



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

ONE Voice

Outreach, News, and Events *July 2017*

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge/Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office

Welcome New Staff

During June and July, the LGLFWCO welcomed six seasonal staff to assist with Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects. Colin Mulloy joined the Native Species Program to help with Lake Trout and Lake Sturgeon restoration. Colleen Kolb, Conor VanDemark, Connor Hartigan, and Katelyn Reed joined the Aquatic Invasive Species Program to conduct early detection, rapid response, and prevention. Finally, Holly Trombetta returned to the Habitat Restoration Program for a second summer. Their motivation, enthusiasm, and skill sets helped kick-off the field season to a great start. (Contact: Sandra Keppner)



Teaching Campers About Environmental Science Careers

Iroquois NWR Biologist Paul Hess participated in the Genesee County Environmental Science Career Camp to talk to campers about how to become a wildlife biologist and what the job consists of. Seven campers attended the week-long camp at the Genesee County Park and Forest to learn about jobs in ten different fields of environmental science. The wildlife biologist presentation consisted of a short talk about the job and then quickly moved to the outdoors where the campers learned how to identify birds and then assisted in conducting three landbird point counts. The data from the counts were used to calculate species richness and

relative abundance and the campers helped determine which point count locations provided habitat for the greatest number of bird species. (Contact: Paul Hess)

New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week

Iroquois NWR and Lower Great Lakes FWCO participated in and hosted a number of Aquatic Invasive Species education and outreach events this past July - an Aquatic Invasive Species Workshop (Hamburg, NY – July 6); a panel discussion "Making Waves: Battle for the Great Lakes" (July 15); and Iroquois NWR hosted an invasive species education and field training program (July 12) in collaboration with the WNY Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (WNY PRISM) and Groundworks Buffalo for New York State's 4th Annual Invasive Species Awareness Week (ISAW). Iroquois NWR used ISAW as an opportunity to engage and empower organizations and citizens from neighboring counties in their knowledge and understanding of invasive organisms, with the intent of enabling them to take action in their respective communities. The refuge program incorporated a broad introduction to nuisance species identification and the burgeoning iMapInvasives database and software, and a field project to remove a local terrestrial invasive, Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). Thirty individuals from regional soil and water conservation districts, cooperative extensions, local nonprofits, and high schools were present. (Contact: Eli Polzer and Marcus Rosten)

Schoolyard Habitat Project Highlighted during Grand Island Garden Walk

A schoolyard habitat project started in 2016 - the Kaegebein Elementary School pollinator garden - was visited by 83 people during the Grand Island Garden Walk on Sunday, July 8th. Participants were able to use their iPads to scan 12 different QR code stations and learn many interesting facts about the pollinator garden. The garden is successfully attracting pollinators including monarch butterflies. Earlier in the year, a killdeer nested in the center of the garden and successfully hatched 4 chicks. (Contact: Betsy Trometer/Photo Credit: Janet Groffien)

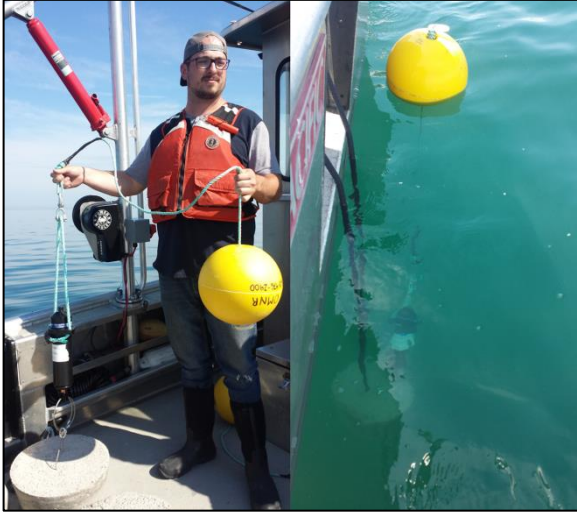


Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/iroquois/>
<https://www.facebook.com/IroquoisNationalWildlifeRefuge>

Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/lowergreatlakes/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LGLFWCO>

Celebrating Latino Conservation Week: Disfrutando y Conservando Nuestra Tierra Across Western New York

Latino Conservation Week was a huge success! There were a total of five events involving Iroquois NWR and Lower Great Lakes FWCO staff and interns from the Hispanic Access Program and Student Conservation Association, starting with a SNAP program with STEM students from the Boys and Girls Club of Rochester (7/15). The next event was at the Belle Center in Buffalo, which had a very large turn out and consisted of 6 different activity stations (7/17). The other three events were pelts and skulls lessons at Massachusetts Ave. Boys and Girls Club (7/17), Beecher Boys and Girls Club (7/19), and West Side Community Center (7/20). We were able to connect to new urban partnerships and reach an audience that does not typically make it to the refuge in person. The total estimate of kids/participants in these events was about 400. (Contact: Ariel Martinez)



Listening for Fish from the Bottom of Lake Ontario

On a clear day in July, fish biologists from the Lower Great Lakes FWCO ventured out to the middle of Lake Ontario and sank some very expensive scientific equipment. Not to worry, this was no accident. It is part of an effort to better understand fish movements in Lake Ontario. For years the LGLFWCO has been tracking lake sturgeon and lake trout movements in and around the lower Niagara River. Now, in coordination with Canadian research partners, the project is expanding in scope to track fish as they move throughout Lake Ontario proper. To accomplish this, hydrophones are strategically placed on the bottom of the lake. These receivers listen for sonic signals emitted from tagged Lake Sturgeon, Lake Trout, Cisco and other species marking their location.

So, how do you recover scientific equipment (and the precious data within) resting 500 feet below the surface? These receivers are tied to a small buoy and attached to an 80lb. concrete mooring block to hold them in place. To retrieve them, biologists drive a boat to the deployment site and send down a signal that causes the receiver and buoy to detach from the bottom and begin the long journey up to the surface. Then it's just a matter of downloading the data, clipping it to another concrete block, and sending it back into the abyss. No matter how often you do it, there is always an extra beat of hesitation before you let go and watch your gear sink from view.

It is only through the use of this cutting-edge technology can biologists continuously examine year-long movement patterns of fishes out in the deep, dark, lake environment. (Contact: Eric Bruestle)

Sharing Nature with Urban Outdoor Adventure Camp

For the seventh year in a row, staff from the Lower Great Lakes FWCO participated in the Outdoor Adventure Camp on July 20 held at the Dunkirk Conference Center in Dunkirk, NY. The one-day presentation to this week long camp included an in-stream demonstration of backpack electrofishing and aquatic insect collection techniques. Children from grades 3 through 9 enjoyed handling various species of fish that inhabit a small Lake Erie tributary. They also collected aquatic insects with kick nets, followed by observing and identifying what they collected. (Contact: Denise Clay)

Culvert Replacement on Spring Creek, Caledonia, NY

Construction was completed on July 24 for a new 18' wide bridge over Spring Creek. The bridge replaced a failing and undersized culvert that was a barrier to fish passage. The new bridge provides access for brook trout to high quality spawning habitat upstream of the road crossing. (Contact: Betsy Trometer/photo credit: Livingston County SWCD)



Learning about Wildlife at Orleans County 4-H Fair

With assistance from volunteers and interns, the Iroquois NWR participated in the annual Orleans County 4-H Wildlife Identification Contest on July 27. Participants were shown various pictures of local wildlife, and had to correctly name each one. Approximately 20 youth participated in the competition. (Contact: Denise Clay)