habitat: Travis Cundy

Habitat and Access Coordinator:

Seth Roseberry

Aquatic Invasive Species:

Greg Downey

Story Fish Hatchery:

Superintendent: Steve Diekema
Senior Fish Culturist: Jared Smith
Culturist: Jennifer Meineke

Sheridan Bird Farm:

Supervisor: Darrell Meineke
Biologist: Nate Brown
Technician: Kurt Heiser

Pronghorn Struck by Lightning



Three pronghorn struck by lightning lie where they fell. With the pronghorn so close together Buffalo Game Warden Jim Seeman did not suspect poaching.



Burned area on female pronghorn; the result of being struck by lightning.

On Friday May 15, 2015, an electrical storm moved through Johnson County. The next day a landowner from the southeast part of the county contacted Buffalo Game Warden Jim Seeman to inform him there were three dead pronghorn in his neighbor's pasture. With the pronghorn close to the road, the landowner suspected someone had shot the pronghorn and left them where they dropped.

When Seeman arrived on the scene he observed three dead pronghorn lying very close together. With the animals in this position, Seeman suspected the animals had not been shot. Typically, if someone is shooting at antelope they will run and end up being further apart when killed.

After a short investigation, Seeman determined the pronghorn had been struck by lightning as one animal had a large burn mark on its neck.



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Wildlife Supervisor Joe Gilbert Participates in Peace Officer Event



Sheridan Regional Wildlife Supervisor Joe Gilbert reads the names of Peace Officers killed in the line of duty in 2014.



Flowers decorate the memorial where the names of Wyoming Peace Officers killed in the line of duty are memorialized.

On May 15th, 2015, Sheridan Regional Wildlife Supervisor Joe Gilbert participated in the Peace Officer Memorial Ceremony at the Wyoming Law Enforcement Academy in Douglas. During this ceremony, which is held each year during National Police Week, Gilbert assisted with reading the names of the 273 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in the United States during 2014. As part of this ceremony, the names of the 62 officers that have fallen in Wyoming were also read. The Wyoming Memorial contains the names of eight former employees of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Gilbert represents the Game and Fish Department and the Wyoming Game Warden's Association on the Memorial Board and has served in that capacity for 27 years.

Big Fish in a Small Pond



Fisheries Biologist Bill Bradshaw holds a large brown trout that was netted in Sibley Lake during a routine fisheries survey.

In late May the Sheridan Regional Fish Management Crew conducted a fisheries survey of Sibley Lake on the Bighorn National Forest. In addition to numerous other fish, the large brown trout shown in the photo at left was captured during the survey. The brown trout was estimated to weigh 12-14 pounds. The exact weight could not be determined because the fish weighing scale the Fish Management Crew had with them topped out at ten pounds. It was reported the large brown trout easily "bottomed out the ten pound scale".

After attempting to weigh the big fish, it's length was measured (27.6 inches), a photo was taken and it was safely returned to the lake.



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Rozet Students Enjoy End of School Year Team Building Exercise



Moorcroft Game Warden John Davis explains the rules for the canoe race to one group of the Rozet 6th graders.



As part of their team building exercise Rozet 6th graders had to figure out the best way to unload a canoe from the trailer.

On May 28th Moorcroft Game Warden John Davis and Sheridan Regional Public Information Specialist Bud Stewart hosted 36 Rozet 6th graders at Keyhole Reservoir. The students rotated through several curriculum segments during the day. In one segment the 6th grade students learned about life jacket sizing and proper fit, canoe maneuvering skills, and water safety. Other segments included fisheries management in the reservoir, Wyoming mammal furs and skull identification and a nature hike where the students learned about trees, wildlife and the Keyhole Reservoir ecosystem. The day was capped off with canoe races so the students could use the canoeing skills they had learned.

Kaycee Game Warden Attends Wildlife Forensics Class

Kaycee Game Warden Grant Gerharter attended a wildlife forensics class in Seeley Lake, Montana where investigative techniques including crime scene photography, forensics entomology, wildlife attacks on humans and firearms evidence were taught.

The forensics entomology segment of the training involved identifying several species of flies and beetles and determining which insect life stage (egg, larvae, etc.) were represented. Time of death can be determined by knowing the environmental conditions of where the dead animal is located, the rate of decomposition and the life stage of the insects present. With this type of information, poaching cases may be easier to solve.



Decomposing animals at the Seeley Lake, MT forensics training facility. Time of death can be determined if information on environmental conditions, insect life stage and decomposition rate are known.



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Bud Love Wildlife Habitat Management Area Has Soggy Opening



Buffalo Game Warden Jim Seeman (yellow slicker) and Wildlife Biologist Dan Thiele (far right) visit with two antler hunters about their experience on the Bud Love WHMA on May 15.



Fog and rainy weather greeted antler hunters that entered the Bud Love WHMA on opening day, May 15 to search for antlers.

The Bud Love Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WMHA) opened May 15th to wet weather conditions. But, that didn't keep die-hard antler hunters from taking advantage of the opening with some entering by foot at midnight and hiking through the night in the rain. Antler hunters had limited success however, as the early spring allowed bull elk to move to higher elevations prior to shedding their antlers.

The rainy weather encountered on the opening day of the Bud Love WHMA in mid-May was typical of the month. Abundant rainfall brought yearly precipitation totals to nearly 150% of normal at the National Weather Service Sheridan reporting station. Sheridan received 5.4 inches (normal 2.4 inches) of precipitation while Buffalo received 5.8 inches (normal 3.2 inches) of precipitation. The precipitation events also boosted late season snowpack at higher elevations. The moisture will provide for abundant forage production that will benefit wildlife and fisheries.

Sheridan Region Employees Conduct Long-billed Curlew Surveys



A long-billed curlew.

Several Sheridan Region G&F personnel conducted long-billed curlew surveys in May as part of the Department's Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) program. The long-billed curlew is a grassland bird species with limited information on abundance and distribution. These surveys provide information on the status of the bird in Wyoming. The long-billed curlew is North America's largest shorebird and breeds in the grasslands of the Great Plains and Great Basin.