Winter/Spring 2011

OUR P.A.P.E.R

Parks Are for People & Environmental Resources

A publication of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Volume 4, Issue 1

Introduction

We believe that this issue of *Our P.A.P.E.R.* really emphasizes the value of education and outreach to our park patrons all over New York State. Articles in this issue highlight how protecting and promoting both our recreational and ecological resources are primary goals of natural resource stewardship. Within this issue, you will see how OPRHP staff, volunteers and partners are involved in a variety of natural resource projects and programming, including invasive species management, wildlife protection, ecosystem-based management (EBM) and conferences & workshops. In addition, *Our P.A.P.E.R.* is debuting a new section that features photographs taken by our very own staff out in the field. We hope you enjoy it, as this section will appear in future issues of *Our P.A.P.E.R.* Visit *Our P.A.P.E.R.* on-line at: http://www.nysparks.com/environment/documents.aspx

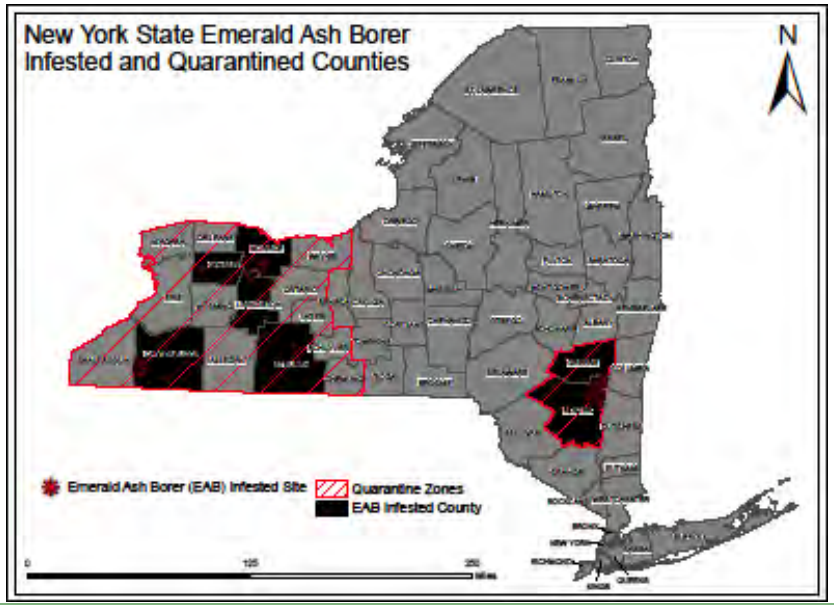
Inside this issue:

OPRHP promotes EAB Awareness Week

In May of 2011, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation announced Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Awareness Week would be held from May 22 – May 28, 2011 to encourage state residents and visitors to become better educated about the emerald ash borer and the destruction it causes to trees. In observance of EAB Awareness Week, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo issued a proclamation urging all New Yorkers to exercise environmental stewardship to protect trees from infestation that can be devastating to landscapes, habitats and forest product industries.

In response to the Governor's proclamation, OPRHP continues its firewood outreach campaign headstrong for 2011, and Parks staff are hard at work inspecting trees for possible EAB infestation and providing our patrons with the most current information about EAB's future impacts to NY.

OPRHP staff placed purple ribbons and yellow awareness cards on 745 ash trees in NYS Parks all over the state.



For more information about the history of EAB and its current spread across NYS State, please visit the NYS DEC website at: http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/74604.html

February ice fishing clinic a huge success at Glimmerglass State Park

Anglers basked in the glorious sunshine while braving temperatures that barely reached 20 degrees F. A single ice shanty provided temporary relief from the cold on the ice. However, it remained vacant most of the time!

First-time ice angler William Richards poses with a yellow perch he caught with his dad Mark.

On February 22, nearly 100 people came out to Otsego Lake for the 2nd annual ice fishing clinic hosted by Glimmerglass State Park and Friends of Glimmerglass, Inc. Organizers were amazed by the number of adults, kids and families from all across the region and neighboring states that came out to try their luck with this unique winter pastime. The fishing was a little slow with only about one dozen fish caught, including several large yellow perch and a chain pickerel. However, the slow fishing did not keep participants from having a good time. The Friends of Glimmerglass treated anglers to homemade chili, soup and hot cocoa served throughout the day. In addition, many participants walked away with brand new ice fishing gear awarded in a free raffle.

Plans are in the works for 2012 with eyes set on Otsego Lake's trophy lake trout!

- Tom Hughes, NRS Biologist
Central and Finger Lakes Regions

NRS Biologist Tom Hughes provided a filleting demonstration to dozens of happy, warm and well fed anglers inside the beach house. Several participants took their catches from the day with them for celebratory meals at home.

Fisheries staff from Region 4 and Albany NYS DEC provided tackle and instruction. From the left are Scott Wells, John Gray, Mike Disarno, Dennis Wischman, Tom Hughes (OPRHP) and Rob Poprawski.

Signage to Protect Natural Resources in the Thousand Islands Region

Interpretive signs were installed at Robert G. Wehle State Park to inform visitors that the park is infested with an invasive plant known as pale swallow-wort. Efforts are being made to remove swallow-wort from the park, but in the meantime, cleaning stations with interpretive signage have been installed to help patrons keep this noxious weed from spreading. The first draft of the sign was given to students at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), who conducted a survey of over 300 individuals at SUNY ESF, Syracuse University, and Green Lakes State Park. Based on the results of that survey, the sign above was developed and installed at the park. These signs have been installed on specially designed stations that come complete with an attached boot brush and hand-held brush for cleaning seeds from clothing and pets. These signs should help our patrons become our partners in our attempt to manage this foreign invader.

Interpretive panels with attached cleaning brushes help patrons keep invasive weed seeds from hitching a ride out of the park.

- Casey Holzworth
NRS Biologist, Thousand Islands and Saratoga-Capital District Regions

State Parks Well Represented at Northeast Natural History Conference

The Northeast Natural History Conference (NENHC) held in Albany in April, 2011 provided an opportunity for State Parks to highlight our resources and initiatives in a special session entitled "Science and Stewardship in NY State Parks." Moderated by SUNY Albany Professor Dr. George Robinson, who took a sabbatical to spend the fall and winter to work with the Environmental Management Bureau, State Parks employees discussed a wide range of topics including large-scale invasive species removal; the use of volunteers in achieving stewardship goals; the cost-effectiveness of using specialized field teams to tackle invasive species; and how State Parks is tackling the impacts of white-tailed deer overpopulation. Additional presentations on State Park resources and efforts were provided in other oral presentation and poster sessions.

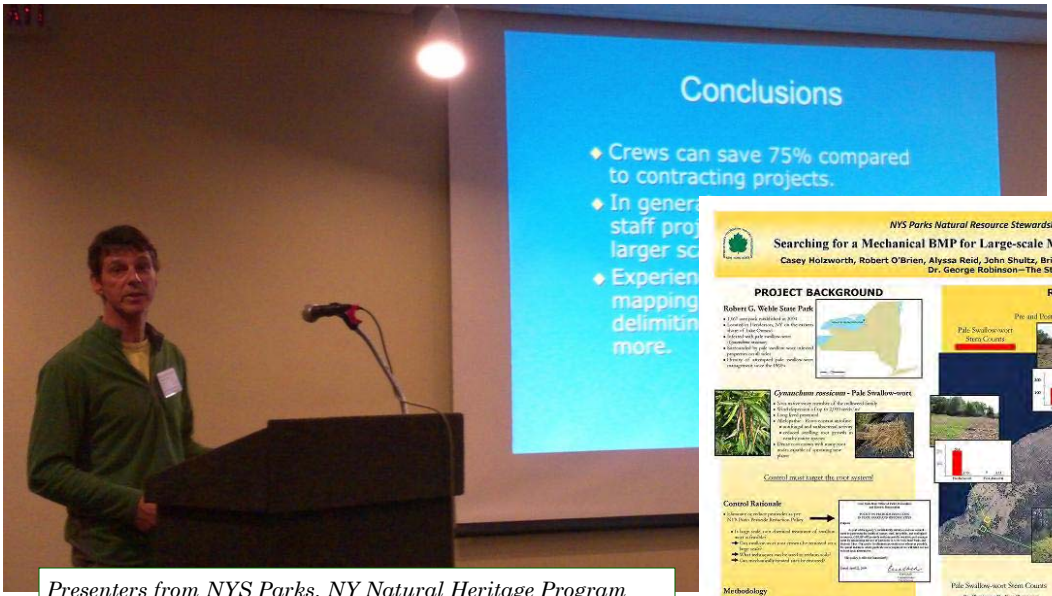
Presentations

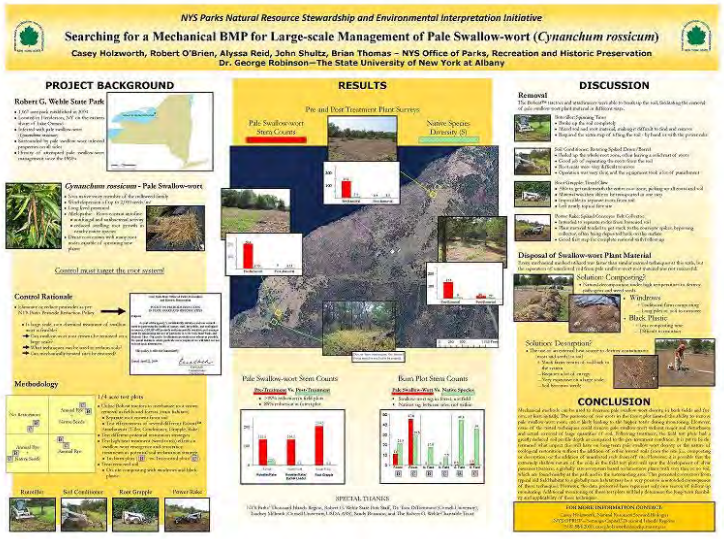
- Science and Stewardship in New York State Parks – George Robinson
- Robert G. Wehle State Park: What Do You Do When You Are Awash In A Sea Of Swallow-wort? – Casey Holzworth
- ESF F.O.R.C.E.S.: A Model for Engaging College Students in Natural Resource Stewardship Projects – Tom Hughes
- The Effectiveness of Field Teams in Creating Invasive Species Prevention Zones – Robert O'Brien
- Deer Management in State Parks: The Letchworth Model – Mark Rogers
- Rediscovery of Two Federally Listed Rare Plant Species in New York – Kimberly Smith
- Biodiversity Distribution in NY State Parks – George Robinson

Posters

- Integrating Ecosystem-based Management (EBM) in NYS Parks: Balancing Ecosystem Sustainability with Human Needs
- Mitigating Impacts of an Invasive on Recreation: Fanwort Control at Belmont Lake State Park
- Stream Monitoring to Identify Impacts of Oil and Gas Well Drilling in Allegany State Park Watersheds
- Restoration of Native Grasslands at Ganondagan State Historic Site
- New York Natural Heritage Program & State Parks: Working Together to Protect Biodiversity
- Searching for a Mechanical BMP for Large-scale Management of Pale Swallow-wort (Cynanchum rossicum)
- Students Gather Data for Tidal Flow Restoration Project at Sunken Meadow State Park

PDF versions of all NENHC presentations and posters can be found on the NYS Parks' website at: http://www.nysparks.com/environment/environmental-management.aspx





Presenters from NYS Parks, NY Natural Heritage Program and SUNY Albany all contributed to the special session, including OPRHP Invasive Species Control Field Director Bob O'Brien (pictured above). Several informational and scientific research posters (pictured right) highlighted the great diversity of projects within NYS Parks across the state.

Partnerships: Helping NYS Parks and Biodiversity

Partnerships are vitally important to the mission of NYS Parks and for conserving and protecting NYS Parks' natural resources. For example, engaging university and other higher learning institutions allows researchers to utilize State Parks as labs and classrooms and help us monitor and learn about our ecosystems. Partnering with school groups provides learning experiences and opportunities to maintain parks by doing service projects such as invasive species removals. NYS Parks' Environmental Management Bureau and Regional Biologists partner with over 150 different groups across the state! Below is only a partial list of our many agency, academic and other partners.

—Compiled by Kristen Cady-Sawyer & Lynn Bogan, Ecosystem-based Management Program Specialist and Ecologist

Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program (APIPP)
Audubon Chapters
Audubon NY
Barnard College
Buffalo State College
Capital-Mohawk PRISM
Catskills Regional Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP)
Cornell University (CU)
CU Cooperative Extension
CU, Crop and Soil Sciences
CU, Department of Entomology
CU, Department of Natural Resources
Erie County Department of Health
Finger Lakes Land Trust
Finger Lakes PRISM
Fordham University
Hartwick College, Robert R. Smith Environmental Field Station
Highlands Environmental Research Institute (HEnRI)
Hudson River National Estuary Research Reserve (HRNERR)
Hunter College
Hyuck Preserve
iMap Invasives
Jay Preserve
Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA)
Lower Hudson PRISM
Mohonk Preserve
Mountain Skills Climbing Guides
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Natural Heritage Trust
New York Botanical Garden
New York Flora Association
New York Invasive Species Research Institute
New York Natural Heritage Program (NY NHP)
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (DAM)
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)
NYS Department of Health (DOH)
NYS Department of State (DOS)
NYS Department of Transportation (DOT)
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority
NYS Forest Health Council
NYS Museum
NYS Office of General Services (OGS)
NYS DEC, Stream Biomonitoring Unit
Rockefeller Trust
Roundout Schools
Sam's Point Preserve
Shawangunk Ridge Biodiversity Partnership
Shawangunk Ridge Scenic Byway
Siena College
St. Lawrence – Eastern Lake Ontario PRISM (SLELO)
Student Conservation Association (SCA)
SUNY Albany
SUNY colleges
SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF)
SUNY New Paltz
SUNY Potsdam
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES
Town of Hamburg
Union College
University of Massachusetts
US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
US Forest Service (USFS)
US Geological Survey (USGS)
USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
USDA APHIS, Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ)
USDA, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
USFS, Forest Health Protection
USFS, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry
Wehle Trust
Western PRISM
White Oak Nursery

NEW FEATURE—PHOTOS FROM OUR NYS PARKS

A pitcher plant flower emerges at Mud Lake in Robert V. Riddell State Park.
- Photo by Tom Hughes

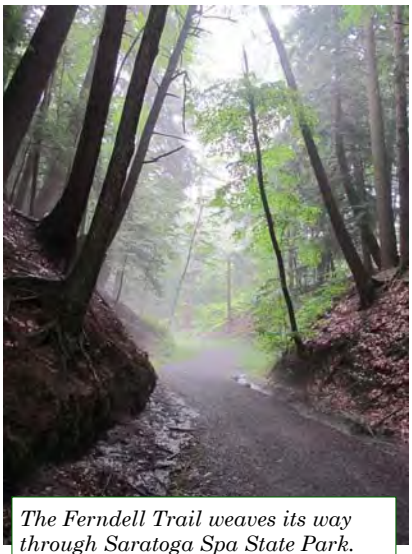
Every year, biologists and scientists from NYS Parks and NY Natural Heritage Program are witnessing firsthand the natural beauty of our NYS Parks.

These trained individuals recognize the value of recording everlasting images of plants, wildlife and other natural scenes while performing their work in the field.

It is our hope that park patrons and readers of this newsletter will enjoy these remarkable photos as captured through the camera lenses of our staff.

Across the state at Sterling Forest State Park, another pitcher plant blooms.
- Photo by Kim Smith

Waters cascade down through the falls at Letchworth State Park.
- Photo by Kim Smith



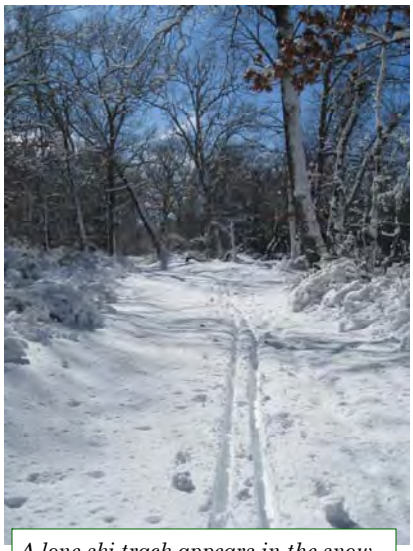
The Ferndell Trail weaves its way through Saratoga Spa State Park.
- Photo by Casey Holzworth

Gorge walls constantly flow at Letchworth State Park.
- Photo by Meg Janis

A misty fog blankets the forest at Sterling Forest State Park.

- Photo by Julie Lundgren

Waves crash along Lake Ontario's shoreline at Robert G. Wehle State Park.
- Photo by Casey Holzworth



A lone ski track appears in the snow at Connetquot River State Park.
- Photo by Ariana Newell

Sundews sparkle in the sun at Taconic State Park.
- Photo by Jesse Jaycox

Sheep laurel flowers at Cedar Pond Bog, Sterling Forest State Park.
- Photo by Kim Smith

BRAZILIAN ELODEA CONTROL AT LAKE STAHAHE

In 2008, Brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*), an invasive aquatic plant that is native to South America and not common in NY State, was found in Lake Stahahe, an 83-acre lake located in Harriman State Park in Orange County.

This plant is commonly used in home aquariums and private ponds and can easily take hold when introduced to lakes and ponds, forming dense stands that not only impact the ecology of the water body, but also the recreational uses that may occur there. Brazilian elodea is spread when the plant, or its fragments, are introduced to a new water body. Recreational boating is thought to be the primary way it has spread to many areas.

Brazilian elodea (Egeria densa) at Lake Stahahe, Harriman State Park

Given that this plant is highly invasive and not known to be in any nearby lakes at or near the park, steps are being taken to reduce the potential for its spread to new areas. Initially, private boat use on the lake was prohibited to prevent transferring of plant fragments to other locations. This was followed by determining the best control options to eradicate or reduce the plant in the lake. The lake has been known to support several rare invertebrate, fish, and amphibian species. Assessments were made to determine if the species were still present and what impacts to the rare species, if any, various control options would have. Additional vegetation surveys were also conducted to better understand the distribution of this invasive plant in the lake. Based upon the results of the rare species and vegetation monitoring activities, along with consultation with staff from the NYSDEC, stocking the lake with triploid grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) has been selected as the best control method. Triploid grass carp are sterile, non-native carp that feed upon aquatic plants and are used for aquatic vegetation management (with a NYSDEC permit).

Triploid grass carp (Ctenopharyngodon idella) Photo courtesy of NYSDEC - http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/52767.html

A containment device will be constructed at the outlet to the lake to prevent the sterile carp from escaping and possibly impacting non-target areas. This will be followed by stocking the lake with 10 carp per vegetated acre. Subsequent monitoring activities will follow to determine how effective the carp are at controlling elodea, and additional carp will be stocked if necessary. Hopefully, this early detection-rapid response effort will have positive results by preventing the spread of elodea to other lakes; restoring the biodiversity of the aquatic plant community in the lake; and reducing the recreational impacts on the lake.

- Jesse Jaycox, NRS Biologist
Palisades and Taconic Regions

Meet the Biologist —Ariana Newell, NRS Biologist, Long Island and NYC

Since both my parents are scientists, I guess becoming a biologist was inevitable for me. Growing up, my time was divided between our house near the Helderbergs in Albany County and my family's cabin in the Adirondacks. From the time I was born, my dad (a botanist/herpetologist) took me everywhere in his backpack while he did field work. I spent much of my childhood outdoors with him, mucking around swamps or patrolling roads on rainy nights looking for frogs and salamanders. I love all animals and after working at my mother's laboratory that treated hemophiliac dogs, I decided to become a Vet Tech. I graduated from SUNY Delhi with a degree in Veterinary Science Technology and began working at a vet office. It didn't take long for me to miss being outside so I decided to go back to school. I found my true passion at SUNY Cobleskill, where I received a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management.

My love of mountains and salamanders brought me to West Virginia, the Mountain State, to pursue my graduate degree. Little did I know that I was moving to the flattest part of the state when I moved to Marshall University! I studied the natural history and thermal ecology of Spotted and Wood Turtles for my thesis and received a M.S. in Biological Sciences. I moved back to NY where I worked as a research technician for Cornell University for three years. Then I surprised everyone and moved to Long Island to be with my husband, even though there are no real mountains here either!

I worked for the Foundation for Ecological Research in the Northeast, a not-for-profit organization, as their biologist studying forest and wetland health for two years until the funding stopped. That provided the perfect opportunity for me to become OPRHP's Natural Resource Steward-Biologist for Long Island and New York City in 2008. I have had the opportunity to work on a variety of projects, including endangered species protection, invasive species control, and habitat restoration. I am very proud to say that I work in some of the most beautiful parks around!

I live on a small farm on Long Island with my husband, 2 year-old daughter, and our menagerie of animals that include dogs, cats, turtles, a gecko, poultry, and sheep.

A publication of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Environmental Management Bureau

EMB Mission Statement

The mission of the Environmental Management Bureau is to assist OPRHP in the responsible stewardship of its valuable natural, historic and cultural resources, as well as in providing safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors.