

# Illinois Department of Natural Resources Newsbits

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**Firearm Deer Permit Applications:** Resident and non-resident deer hunters can apply for the second lottery drawing for 2016 Illinois Firearm Deer and Muzzleloader-only Deer permits. The deadline to apply for the second lottery is June 30. For more information, check the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/deer).

**Don't Bother Wildlife:** When people come in contact with young wildlife, they may jump to the conclusion that the animal is orphaned and in need of assistance. Young animals are often left alone while their parents are away searching for food. Do not touch or remove the young animal unless you are absolutely sure that it is an orphan or severely injured. Many species return to their young near dusk and dawn. A young animal that looks well-fed with bright eyes and clean fur or feathers is probably not

orphaned. If the animal does need help, contact a wildlife rehabilitator for advice. Find contact information on the Living with Wildlife in Illinois website: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/professionals.cfm#rehab>.

**Aquatic Life Violations Cited:** A New York seafood wholesale dealer was issued two citations by Illinois DNR Conservation Police recently for violating Illinois laws related to the importation of live aquatic life into the State of Illinois. Captain Blue LLC, located in the Fulton Fish Market in Bronx, New York, unlawfully imported live crawfish and Chinese muddy loaches to the Niles Super H Mart store in Niles, Illinois on numerous occasions in 2015. The IDNR has an established Aquatic Life Approved Species List specifying which species are approved for live importation. Any species not on the list are illegal to possess or import alive without special authorization by the IDNR because of the potential risk they present. The live food trade is one of many ways invasive species can be introduced into the environment. IDNR Conservation Police have stepped up efforts to inspect aquatic life dealers, live food markets, and the transportation of aquatic life into and within the state. The University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Biological Sciences and Pritzker Laboratory at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago conducted DNA testing on the loaches to specifically identify which species of loaches were seized. The New York Department of Conservation also assisted in the investigation. Links to the Aquatic Life Approved Species List and regulations related to aquaculture, transportation of aquatic life, stocking, importation, selling, and/or possession of aquatic life can be found online: <http://www.ifishillinois.org/programs/aquaculture.html>.

**May is Invasive Species Awareness Month:** Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month is a statewide effort held each May to educate and inform citizens of Illinois about the threats posed by invasive species. The theme is 'Preserving Illinois' Wild Side.' Invasive species of concern include plants like buckthorn, garlic mustard and kudzu, aquatic species like Asian carp and zebra mussels, and animals like feral swine. Plan to attend the Illinois Invasive Species Symposium at the University of Illinois Extension in Champaign on May 26. For more information, check the website at [www.invasive.org/illinois](http://www.invasive.org/illinois).

**Camping Reservations:** Spring and summer are great times for camping in Illinois. Make campsite and shelter reservations for many IDNR sites online through the Reserve America website at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com) using a credit card. For more information, check the IDNR website at <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/camping/camprsvp.htm>

**Mushroom Collecting:** No license is required for mushroom collecting in Illinois, but mushroom collectors always need landowner permission and, on public sites, must

adhere to approved collecting regulations and hours. Collection of mushrooms is allowed in many IDNR state parks, fish and wildlife, and other recreation areas, but it is prohibited in any area designated as a dedicated nature preserve. Areas under the jurisdiction of the IDNR that offer spring turkey hunting are not open to mushroom collecting until after 1 p.m. daily during the spring turkey season to ensure the safety of all site visitors. Mushroom hunters are urged to call ahead to the state site they intend to visit to learn of any site-specific regulations regarding mushroom collecting.

**Oil and Gas Board:** The Illinois Oil and Gas Advisory Board will meet on Wed., May 11 at 10:30 a.m. at the Illinois Oil and Gas Association, 824 Ill. Route 15, Mt. Vernon, IL 62864. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, contact the IDNR at 217-782-3718.

**Bike to Work:** May is National Bike Month, and May 16-20 is national Bike to Work Week. A special day is National Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 20. Go riding during May, or anytime, and enjoy the health and environmental benefits of bicycle riding and biking to work.

<http://bikeleague.org/content/bike-month-dates-events-0>

**Wear It (Your Life Jacket):** Spring, summer, or fall (or even on a mild day in winter), boat operators and passengers are reminded to wear a life jacket whenever they're on the water in Illinois. National Safe Boating Week is May 21-27. Life jackets save lives, and Illinois law requires that life jackets or life vests (personal floatation devices, PFDs) be available for each person aboard a boat or other watercraft. State law also requires that anyone under the age of 13 must wear a life jacket while aboard any watercraft under 26 feet in length at all times the boat is underway, unless they are below deck in an enclosed cabin or operating on private property. Illinois law also requires persons of any age to wear a PFD while operating a personal watercraft. For more information, check the National Safe Boating Council's "Wear It" campaign website at [www.safeboatingcampaign.com](http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com).

**Check Your Boat Registration:** The IDNR reminds boat owners in Illinois to check their three-year boat registration/decal and renew their registration if it expires on June 30, 2016. Renewing watercraft registration can be done online through the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov) or by phone by calling 1-866-867-3542. To renew registration, have available the watercraft's Illinois registration number, the first six characters of the watercraft's hull ID number, the first three letters of the registered owner's last name, and a credit card. For details on Illinois watercraft registration requirements and three-year boat registration fees, check the IDNR website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/boating](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/recreation/boating).

Non-motorized watercraft, including canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, or sail boards in

Illinois, are no longer required to be titled/registered in Illinois, unless the vessels have a motor or sail. Non-motorized watercraft owners are required to purchase an Illinois Water Usage Stamp for \$6.00 per calendar year (for each of their first three vessels, and \$3.00 each for any additional vessels).

An agent fee of \$0.50 is charged per vessel. The 2016 Illinois Water Usage Stamp is valid through December 31, 2016. Water Usage Stamps are available over-the-counter from IDNR license and permit vendors. Find a vendor through the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LPR/Pages/LicensePermitVendors.aspx>

**Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair:** Join the fun at the 25th annual Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair at Pere Marquette State Park near Grafton, IL on Sat., June 11 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The free event features fun for children and families. For details, call 618-786-3323.

**Free Fishing Days:** Mark your calendars for Illinois Free Fishing Days on June 17-20, 2016. For more information on fishing in Illinois: [www.ifishillinois.org](http://www.ifishillinois.org)