

# Network News

*It takes a Network to protect a watershed.*



## Welcome to our Website!

### A brief guide to [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org)

**Hilary Lambert & Jenn Tufano Grillo** *CLWN staff*

*In the early months of 2019, Network staff and Board members got to work updating our website. Our Ithaca-based web provider Ancient Wisdom Productions (AWP) helped us shift to a nimble, flexible platform that can be edited and updated as needed. This new webpage also looks great on cell phones and other mobile devices.*

**WE** are especially grateful to Mike Duttweiler, who helped create the beautiful and informative pages that you can peruse at [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org). Mike has since stepped down from our Board but remains our trusty web guy. Big thanks also to the Ithaca-based Triad Foundation, Inc., for their grant support that made this upgrade possible!

An overview of the services that our website provides: Access to critical watershed protection resources and programs, timely information on HABs and invasive species management and control, ability to quickly connect with watershed staff, Board, and elected leaders/municipal entities, and opportunities for volunteering and make financial donations.

The words emblazoned across our home page reflect our urgent purpose: “Protecting Our Water in an Era of Rapid Change.” Following is a brief guide to the deeply-sourced, accurate and useful resources available for you at our website. Each topic area below is a clickable section heading at the top of our homepage.

#### About—Priorities, People, Organization, History, Contact.

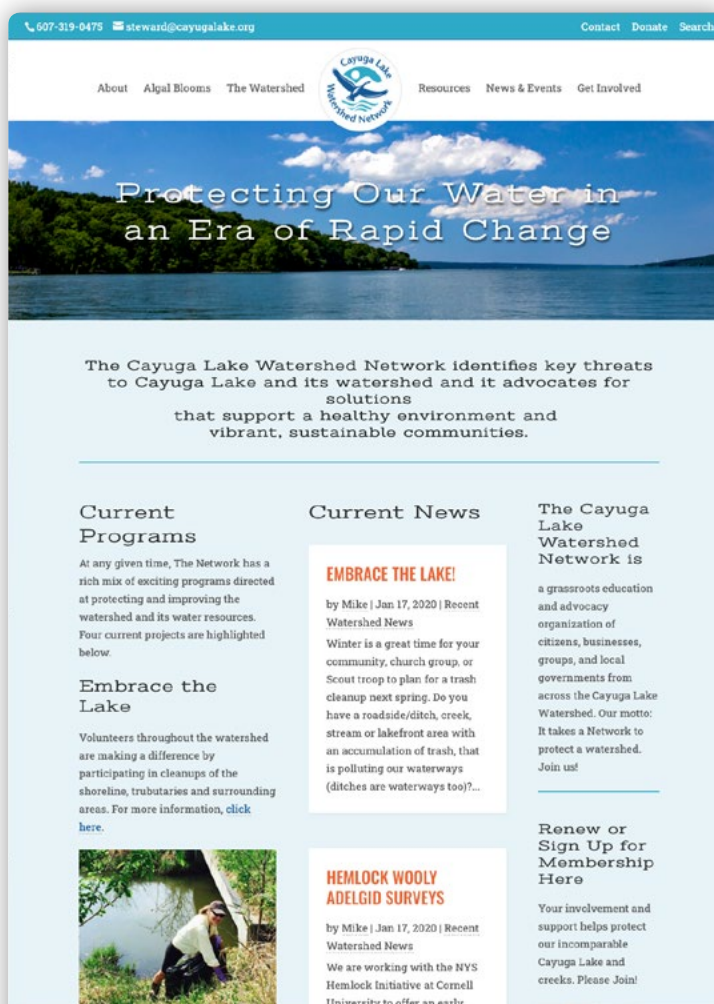
An introduction to the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network: Issues we focus on; our Board of Directors; how the Network functions today, and how we got our start; and a contact page for

you to get in touch. Note that our office phone number and contact email are at the top of each page; at the bottom, you can link to us on Facebook, Twitter (we’re not very good at Twitter!), and Instagram.

#### Algal Blooms—

Swimming & Water Contact Advisories, HABs reporting, 2019 (will soon be 2020!) HABs Monitoring Program, All About HABs, HABs in the News. Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) have become a major focus of our work since 2017. At these links you will find in-depth reporting about HABs on Cayuga Lake and the work we are doing with partners at local, county and state levels. Want to know about health threats that HABs pose to dogs? Find that here. A link to the Cayuga Lake HABs monitoring page maintained by the Community Science Institute?

*continued on page 2*



# Lake Friendly Living

**Nancy and Ed Currier** CLWN Board members  
**Lake Friendly Living Program of the Finger Lakes**



*Making small changes as we live in the watershed can make a big difference. The health and recreational enjoyment of the Finger Lakes depends on our actions and involvement.*

**AN** evolving program, Lake Friendly Living (LFL), is being developed by representatives from our region. Members of watershed associations from Canandaigua, Keuka, Seneca, and Cayuga lakes meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas and initiate programs that will encourage residents to take actions that will have an impact on the watersheds of our Finger Lakes in both the short and long term.

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Over the years, the Finger Lakes have experienced a wide array of water quality challenges. Present day concerns range from long term increases in flooding frequency and persistent pollution to the short term increase in pronounced seasonal phenomena such as Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs).

Extensive research has been done and continues today, much of it in collaboration with government, academic resources, and

lake associations, that help us understand why these challenges are happening and more importantly, what we can do to slow or stop it altogether.

CLWN has long been involved with raising awareness of lake friendly practices. To learn more about these important strategies, go to our website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org) click on Resources then Smart Steps for Clean Water and read more about these important practices in Lake Shore Living Resources. The Lake George Association booklet found there is a valuable resource for all lakes, including Cayuga.

Look for future updates on specific initiatives on the website and through member emails. 🐾

## Welcome to our Website! A brief guide to [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org) *continued from cover*

HABs problems around the country? Click on in. These pages are updated annually by our summer HABs Communications Interns.

**The Watershed**—Restoration & Protection Plan, More Watershed Maps, Wetlands Mapping Project, Finger Lakes & Great Lakes Basins. Look here for the tools we and others use to define and tackle issues across our big watershed. Read the 2017 *Cayuga Lake Watershed Restoration & Protection Plan*, view the wetlands maps used by Tompkins County agencies and municipalities, and get a hint of the universe of information available about our Finger Lakes region and Great Lakes basin. (We could work fulltime on updating that one!) All viewable here, with links to much more.

**Resources**—Lake Level Information, Issues in the Watershed, Water Quality Committee, Newsletter, Recreation, Smart Steps for Clean Water, CLWN for Kids, Conference Presentations, Videos Photos & Shows. We went overboard (is that a pun? sorry) in this section. Several of these topics were developed in response

to the many questions we receive about Cayuga Lake, even though many are outside what we do on a day-to-day basis. Hot tip: take a look at the wealth of lakewide information on the Recreation page! Teachers, lakeside landowners, water quality experts—there's valuable resources for you here.

**News & Events**—Calendar of Events, *Network News* (newsletter). Information on what's coming up, and an archived treasure trove of present and back issues of our quarterly newsletter, *Network News*, stretching back to the early '00s.

**Get Involved**—(Last, not least!) Become a member, Donate, Become a Hydrilla Hunter, Embrace the Lake (trash cleanups), Climate Coping Book Group & Information, Contact our Leaders. Cayuga Lake and the Network need your help to stay healthy and thrive. You can donate money, time, experience—here are several ways to help and get involved.

Please pay us a website visit, and send us a query via the contact email address if you need more information. 🐾

### An early March 2020 dive into the data below the surface of our website

- Most website visitors live in: United States followed by Canada
- Most often day/time visited: Thursday between 9am and 4pm
- Most viewed pages: Recreation/ Marinas followed by lake levels, HABs, and watershed maps
- Most visited month: July
- Number of visitors to our site in the past 28 days: 554
- Our site is most often used on: Desktop (82%), Mobile device (17.4%)



# The Network's New Spring and Summer Lakewear!

*The Network has new hats and shirt available for purchase! All proceeds benefit the Network, and a portion of our earnings will be used to purchase future gear. Hats and shirts feature "AIS" (Aquatic Invasive Species), and logos from CLWN and our partners at the Finger Lakes Institute and Finger Lakes PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) in Geneva.*

**WE** encourage anyone working with, volunteering to protect, or simply enjoying our lake and creeks, to purchase and proudly wear these items. They also make great gifts!

**Hat or Shirt: \$25/each**  
**Two of any combination**  
**(two hats, or two shirts, or hat/shirt): \$40 total**

Shirts are unisex, sized from adult Small to XXL.

Caps are adjustable, for adult head sizes. There's one color selection for caps and shirts—blue shirts, and cream caps with matching blue piping.

## How to order

Please contact Jenn Tufano Grillo at [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org) to place an order.

- Provide your name, mailing address, and number of items to be ordered, including shirt sizes.
- To calculate shipping costs, please provide your mailing address, so that we can calculate cost of shipping to your location, based on the number of items you order. We'll add that to the cost of the items, and provide you with a total amount for payment.

- Payments can be made via our website or by sending in a check—please arrange with Jenn.
- Items will be shipped upon cleared payment. ➤





# Waterhuggers alert!

## Embrace the Lake with creek, lakeshore & ditch cleanups

**Hilary Lambert** Steward

**Paul Closs** Network Board & Glorious Trashbirds

*Paul Closs has been paddling Cayuga Inlet for many years now—mainly via SUP (Stand-Up Paddleboard) and kayak. He and many others comprise the Ithaca area paddling community, and they like their creek and lakewater clean. Under the somewhat mysterious Facebook rubric of “the Glorious Trashbirds,” Paul and friends have been doing trash cleanups and hunting hydrilla for a number of years.*

### Documenting and mapping trash

In 2018, Paul documented the trash he found floating in Cayuga Inlet, then collected for proper disposal. These data were mapped by Michelle Henry for a trash-based art show in 2019, held at Ithaca’s Community School of Music and Arts. Also for this show, activist-artist Caroline Byrne counted the items, by company origin, in an intensely-trashed small area in the landscaping next to Ithaca’s WalMart, and worked with Henry to create a second trash map for the show, which was recently reprised at Elmira College’s George Waters Gallery. We include the Glorious Trashbirds map for this article (be sure to see it online in full color at our *Network News* web page).

A glance at the map reveals what Paul found and where: plastic bags, Styrofoam containers, straws, cans, tiny sample

liquor bottles, cigarette packs, lighters, drug needles, balloons, and plastic bottles. We need not remind you that this is downtown Ithaca’s premiere waterway and recreation area. The Glorious Trash Birds carry out numerous cleanups here each year. The adjoining Stewart Park area is scoured clean by volunteers each spring. And yet, the daily discarded trash load is overwhelming.

### What can be done?

Following a truly gross in-depth cleanup by volunteers last spring of the stormwater basin and sidewalk area across the parking lot from WalMart, it was decided that we—the Network and partners—need to document more, and to name the companies generating the trash. And we need to initiate business partnering for our cleanups.

The wrappings and containers and other filth that people discard in the parking lot before driving away are blown and caught in nearby wetland plantings. When dumped by the bagful, boxes and cans end up as the front porch for groundhog burrows. You have not lived—and despaired—until you have unwound densely-packed layers of stinky plastic bags, and dug down to disinter batteries and cans from around the roots of cattails; or removed a toxic cigarette butt from the grassy doorway of a mole. Don’t get us started on the trash problems of roadside ditches, which are waterways too. We can easily do better—but there’s a lot of people-work involved. Contact us if you want to help.

The photos provided here are from Paul’s winter 2020 cleanups. He is again documenting what he finds and collects.



**Trash collected by Paul Closs and Glorious Trash Birds in the early weeks of 2020.**







Trash dumping portraits of despair. Can Ithacans recognize this spot?

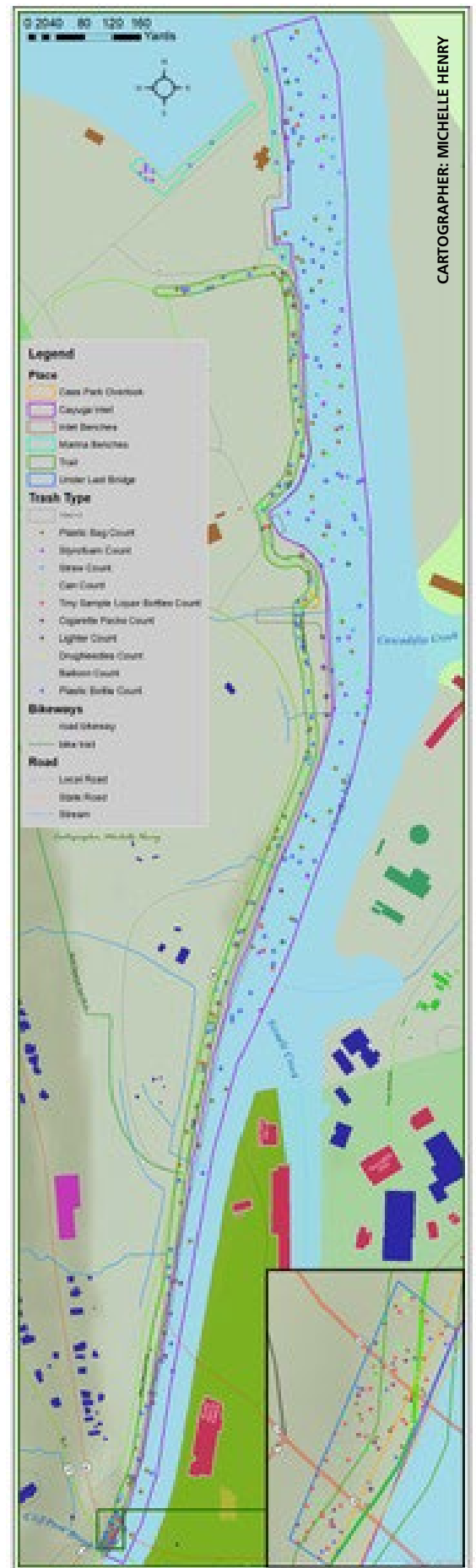


As of March 1, 2020, he had collected the following (recorded by brand name): Snack wrapper: 33, Plastic btl: 20, Cans: 16, Plastic bags: 16, Plastic cup: 12, Styro cup: 9, Straws: 9, Caps: 9, Plastic lids: 8, Sm liquor btl: 6, Dog poop bag: 6, Cigar wrap: 6, Styro container: 5, Plastic container: 4, Large plastic liquor btl: 3, Lighter: 2, Cig pack: 1, Drug needle: 1.

### Embrace the Lake cleanups—organize/join!

A number of municipal, community and school groups do these cleanups annually. Many are taking place around Cayuga Lake this spring! Thanks to our volunteer lake

lovers and waterhuggers! Would you like to organize or take part in a ditch, stream, or lakeside cleanup during March, April, or early May? We provide—free—beautiful posters, bags and gloves. We can advise on good locations; can (in some townships) get trash picked up afterwards. We can link you to already-organized events. Great for families, Scout groups, neighborhoods. Contact Hilary at [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) or Jenn at [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org) for details and materials. See page 8 for a statement about cleanups during the Coronavirus pandemic. ♡



## The Discarded

Glorious Trash Birds Cass Park Trash Stewardship  
April - September 2018

# New York Natives: Eastern Hemlock Threatened by Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation & CLWN

With its deep green, flat and stubby needles and its small cones, the eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) is a familiar sight in many parts of New York State. But don't be fooled by its sometimes-scraggly shape. The eastern hemlock tree plays an irreplaceable role in New York's forests. In warmer months, hemlock stands provide cool shade for wildlife seeking refuge from the heat. The shade created by hemlocks along streams also maintains the cooler temperatures necessary for many aquatic species, including our native brook trout.

In the eastern U.S., our hemlocks are susceptible to attack by hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), an invasive insect. HWA feeds off hemlocks and damages its host tree by disrupting the flow of nutrients to the tree's twigs and needles. HWA can be difficult to see because of its small size, so infestations are best identified by the white, woolly masses the insects create to protect themselves and their eggs. The woolly masses can be most easily seen from November through April and are found at the base of the needles



*Hemlocks on the left were treated in November 2018 by spraying on bark. Hemlocks on the right were left untreated.*

on infested hemlock trees. For HWA identification information and photos, visit DEC's web page: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7250.html>.

## The NYS Hemlock Initiative

The NYS Hemlock Initiative (HI) is located at Cornell University in Ithaca, at the heart of our gorges-rich region, where steep slopes are held together by hemlock tree roots. Since 2008, research leader Mark Whitmore and staff have been working to locate and mitigate affected hemlocks, and to advise Cayuga Lake watershed residents how to protect hemlock trees and woodlands. That's the local side of their larger goal, which is to protect hemlocks statewide.

Many lake and creekside landowners have taken the Hemlock Initiative's advice on chemical treatments for affected trees on steep slopes, along driveways, waterways, and the lake. The photograph shows an untreated tree next to a treated tree, on the Cayuga Lake shoreline. The treatments work.

If Cayuga Lake paddlers and boaters want to report HWA sightings (affected trees are most easily spotted in springtime), sign up at the HI website <https://blogs.cornell.edu/nyshemlockinitiative/>. There you can learn about HWA biocontrols research; click to report HWA sightings; help the HI collect field data; get blog posts on research and problem-solving; and sign up to receive the HI online newsletter. Also, we'd like to hear about your HWA control efforts for future newsletter and social media outreach—thank you! 🐾

## Become a Member of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network!

**PLEASE JOIN CLWN**, your lake's watershed protection organization. Your membership strengthens our ability to protect the lake at the center of our lives. **ENCOURAGE FRIENDS, FAMILY, GROUPS AND BUSINESSES TO JOIN.** You can use the form below to join or renew. Mail completed form with check to CLWN, PO Box 348, Aurora NY 13026. *Thank you.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

**We have membership levels to suit everyone's needs. Please check one of the levels below.**

- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> \$10 Student/Senior | <input type="radio"/> \$35 Family              | <input type="radio"/> \$50 Business/Farm     | <input type="radio"/> \$250 Lake Sponsor         |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25 Individual     | <input type="radio"/> \$50 Organization/Agency | <input type="radio"/> \$100 Headwaters Donor | <input type="radio"/> \$500 Watershed Benefactor |

**We are growing and expanding our effective programs.**

**Would you like to make an extra donation to support this work?**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Unrestricted – for general operations.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ To support water quality tests on Canoga, Burroughs, Yawger and Milliken Creeks.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ To expand our springtime Embrace the Lake creek, lakefront & ditches cleanups.

**TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ (payable to Cayuga Lake Watershed Network please)

Payment can also be made via Paypal/credit card at our website [www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org)

Your Contributions to the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network are Tax Deductible.



Would you like

☐ 1 or ☐ 2

full-color CLWN logo  
window stickies (4 x 6")

**If you are interested in learning about donating stocks to CLWN, please contact Jenn at [programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org).**



# Help us Monitor Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) on Cayuga Lake in 2020

**NATHANIEL LAUNER** Outreach & Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program Coordinator, Community Science Institute

*The Community Science Institute (CSI) and the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN) are looking for new volunteers to join the Cayuga Lake HABs Monitoring Program. In 2019 over 80 HABs Harrier volunteers monitored nearly 50% of the Cayuga Lake shoreline. Help us monitor more of the shoreline in 2020 as part of our effort to understand these harmful blooms and protect Cayuga Lake!*

**I**N 2019 CSI's certified water testing lab analyzed bloom samples collected by HABs Harrier volunteers and together we confirmed 67 blooms that occurred on Cayuga Lake. The results continue to provide interesting insights as to when HABs occur on Cayuga Lake, where they occur, what types of cyanobacteria form the blooms, and the concentration of microcystin toxin in the blooms.

Most of the blooms on Cayuga Lake occurred in early July (40 blooms) and then in late August, early September and early October (27 blooms) of 2019, an interestingly similar pattern to what we observed in 2018. Blooms were reported at many shoreline locations around the lake, however, we did notice a difference between blooms that occurred in the northern part of the lake and those in the southern part. In 2019, all 28 blooms that had high levels of microcystin toxin occurred along the northernmost 8 miles of shoreline. Results like these are helping to further our understanding of patterns of HABs occurrence on Cayuga Lake.

Most importantly, the program serves to alert the public quickly to cyanobacteria blooms, all of which have the potential to threaten human and animal health. Bloom reports are posted within hours on CSI's online Cayuga Lake HABs Reporting Page, which features an interactive map of bloom locations and a table of lab results. CLWN helps get this information out to the public with weekly HABs Updates. HABs Harriers also help spread awareness, acting as some of the first to notify neighbors,

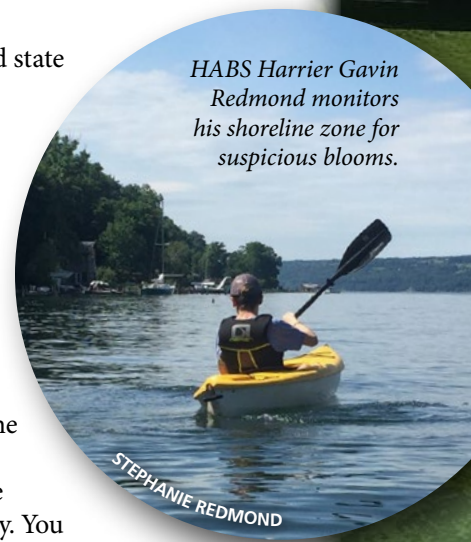
lifeguards, town officials, and state parks of blooms occurring nearby.

## What's involved in being a HABs Harrier volunteer?

- Attend a two-hour HABs identification and sampling workshop in June.
- Survey a stretch of shoreline once per week, July to October. Times are flexible in case you need to be away. You decide the shoreline you will monitor, with input from CSI. It can be your property, a neighbor's property, or public shoreline.
- Submit a brief online report of your observations following each survey.
- Report any suspicious bloom, collect a sample and transport it to the CSI lab in Ithaca for analysis.

You can help monitor blooms this summer. If you live by the lake, frequent a favorite shoreline, are an avid paddler, swimmer, or angler, or otherwise enjoy and care for Cayuga Lake and would like to help us monitor these HABs, please contact Nathaniel Launer at [nathaniel.launer@communityscience.org](mailto:nathaniel.launer@communityscience.org) or Hilary Lambert at [steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org) for more information about becoming a HABs Harrier. Learn more at [www.communityscience.org](http://www.communityscience.org). 🐾

HABs Harrier Gavin Redmond monitors his shoreline zone for suspicious blooms.



*Background photo of a Harmful Algal Bloom was taken July 13, 2019 by HABs Harrier/CLWN Board member John Abel. The view is southeast from the Taughannock Boulevard lakeshore toward Cass and Stewart parks in Ithaca. As a trained Harrier, John took a sample for lab analysis to determine toxicity. He sent his report to the HABs hotline and to CSI.*

## 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, sustainable communities.



PO Box 348  
Aurora, NY 13026

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**Cayuga Lake Watershed Network**  
170 Main St., PO Box 348  
Aurora, NY 13026  
[www.cayugalake.org](http://www.cayugalake.org)  
Office: 607-319-0475

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
By appointment.  
Please contact  
[steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org)  
to arrange.

**STAFF:**  
**Hilary Lambert**, Steward  
[steward@cayugalake.org](mailto:steward@cayugalake.org)  
**Jennifer Tufano Grillo**, Staff  
[programs@cayugalake.org](mailto:programs@cayugalake.org)

Newsletter Advisory  
Committee:

**Niamh O'Leary**  
**Nancy Currier**  
**Ed Currier**

Photographs by Hilary Lambert  
unless otherwise noted.

The Cayuga Lake Watershed Network thanks Leigh Dezelan of Dezelan Design and Pioneer Printing of Lodi for newsletter production excellence.



- Educate
- Advocate
- Protect

Current Resident

## Upcoming Events

**AT** the time of this writing (March 16, 2020), the trajectory of the Coronavirus Pandemic has yet to fully emerge. Right now, we must focus on practicing maximally safe behavior, to protect ourselves and others.

As a result, all of the community springtime events that we and you enjoy have been cancelled. Our spring community conference is scheduled for June 13 at the north end of Cayuga Lake. We do not yet know the form it will take. Our Annual Meeting & Picnic is set for August 11, but again, we cannot plan that far ahead with any certainty.

We have been communicating with other groups about doing small-group springtime trash cleanups. We cannot guarantee the safety of plastic and latex gloves, when dealing with potentially germ-laden trash. There are safety and liability concerns about small groups walking along our roads and going unattended to waterways.

However, we do urge you to get outdoors! Enjoy safe walks and hikes. Take a bag along in case you find trash and litter that you can safely collect and dispose of. As of mid-March, Governor Cuomo announced that all state parks are free admission for the time being. Take advantage! Embrace the lake—and Planet Earth.

Going forward, please check our website,

Facebook and Instagram pages, and listserv for updates. We will be sharing suggestions about “virtual cleanups,” led by the Glorious Trashbirds of Facebook fame.

It is difficult to live long-term with doubt and fear. Anxiety blooms when we see no clear path forward. On March 15, former U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy provided some guidance via an excellent statement on the evening National Public Broadcasting news:

*“At the end of the day, this is an all-in moment for America and for the world. And every now and then, these moments come about in the world’s history, where we have to come together to overcome a challenge that’s bigger than any one of us can take on alone. And this is one of those moments. This is a serious pandemic.”*

*“But we do know how to address it. And if we take those measures—if each of us step up, if we do the social distancing measures and physical distancing we know we need to do, if our government steps up to support hospital systems, health departments, get resources to the front lines—then I believe that we can blunt this epidemic.”*

Thank you. Stay in touch with us and with one another. ➤