



Hunting News

Grafton Land Trust

Preserving Grafton's open spaces since 1958

April 2015



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Submit Your Pics!

Got a cool photo from a recent hunting trip in Grafton? Send it to hunting@graftonland.org and we'll publish it in the "Photo of the month" section of *Hunting News*.



We are a member supported organization that relies on you - hunters - as well as hikers, equestrians and other recreational users to manage our lands. Please [become a member](#) today!

Dear Hunter,

Turkey Time!

You know wild turkey season is approaching when your spouse gives you a dirty look as you feverishly work a box call during the final episode of Season 3 of *House of Cards*. Grafton turkeys are as excited about the rapid snow melt as hunters, and we will soon square off in the early morning light as green seeps back into the landscape.

Make sure you have your official safety stickers, which are available at no charge from MassWildlife. Stickers must be adhered to a firearm such that it is visible to the hunter when sighting down the barrel (typically placed on the tang). If a new or replacement sticker is needed send a self-addressed stamped envelope to any [MassWildlife District Office](#) or the [Field Headquarters](#) requesting a sticker. Several stickers are on one sheet, but you only need one on the gun. The others can be used when the first one falls off or you can give them to your hunting buddies. [Learn more](#) about the Massachusetts wild turkey season.

As always, safety should be your **PRIMARY CONCERN** during the wild turkey season. **Be sure of your target and what lies beyond it!** We wish you all a safe hunt and we encourage successful hunters to send in pictures of their birds. We would be happy to publish them in a future edition of *Hunting News*. Let the gobbling begin!

See you in the field.

Troy Gipps
Vice President & Hunting Program Coordinator
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A wary tom walks through a Grafton field in early April. The tom was part of a flock of nearly 30 birds. (Photo by Dean Cerrati)



Wild turkeys on the move in Grafton in early April. (Photo by Dean Cerrati)

The Mystery of the Frozen Buck

By Troy Gipps

While snowshoeing through deep snow on public land in Grafton on February 6th, I noticed a large area of coyote tracks alongside a stream. A small amount of deer hair and bits of hide and flesh were scattered on the snow, but there was not enough evidence to suggest an entire deer carcass had been scavenged at the site. Then the curvature of an antler caught my eye. I brushed away the snow and discovered that an entire deer was buried beneath me; only the left side of the buck's antlers and its left rear leg were visible. I returned to the site two days later, with a hammer and chisel in hand, and successfully excavated the buck's 7-point rack. Half of the buck was frozen in a thick block of ice and the other half was lying in water ... needless to say, it was a fragrant experience. I'll never know for sure what led to the buck's demise, but the sound of his antlers rattling will again be heard in the Grafton woods on future archery hunts. (Photos by Dean Cerrati)



American kestrel nest box monitoring program

Last November, Grafton Land Trust volunteers installed 10 nest boxes for the American kestrel on public and private land in Grafton. The kestrel is the smallest of all North American falcons (roughly the size of a mourning dove) and their numbers are dwindling not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the eastern United States. Our goal is to provide nesting sites on suitable habitat for these cavity nesting birds and we will work with MassWildlife biologists to band fledglings if we are lucky enough to get one or more nesting pairs. **WE NEED YOUR HELP.** First, we request that you keep your distance from the nest boxes (we don't want to scare away falcons that are considering the box as a nesting site), and second, if you see kestrel falcons near our nest boxes please report the sightings to kestrel@graftonland.org. If you want to learn more about this important project please visit our [Kestrel Project](#) web page.



Eastern Coyotes in Grafton, MA



A pack of Eastern coyotes in Grafton, MA in January. Additional wildlife videos can be found on our [Vimeo](#) site. (Video by Troy Gipps)

What's in season this month?

Wild Turkey ... Apr. 27 - May 23
Wild Turkey Youth Hunt ... Apr. 25 ([special rules](#))
Crow ... Jan. 1 - Apr. 10 (Fri/Sat/Mondays only)
Snapping Turtle ... Jan. 1 - Apr. 31

Open Season (year-round, except during shotgun season for deer; no daily or seasonal bag limit):
English sparrow, flying squirrel, red squirrel, chipmunk, porcupine, skunk, starling, weasel, and woodchuck.



The Grafton Land Trust is a private, non-profit, member-supported organization that preserves, maintains, and advocates for open space in Grafton, and promotes environmental education and stewardship.

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