

## Connecticut State Wildlife Grant Success Stories

In the five years since its inception, the State Wildlife Grant Program has played an important role in the conservation of Connecticut's wildlife. The following are some projects funded through State Wildlife Grants:



*New England Cottontail,  
Photo Courtesy of  
Connecticut DEP*

### **Conservation: Protecting Wildlife for Future Generations** **The New England Cottontail**

The New England cottontail is Connecticut's only native rabbit and was once found statewide. Limited research suggests that this rabbit has declined throughout the Northeastern United States and is currently being petitioned for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. State Wildlife Grant funding has enabled Connecticut biologists to study the distribution and abundance of the New England cottontail. Through these efforts, the New England cottontail has been documented in towns where it was thought to have disappeared. The information collected by this study will help inform decision makers when deciding if it is necessary to list this species as endangered.



*Trapping Burbots, Photo  
Courtesy of Connecticut DEP*

### **Research: Gathering Information to Take Action** **The Burbot: A Glacial Codfish**

Knowledge is the key to making cost-effective decisions that will conserve wildlife and vital natural areas for future generations. State Wildlife Grants are helping us make the best decisions possible by funding research on the burbot, a unique fish found only in two areas of northwestern Connecticut. This mottled black and green fish is much smaller than its ocean-dwelling relatives, weighing only about five pounds. As the only freshwater member of the codfish family, little is known about the burbot's life history or habitat preferences. This research will help make informed management decisions for this state endangered species.



*Whip-poor-will, Photo  
Courtesy of USGS*

### **Management: Working Together to Improve Public and Private Land** **Regional Efforts Target Seldom Seen Migrant**

Many existing methods used to survey birds don't work well on birds with secretive habits. One such bird is the whip-poor-will. Lack of data on this species combined with concerns about a potential population decline prompted the Northeast Partners in Flight Working Group to initiate a standardized, regional survey aimed at locating this nocturnal bird. As results from these regional surveys are reviewed and state-specific data analyzed, the Northeast states participating in this project will work together to develop the most effective sampling technique possible for whip-poor-wills across many habitat types. Accurate data will ultimately aid conservation efforts for this unique bird.

**Congress has appropriated \$3.7 million in State Wildlife Grants to Connecticut since 2001. This has been matched with \$812 thousand state and partner dollars.**