

Region 6 Inaugural Youth Waterfowl Hunt with an ECO, Fall 2010



During September, Environmental Conservation Officers from Region 6 took nine youngsters hunting for the youth waterfowl hunting weekend. The event was hosted by the Watertown Sportsman's Club, sponsored by the Federated Sportsman's Clubs of Jefferson County and helped made possible from funding from New York Conservation Officers Association. Other donors also contributed, including Jerry's Sport Center by providing waders and ammunition and Thruway Fasteners provided monetary assistance. These donations made the hunt possible this year as well as for years to come.

The waterfowl hunt was a two-day event with the first being an instructional day, and the second being the hunt day. The instructional day included some time in the class room covering the rules and regulations pertaining to waterfowl hunting, the different types of calls, the use of decoys, and waterfowl hunting strategies and safety. There was also a waterfowl identification course instructed by Region 7 ECO Mark Colesante. The day continued on the shooting range, where some basic marksmanship skills were reviewed as well as some practice shooting at stationary targets. Once the participants were comfortable shooting stationary targets, they moved on to testing their skills on some clay birds. Each young hunter had a chance to shoot at the flying targets to help them prepare and become more comfortable for the upcoming hunt. The following Saturday everyone met at the Watertown Sportsman's Club at 5 am and headed out the areas to be hunted. Some were able to walk into a blind where they



hunted, others needed to paddle in with canoes. It was a slow hunting morning but everyone had an opportunity to see or shoot at birds. A total of 4 ducks were taken, all blue wing teals. When the hunt was over, everyone returned to the sportsman's club for some food and refreshments. There was also a lesson on cleaning the ducks. Everyone involved felt it was fun and a great learning experience which will continue to be offered for many years to come.

