



# TURKEY TALES



NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION

A NEW YORK STATE CHAPTER PUBLICATION

FALL 2016 Volume 41, Issue 2

[www.nwtf.org/about/state/new-york](http://www.nwtf.org/about/state/new-york)

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**2017 AWARDS & LEADERSHIP MEETING INFO**

**NWTF AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**#RISE&FLY INFORMATION**

**SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION**

**YOUNG FOREST INITIATIVE**

**10 GUN RAFFLE WINNERS**

**NYS CALLING CONTEST WINNERS**







Nora Chandler and Gander Patterelli with a pumpkinseed caught by Nora during the Genegantslet Gobblers chapter's first Youth Fishing Day at Cook Park outside of Greene, NY.

The photo on the front cover shows husband and wife, Sean and Christine Langevin, as they hunt.

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In an effort to cut costs associated with the printing and mailing of *Turkey Tales*, households with multiple NWTF members may only receive one newsletter. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

### The New York Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation

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## Message from the President

Dear Friends and Fellow NWTF Members,

I have just returned from representing the NY State Chapter at the National Leadership Conference in Augusta, Georgia along with 21 other volunteers from NYS. What an experience it was, from the energy of 600 like-minded attendees to the tour of the Palmetto Shooting Complex in Edgefield, SC, it was a very inspiring two days. I was pleased to hear that NY State is in the forefront on some of the goals of the Save the Habitat/Save the Hunt Initiative and is one of the top Chapters in the Country, something we could not have done without your help.

While I was there I attended many meetings around our new initiative Save the Habitat/Save the Hunt, which will continue to be the focus of our efforts in the years to come. Given that our Turkey population is at 20 year low and we are losing hunters faster than we can recruit them, I would like to encourage you to introduce a person to hunting and to take advantage of our spring seed subsidy program. This year we have 3 seed blends and crabapple seedlings to help improve the habitat in your area, with the State Chapter paying 50% of the cost. This is one of the benefits of being a member of the NWTF.

I would also encourage you to attend your local Banquet and to get involved with your local chapter to help preserve this sport we love so much.

Good luck this season and safe hunting.

Bill Wilbur,

President, NYS Chapter NWTF



## NYS CHAPTER MEETING DATES

**JANUARY 14 & 15, 2017**

**MARCH 19, 2017**

**JULY 9, 2017**

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2017**

**ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE HOLIDAY INN, STATE ROUTE 414, WATERLOO, NY BEGINNING AT 9:30 A.M.**

### NWTF

770 Augusta Rd;  
Edgefield, SC 29824

### Newsletter Editors:

Randy Opferbeck, Carol and Larry Becker, Doug Little,  
Sean Langevin

Newsletter Designer: Deb Opferbeck

# 2017 LEADERSHIP MEETING & AWARDS BANQUET NEWS

SAVE THE DATE for the 2017 Leadership Meeting  
and Awards Banquet to be held **JANUARY 14, 2017.**

We encourage everyone to attend these fun and learning events.  
Get to know other local chapter volunteers and the State Chapter Board volunteers.

## LEADERSHIP MEETING 2017

Where: Holiday Inn, State Route 414, Waterloo, NY

When: Saturday January 14, 2017

Time: **Speakers start at 10:00 A.M.; Workshops end at 3:30 P.M.**

We will break for a **FREE** lunch at 12:00 P.M

### 2017 SPEAKERS:

**Matt Lindler**- Editor, Turkey Country & Jakes Country, National Wild Turkey Federation

**Bob Eriksen** - NWTF Biologist (Retired)

### 2017 LEADERSHIP MEETING WORKSHOPS

- Turkey Country Magazine
- R3 Initiative: Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation
- Online Ticket Sales
- NWTF and the History of the Wild Turkey in New York
- Habitat 101

**ALL NWTF MEMBERS** and those considering joining, may attend. There is no charge for attending this meeting. Advance registration is required.

PLEASE PRE-REGISTER WITH BRUCE BAILEY @ (315-695-5113 or [dinklepuss@hotmail.com](mailto:dinklepuss@hotmail.com)). Or complete the form and mail to Bruce Bailey, 2506 Lamson Road, Phoenix, NY 13135.

**NYS CHAPTER QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING - Sunday January 15, 2017: 8:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. (+/-)**

All NWTF members are welcome to attend any of our board meetings. Since we serve lunch and refreshments, advanced notice is helpful to ensure we have enough food and beverages. If you would like to attend, contact your Regional Director or Bill Wilbur. Your participation is encouraged!

## NOMINATIONS ARE REQUESTED:

### MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Do you know of an exceptional NWTF member? The NYS Chapter every year honors a special member as The Chapter Member of the Year. If you would like to submit a deserving individual, the Award Committee would like to hear from you. Provide the members name, address, and an explanation of what makes this member special. Feel free to include any additional information such as news clippings, letters of support from others, anything that will show how this person is outstanding and should be considered for the award. The information should be submitted by 12/15/16, to Randy Opferbeck, Awards Committee, 3164 N. Nine Mile Rd, Allegany, NY 14706.

### CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

Are you proud of your chapter and it's 2016 accomplishments such as; your outreach efforts, membership growth, projects and events? If so, the NYS Chapter Awards Committee would like to consider your chapter for the Local Chapter of the Year Award. Submit a synopsis of your chapter's accomplishments and provide supporting information, the more the better, to the Awards Committee by 12/15/16, so that your chapter can be considered for this prestigious award. Send the information to Randy Opferbeck, Awards Committee; 3164 N. Nine Mile Rd., Allegany, NY 14706.

# 2017 LEADERSHIP MEETING & AWARDS BANQUET NEWS

SAVE THE DATE for the 2017 Leadership Meeting  
and Awards Banquet to be held **JANUARY 14, 2017**.  
Holiday Inn, State Route 414, Waterloo, NY

## 2017 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET AT THE HOLIDAY INN, WATERLOO, NY

**Saturday January 14, 2017: NWTF NYS Chapter Awards Banquet: 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm**

Guest Speaker: **Matt Lindler**- Editor, National Wild Turkey Federation

Invitees: **ALL NWTF MEMBERS** and their significant other.

**Purpose:** Awards presentation for outstanding accomplishments over the past year to local chapters and other deserving individuals. This will be a fun time to visit with old friends, make new friends, and to network with your fellow wild turkey conservationists. You will also have an opportunity to meet special guests, view and bid on the 2017 banquet core package and on other items of your choice, enter special raffles for guns and other prizes.

**Registration:** **Advance registration and payment for meals is required.** Contact Bruce Bailey (315-695-5113 or dinklepuus@hotmail.com) if you would like a reservation form or more information.

**Cost:** See Form

### REGISTRATION FORM FOR BOTH EVENTS

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of Local Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign me up for the following:

RESERVATION TYPE	COST FOR 1	NUMBER	TOTAL
LEADERSHIP MEETING (ENTER GUESTS IN NUMBER COLUMN)	\$0.00		\$0.00
AWARDS BANQUET DINNER (SELECT CHOICE BELOW)			
Chicken Cayuga (Boneless breast with broccoli, cheddar, Alfredo)	\$25.00		
Prime Rib	\$30.00		
Haddock French (Battered Haddock in Lemon Wine Sauce)	\$25.00		
Gluten Free Chicken	\$25.00		
BOARD MEETING CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	\$0.00		\$0.00
BOARD MEETING BUFFET LUNCH	\$0.00		\$0.00
GRAND TOTAL			

Check - Payable to "NYS NWTF". Phone number is required on check.

Credit Card-Circle Type of Card - Expiration date, phone number and Zip Code are required.

MC VISA AMEX DISCOVER \_\_\_\_\_ cvv# \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Cut out and mail the form and your payment** no later than January 2, 2017 to:

Bruce Bailey, 2506 Lamson Road, Phoenix, NY 13135.

Like us on Facebook: NWTF-New York

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# NEWS FROM THE LOCAL FLOCKS

## COHOCTON VALLEY CHAPTER



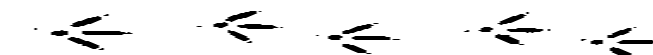
On July 9, the Cohocton Valley Chapter sponsored their annual JAKES event at the Bath Rod & Gun Club in conjunction with the Canisteo Valley Chapter, and the Southern Tier Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited (pictured above). 71 youths between the ages of 4 and 17, and their parents participated in a variety of activities, including .22 rifle, shotgun, and 3-D archery for the older age group and airguns, archery, fur trapping, deer search with dogs, Civil War re-enacting and the Steuben County Sheriff CIRT Vehicle for the younger group. A light lunch was provided by Corning Catering, The Park Inn from Hammondsport and the Rod & Gun Club. Each youth participant was given a chance to win one of the BB guns, rifles, shotguns and bows provided by Whitetails Unlimited.



The Cohocton Valley Chapter sponsored two youth turkey calling contests this summer. The first one was held at the Steuben County Fair in August in cooperation with the Steuben County Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. Pictured above are the 26 participants, each one received a prize.

The second youth turkey calling contest was held at the Southern Tier Outdoor Show at Wilkins RV in Bath, NY on October 9. This contest had 16 participants. Winners were given first choice of the prizes available, with each child again, receiving a prize.

In the last issue, we reported that one of the Cohocton Valley Chapter members, Scott Travis, won a contest for a Goulds turkey hunt in Arizona. Scott was successful in his hunt and his trophy was listed as the #4 U. S. Goulds turkey taken in 2016. Congratulations to Scott on his achievement!



## CROSSROADS LIMBHANGERS



Crossroads Limbangers Wheelin' Sportsman Hunt "5th Annual Gobblers in the Gorge". Dave Grace with the lone bird shot on a rainy opening day in Letchworth State Park.



Michael Germano with his first turkey ever during the 2016 Shortsville Youth Hunt sponsored by the Crossroads Limbangers, Shortsville Rod and Gun Club, and NYSDEC ECO John Stansfield.



# NEWS FROM THE LOCAL FLOCKS

## FINGER LAKES BUCKS N' BEARDS



Shown in the photo to the left: 2nd place scholarship winner, Ryah Bottoni, Deborah Calderwood and 1st place scholarship winner, Amber Smith.

Deborah Calderwood is shown with the 1st place scholarship winner, Amber Smith in the photo to the right.



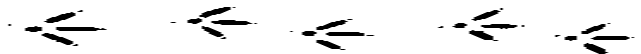
This year, the Finger Lakes Bucks N' Beards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation selected two Prattsburgh Central School students as the recipients for their 2016 Conservation Scholarship. Ms. Ryah Bottoni was selected as the 2nd Place winner, receiving a \$250 scholarship award. Ms. Amber Smith was selected as the 1st Place scholarship winner, receiving \$700 from our local chapter. Her application was then forwarded to the New York State Chapter of the NWTF for state-level scholarship consideration. We are pleased to share that she won the NYS Chapter's 1st Place scholarship award as well, for an additional \$1,000 award. Her application was then forwarded on to the National Level to be part of the competition for a \$10,000 scholarship.

On March 18th, the chapter presented the 2016 scholarship awards at their annual Hunting Heritage banquet. In addition to our two winners, three past Prattsburgh Central School scholarship winners were present. All of these youth are the future of conservation and the preservation of our hunting heritage. We can all be proud that Prattsburgh Central School plays an ongoing, vital ROLE IN THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT IN NEW YORK STATE.

## GENEGANTSLET GOBBLERS



On August 28, the Genegantslet Gobblers chapter hosted their first Youth Fishing Day at Cook Park outside of Greene, NY. There were 5 participants that got to enjoy the great weather and fishing. A couple of participants were able to catch their first fish ever at the event. Each participant took home a fishing rod and some fishing goodies after enjoying hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch. We plan to continue this event in the future and hope to have more participants each year. Feel free to contact chapter president, Eric Davis, if you would like to contribute to the event next year or if you have a youth interested in participating.



## SALMON RIVER STRUTTERS

The Salmon River Strutters Chapter hosted a Muzzleloading Wheelin' event on October 15th with help of the Lacona Fire Department, local land owners and lunch provided by the Albion Fish and Game Club. Participants are pictured in the photo below.



## SOUTHERN TIER CHAPTER



This year was a huge success for the Southern Tier Chapter Youth Hunt. We had 28 kids registered for the event that took place on April 23rd and April 24. There were 24 young men registered and four young ladies. An amazing 13 successful hunts were achieved. The event was held again this year at Home Central in Vestal. Those who scored birds in the 12 yr old category were: Logan Rockefeller, Gabriel Monroe and Isiah Benjamin. Those who scored in the 13 year olds were: Nicholas Waslyn, Hunter Gibbore and Reed Schmidt. The 14 year olds were: Emily DeMoney and Tracy Kenyon (smallest bird winner, an Ameristep Dog House Blind). The 15 year olds were: Colby Bendick, Aaron Austenfeld, Tommy Lindsay III, Noah Hust (Grand Prize winner, Mossberg 20 gauge shotgun in camo with two barrels) and Derrick Kenyon. Every young person registered received prizes from the chapter.

We would personally like to thank Paul Litynski, Bill Holmes and Doug Doty. These three men have been enduring the weather over the years to score the birds for the chapter.

The Southern Tier Chapter also sponsored a Veteran Hunt this year. It took place from 5/6 thru 5/8. Though the weather was horrible and the birds noncooperative, we had a wonderful time sharing great food and stories all weekend with Fred, Mindy and Ed. A big thank you to our men and women who stand in harms way to protect the freedoms we enjoy! Also to Operation Injured Soldier the organization which screens the vets and works with the NWTF for functions such as this.



## SULLIVAN COUNTY CHAPTER

September 17, 2016 dawned cool, breezy and slightly overcast, but it did not dampen the spirits of the 204 youths that attended the annual Sullivan County Long Beards's J.A.K.E.S. Event. In all, approximately 480 people participated in the day's activities in some capacity.

This year's emphasis was on the basics of archery, tree stand safety, BB gun, air rifle, laser pistol and rifle and .410 shotguns. We also had the 143rd Civil War reenactor's, fly casting, taxidermy displays and a yellow lab named Patriot retrieving on command of a 12 year old JAKE!

There were many more things going on to keep everyone involved during the event. Over 150 bluebird house kits, previously prepared by chapter members were assembled by the kids. This is one of the most appreciated projects that is provided during the day.

Another huge activity is making apple cider, cider donuts and popcorn all free to the kids.

The highlight of the day was the K-9 demonstrations, Encon Officer Wood (former NWTF ECO Officer of the Year) with his fish, gun and spent cartridge trained dog partner, Demming, along with Fallsburg PD Officer Rosa with his partner Maus. Together, they captivated most in attendance for nearly an hour.

Ever faithful licensed Falconer, Brian Bunce, entertained everyone for hours with his birds of prey.

Several government agencies were in attendance to interact with our youth: NYS Forest Rangers, DEP (NYC watershed) Encon, NYS Police, National Park Service Etc.



Children watched K-9 demonstrations at the Sullivan County JAKES Day in the above photo. Patriot, the yellow lab, is shown in the photo to the left as he retrieves duck decoys.





Children are learning the basics of archery at the Sullivan County Longbeards J.A.K.E.S. day in September (above photo).

## SUNY-COBLESKILL CHAPTER



SUNY Cobleskill student chapter attended the National Leadership Conference in Edgefield, SC. Pictured above are Brittney Moore, Brandon Keyser, Kimberly Aney, and Alex Clark with NWTF Spokesman Michael Waddell.



## WE NEED YOUR SUGGESTIONS & HELP!

The NYS Chapter would like to be part of the State Chapter's Tables this year at the National Convention. The idea is that each state sets up a table with products indicative of their state. Each table is then auctioned off.

We have many products that are unique to our state and would like your help gathering these products to fill our table and showcase New York State.

We have a list of some of the items from our state, but if you know more, you can add them to ours. What we have thought of so far is: Maple products, Wine, Apples, Grandma Brown's Beans, Henry Rifle, Philadelphia Cream Cheese, Cuba Cheese, Potato Chips, Cutco/KaBar Knives... this is just a start, we need your help and suggestions for items to present at the convention.

We welcome your input for this project. This is a terrific way to show off our state before 40,000 attendees.

If you can assist us with this, please bring your items to the January 2017 Leadership Meeting/ Awards Banquet. If you cannot attend, but have items to share, please contact Bill Wilbur, NYS Chapter President.



# NYS CHAMPIONSHIP CALLING CONTEST

was held April 10, 2016 at Bass Pro in Auburn, NY.

Here are the winners in each category:



## **FRICTION DIVISION:**

1st: Ken Jones, Proctor, VT  
2nd: Brett Ladeau, Hartland, VT  
3rd: Lawrence Scartozzi Jr., Sparta, NJ



## **RESIDENT:**

1st: Michael Pollack, Dundee, NY  
2nd: Jason Pollack, Rock Stream, NY  
3rd: Greg Mallen, Canisteo, NY



## **OPEN:**

1st: Jason Pollack, Rock Stream, NY  
2nd: Michael Pollack, Dundee, NY  
3rd: Clay Erb, Fleetwood, PA



## **YOUTH DIVISION:**

1st: Sam Warren, Almond, NY  
2nd: Connor Warren, Almond, NY  
3rd: Aidan Pollack, Rock Stream, NY

Congratulations to all the winners! Thank you for participating in the New York State Chapter's Calling Contest.

The annual **NYS CALLING CONTEST** is anticipated to be held next **April, 2017** at Bass Pro, be watching the website and Facebook (NWTF-New York) for further information.



A youth turkey calling contest was held at the Southern Tier Outdoor Show at Wilkins RV in Bath, NY on October 9. This contest had 16 participants pictured to the right.





## UPCOMING LOCAL CHAPTER BANQUET DATES

### JANUARY

LAKE SHORE LONGBEARDS 1-21-17  
WYOMING COUNTY GOBBLERS 1-28-17

### FEBRUARY

NIAGARA FRONTIER 2-4-17  
COHOCTON VALLEY 2-10-17  
CATHARINE VALLEY 2-11-17  
LAKE CHAMPLAIN 2-11-17  
CAYUGA COUNTY 2-18-17  
NIAGARA FALLS 2-24-17  
TWIN TIERS 2-25-17

### MARCH

FOREST KINGS 3-1-17  
LAKE COUNTRY 3-4-17  
SOUTHERN TIER 3-4-17  
LAKE RIDGE 3-10-11  
LETCHWORTH 3-11-17  
MARCH 11TH CORTLAND 3-11-17  
SUNY COBLESKILL 3-16-17  
FINGERLAKES BUCKS-N-BEARDS 3-17-17  
CANISTEO VALLEY 3-18-17  
SARATOGA 3-18-17  
CHEMUNG VALLEY 3-24-17  
CROSS ROADS LIMBHANGERS 3-25-17  
SULLIVAN COUNTY 3-26-17  
GENESEE 3-30-17

### APRIL

SPRINGVILLE STRUTTERS 4-1-17  
TRI-COUNTY 4-1-17  
NIAGARA COUNTY GOBBLERS 4-2-17  
LAKE PLAINS 4-6-17  
OAK ORCHARD 4-7-17  
BETWEEN THE LAKES 4-15-17  
HARDWOOD STRUTTERS 4-20-17  
CHAUTAUQUA LAKE 4-22-17  
APRIL 22ND GENE GANTSLET  
OSWEGO RIVER 4-28-17  
DRUMLINS 4-29-17

### MAY

SUMMER SLAM 5-14-17  
GRAND SLAM GOBBLERS 5-20-17

### JUNE

SENECA LAKE 6-4-17  
SALMON RIVER 6-9-17  
SPRINGVILLE STRUTTERS (WITO EVENT) 6-10-17

BORDERLINE TBD  
SCHOHARIE COUNTY TBD  
NORTHERN NY TBD

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The NWTF Academic scholarship program is alive and well. Now is the time to get applications out to the schools in your area. All information can be obtained on <http://www.nynwtf.org/scholarships>.

Winners have an opportunity to receive a minimum of \$250 at the Local Chapter level and will be eligible to win at the State Chapter level which is \$1000 for 1st place or \$500 for 2nd place. The winner at the State Chapter level will go on to compete for a scholarship prize of \$10,000 at the National level.

Any graduating senior, with a 3.0 or better GPA pursuing higher education at any accredited institution is eligible.

Keep in mind that this scholarship is a "Conservation Scholarship". Aligning with the NWTF's Save the Habitat - Save the Hunt program with emphasis placed on conservation qualifications.

Deadlines are as follows: January 1st - due to local chapter president; February 1st due to State Chapter President and or State Scholarship Committee Chairman; March 1st due to National. Chapter winner applications not making the Feb 1st deadline are still eligible for the minimum \$250 up to July 1st.

Any questions or problems contact Butch Kortright - Scholarship Chairman at [butch.kortright@gmail.com](mailto:butch.kortright@gmail.com) or 845-292-4325.

The committee members that have the task of evaluating the applicants are: Michael Cali, Norm Ridley & Butch Kortright, Chairman.



Jason Sayers is in the above photo with a nice bird he shot during opening week. This bird helped him and teammate Brian Gottfried win the 2016 NWTF NYS Turkey Hunting Open.

## DEC'S YOUNG FOREST INITIATIVE ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS - CREATING HABITAT FOR WILDLIFE

Partnering with National Wild Turkey Federation and several other groups, DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife is increasing the amount of young forest on 90 state-owned Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Many kinds of wildlife are drawn to young forest to feed on abundant bugs, berries, and browse, and to use the thick, brushy cover for resting, nesting, and raising young. Since young forest is in short supply, DEC's Young Forest Initiative (YFI) plans to make more, creating a patchwork of young, intermediate, and mature forest. The goal is to "set back" about 10% of the forested area on WMAs to a young forest condition by opening up the tree canopy and allowing seedlings, saplings, and shrubs to grow in abundance.

We are focusing on improving habitat for eight target species: turkey, grouse, woodcock, New England cottontail, snowshoe hare, golden-winged warbler, whip-poor-will, and white-tailed deer. Creating better habitat for these species will also help many other birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and insects like pollinators.

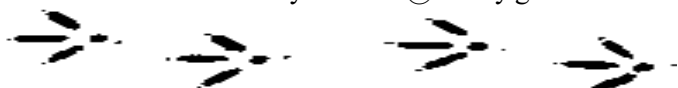
In order to manage for a diversity of forest age classes, the first step is to write a habitat management plan (HMP) for each WMA in the program. HMPs are ten year plans that outline when and where we intend to create or maintain different kinds of wildlife habitat. We've written over ten plans so far, all available online at:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/7768.html>.

These include: Cranberry Mountain WMA (Putnam County), Louise E. Keir WMA (Albany County), Vinegar Hill WMA (Greene County), Ashland Flats WMA (Jefferson County), Oriskany Flats WMA (Oneida County), Tug Hill WMA (Lewis County), Upper and Lower Lakes WMA (St. Lawrence County), Cicero Swamp WMA (Onondaga and Madison Counties), High Tor WMA (Ontario County), Rattlesnake Hill WMA (Livingston and Allegany Counties), and Hanging Bog WMA (Allegany County). For each HMP, we are holding a public meeting where you can hear about the plan and talk to DEC staff who manage the WMA.

With plans in place, DEC's biologists and foresters will start making young forest habitat on the ground. We will use a variety of forestry methods, including clearcuts, seed tree cuts, and shelterwood cuts. In time, these managed areas will provide not only great wildlife habitat, but also a better hunting and wildlife watching experience for WMA visitors. This fall, start looking for new YFI signs on WMAs where we plan to make young forest.

For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/104218.html>  
or contact us at [yfwildlife@dec.ny.gov](mailto:yfwildlife@dec.ny.gov).



The above photo is an example of habitat improvement practices.



Pictured above is a bird that was shot during opening week by Brian Gottfried.



# #RISEANDFLY

by Brian Gottfried,

NWTF NYS Coordinator-Save the Hunt Initiative

By the time you are reading this, most hunting seasons in New York have ended. The gap between the last newsletter and this one has been packed full with the spring turkey season, fishing, goose hunting, bow hunting, and the regular firearms season for deer. That's probably why I'm writing this on my phone while sitting in a treestand on a super windy afternoon, two weeks after the deadline for articles. Don't criticize me, I'm scanning frequently and doing my best to multi-task. I actually just had a doe and fawn 80yds in front of me. Time flies, life is constantly moving forward whether you are keeping up or not. It's hard to stay on top of everything sometimes. I'll admit, I'm not the best at keeping up with life at times. I'm too afraid to miss that one magical day where all the fish are biting any lure you throw, or miss the buck of a lifetime walking by one of my stands, and I dread to think that there is a turkey gobble that I didn't hear, so I rarely skip the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors.

I wouldn't be nearly involved in the outdoors lifestyle if my mentor hadn't taken me when I was young. My dad fished but never hunted. I was real interested in hunting because my magazines covered hunting as well as fishing. My fishing friends came from hunting families and my neighbors hunted as well. I didn't have anyone to teach me how to hunt. That was the case until a day when I was 12. I found and filled out an application for the Apprentice Hunter Program through Region 8 of the NYSDEC. It wasn't long before I was paired up with a mentor hunter and on the road to becoming a self-sufficient hunter.

My mentor hunter would wake up extra early to pick me up and take me along on turkey hunts, grouse and woodcock hunts, trout fishing small streams, and even agreed to take my dad deer hunting before I was old enough to hunt myself. He didn't get paid, or rewarded (not in a materialistic sense anyway) yet he invested a lot of time and effort in taking me afield (as well as my dad at times). I'm forever grateful for that, and as a matter of fact we still hunt together today. I'm 36, he's 81 and we still bag turkeys together each May.

The Apprentice Hunter Program is no longer around but I think it needs to be. I also think it isn't the only option, we all can take NEW people hunting and promote the outdoor lifestyle to anyone we want. I capitalize "new" because they don't have to be kids. There are a lot of adults that would like to hunt but don't have the right network of friends or simply don't know where to start. We as hunters just need to be a little proactive. Ask around, encourage, and participate in activities where the outdoor lifestyle is

being promoted. We need to recruit new hunters or before we know it, hunters will be a thing of the past. Only 6% of the U.S. population are hunters and the average age of us hunters is rising every year. That means we aren't recruiting new people. If people aren't hunting and fishing, funding for conservation will disappear along with the hunters.

Sometimes it's hard to find people to help take the new hunters. I was fortunate enough to take a young man and his father on his first hunt ever this spring. Even dad hadn't really turkey hunted before. Take a look at the smiles in the picture below and I think you'll realize we made a hunter for life that weekend. I wasn't so lucky this fall when looking for a youth to take on the youth deer hunt. It was partially my fault, I was late in asking around (showcasing my ability to let life get ahead of me as I mentioned earlier) but I didn't even have one response. Just this past week, my local chapter joined up with Operation Injured Soldier to host some Vets on a bow hunt in Letchworth State Park. Unfortunately I had a wedding to attend, so I needed some volunteers to help guide the Vets. I had a month to find them. I was only able to find 2 when I was hoping for 10. It all worked out and the vets had a great time, but it caused me to reflect on what I'm doing wrong. I need to be more proactive in finding people willing to help and I need to be more encouraging to people who might be willing to help.

It truly is one of the greatest things ever, to experience the new hunter and watch them learn while afield. So, while you are battling cabin fever this winter I hope that you think of a way to take someone new out in the field. Whether they are young, old, or used to hunt but stopped, help them get outdoors and try to help reverse the steady decline in the number of hunters in this country. Conservation depends on it.

#RISEANDFLY



Michael Germano got his first turkey hunting with his dad Brian and guided by Jim Smith (both pictured) and Brian Gottfried.

# PARTNERSHIPS -

## Creating New Opportunities for Private Landowners

Kristen Schnepf-Giger,  
NWTF Wildlife Biologist

Great achievements are rarely met by the efforts of one single individual or organization. For example, NASCAR drivers wouldn't be able to complete a race without the help of their pit crew. Partnerships multiply the efforts of like-minded people or organizations, ultimately producing an end result greater than that which either could achieve on their own. It is no different in the world of conservation.

The National Wild Turkey Federation has prided itself in establishing and maintaining effective partnerships for over 40 years. Partnerships were integral in the early days, when outdoor enthusiasts and wildlife managers were deciding on the best ways to bring wild turkeys back from the brink of extinction.

Those partnerships led to the historic "trap and transfer" days, which resulted in arguably the greatest wildlife restoration success story in the history of the world. New York State boasts an important part in that piece of history.

Significant efforts were made to trap birds from Allegany State Park to transfer to other suitable habitats within New York as well as New Hampshire, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. An area that was once a historic turkey stronghold is now experiencing a significant wild turkey population decline. The decline can be attributed to a number of factors. Some of these factors are outside of our control, including weather. Other factors we can influence. The loss of young forest habitat to provide quality nesting cover is likely playing a significant role in this situation. Additionally, lack of forest & field management reduces brood, nesting, and cover needed for a productive turkey population.

This situation, and others like it around the country, helped spark our Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. initiative. Leaning on past successes, and looking towards future opportunities, NWTF is excited to partner with Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) through a Regional Conservation Partnership award from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to combat the habitat issues attributed to these population declines.

The NWTF has created two new positions under this agreement with Wildlife Management Institute to spearhead efforts of implementing young forest habitat on private lands in two areas of NY. The work will benefit a host of species including American woodcock, ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer, black bear, New England cottontails in southeastern NY counties, and of course wild turkeys.

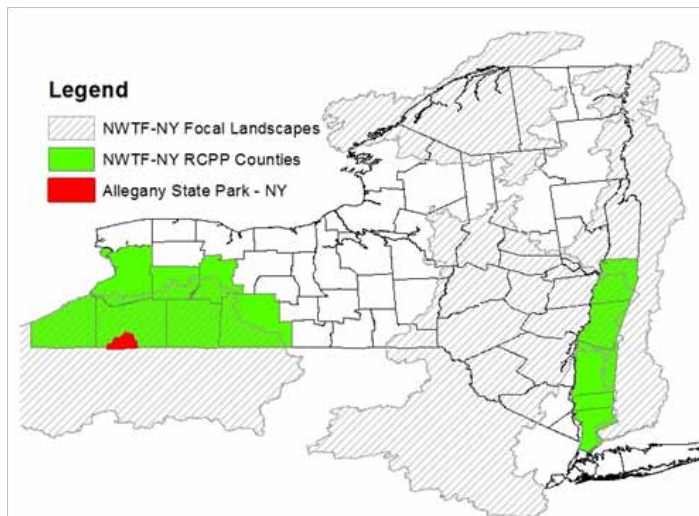
NWTF will hire a biologist that will be working out of the NRCS Service Center in Ghent, NY. They will be focusing on the southeastern portion of the state (Columbia, Dutchess, Putnam, and Westchester Counties) where New England cottontail focus areas along with NWTF focal landscapes have been established.

I will be covering the NY State portion of the Allegheny Mountains Focal Landscape (Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Erie, Wyoming, Steuben, and Livingston Counties). This focal landscape is one of the highest priority focal landscapes in the northeast district for NWTF.

These staff members will help volunteers move the needle forward in the state strategic plan for our Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. initiative, which calls for conserving or enhancing 6,000 acres of habitat by 2019. Young forest cover is one of the key habitat types to address within that 6,000 acres. Other programs such as our Conservation (surplus) Seed and Seed Subsidy programs will aid in accomplishing that goal.

Not only will these biologists help to achieve those objectives, but those accomplishments will be reached by bringing an entirely new funding source to the table. The funding award by Wildlife Management Institute includes financial assistance funding to assist private landowners who wish to implement young forest habitat on their property. Interested landowners will need to work with our staff or other partners in the program to apply for the NRCS program funding, meet specific eligibility criteria, and have their application rank high enough to receive funding consideration.

Stay tuned as more information becomes available on how you can participate. If you live, hunt, or work in these areas, don't miss out on the chance to be part of this chapter of history in wild turkey management. Kristen Schnepf-Giger  
[kgiger@nwtf.net](mailto:kgiger@nwtf.net)





## NEW YORK STATE REPRESENTATIVES TO THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN OCTOBER 2016.



Posing in front of the statue at the NWTF's National Headquarters in Edgefield, SC are the members from NYS that attended the NWTF's National Leadership Conference. The theme of the meetings was Partnerships. Front Row: Sean Langevin, Alex Clark, Brittany Moore, Bill Wilbur, President of NYS Chapter. Second Row: George and Christine Condon, Sandy Gamel, Jim Donahue, Mike Camberari, Mike Koziol, Deb & Randy Opferbeck, Dave & Renee Fanaro, Wendy St. John. Third Row: Brandon Keyser, Kimberly Aney, Jim Gamel, Vickie Sweet, Marty Huber, Chad McDonald, Doug Little, Ed Burroughs, Bob St. John.



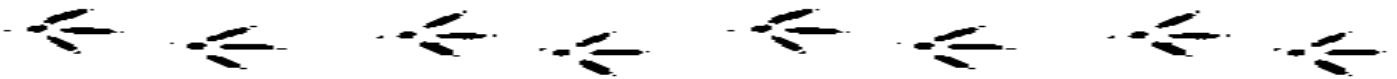
In the above photos, NYS members visited the Palmetto Shooting Complex, a new part of NWTF's properties. Below left is a picture of a display of box calls in the Muesum. Below right is a demonstration of a turkey trapping operation.





770 Augusta Rd  
Edgefield, SC 29824

## FALL 2016 - NYS CHAPTER - NWTF NEWSLETTER



### **NYS CHAPTER'S ANNUAL 10 GUN RAFFLE 2016 WINNERS**

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Ron Bunce, Frankfort, NY
- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Matthew Shaw, Bloomingburg, NY
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: Rick Blatner, Elma, NY
- 4<sup>th</sup>: Stephan Mataraza, Medusa, NY
- 5<sup>th</sup>: Jarrod Wall, Livonia, NY
- 6<sup>th</sup>: Brody Wright, Portville, NY
- 7<sup>th</sup>: Wanda Brown, Angelica, NY
- 8<sup>th</sup>: Jeremy Mikolajczyk, Hinsdale, NY
- 9<sup>th</sup>: Allie Kleingardner, Parksville, NY
- 10<sup>th</sup>: Stephanie Biancaniello, Suffern, NY

• Thank you to all NWTF members that took time to sell tickets and to all those that purchased them as well.  
• Currently, this is the one way that we raise funds to help with the day to day operational expenses that are not covered by the SuperFund. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

### **ATTENTION**

NY STATE SPORTSMEN EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS

We would like to hear from NWTF members that are also Sportsmen Education Instructors

The NWTF-NY State Chapter commends the volunteer work you do to provide aspiring hunters with the foundation needed to hunt. If you are a Sportsmen Education instructor and an NWTF member your efforts may be counted towards our Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. initiative goals.

For more information on how your efforts could be counted towards our initiative please email [NWTF\\_HunterEd@yahoo.com](mailto:NWTF_HunterEd@yahoo.com)

If you are interested in becoming a Sportsmen Education instructor please check out the following website:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/9189.html>