

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

ONE Voice

Outreach, News, and Events

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

April 2016



Helping Monarchs at WNY Plantasia Garden & Landscape Show (March 30 – April 3): Plantasia 2016 was a successful collaboration between Friends of Iroquois NWR, Iroquois NWR, Lower Great Lakes FWCO, and Eastern Monarch Butterfly Farm. From Wednesday evening's opening night through 5PM on Sunday, over 2,800 people visited the display, asking questions about the refuge and its bald eagles, telling stories about birds, bees, and fish, and talking about milkweed and monarchs. Everyone really appreciated the milkweed seed balls and seed sticks that Eastern Monarch brought along for planting milkweed at home. And, many people are planning to visit the refuge –some for the first time—in the near future. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped to make this year a great success! (Contact: Denise Clay)

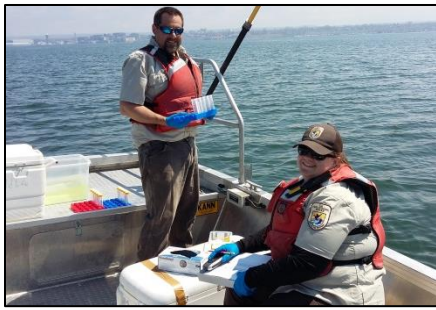
Connecting with Future Conservationists at Seneca Park Zoo's Nature Career Day (April 9): Lower Great Lakes FWCO participated in the Nature Career Day at the Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, NY. Other natural resource and environmental organizations present included the New York State Wildlife Association, NY Sea Grant, and The Nature Conservancy. Attendance to the zoo was limited due to snowy weather for an outdoor event but those that did attend were highly motivated to explore careers in the environmental field. (Contact: Heidi Himes)

State of the Lake (Erie) Update to Anglers (April 14): Deputy Complex Manager, Mike Goehle, provided a summary of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) activities across Lake Erie and the Great Lakes basin at the annual State of Lake Erie Meeting. Mike provided a summary of major GLRI highlights since 2010 including invasive species, contaminants, and habitat projects. As in past years, this meeting was sponsored by NY Sea Grant, New York State Assemblyman Sean Ryan, and the Southtowns Walleye Association. Approximately 110 people were in attendance. (Contact: Denise Clay)



Pollinator Presentation to Kaegebein Elementary School (April 21): Lower Great Lakes FWCO recently talked with 120 3rd and 5th graders at Kaegebein Elementary School on Grand Island about pollinators and attracting pollinators to gardens. The students will be planting a pollinator garden in the school courtyard in May. (Contact: Betsy Trometer)

Great Lakes Explorers Field Sampling Day (April 23): Lower Great Lakes FWCO hosted a field day on Cazenovia Creek in Cazenovia Park for 35 middle school children in the Great Lakes Explorers Club in Buffalo. The children observed a backpack electrofishing demonstration, learned to identify aquatic macroinvertebrates they collected with kick nets, used stream tables to observe and manipulate water flows and other stream processes, and worked on a matching game to help them understand "What Makes Migration Tough for Fish". The kids had a great time. (Contact: Betsy Trometer)



Early Detection and Monitoring for Asian Carp (April 22 and 23): Biologists from the USFWS's Northeast and Midwest regions collect water samples throughout the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basin as part of an early detection and monitoring program targeting Bighead carp and Silver carp (also known as Asian carp). Water samples are sent to the Whitney Genetics Lab in La Crosse, WI and tested for trace amounts of environmental DNA (eDNA). Biologists from the Lower Great Lakes FWCO sampled NY and PA waters in the Great Lakes basin. Results will be posted online at <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/fisheries/edna.html> (Contact: Robert Haltner)

Erie County Envirothon Competition Day (April 28): Seven teams from various high schools vied for the title of Erie County Envirothon champion on a lovely spring day. Though the competition was close, the Hamburg Homeschool team was able to pull out a win on the Aquatics section, beating the next closest team by a single point. It was a wonderful event where students had the chance to showcase their knowledge of wide variety of environmental studies, and had the opportunity to win scholarship prizes. (Contact: Stacy Furgal)

INWR Spring Into Nature (April 30): Iroquois NWR and the Friends of Iroquois NWR held the refuge's annual celebration of Spring into Nature. The theme this year was migration in recognition of the Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial to celebrate 100 years of migratory bird conservation and the second biennial World Fish Migration Day. There were over 25 displays, hands on activities for kids, a migration maze, live birds of prey, fly fishing demonstrations, archery and more for kids and adults to enjoy. Our estimated 1000 visitors were spoiled with a beautiful, sunny spring day. Lectures were also given throughout the day by the Lower Great Lakes FWCO, the Purple Martin Project, Eastern Monarch Butterfly Farm, and Sky Hunters highlighting migration in fish, butterflies, and birds. This year a butterfly garden containing various native plants, including milkweed, was planted by the public that attended the event. The new garden will allow butterflies, bees, birds and other pollinators to thrive.

