

**Deering Conservation Commission
2022 Hatch Season-Wood Duck Box Report**

The Deering Conservation Commission (DCC) now maintains 41 Wood Duck nesting boxes throughout the town, primarily on its many conserved lands. Nesting boxes supplement available nest cavities in trees. Competition for these tree cavities from other animals reduce cavities available for the wood ducks: European starlings, owls, kestrels, raccoons, etc.

PROGRAM UPDATES:

Two boxes had been vandalized and were repaired. These were both at Central Rangeway. At Pleasant Pond, the pipe with a duck box mounted on it that was leaning way over, was straightened by Mike and I, using waders. An old box was replaced at Lily pond. A tree fell down at Trum-Hunter's with the box frozen in the ice. We may try to retrieve it by canoe. An old box was taken down there, also. There are 5 boxes placed there that are not ours, that we cleaned out and added predator guards to. No one else is cleaning them. There are 8 boxes at Trum-Hunter's that we just left for now. A tree also fell at Clifton's Camp and Johnson's Pond, and both boxes were relocated nearby.

This winter every box was checked, and fresh wood shavings placed due to help from most Conservation Commission members. 13 boxes were used of the 41 boxes which is a 31% rate of use. There was dumping in 2 boxes at Lily Pond. Out of the 18 ponds containing duck boxes, 10 ponds had boxes that were used: 55%.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Next year we have 41 boxes to check, plus the 5 at Trum-Hunter's that we will probably take over.

CONCLUSION:

The ice was very thick and safe this year, and no one went through the ice.

31% usage is less than last year, but still good.

There is a loose-leaf notebook at Town Hall with more information and also an album of pictures of each site.

Sincerely,

Dennis Sawyer