HBMI Natural Resources Department



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May your holidays be filled with happiness and joy and the unlimited possibilities awaiting in the New Year

Happy Holidays from **HBMI** Natural Resources

Matthew Edberg **Ryan Greenlaw** Cara O'Donnell **Rhonda** Jewell-Smart Sharri Venno Sue Young

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Puniw (It is Winter) December 2009

Brenda Commander - Tribal Chief Susan Young - Editor

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Sleeping all winter takes preparation and animals that hibernate begin preparing for it in the fall. They try to put on as much fat as possible because they won't be eating much during the winter. Animals that hibernate also put on a special kind of fat, called brown fat. This special fat is found across the back and shoulders of hibernating animals, close to an animal's organs (brain, liver). Brown fat works fast to deliver quick energy to an animal coming out of hibernation.

Hibernation is still a bit of a mystery for scientists. How does an animal know when it's time to get ready for hibernation? How does its body know to slow down during hibernation? Scientists have found a special substance in the blood of hibernating animals. It's called HIT (Hibernation Inducement Trigger). If blood is taken from a hibernating ground squirrel in the winter and injected into an active squirrel in the spring, the active squirrel goes into hibernation. (Pretty weird, huh?)

There are different kinds of hibernation. The "true" hibernators sleep so deeply that they are almost impossible to wake up. Woodchucks, ground squirrels and bats are "true" hibernators. A woodchuck's heart rate goes from 80 beats a minute when active to 4 or 5 beats a minute when in hibernation. Its body temperature drops from 98 degrees Fahrenheit to 38 degrees Fahrenheit. And, the woodchuck's incisors, which grow continuously and are kept short by all the gnawing it does, quit growing during hibernation. True hibernators do get up every few weeks to nibble on food, and in the case of the woodchuck, use an underground toilet room. When bats are ready to hibernate, they must find a place that stays above freezing. They gather together in caves called hibernacula.



Snug in the Snow

What happens to animals when the days get shorter and the snow starts to fly? Many head for warmer climates. Others get ready for winter by putting on a thick

coat of fur. Some animals head underground for a long winter's nap. This is called hibernation. These hibernators go into a deep sleep. If you saw a hibernating animal you might think it was dead.



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NAFWS NE Conference

Natural Resources staff traveled to Portland in November to the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS) Regional Conference. This year's theme "One Health, One Life, One Earth - We Are All Connected". Chief Brenda Commander gave an opening address that was followed by a keynote address by Passamaquoddy Representative Donald Soctomah.

Three presentations focused on work being done here on tribal lands. The first presentation by John Field, touched on work being done in the Meduxnekeag River as part of our Tribal Wildlife Grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Skip Lisle from Beaver Deceivers, LLC., talked about the advances in technology he now uses to help landowners and beavers co-exist and create healthy wetlands. Skip has recently installed a new version of this device near the

tribal offices. Another presentation by David Astle, Tribal Liaison U.S. Border Patrol, focused on improving relations between the Border Patrol and Tribes, emphasizing the need to recognize tribes as sovereign nations and treat them accordingly in all facets of their work. Asst. Chief Astle also mentioned the good relationship we have developed with the Border Patrol over the last year with regard to trust lands and border protection issues. It was great to see the work being done in our programs being showcased in such a great way.

Other topics presented:

- Climate Change: Energy Security Act of 2009
- Tribal Wildlife Grant Panel
- Eagle Take Regulations •
- National Aquatic Health Plan
- Plant Pests, Emerald Ash Borers, ٠ Asian Longhorn Beetles

Winter Word Search

- Wildlife Diseases Rabies, etc.
- Ash Seed Collection

During the society's business meeting, Sue Young was elected to the position of Northeast Regional Director. She will represent the Maliseets and the region at the national level, along with Dinalyn Spears from the Narragansett Tribe.

For more information about the Native American Fish & Wildlife Society or to become a member contact Sue Young - or go to www.nafws.org



From Left - Chief Commander, John Field, Matthew Patterson, U.S. F.W.S. and Matthew Edberg, listen to conference presentation

and the Maliseet Words in the Puzzle shown here? **BEAR - MUWIN** FROST - MASTEWOTON **GROUND HOG - MUNIQEHS HIBERNATE - PUNOSQU SKUNK - APIKCILU SLED -'TAPAKON SNOWBALL - WASTAPSKONUT SNOWFLAKE - WASTEWIS SOLSTICE - APACUHSE**

Can you find both the English



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Staying Warm in an Unheated House



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During severe winter storms your home heating system could be out of order for several days. To minimize discomfort and

possible health problems during these times, dress warmly to conserve body heat, find an alternative heating source such as a fireplace or space heater and try to confine heating to a single room. While chances of freezing to death in your home are fairly small, there is a greater danger of death by fire, lack of oxygen or carbon monoxide poisoning.

THINK SAFETY FIRST!

- Never burn anything larger than a candle without providing ventilation to the outside.
- Do not use a gas or electric oven or surface units for heating. A gas oven may go out or not burn well which could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not burn outdoor barbecue materials such as charcoal inside not even in the fireplace
- If you use a catalytic or unvented heater, such as a kerosene heater, open a window on each side of the room for fresh air. Better to let cold air in than risk carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Have one person watch for fire whenever an alternative heat source is used. If you feel drowsy or have a headache it could mean you need fresh air to prevent a tragedy.
- Be sure you have battery operated smoke and CO (carbon monoxide alarms). Remember to check batteries regularly.
- Keep firefighting materials on hand. These include: dry powder fire extinguishers, a tarp or heavy

and water.

select a single room to be heated. When choosing a room:

- chimney
- smallest room possible
- and windows.
- Choose a room on the "warm" • side of the house. It is usually one away from the wind, with few windows. Surprisingly, your basement may be a warm place since it is insulated by the earth thereby cutting heat loss.

stay warm. Consider staying with relatives or going to a designated shelter in your area.

blanket, salt, sand, baking soda

- Any type of heater except electric needs to be vented.
- Be sure to conserve your body heat whenever possible. This can be done easily by simply putting on additional clothing such as a hat, socks, sweater or sweatshirt. If the cold is severe, going to bed may be the warmest place since extra blankets and layers, trap your body heat. This is a very good way to keep children warm. Farm families might consider taking refuge in a warm livestock barn.
- Close off all unnecessary rooms and
- If using a vented stove or space heater, pick a room with a flue or
- Confine the emergency heat to the • Try to isolate the room from the rest of the house, by keeping doors closed, hanging bedding or heavy drapes over the doorways

- Make sure you have a back-up plan in place if you cannot find a safe way to
- Excerpted from www.umext.maine.edu.onlinepubs /htmpubs/9022.htm

Fee to Trust Update

This has been a very busy year for the Real Estate Program. We are pleased to report that we currently have 4 parcels of land that are in the fee land to trust land process. Those parcels are:

- Wilderness Pines (Monticello)
- Rollerama (Houlton)
- McCarthy (Houlton)
- C. Drew (Monticello)

We hope to receive notification on the Wilderness Pines property in the very near future. With the streamlining of the process at BIA, they assure us, that the fee to trust process will move along much more quickly than it has in recent years. Here's hoping 2010 brings us an increase in our trust land status.













































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Project Feeder Watch

Each year, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology welcomes amateur birders from across the country to participate in "Project Feeder Watch. For more than 20 years, the program has become a valuable source of data regarding the populations of birds, their migration habits and more. During the 2007-2008 season, participants submitted more than 115,000 checklists documenting unusual sightings, winter movements, changing ranges and a host of other interesting information.

The best part of this program is that you can do it from the comfort of your own home. No trudging through the snow, carrying heavy or expensive equipment, all you need to do is look outside your window and record what you see. If you choose to put up a couple of birdfeeders, chances are you'll have even more to report. More than 100 studies have shown that getting closer to nature helps to reduce stress and promote a greater sense of well being in children and adults. If you'd like to officially participate in "Project Feeder Watch" got to the Cornell website to register. http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/.

There are a number of other places where you can sign up to report sightings (www.birdcount.org) or you can simply sign up for email alerts and you will get regular emails detailing visitors to your area. One site that highlights feathered visitors to Northern Maine is www.northernmainebirds.blogspot.com.

Take a break this winter and check out what's going on outside your windowyou may just be surprised at who you'll see. Some of northern Maine's common winter feeder birds are shown to the right - how many do you know? (answers pg 7)

Rivers in Winter (continued)

What about frogs and turtles? You're not likely to find these critters in the winter. That's because they burrow down into the stream bottom and sides, safe from frost and predators like raccoons and weasels. When spring comes with warmer temperatures, these animals emerge from their muddy resting areas to make a living again in the flowing water.

Where does the flowing water come from when everything is frozen? Most of the water that keeps creeks flowing in the winter comes from groundwater springs. Some water also comes from upstream lakes and wetlands. Groundwater is usually clean, so water quality is generally good over the winter. Problems start in late winter and early spring when snow melt and heavy rains wash over frozen ground.

So, in spite of its icy appearance, rivers continue to support life during this coldest part of the year.

Taken from the UW-Extension Environmental Resources Center publications "River Life in the Winter" #S003 and "Streams and Creeks prepare for winter" #S005. Both are available free, to download visit the ERC publications page. http://basineducation.uwex.edu/upperchip/waterways/winter.htm

Rivers in Winter





Bears are not "true" hibernators. They are one of the "light sleepers". They are easily awakened from their winter slumbers. These in-between hibernators are simply taking long winter naps. Skunks, raccoons, opossums are also in this group. These animals breathe a little more slowly and lower their body temperature a few degrees while sleeping, but they wake up to forage between winter snows.

Can you think of any other animals that hibernate? How about our cold-blooded friends -- snakes, turtles and frogs? Since cold-blooded animals can't warm themselves up, they need to find a way to protect themselves from the cold. Frogs and turtles bury themselves in the mud below the frostline. They get oxygen from air trapped in the mud. In the spring when the sun warms the mud, out they'll come. Some snakes head underground to hibernate. Others gather together in sheltered places, like rotted out logs. Imagine walking in the woods on a spring day and coming across a bunch of snakes emerging from their winter spot. What a sight that would be!

Hibernation is still somewhat of a mystery and an amazing animal adaptation. The next time you are sitting around the fireplace all snug, warming up after playing outside, think about all the animals that are sleeping, snug in the snow.

If you'd like to learn more about hibernation, here are a couple of books you can look for at the library:

- Animals That Hibernate by Larry Dane Brimner, 1991. A First Book

Do Not Disturb by Margery Facklam. Illustrations by Pamela Johnson. 1989, Sierra Club Books Article excerpted from: EEK! Environmental Education for Kids Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/nature/snugsnow.htm

cold and ice.

How do plants and animals survive? The key to winter survival for most aquatic insects and animals is to lower their activity levels to a point where their needs for food and oxygen are greatly reduced and to find a location where they will not freeze. Most inhabitants of a river are cold-blooded; when the water temperature drops, so do their The Meduxnekeag River in Winter body temperatures. They can live in the coldest water, as long as it doesn't freeze solid. Stream flow at this time of year is at a seasonal low. Parts of the stream will freeze, along the edges and in shallow stretches. So, most aquatic animals move to deeper pools in the river where ice hasn't formed.

Photosynthesis continues to occur in a river during the winter. Although some aquatic plants cease to grow during the cold months, many plant species, such as blue-green algae, are still active and continue to provide a source of oxygen for fish and insects in wintry waters. Most aquatic insects are still in the river, but much less active. Some types of insects spend the winter in the river as nymphs or in a larval case to emerge in the spring as adult flies.

What happens to fish? Fish "get along just fine in the winter" according to a stream biologist. The cold is a signal for them to leave shallow riffle areas. They over winter in deep holes in the river to avoid being frozen in ice. The metabolism of fish slows down in the winter so they don't need as much food as they do in warmer weather. Their food sources, the insects, are still present.







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Temperatures are frigid and snow is flying - winter is almost here and in full force! You may wonder where river critters, from flies to fish, go when ice begins to form along the banks of the river. Just as we have ways of adapting to cold weather, such as putting on boots and down jackets, animals have strategies for surviving the