



Photo of Myers Point by Bill Hecht

HABs Weekly Newsletter

A product of the 2021 Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program

AUGUST 17, 2021

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HABs Update

by CLWN Staff Intern Alora Cisneroz

Just as we think we've begun to be able to understand HABs, they pull out another surprise on us. The recent heatwave has riddled many with anxiety, knowing that HABs must be following shortly behind. And yet it's been absolute radio silence. Not a single bloom in the past week!

Who knows if we will ever truly understand the mysteries of HABs, but for now I think we are all relieved that we are pleasantly HAB-free...for now.

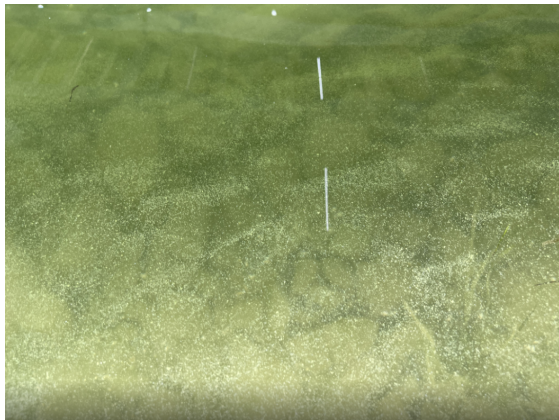
In other exciting news, CLWN's Executive Director, Hilary Lambert, and CSI's Nathaniel Launer (whose bio you can read on page 3!) were involved in [a recent Ithaca.com article about HABs on Cayuga Lake](#). Their interview made for a great article that would be the perfect introduction piece to share with anyone unfamiliar with HABs.

HABs Update

(as of Monday 8/14)

In a first for this 2021 HAB season, I am happy to report that **no new blooms have occurred in the past week!**

While this is happy news to hear, it doesn't exactly make thrilling material for this section of the newsletter. So instead of leaving an empty page, I've provided more data and photos on the the most recent three blooms on Cayuga Lake — which occurred back on the 6th and 7th of this month.



Photos taken of bloom 21-3483-B2, spotted on 8/7 along the shoreline of waterfront properties near Ellis Point.

Credit: [CSI's HABs Map](#)

Map indicating the locations of the recent blooms on Cayuga Lake.
Credit: [CSI's HABs Map](#)

HABs Technical Chart

The three most recent blooms

Bloom Code	Date Sample Received at CSI Lab	Location Description	Bloom Extent	Microscopy	Total Chlorophyll (ug/L)	Microcystin Toxin (ug/L)	Bloom Status
21-3408-B1	8/6/2021	Bloom located near the Wells College Boathouse and public swimming beach in the Village of Aurora.	Large Localized	Moderate colonies of <i>Dolichospermum</i> and sparse colonies of <i>Microcystis</i> .	309	14.67	Cyanobacteria Bloom (HAB): Cyanobacteria bloom with a microcystin toxin concentration that exceeds the limit for contact recreation (4.0 ug/L).
21-3483-B2	8/7/2021	Bloom located along the shoreline of waterfront properties near Ellis Point.	Large Localized	Sparse to moderate colonies of <i>Dolichospermum</i> .	1,488	3.31	Cyanobacteria Bloom (HAB): Cyanobacteria bloom a microcystin toxin concentration in between the drinking water limit (0.3 ug/L) and the limit for contact recreation (4.0 ug/L).
21-3460-B3	8/7/21	Bloom located along the shoreline of waterfront properties on Powers Rd. in King Ferry, NY.	Small Localized	Sparse colonies of <i>Dolichospermum</i> and sparse colonies of <i>Microcystis</i> .	82.7	3.26	Cyanobacteria Bloom (HAB): Cyanobacteria bloom a microcystin toxin concentration in between the drinking water limit (0.3 ug/L) and the limit for contact recreation (4.0 ug/L).

Meet the Community Science Institute Team!

The Community Science Institute (CSI), amongst doing many other things, plays a critical role in the HABs monitoring program. Let's get to know some of the wonderful people on the CSI team who help keep our community safe!

Meet Nathaniel Launer! **Director of Outreach** **and Cayuga Lake HABs** **Monitoring Program** **Coordinator**



Hi! I'm Nathaniel Launer. I joined the team here at CSI three years ago. Previously, I worked as a Wildlife Field Biologist in the Rangeley Lakes area of Maine where I spent my time out in the field on large reservoirs studying the population health of Common Loon and Bald Eagles. Prior to that, I graduated from the University of Vermont with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences and a focus in Conservation Biology. While I have loved my time here in Ithaca, I still often think of Greensboro, Vermont, - the town where I grew up - as home. However, the green mountains of Vermont, the high peaks of the Adirondacks, and the beautiful gorges of Ithaca have all shaped who I am, and I feel so grateful to have lived in such beautiful places.

My primary roles as Director of Outreach is to work with and coordinate over two hundred volunteers across the Finger Lakes region who partner with CSI as part of our Synoptic Stream Monitoring Program, Red Flag Monitoring Program, and Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring Program. As Director of Outreach, I also try to facilitate, guide, and develop each and every way that CSI engages with the community, communicates our data and science, provides environmental education, brings stakeholders together to address local water quality issues, and seeks to foster stewardship of our shared water resources. As the Cayuga Lake

HABs Monitoring Program coordinator, I help guide the development and implementation of the volunteer-led HABs Monitoring Program here on Cayuga Lake, provide HABs identification sampling and training for new and returning HABs Harrier volunteers, coordinate bloom reporting and sample collection, and work to rapidly report HABs occurrences for public view and to local officials. Experiencing nearly every step in the process of monitoring natural resources, communicating data that are collected, and working with the community to achieve solutions to protect these resources continues to be both gratifying and inspiring. None of it would be possible without the excellent and hard-working team here at CSI, and our dedicated and caring volunteer partners.

Some work-related goals that I hope to achieve by year's end include assisting CSI and our volunteers through another successful year monitoring the lake for harmful algal blooms and monitoring the water quality of streams across the region. During this time I am also exploring and working on ways that we can improve our HABs monitoring science and bloom reporting efficiency in the future. I also look forward to CSI's publication of our next Water Bulletin Newsletter in the fall, and communicating the results of this year's monitoring efforts at local forums, community gatherings, and online.

The part I enjoy the most about working here at CSI is working with our volunteer partners. All of our volunteers are dedicated people who are passionate about protecting water. Their care and dedication continues to inspire me each and every day. I also enjoy when our monitoring efforts lead to the discovery of interesting data or patterns, as well as the challenges and gratification of communicating our science to a wide audience.

Meet Diana Beckenhaupt!
Laboratory Analyst and Administrative Staff Member



Hi! I'm Diana Beckenhaupt. I've been working at CSI in various capacities since 2016, originally as a Public Science Intern, and now as a laboratory analyst and administrative staff member. I graduated with a Biochemistry degree from Binghamton University in 2019 (though I attended four different colleges along the way!). I grew up mostly in Owego, NY, just south of Ithaca, though I'm originally from the south shore of Long Island.

While my official title is "Laboratory Analyst", I have gotten to do a lot of different things during my time at CSI - including helping teach children chemistry at public outreach events, testing probably thousands of drinking and non-potable water samples for bacteria, writing or reviewing reports and invoices, answering a lot of emails and phone calls, and looking at HABs and other phytoplankton under the microscope. But these days, most of the time I'm in the lab doing wet chemistry and microbiological assays.

I'm just hoping for the rest of the summer to go smoothly! Things can get pretty busy with HABs, stream sampling, and a ton of other lab-related projects. We manage pretty well, however. I'd also like to continue improving and innovating CSI's Monthly Update email (similar to this newsletter!), which I work on with Nate Launer, our Director of Outreach.

I like contributing towards the meaningful goal of creating long-term water quality datasets. I find it satisfying and intellectually engaging to be part of the collaborative, small team approach we take at CSI, and it's also been a great way to develop my communication skills. But my favorite CSI related work is helping kids learn basic chemistry and sample water on the MV Teal during the summers (at the Floating Classroom 4H2O events) - it's just more fun to do chemistry out on a boat!

Meet Kathryn Graham!
Laboratory Analyst



Hi, my name is Kathryn, and I'm a laboratory analyst at CSI. I graduated from Binghamton University this past spring and majored in Environmental Science. I'm from Union Springs on the northern end of Cayuga Lake.

I joined CSI's team in early July, and have since then been learning the microbiological and chemical assays in the lab and helping out wherever is needed.

Since I joined CSI recently, my goal for the summer is to learn as much as I can, both in the lab and about CSI's mission. I enjoy how collaborative the environment is; everyone has been super helpful and communicative. I've also enjoyed learning more about the lake and water in the surrounding area that I've grown up in.

Meet Aleah Young!
Public Science Intern



Hi! My name is Aleah Young, and I am the Public Science intern at CSI this summer. I'm a lifelong Ithaca resident, and I got my Associates degree in Environmental Studies from Tompkins Cortland Community College. I will be transferring next fall to another college to finish out my Bachelor's Degree.

I provide support wherever I can in the operations CSI, though I primarily help with administrative tasks.

My goal for the summer was to gain some real life work experience while also contributing to something I felt was of value, and working at

CSI had allowed me to do that. I enjoy interning at CSI because I feel as though I am helping contribute to a project that has real value, and because I am working with people who are genuinely invested in and passionate about what they are doing.

Meet Noah Mark!
Technical Director



Hi! My name is Noah and I'm the Technical Director at CSI.

I grew up in Dansville, NY, and I've spent most of my life in the Finger Lakes. Education-wise, I received my B.A. in Environmental Studies from Ithaca College and a M.S. in Soil, Water and Environmental Science from the University of Arizona.

At CSI, I am the technical director and a laboratory analyst. My primary functions include: performing chemical and bacteriological analyses, ensuring our lab operates a quality

system that conforms with our state certification program, planning and directing lab activities, and working on some outreach and fundraising projects.

In the summer, the lab stays busy. We tend to focus on churning out results in a timely manner, maintaining the quality of our work, and fulfilling goals for our core programs (e.g. capturing stormflow events on Cayuga Lake tributaries).

What I enjoy most about working at CSI is the fantastic people: I can't say enough how grateful I am to the volunteers, staff, and local stakeholders involved in this work. Also, I value that CSI offers a variety of work. This suits me well given that I prefer wearing multiple hats.

FAQs

What is the HABs Monitoring Program?

The Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program is a collaborative effort led by a local consortium of three nonprofits: the Community Science Institute (CSI), the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN), and Discover Cayuga Lake (DCL), working in collaboration with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Through this monitoring program, we seek to protect public health, water quality, and the larger ecosystem from HABs.

How can I know if there is a HAB near me?

The fastest way is to [look at CSI's HABs Reporting Page](#), which provides an updated map with all the critical information. NY's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) also [maintains a HABs map](#). Additionally, this email newsletter will also communicate any reported HABs for the past week.

Where can I report a potential HAB?

[Use this form](#) or email habshotline@gmail.com. Please be sure to include all of the information required: personal information (your name, email, and phone number), bloom information (observation date and time and location of the bloom), and two pictures (one close up to show bloom composition and one from far away to show bloom extent).

Where can I easily view past HABs newsletters?

The CLWN website posts each weekly newsletter under the [2021 HABs Update page](#).

If I have more questions, who can I contact?

Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN)

CLWN Executive Director, Hilary Lambert: steward@cayugalake.org

607-319-0475

Community Science Institute (CSI)

info@communityscience.org

HABs Monitoring Program Coordinator, Nathaniel Launer:

nathaniel.launer@communityscience.org

607-257-6606

Discover Cayuga Lake (DCL)

(607) 327-5253