

*THE INHABITANTS OF THIS STATE SHALL HAVE LIBERTY in seasonable times, to hunt and fowl on the lands they hold, and on other lands not inclosed, and in like manner to fish in all boatable and other waters (not private property) under proper regulations, to be made and provided by the General Assembly.*

*(Article 67, Vermont Constitution, 1777)*



Vermont has a long and interesting history of wildlife and fish management. The dates below reflect changes that have occurred since European settlement times.

*Fish & Wildlife Timeline 1724-1872*

- 1724 First white settlement in Vermont at Fort Dummer, Brattleboro.
- 1741 New Hampshire law first protected Vermont deer (NH people considered Vermont part of their territory) with a closed season of January 1–August 1.

1777 The right to hunt, fish and fowl included in the Vermont Constitution *(only Pennsylvania did likewise)*.



1724 — Passenger pigeons roosted in huge flocks in Vernon.

- 1779 Vermont's legislature declared a closed deer season of January 10–June 10.
- 1787 Legislature established bounties on wolves and mountain lions as well as some other species.
- 1791 Five days after admittance into the Union, a law was passed prohibiting killing deer, moose and elk from January 10–July 1, with a \$10 fine for violation.
- 1798 Turner's Falls Dam was constructed on the Connecticut River in Massachusetts, preventing upstream migration of spawning Atlantic salmon and American Shad.
- 1841 Zadock Thompson reported the last of beaver in Essex County had been trapped, but that a few remained in "beaver meadows" elsewhere in the state.

- 1857 The Governor appointed George P. Marsh to investigate the artificial propagation of fish.
- 1860 The turkey becomes extinct in Vermont.
- 1865 Deer hunting season was closed entirely, statewide.

1866 On November 19, legislation was passed allowing the appointment of a Board of Fish Commissioners. Legislature also passed a law prohibiting taking trout and muskellunge except during June thru August.

1872 Fish Commissioners recommended the appointment of fish wardens with the authority to see to the enforcement of the laws with fish and fisheries.



late 1700s — Elk and caribou disappeared from the state.

## Fish & Wildlife Timeline 1870–1921



mid-1800s Vermont's forest had been cut to clear the land for farming to the extent that only 25-30% of the state was covered by forest. This destruction of habitat coupled with subsistence hunting, brought wildlife numbers to very low levels and eliminated some species.

1870-1874 Fish Commissioners stocked fish throughout the state. "California salmon" were stocked in the Missisquoi River. Shad were stocked in rivers and in Lake Champlain. Black bass, brown trout, rainbow trout, landlocked salmon and walleyes were stocked in various waters.

1876 Legislature gave the fish commissioner's authority over game as well as fish.

1870-1880 Lake and pond surveys were first done to assess depth, temperature and fish populations.

1878 17 white-tailed deer were brought in from New York and stocked in Bennington and Rutland Counties.

1880 Legislature revised fish and game laws and created new ones, including several related to fishing seasons and the use of nets to catch fish.

1881 Last eastern mountain lion shot in Barnard.

1883-1884 German carp stocked in several lakes and ponds. Lake and pond surveys were done to determine success of previous fish stocking efforts.

1887 Last wolf shot in New Hampshire. Last wolf shot in New York in 1893.

1891-1892 The Vermont Fish & Game Commission, an appointed group of interested sportsmen, was formed.

1892 First five-month closed season on rabbits.

1897 A one-month deer hunting season beginning October 1, was allowed for bucks only. This was the first state-wide season since 1865. Hunters took 103 bucks.

1900 The passenger pigeon becomes extinct in Vermont. Taking beaver was prohibited. A total of 258 town game wardens existed.

1902 The last three bounties on record were paid for wolves.

1904 Legislature gave the Governor authority to appoint Fish & Game Commissioners for two year terms. The first effective warden system was established with one or two appointed by the commissioners for each county and employed by the state.

1906 The Fish & Game Department was created with one commissioner. All seining of fish was prohibited except for sturgeon in Lake Champlain.

1909 The first resident hunting license was created at a fee of 50 cents. First antlerless deer hunt occurs.

1915 Fish hatchery built at Arlington and later moved to Bennington. Vernon Fish Hatchery established. The first resident fishing license was created.

1916 The Migratory Bird Act was ratified between the U.S. and Canada. Canaan Fish Hatchery was built. Bennington Fish Hatchery comes into operation.

1920 Six county wardens were added as full-time personnel with a yearly salary.

1921 Porcupines were added to the bounty list.



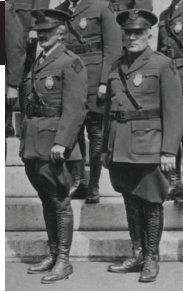
1891—  
First fish hatchery constructed in Roxbury.

## Fish & Wildlife Timeline 1925–1968



1925 Commissioner requests the authority to declare open or closed season on fish and game without waiting for legislative approval.

1930 Wardens issued first uniforms.



1931 Salisbury Fish Hatchery comes into operation.

1932 Beavers were reintroduced from Maine into Caledonia County.

1935 Department of Fish and Game renamed Fish and Game Service. "Test Water" fishing laws were created, and input from fishermen on their fishing success was required for these waters.

1937 Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson) Act was passed, providing funding to wildlife restoration efforts in the states. The funding source is a federal tax on the manufacture of sporting arms and ammunition.

1941 The \$10 bounty on black bears was repealed. Beavers were again found in all 14 counties.

1943 The 5,839-acre Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge was created in Swanton.

1945 Establishment of a Fish and Game Commission separate from Forestry and Geology.

1947 A total of 38 wardens were employed and a warden training school was provided. Sidearms were issued for the first time.

1948 The first coyote was shot in Vermont.

1948 The Federal Pollution Control Act (the basis for the Clean Water Act) is enacted, initiating water pollution control programs and water quality standards to prevent contamination of surface waters in the United States.

1950 Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration (Dingell-Johnson) act is adopted by Congress.

1951 Dead Creek Refuge purchased in Addison.  
Vermont's first bow and arrow deer hunting season.

1921 —

Six beavers trapped at Old Forge, New York, released in Bennington County.

1952 Bald Hill Fish Hatchery comes into operation in Newark.

1953-1954 Division of Conservation and Information formed to work with schools, clubs, etc.

1955 Bull moose spotted in Reading and another in Plymouth in 1956. Estimated to be 10 in the state.

1956 24 fishing access areas were purchased to start the access program. Now there are 186 developed fishing accesses on public waters.

1956 44 Canada Geese pinioned at Dead Creek to establish a new resident population.

1959 Establishment of a sportsmen/landowner program where the Service funded new landowner/sportsmen signs to replace no trespassing signs.

1961 Fish and Game Service renamed Fish and Game Department. Bear season was restricted to September 1-November 30.

1967 Bear trapping eliminated.

1968 Last lynx trapped in Vermont near St. Albans.



1919 —

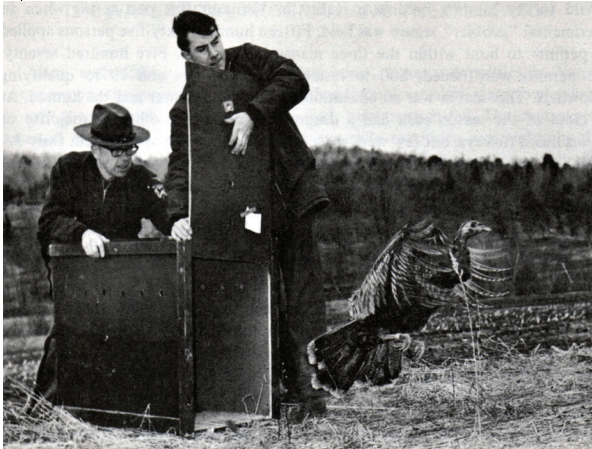
1,000 acres purchased on the Lamoille River in Milton—the Sandbar Refuge. Site of Vermont's first WMA, Sandbar was also one of the first land purchases in the Eastern U.S. for migratory birds and waterfowl hunting.

# Fish & Wildlife Timeline 1968–1986

1968

Department initiates a pilot program to pay \$0.25/acre to keep private lands open for hunting.

Department reorganizes under the Agency of Environmental Conservation



1969–1970 Biologist Bill Drake live-trapped 31 wild turkeys in southwestern New York and stocked them in Pawlet and Castleton.

1970 Land Use and Development law Act 250 passed the legislature. Criteria 8(a) was added later and allowed the Department to intervene in developments if “necessary” wildlife habitat was to be impacted.

1971 Department gains support for deer management after movie “Winter Bottleneck” showing deer die off in winter produced. The last of Vermont’s bounties (on bobcats and rattlesnakes) were repealed.

1973 Vermont’s first wild turkey gobbler hunting season. New emphasis on the mapping and protection of critical winter deer habitat

1974 The legislature gave full police powers to State Game Wardens (pursuant to Act 200 of 1973). Institution of the first fisher season.



1959–1967  
124 fisher reintroduced from Maine to help control porcupine numbers.



1966 — GMCC camp on Lake Bomoseen opens. Second GMCC camp opens at Salem Lake in 1969. Camp Bomoseen is renamed Edward F. Kehoe Conservation Camp in 1990.

1975 Hunter Education becomes mandatory.

1977 First reintroduction of peregrine falcons in Groton.

1978 Warden Arnold Magoon was killed in the line of duty by a deer jacker in the town of Brandon.



1979 Last native muskie found in Vermont’s Missisquoi River.

1981 Atlantic Salmon and American Shad came upstream to spawn over Vernon Dam on the Connecticut River.

Habitat program established to work with private landowners to improve habitat (initiated as a result of the antlerless harvest).

1984 Name of department changed from Vermont Fish & Game Department to Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department (pursuant to Act 158 of 1983). The name change was to “reflect a public demand for increased and diversified services”.



1985 Nongame tax check off created to provide funds for managing nongame species.

Wildlife Management for Educators course begins.

1986 The Vermont fish health program was initiated, allowing for fish health inspections of wild and cultured fish to prevent the introduction and spread of fish pathogens into and throughout the State.

Vermont’s first deer muzzleloader hunting season.

# Fish & Wildlife Timeline 1988–2016

1988 Vermont begins hatching walleye eggs at the Salisbury Hatchery from wild walleye broodstock collected from the Poultney River.

1989 American Martens were reintroduced to Vermont.

1990 Lake Champlain sea lampreys are treated for the first time in Lewis Creek, Ferrisburg and in streams in New York. Aimed at introducing people to fishing in Vermont, June 9, 1990 marks the inaugural Free Fishing Day where anyone may fish Vermont waters without a fishing license.

1991 Ed Weed Fish Hatchery on Grand Isle begins operating.

1992 Southview Act 250 deer wintering area case in Stratton goes to the Supreme Court and the Department prevails setting precedent for the protection of critical wintering habitat.

1992 VFWD adopts the Vermont Management Plan for Brook, Brown, and Rainbow Trout, a guidance document developed for state fish biologists to use in managing trout fishery resources into the future.

1993 First moose hunting season since 1896.

1994 Vermont's first 2-year old "Trophy Trout" are stocked into 4 rivers (Otter Creek, Winooski, Lamoille, and Black River) totaling 10 miles to garner excitement and increase fishing participation in the State.

1998 The first Grand Isle Family Fishing Festival is held, teaching kids and families about fish and fishing in Vermont.

2003 Lynx sighted again in Vermont.

2004 Centennial anniversary of our current Warden system (pursuant to Act 118 of 1904).

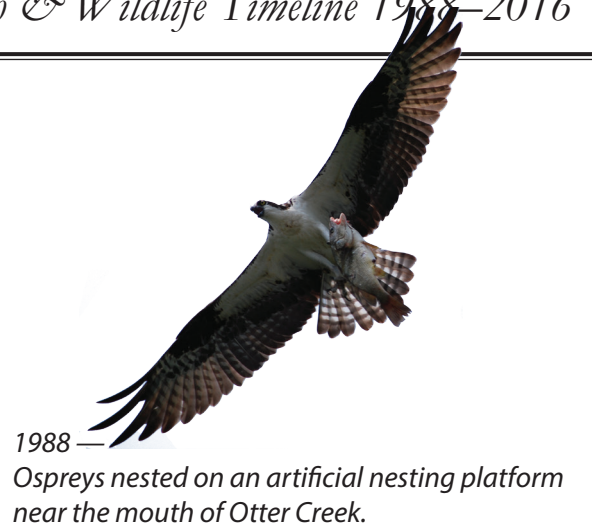


2005 Common Loon, Peregrine Falcon and Osprey removed from the State Threatened and Endangered Species List.

2006 92-pound canid shot in Troy (genetic analysis suggested captive bred wolf-hybrid but isotope analysis suggested it grew up in the wild).



2008 Muskies and Bald Eagles reintroduced to Vermont.



2009 VFWD releases *Guidelines for the Design of Stream and Road Crossings for Passage of Aquatic Organisms in Vermont*, leading the way towards the design and construction of road crossings that minimize fragmentation of rivers and streams.

2010 First American Marten documented 5 years after the reintroduction.

2011 Roxbury hatchery flooded and destroyed in Tropical Storm Irene. With miles of rivers damaged, state passed improved river management laws.

2014 Aimed at introducing people to ice fishing in Vermont, January 25, 2014, marks the inaugural Free Ice Fishing Day where anyone may ice fish Vermont waters without a fishing license.

2016 Legislature passes the threatened and endangered species critical habitat protection law.

100th anniversary of Bennington Fish Hatchery.  
 125th anniversary of Roxbury Fish Hatchery.  
 50th anniversary of GMCC.  
 30th anniversary of Vermont Duck Stamp.  
 25th anniversary of Ed Weed Fish Hatchery.





# VERMONT

---

respect. protect. enjoy.