

Network News

*It takes a Network to
protect a watershed.*



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This photo, of a truck with a load of aquatic plants festooning the boat trailer, was taken at the Treman Marine Park boat launch at the mouth of Cayuga Inlet, where hydrilla was found in August 2011. Large signs require that boat operators remove aquatic vegetation from their boats prior to landing or launching. A new Tompkins County law imposes a fine for anyone caught transporting aquatic vegetation.

Photo supplied by author

A wonderful summer internship on Cayuga Lake Stopping the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species in the Finger Lakes Area

By Daniel Munsell

I'll start off by introducing myself. I grew up in a relatively small town outside of Philadelphia called Doylestown or D-Town as the young bucks like to call it. I went to Central Bucks High School West which made me a young buck back in the days of homecoming football games and \$1 hotdogs on Friday nights at the snack bar. I started to play the great game of Lacrosse when I was in fourth grade and continued to play all through high school. When it was time to start looking for colleges I knew I had to find one where I could continue to play the sport that I loved while at the same time receive a great education. I decided that Wells College was the place for me, located on beautiful Cayuga Lake.

As a first-year student I immediately started to pursue my interest within the environmental field, and haven't had a change of heart since the beginning. I'm currently majoring in Environmental Studies with a concentration in values and policies with a minor in Economics. I am now one of the few male seniors that have survived these past 3½ years and boy what a ride it has been. I've been the captain of the Wells College Men's Lacrosse team since my sophomore year and am very proud to say I am also the Environmental Teaching Assistant at Wells. Now that you know a little bit about me I would like to

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Our Annual Meeting at Myers Park, Lansing Network's Board Adds New Members, Welcomes Back Others

On August 15, the Network's 2012 Annual and August meetings were held at a lakeside picnic pavilion at beautiful Myers Park in Lansing.

We were gratified at the lively crowd of members who attended, bringing dishes to share for a fun cook-out, while taking part in the official business of electing and re-electing Board members for new or renewed terms.

Board Chair Deb Grantham gave a brief state of the Network talk; Sharon Anderson (TC Cooperative Extension and former Steward) spoke about the hydrilla eradication program, with input from member Liz Moran of EcoLogic once the talk, inevitably, turned to the future dredging of Cayuga Inlet. Steward Hilary Lambert said that in the year since she previously reported, many more town-level bans or moratoria against gas drilling in Tompkins County have been enacted, almost

completely protecting the 65% of total surface water flow that enters Cayuga Lake via the big creeks at the south end.

Deb Grantham summarized important work over the past year in developing the Network's direction as a voice for the watershed and its citizens. She said that our Mission Statement and Strategic Plan articulate our determination to identify and educate the public about key threats to the watershed, and to integrate and coordinate community actions. Accomplishments of the past year include: 1) an informed response to NYSDEC's dsGEIS on hydraulic fracturing, 2) a Position Statement on Hydraulic Fracturing informed by the most recent peer-reviewed science, 3) a letter (with Position Statement) to

Governor Cuomo urging rejection of hydraulic fracturing in New York State, 4) action of our Steward in rigorous evaluation of proposed waste transfer station in Newfield, and 5) integration of community responses to the Hydrilla invasion. Deb expressed appreciation to the Board and to our Steward.

Our Board members, new and returning, are as follows. We thank departing Board member **Jim Clark** and hope you will continue to advise and assist! Board photos, offices held and brief bios will be posted later this fall to our website, presently being rebuilt and updated by Ancient Wisdom Productions, thanks to Park Foundation support. 🐦

Meet the Board...

Chair: Deb Grantham, Assistant Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Dale Baker, Retired, NY Sea Grant

Jackie Bangs, President, McDonnell & Bangs Associates

Penney Mapes Cook, Aurora Ridge Gardens and Aurora Ridge Dairy

Michael Dineen, Cornell University and Back to Democracy

Patricia Haines, Director, Level Green Institute and Center for Environmental Sustainability

Scott Heinekamp, Professor, Wells College

Dan Hill, Cayuga Nation and Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force

Steve Hughes, Director of Finance, BorgWarner Morse TEC

John Mawdsley, Hydrology Consultant

Mark Witmer, Adjunct Associate Professor, Wells College

David Stilwell, US Fish & Wildlife Service (returning in October)

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network

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steward@cayugalake.org
Ashley Benning, Volunteer Staff
Brittany Toledo and Daniel Munsell,
Wells College student interns

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network thanks Westhill Graphics of Ithaca and Pioneer Printing of Lodi for their support and excellence.

We almost made it through a hydrilla-free summer season... **Locally we are hydrilla-free, but it was discovered in Erie Canal in North Tonawanda, NY**

Thanks to tireless efforts by all members of the Hydrilla Task Force of the Cayuga Lake Watershed, season-end reports are that no living green hydrilla plants have been found anywhere in Cayuga Inlet or on the lake – excepting one small sprig found at the mouth of Cayuga Inlet. Viable tubers are also less abundant than last year. The two-herbicide program, plus monitoring by scientists, professionals and citizens, has proved an apparent success for this season around Cayuga Lake. Information and reports are here: www.StopHydrilla.org

In early November, informational public meetings – with a big thank-you to our Hydrilla Hunters and other volunteers – will take place at the north and south ends of the lake (see Upcoming Events, page 8 for dates and locations). However, we cannot celebrate fully: a September research report indicates that hydrilla has been found at another location in upstate New York, with unhappy implications for Cayuga Lake and Finger Lake protection as well as for the Great Lakes. A news report on this finding follows:

A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist recently discovered hydrilla, a highly invasive aquatic plant, in the Erie Canal in North Tonawanda, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) announced on September 21. Experts at a symposium on hydrilla in Syracuse during early September confirmed the identification.

This latest discovery creates a very high threat of infestation in New York and beyond the state's borders through the Niagara River and the Erie Canal system by natural flow dispersal and to many more waters by recreational boating. Recreational boating is the highest risk vector for spreading this plant to other waters. DEC urges boaters to take steps to prevent the spread of this and other aquatic invasive species.

"DEC urges boaters, anglers and others enjoying New York's incredible and abundant water resources to help stop aquatic hitchhikers", said DEC Assistant Commissioner for Natural Resources Kathy Moser. "Inspect boats and gear for



any clinging plants, mud or tiny animals; remove them, and clean and dry all boats and gear. Use DEC's aquatic invasive species disposal stations, when available."

"Preventing the spread of hydrilla and other invasive plants and animals in the Great Lakes is a priority for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In response to the discovery of hydrilla in the Erie Canal, Service biologists are working with others to rapidly assess if it has spread in that area," said Jaime Geiger, Assistant Regional Director for the Service's Fisheries program in the northeast.

DEC is working closely with federal and state partners including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York State Canal Corporation, the Office of Parks and Recreation and the Western New York Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management to determine the extent of the infestation and develop recommendations for rapid response.

Prior to the discovery in North Tonawanda, hydrilla was found in New York State in the Cayuga Inlet at the south end of Cayuga Lake, and in small, isolated occurrences on Long

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Hydrilla research, summer 2012. Left to right: Jordan Starke, Briana Boaz, Mike Miroiu, and Mikhail Kern worked as 2012 summer interns for Bob Johnson (Racine Johnson Aquatic Ecologists). They are shown searching for viable hydrilla tubers in mud samples from Cayuga Inlet.



CanYou Canoe Cayuga 2012

A great success despite massive last minute changes!



The Network's new summer lake event, "CanYou Canoe Cayuga?" (CYCC), was scheduled for Saturday September 8. Seventy paddle-powered boats, including kayaks, canoes, paddleboards and dragon boats, were registered, with participants ready to launch from one of the four put-in points. These were the north-end Cayuga Lake State Park, southward to Dean's Cove, Sheldrake Point, and Taughannock Park's north side, with a big party to finish at Cass Park, next to the Treman Park Marina in Ithaca.

The caterer, Kendra's, was ready. A tent and chairs were rented. The volunteers were standing by. Guard boats were scheduled to patrol sections of the lake, along with the amateur radio operators, the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and trusty Dennis Montgomery, head of TioHero Tours. Food and water had been donated by Wegmans and Tops for the launch sites. T-shirts by PSP Unlimited had arrived and registration packets were about to be assembled. Permits and insurance were lined up.

And then the weather turned wacky. After months of languid, calm, hot, dry weather, September 8 was predicted to have a very bad afternoon storm, tearing through exactly when all the boats would be on the lake. The "new normal" – unpredictable and extreme weather events accompanying climate change – chose our event date to cause trouble!

Thanks to superhuman efforts by CLWN Board member John Mawdsley and co-organizer Sharon Mier (John's wife), the show went on the next day instead. John and Sharon spent all day Friday and much of Saturday contacting all participants, volunteers, officials and helpers. On Saturday, the storm was not as apocalyptic as predicted, but



any small boats on the lake during its passage would probably have foundered. We are so grateful to everyone for the flexibility and generosity shown by everyone involved, and regret that some registrants could not alter their plans to be there the following day. They have all been sent their T-shirts, “sights along the way” posters and other materials.

On Sunday, a shortened route – starting at Sheldrake Point, continuing at Taughannock State Park and on to Cass Park at the south end – saw forty-three boats start and successfully complete the event, with many adventures and tall tales generated along the way. A chart with full information about the boats, participants, and finish times is available at our website www.cayugalake.org. Each boat was cheered as it arrived at the Treman Marina take-out point. The ensuing party at Cass Park was satisfying, fun, and relaxing, and the food was delicious, including a luscious Lake Cake baked by Board member Patricia Haines.

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From the shores of Sheldrake Point and Taughannock Park, CYCC participants of all ages and paddle-powered boat persuasions made it safely south to a relaxing, well-fed party for all at Cass Park. On to 2013! And by the way, congrats to Cody White for his paddle-board epic journey from Watkins Glen north on Seneca Lake, through the Seneca Cayuga Canal, and south along Cayuga Lake to Aurora! Please look for these photos and many more at our Facebook page and at our soon-to-be brand new website later this fall.

CanYou Canoe Cayuga 2012 continued from page 5

Big thanks go to summer staff Ashley Benning for setting up our Facebook page and maintaining it, along with her superb posters and signs! Rounding out the wonderful organizing committee for CYCC 2012 were Board member Dale Baker and long-time expert on all things Ithaca, Alice Green. Here are comments from participants posted afterwards at the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network's Facebook page:

From John Mayer and Liz Butler: THANK YOU! Cayuga Lake Watershed Network.... Thank You for "Can You Canoe Cayuga." The combined Ithaca Dragon Boat Club and Cornell Dragon Boat Club LOVED the Event. As You can see in the Photos, Our Dragon Boat SMILED and GRINNED the Whole Way! Fantastic event CanYou Canoe Cayuga volunteers and organizers! Thank You!

From Paul Cookies Closs: Fantastic event!!!! I can not wait for next year! Food was OUT-STANDING! You guys did an amazing job! Love the CWN!

From Cynthia Brock: A big mahalo to the CanYou Canoe Cayuga organizers and volunteers for pulling it all together today after the uncertainty and chaos of yesterday's weather. It was a wonderful, fun, safe and welcoming environment for everyone, and the food was amazing! We love our shirts and I think the kids will be wearing them to school tomorrow to show off what they achieved! Thanks so much for making it happen! We look forward to doing it again next year!

From Julie Palmer Carmalt: A huge Mahalo (thank you) to John and Sharon and all the volunteers who helped make this event a huge success and tons of fun! LOVED the wind and waves (thank goodness it was a tail wind), your great energy and positive attitudes, the camaraderie of the paddlers, the wonderful support of the safety boaters, and the



phenomenal post-paddle meal!!! YUM (though I regret not grabbing a pieced of the lake cake before it was devoured). Can't wait til next year!

Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a big success, and to help us focus attention and love on Cayuga Lake, the wonderful waterbody at the center of our lives. Also, thank you to the Tompkins County Tourism Grants Program for their support! We are already looking ahead to 2013 and invite everyone's help and participation. 🦋

Please Join or Donate to the Network

Joining or donating is easy to do!

MAIL: Fill out the information below, select a donation level, and mail the form with your check to Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, P.O. Box 348, Aurora, NY 13026

PAYPAL: Join via your PayPal account or credit card online at www.cayugalake.org

- ☐ I am joining the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network with the enclosed contribution.
- ☐ I am renewing my membership with the enclosed contribution.
- ☐ Send a gift membership to the person listed below, and send me a gift card to give them.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ May we add you to our listserv? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please Select the Support Level You Prefer:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Watershed Benefactor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Farm/Small Business | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Lake Sponsor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Organization or Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student/Senior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Headwater Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Thank you for your support!!!

Your Contributions to the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network are tax deductible.



Stopping the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species... *continued from cover*

tell you about my incredible summer spent interning for a great organization in the field that I love.

I was able to land a summer 2012 internship with the Finger Lakes Institute, located in Geneva NY, helping with researching/preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout the Finger Lakes. My position was as one of the handful of Watercraft Stewards that were stationed at different boat launches across the Finger Lakes. My primary site was Allan H. Treman Marine Park located right in the Ithaca area, near the mouth of Cayuga Inlet, where hydrilla was first discovered in August 2011. Even though this site seemed like a zoo on the weekends from the volume of boaters, I couldn't have asked for a better location because I was right on the front lines battling the dreaded HYDRILLA!!!

As a Watercraft Steward my duties were to visually inspect each watercraft before it entered the water as well as when they leave the water. While I visually inspected each watercraft I constantly looked for any aquatic hitchhikers that might be attached to either the watercraft and/or the trailer, while at the same time educating the boaters about aquatic invasive species and their spread. If I did find any type of aquatic species I would remove it from the watercraft and dispose of it properly. After every watercraft was inspected I would record the data on a data sheet that included time, type of watercraft, state, last water body visited, if sample was collected, and a few others. If an organism was found that was deemed to be an "invasive", especially Hydrilla, I would take a sample and send it back to the Finger Lakes Institute headquarters for testing.

I guess now would be a good time to tell you about my daily interactions with some of the most interesting people



Water Steward Dan Munsell checked thousands of water craft and trailers this summer, working at Treman Marine Park.

I have ever met, while I was working as a watercraft steward. I first have to give a big thanks to all the boaters that I talked to over the summer, because they were all so kind and open to my inspections. 99% of the boaters that I asked to inspect their watercrafts allowed me – and I inspected thousands of watercrafts. Even though some days were unbearably hot, and it seemed like the boat launch area was a competition to see who could get their boat in the water the fastest, almost every single person took time out

to talk to me and allow me to do my job – and I can't thank you all enough. By the end of the summer I knew returning boaters by name and I had even been offered sailing and fishing trips but unfortunately had to decline suspecting they were not in my job entitlements...even though I LOVE TO FISH.

When I wasn't at my boat launch working on my incredible farmers tan wearing my red shirt that everyone came to know, I was at different events in the area spreading the word about invasive species and the problems associated with them. I was part of the education outreach at the Dragon Boat Festival as well as the Finger Lakes Land Trust's "Celebrate the Lake" event at the Ithaca Farmers Market, where I was able to interact with great people who were very interested in the prevention and eradication of invasive aquatic species.

Overall I had an amazing summer working for a great cause and a great organization. I hope to continue work within the Finger Lakes area the rest of this year, and my autumn Wells College internship with the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network is a great way to accomplish this. Our work this past summer can be found at our website: <http://flisteward.wordpress.com/>. 🐾

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

— NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB

Locally we are hydrilla-free... *continued from page 3*

Island and in Orange County.

Hydrilla is considered to be among the most invasive aquatic plants in North America, and has resulted in significant ecological, recreational and economic impacts in other regions of the country. Its biological traits enable it to out-compete native species and dominate aquatic ecosystems due to its ability to grow in a variety of environmental settings and to propagate and spread from fragments, turions (overwintering buds) and tubers (reproductive structures attached to plant rhizomes).

Information on preventing aquatic invasives spread: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48221.html> .

Information about the hydrilla response on Cayuga Lake: <http://www.stophydrilla.org> 🐾

Part of this article is based on a news release from NY's Department of Environmental Conservation, issued September 21, 2012.

UPCOMING EVENTS *in the Cayuga Lake Watershed*

HYDRILLA!

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 7:
Tompkins County Public Library,
Borg Warner Room,
101 E. Green St., Ithaca NY 14850.

6:30 pm: Thanking our volunteers!
A reception precedes the public meeting to thank Hydrilla Hunters and others who have been on alert for hydrilla all summer and who helped "spread the word, not the plant." Come for refreshments and a brief talk by John Abel, West Shore Homeowners Association. No charge. Stay for the public meeting at 7:00 pm.
7:00 pm: Hydrilla Public Information Meeting: Sharing information on the herbicide treatment, plant and water monitoring in 2012. No charge. Roxy Johnston and others will speak. Sponsored by the Hydrilla Task Force of the Cayuga Lake Watershed. www.StopHydrilla.org

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 8:
Seneca Falls Public Library,
Littlejohn Community Meeting
Room (47 Cayuga St.,
Seneca Falls NY 13148).

6:00 – 8 pm: Hydrilla Hunters Thank You & Public Information Meeting: Take part in a reception and thank-you event for all the folks who have been helping keep an eye out for hydrilla this past summer. We will also have speakers to update us: Roxy Johnston, City of Ithaca, will report on the hydrilla situation in Cayuga Lake during 2012. Bob Natale, City of Auburn, will speak about Asian clams and other invasives. Speakers may be added. No charge. Refreshments served. Co-sponsored by the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network and the Hydrilla Task Force of the Cayuga Lake Watershed. www.cayugalake.org

**2012 ITHACA
ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIR**
SATURDAY DECEMBER 1:
First Presbyterian Church and
First Baptist Church, De Witt
Park, Ithaca NY 14850.

11:00 am – 6 pm: Ithaca Alternative Gift Fair: A fun way to bypass the annual stress of holiday shopping and "stuff" accumulation while honoring friends and relatives with donations to causes that fit their values. Each organization that participates in the fair offers variously priced gifts that have a specific purpose. For each donation, the giver receives a holiday card with a description of the organization and gift, and the organization to which a donation is made gets 100% of that donation. Come for the good causes and stay for the excellent holiday baked goods, hot chocolate and big rooms packed with smiling people and a global holiday spirit. The IAGF is sponsored by the Center for Transformative Action. www.ithacaaltgiftfair.org

Please send details about interesting upcoming events in the Cayuga Lake watershed to steward@cayugalake.org.

The Mission... *The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network identifies key threats to Cayuga Lake and its watershed, and it advocates for solutions that support a healthy environment and vibrant communities.*



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