

NDG&F May 18th Newsletter

Leave Wildlife Alone, Watch for Deer

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department emphasizes a simple message to well-intentioned humans who want to pick up and rescue what appear to be orphaned baby animals – don't touch them. Whether it is a young fawn, duckling, cottontail rabbit or a songbird, it is better to just leave them alone. More often than not young animals are not abandoned or deserted, and the mother is probably watching nearby. Young wildlife are purposely placed into seclusion by their mothers to protect them from predators.

Anytime a young wild animal has human contact its chance for survival decreases significantly. It's illegal to take wild animals home, and captive animals later returned to the wild will struggle to survive because they do not possess learned survival skills.

The only time a baby animal should be picked up is if a young songbird is found on a doorstep. If that is the case, the young bird should be moved nearby to suitable habitat.

Citizens should also steer clear of adult wildlife, such as deer or moose that might wander into urban areas. Crowding stresses animals, and this could lead to a potentially dangerous situation.

In addition, motorists are reminded to watch for deer along roadways. June is one of the peak months for deer vehicle accidents because young animals are dispersing from their home ranges. With deer more active during these months, the potential for car deer collisions increases.

Threat of Exotics in State Waters Continues

Outdoor water recreationists are once again reminded to help prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic nuisance species in North Dakota.

State Game and Fish Department ANS coordinator Fred Ryckman applauds the efforts of those who keep North Dakota waters free of unwanted species.

"I commend the commitment shown by the vast majority of our boaters and anglers who understand how important it is to keep our lakes and rivers free of ANS, by doing their part to ensure our waters do not become infested," Ryckman said. "But at the same time, there are others who do not follow the regulations. It is critically important for everyone to comply, so that the vast majority of our state's waters remain ANS free."

Current law states:

water must be drained from watercraft prior to leaving a water body, including livewells;

bait buckets and/or any container of 5 gallons or less in volume can be used to transport legal live baitfish or other bait in water;

all other fish species may not be held in water and/or transported in bait buckets/containers when away from a water body;

transportation of fish in or on ice is allowed;

no aquatic vegetation, or parts thereof, shall be in or on watercraft, motors, trailers and recreational equipment when out of water;

time out of the water needed to remove aquatic vegetation at the immediate water access area is allowed;

all built-in structures in boats, including livewells and bait compartments, and containers (bait buckets) used to transport legal live bait, must also be free of aquatic vegetation;

all legal live aquatic organisms used by anglers, including legal baitfish (fathead minnows), amphibians (salamanders and frogs), invertebrates (crayfish and leeches) and insects must be purchased and/or trapped in North Dakota.

Be Courteous at Boat Ramps

Boaters are reminded to exercise patience and plan accordingly when heading to a lake or river this summer.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department receives a number of complaints every year about overly aggressive behavior at boat ramps. A few simple reminders will help ensure a fluent transition when launching and loading a boat.

Launching

Don't pull onto ramp until your boat is ready to launch.

Prepare for launching in the parking area. Remove covers, load equipment, remove tie downs, attach lines and put in drain plug, before backing onto the ramp.

When ready, pull into line to launch. Wait your turn. Be courteous.

It takes at least two people to efficiently and courteously launch a boat: one to handle the boat and one to take care of the tow vehicle.

Loading

Don't block the loading area with your boat until your tow vehicle is ready to load. Wait until you are clear of the launch area to unload gear.

As soon as your trailer is in the water, load and secure your boat to the trailer.

Remove boat and trailer from the water as quickly as possible.

Get clear of the ramp. Pull into the parking area to finish securing your boat and unload gear.