

The heat is back on and on a snake hunt this morning.

The day is heating up fast today. We need some heat and sunshine to perk my garden back up. Not so great for a snake hunt this morning though. The NH Fish and Game Department (F&G) has an ongoing study of black racer snakes. I have reported several over the years near where I live especially in Bear Brook State Park nearby. Brendon Clifford from F&G is heading up the study and asked me if I could take him to where I have seen them in the last decade in hopes of catching one and placing a radio transmitter in it to track it as part of their study. We searched the places I have known them to be for close to three hours this morning to no avail. Black racers are a non-poisonous snake but can be six feet long. And boy can they slither fast. I have never actually captured one in my life those that I have chased a few in hopes of capturing it. I did pick up a shed skin once that was exactly six feet long. Anyone seeing a black racer in NH (<http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/Nongame/snakes.htm>) should report it to the Fish and Game folks at 271-2462.

My garden is doing very well this summer. Just enough rain to keep things moving along nicely though we could use a couple more downpours and lots of sunshine. My peas and potatoes are in bloom. I'm still hearing lots of birds early and late in the day. The toads never came this year and the tree frogs have probably given up spawning here as well. Simply put since the river has been drawn way down with the dam opened at Buck Street in Pembroke there no longer is enough water in the backwater, I call the meadow, for them to successfully spawn. No green frogs or bull frogs any more either. The avulsion in the Suncook River has completely changed the habitat down this way and the fact that folks believe the dam has contributed to the flooding has the Dam Bureau keeping the Buck Street dam wide open and so frog spawning habitat no longer exists here any more.

I am seeing numbers of deer about; even mid afternoon the last few days. Summer is really moving along. In my snake search this morning I couldn't help but bend down here and there to scoop handfuls of blueberries to eat. Theo house wren has been calling at my mothers, though I don't have one here this year. The rivers and brooks have already dropped to summer levels as well. Summer really is at hand now.