



**New York Chapter
American Fisheries
Society – Newsletter**

Summer 2013

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2013-2014
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Editors' Note

Welcome to the Summer 2013 newsletter! Many thanks to all who submitted newsletter items in a timely manner! If you would care to submit something for the Winter newsletter, please email it to me at eczollwe@gw.dec.state.ny.us by December 1, 2013. I'm especially looking for fish stories and student happenings... Also please make sure that Erik (ejlatrem@gw.dec.state.ny.us) has your correct email address in order to ensure uninterrupted delivery of the newsletter!

Emily Zollweg-Horan, Newsletter Editor

President's Corner

It's that time of year again when the summer issue of our newsletter comes out which also means fall is just around the corner. I hope you've had a good summer thus far and have been able to enjoy some of the great aquatic resources our State has to offer. As we head into fall, I'd like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date on some of the Chapter activities.

Erik Latremore continues to develop our Chapter website at www.newyorkafs.org. I encourage you to make a habit of visiting the website, as Erik routinely updates it with new information regarding the Chapter as well as other interesting fish-related information. On a similar note, I encourage you to consider contributing to the NYCAFS Newsletter. Emily Zollweg-Horan is our Newsletter Editor and is always looking for information that our Newsletter readers may find of interest.

The NYCAFS EXCOMM has been busy the past few months finalizing arrangements for our 2014 Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held February 5-7, 2014 at the Ramada Inn in Geneva, NY. Web Pearsall is our Arrangements Chair and Brian Weidel is our Program Chair. Their efforts will certainly result in another outstanding meeting. Chris VanMaaren, the Workshop chair, is still considering organizing a workshop associated with the meeting but has not yet settled on a theme. The Chapter website will provide more information as it becomes available. Please stay tuned.

I attended the AFS Northeast Division meeting in Saratoga this past spring and initiated an effort to assess the feasibility of conducting the NED Business meeting in conjunction with one of the five Chapters in NED, on a rotating basis. We believe this will improve Chapter-Division interactions as well as save Chapters money. Discussions are in an early stage so stay tuned on that issue as well. One of the perks of Chapter President is providing you with positive and exciting news about the Chapter and activities throughout the State. But at this time, I unfortunately have some very sad news to share. Earlier this summer, we lost a dear friend and colleague and his co-worker to a tragic accident. On July 8, 2013 Rob Klumb and Maegan Spindler were struck by a car as they stood in the parking lot of a hotel during one of their Missouri River Pallid Sturgeon sampling events. Rob was a graduate student at the Cornell Biological Field Station, earning his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 2003. He joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a Fisheries Research Biologist in 2002 and was promoted to Project Leader of the Great Plains Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office in 2009. Maegan graduated in 2006 from Cazenovia High School and completed a BS degree in wildlife science from SUNY-ESF in 2010 and went on to receive a Fisheries diploma in 2011 from Vancouver Island University. After graduation, she joined the US Fish and Wildlife Service in South Dakota where she worked with Rob. Both had many friends in NYS and abroad, and will be missed by us all.

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On that note, I appeal to all of you to renew your dedication to safety, whether at work or at home. While some tragedies cannot be avoided, many can be by simply increasing our awareness of our surroundings and the potential hazards that exist. Please make the effort to be safe and help minimize injury or worse, like the senseless loss of life made painfully obvious to us all by Rob and Maegan's passing.

Tony VanDeValk, President

Chapter News

Annual Meeting

Robert Klumb 1967-2013

Many of you have heard that our own Robert Klumb, age 46, died on July 9, killed by a drunk driver in the hotel parking lot after finishing a day of field sampling in South Dakota. Rob's technician, Maegen Spindler, age 25 from Cazenovia and graduate from SUNY-ESF was also killed.

Rob got his B.Sc. at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, his M.Sc. in Fisheries at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point (1997) and his Ph.D. at Cornell University in 2002. At Cornell he worked with Ed Mills and me on alewife in Lake Ontario. His findings of the overlap of alewife adults and larvae and importance of the whole nearshore zone for alewife reproduction in Lake Ontario are important for our understanding of alewife dynamics. I just presented this data again at a workshop on climate change and fisheries management in Ohio. The distribution patterns and spatial overlap will likely change with climate changes, leading to new recruitment dynamics in the lake. Rob was at the forefront of that analysis. He also worked on alewife energetics and larval behavior, and on zooplankton refuges in low oxygen conditions. He even expanded to modeling Pacific herring's role in the North Pacific ecosystem with Bernie Mergrey and Kenny Rose at a Japanese workshop.

In South Dakota, Rob continued pursuing his interests in fisheries as Fisheries Biologist and the project leader of the South Dakota USFWS laboratory in Pierre, South Dakota, and in particular working on the endangered pallid sturgeon. He was also affiliated with South Dakota State University.

This was a sad day for all of us at Cornell DNR and the Field Station. We got many words of remembrance from his colleagues and fellow graduate students. Rob was a great person, positive and energetic, and inspiration to new students, old advisors and colleagues alike. For example, Lori Davias, one of the interns at CBFS that Rob advised wrote "I was only 19 during my summer at the field station, and I don't think I realized then just how important that summer would be for me. Rob was very influential. He imparted enthusiasm about his research and aquatic sciences, taught me how to set and pick a net at midnight, and had the patience to teach me statistical models in SAS. He was a great mentor then, and in subsequent years continued to encourage me in my graduate education and career". From Brooke Zanetell, a fellow graduate student, I got this message "Rob was just always a very genuine, earnest person who truly loved nature and the great outdoors. The last time I saw him, we were drinking a beer next to the Missouri River at an AFS conference and he was just glowing in the sunset with excitement about the river, fish, and his work. My favorite memory, though, was when he and other DNR grad students took Tania Schusler and I smelt fishing at night on a tributary to Cayuga Lake. Seems like it was always a good time when he was around. I really appreciated how open and nonjudgemental he was".

Many of his friends made it out to the memorial service in South Dakota, including Kristen Holeck, Randy Jackson, Ed and Lois Mills, Nate Smith, Jeremy Coleman, Ed Roseman, to name some of the people with New York connections. While reminiscing about Rob, Randy, Ed Roseman and I

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concluded that Rob did live life to the fullest, and that he would probably live it the same way if he could do it again. We miss him.

To recognize his professional contributions, his colleagues and family have established The Robert A. Klumb Memorial Award, presented annually by the Dakota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, and the Robert A. Klumb HAMMS Award [Habitat, Aquatics, and Management of the Missouri River System] presented annually to an outstanding graduate student at South Dakota State University. Donations can be made through the Dakota AFS – Klumb Fund. USGS South Dakota Coop Unit, NPBL 21408, South Dakota State University, Brookings SD 57007.

Lars Rudstam

Chapter Awards

Please send a brief synopsis of why your candidate deserves the award you are nominating them for to rabbett@usgs.gov. The final date for accepting nominations is January 4th, 2014.

New York Chapter Awards

The New York Chapter has three award classifications for recognizing our fisheries professionals:

Honorary Member Award

The Honorary Member Award is for significant involvement and accomplishments by an individual to the Chapter or official position (i.e. Guest Speakers). Nominations should include a brief biography and discussion of the significant involvement and contributions towards conservation of fisheries/aquatic resource within the Chapter. The only criterion for the award is that the nominee must be a member in good standing.

Professional Achievement Award

The Professional of the Year Award is awarded to an individual employed in a field related to fisheries and aquatic resources. Nominations for individuals should include a brief biography along with information pertaining to service, impact on the resource and other professional, and significant accomplishments. Eligible accomplishments by the nominee can be in one of the following categories: Leadership and Development, Education, Aquaculture, Management, Research and Technical Support.

- Only members in good standing can make nominations
- The recipient must be a member in good standing
- The award is based on fisheries related work in New York

Conservationist of the Year Award

The Conservationist of the Year Award is for significant involvement and accomplishments by an individual or group not employed in the fisheries or aquatic resources field (i.e. Conservation or Angler Groups). Nominations should include a brief biography and discussion of the significant involvement and contributions towards conservation of fisheries/aquatic resources. The only criterion for the award is that the award is based on fisheries/aquatic resource related work accomplished in New York.

Dave Bryson Memorial Award

The New York Chapter of the American Fisheries Society established the Dave Bryson Memorial Fisheries Fund in memory of Dave Bryson, ex-chapter President and long-time member. Eligible recipients include any college-bound high school students, college student or young fisheries professional in a fisheries-related program of study or a recent college graduate that has received a

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degree from a fisheries-related program of study within the past two years. The award is intended to assist the recipient in furthering their education or fisheries-related career aspirations and may be used for travel expenses, equipment purchase, or educational costs (i.e. books).

Website

<http://newyorkafs.org//index.html> The eCommerce site has been updated and if anyone has issues, concerns, or comments please feel free to have them contact me at ejlatrem@gw.dec.state.ny.us with your questions or suggestions.

Erik Latremore, NYSAFS Webmaster

The New York Chapter of the American Fisheries Society would like to formally invite you to join our Facebook group to stay informed and communicate with other members. You will be able to view job announcements, current events, or even catch up with good 'ol friends. If you do not have a Facebook account, type www.facebook.com into your web browser and fill out the information under "Sign Up." We have a link from our new website as well under Social Network. Join us soon to stay in the loop and help us help you help our fisheries resources ;-). If you have suggestions and ideas on how to manage or what to post on our Facebook site, we would like to hear them.

For our members not interested in Facebook, we also have a LinkedIn group which can be found by searching "NY Chapter of the American Fisheries Society." This forum is available for discussion of chapter and professional related items. Our chapter website is still the "go to" place for job announcements, meeting announcements, newsletters etc.

Student News

Willie Fetzer complete his PhD at Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources in August 2013 under the supervision of Lars Rudstam and Randy Jackson. He is now a postdoctoral researcher with Brian Roth at Michigan State University. Willie spent his graduate time mainly at the Cornell Biological Field Station. His thesis abstract follows. Feel free to contact Willie (can still be reached through wwf3@cornell.edu), Lars or Randy if you are interested in more information. Publications will soon follow.

DISENTANGLING THE EFFECTS OF MULTIPLE ECOSYSTEM CHANGES ON FISH POPULATION AND COMMUNITY DYNAMICS

North temperate lakes are undergoing diverse physical, chemical, and biological changes, including warming water temperatures, shifts in lake trophic states, and introductions of non-native species. These ecosystem perturbations rarely occur in isolation, making it difficult to evaluate the impacts of concurrent perturbations on population and community dynamics. Here, I use Oneida Lake, New York, USA, to study interactions among multiple ecological changes and their combined effects on age-0 and juvenile yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*). These ecological changes included diversification of the predator and prey communities, shifts in lake trophic state from eutrophic to mesotrophic, and an expansion of littoral habitats. Multiple long-term limnological and fisheries datasets were integrated with short-term diet studies of age-0 yellow perch and their predators from nearshore and offshore habitats to develop a multi-habitat understanding of lake-wide responses to ecosystem perturbations. Walleye (*Sander vitreus*) were still the most important predator on age-0 and juvenile yellow perch, though the importance of alternative predators, such as white perch (*Morone*

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americana), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), and largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), was also high and has likely increased. Consumption of age-0 yellow perch was dominated by walleye and white perch in offshore habitats during early summer, but transitioned to walleye, smallmouth bass, and largemouth bass in nearshore habitats during the fall and second year of life. As ecological conditions within the lake changed, age-0 yellow perch population dynamics became increasingly driven by littoral habitats and the population-level reliance on benthic energy pathways increased from 10-20% in the 1960s to 30-70% in the 2000s. These results illustrate the importance of both nearshore and offshore habitats to age-0 and juvenile yellow perch population dynamics and highlight the complexity of population- and community-level responses to ecosystem perturbations.

New York Chapter of the American Fisheries Society 2014 Student Travel Award

The New York Chapter of the American Fisheries Society is pleased to announce that five travel awards are available to support student presenter's travel to the Chapter's annual meeting February 5-7, 2015. The meeting will be held at the Geneva Ramada in Geneva, NY. Awards will be in the amount of \$150 per recipient and meeting registration will be waived for award winners. All undergraduate and graduate students presenting either an oral presentations or posters are eligible to apply. Award winners are expected to attend the business meeting to accept their awards on February 6th at 5:00pm.

Our goal is to support high-quality presentations and encourage student involvement in the NY fisheries and aquatic community. We encourage students to apply even if their research is in its initial stages. A selection committee will base award decisions on *abstract clarity* and *application answers*.

Travel award applications are due by Friday **January 10th, 2014**.

Applications are submitted to Brian Weidel, NYAFS Student Subunit Committee Chair at: bweidel@gmail.com

Application

- Please fill out **ALL** the information requested below.
- Save this document and include your last name in the file name.
- Attach this document to an email and send to bweidel@gmail.com, by January 10, 2014.

Background Information

Name: _____ Email address: _____
Mailing Address: _____ Phone: _____
College/University: _____ Name & email advisor or mentor: _____

Application Questions

Describe your interest or involvement with fisheries & aquatic research, AFS groups, or student fisheries organizations (200 word limit).

Describe how presenting at this meeting may help you to attain your career goals (200 word limit).

Submitted abstract:

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Northeast Division

Announcements

The latest edition of the NE Division Fish Rapper can be found at <http://www.fisheriessociety.org/ned/>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center will be offering Fish Identification November 4 - 8, 2013.

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to develop participant fish identification skills and knowledge of regional freshwater fish species. Participants will learn an overall system for identifying fish. Characteristics of major taxonomic groups within each family will provide the basis to approach species-level identification. Although emphasis will be placed on the families Cyprinidae, Percidae, Centrarchidae, Catostomidae, and Ictaluridae, specimens from 25 North American freshwater fish families will be available for study. This course is "hands on" and lab-intensive. Field exercises will provide fresh specimens for identification.

Tuition

Tuition for FWS, NPS, and BLM is prepaid. Tuition is \$1,195.00 for participants from other agencies and organizations.

To Register

DOI employees: Log In to DOI Learn, enter the course title in the search box, click scheduled classes, click submit request. Non-DOI employees: Contact Marilyn Williams for a paper application. Marilyn Williams, 304-876-7940 (marilyn_williams@fws.gov)

Course Contact

Matthew Patterson, 304-876-7473
matthew_patterson@fws.gov

AFS News

We are gearing up and excited to welcome everyone to Little Rock in a few weeks for the AFS meeting. As we get closer to the meeting we will be posting updates and information on our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/AFS2013LittleRock>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/AFS2013LR>) pages.

Please feel free to join these pages and contribute your comments and questions.

Check out the latest AFS books at www.afsbooks.org

Join AFS or renew for 2013 at www.fisheries.org/afs/membership.html

AFS Information on the Web <http://fisheries.org>

Upcoming Events



WHAT WORKS? A Workshop on Wild Atlantic Salmon Recovery Programs

September 18-19, 2013

Chamcook, New Brunswick

We are pleased to invite you to register for the **Atlantic Salmon Recovery Workshop** hosted by the Atlantic Salmon Federation. The Workshop will take place on **Wednesday, September 18th and Thursday, September 19th, 2013 at the Wilfred M. Carter Atlantic Salmon Interpretive Centre in Chamcook, New Brunswick.**

Our Workshop Website, <http://www.asf.ca/2013recoveryworkshop.html>, has all the information details including :

- Program Agenda: View the list of speakers and presentation titles
- Registration form: also attached to this email. Please complete and return to Shawna Wallace, swallace@asf.ca with your preferred method of payment for the registration. The Workshop registration fee of \$ 70.00 CDN contributes to the cost of the Workshop, morning and afternoon refreshments for the duration of the Workshop (two continental breakfasts, two lunches and a social with cash bar). It does not include accommodation. The Workshop is limited to **80 participants** so please register early
- Field Trip: September 17th, there is an option for a Field Trip with Steve Koenig of Project SHARE where a demonstration of remnant log drive dam removal will take place. Some information on the field trip can be found on the Workshop site and we will advise when the final details are available.
- Accommodations: Accommodation in St. Andrews is limited and there are several options on the Workshop site linked above. **Please confirm your accommodation at your earliest convenience to receive the group rate and as availability is limited.**

For more information contact **Shawna Wallace**, Research Assistant, Research & Environment at the Atlantic Salmon Federation by email at swallace@asf.ca. We apologize for any duplication of email invitations.

Jobs

AFS Job Center Online: <http://www.fisheries.org/jobs.shtml> <http://fisheries.org/jobs.shtml>

<http://newyorkafs.org/NYCareers.html>

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NATIONAL FISH HABITAT ACTION PLAN EASTERN BROOK TROUT JOINT VENTURE FY2014 PROJECT APPLICATION OPPORTUNITY

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (EBTJV) is requesting project proposals to restore and conserve habitat necessary to support healthy and productive populations of brook trout. Federal funding available under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will be used to fund top ranked proposals. The maximum award amount for an individual project is \$50,000. All proposed projects must be developed in coordination with the nearest Service Sponsoring Office. A list of these offices by state can be found with the application materials on the EBTJV website under the Funding tab.

Guidelines for the use of NFHAP funds by the Service can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/policy/717fw1.html>. All applicants are encouraged to review this guidance. These funds can only be used for on-the-ground habitat conservation and improvement projects and related design and monitoring activities. They may not be used for acquisition in fee or easement. All projects must have a minimum of a 1:1 match from other sources.

The following materials are required to apply:

1. Application Form (see website for application form and instructions)
2. Letter of Support from the State Fisheries Management Agency
3. Photographs and Photograph Release Form
4. Coordination with the Sponsoring U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office

Application materials are available on the EBTJV website - <http://easternbrooktrout.org/funding-opportunities/apply-for-2014-funding-opportunities-here>. Applications should be submitted electronically through the EBTJV website. Please refer to the application instruction document for specific guidance on completing the application. You need to be a registered member of the website in order to submit an application. If you have not registered previously, please do so by clicking the gray REGISTER button under the banner (on the right-hand side). Once you have registered, LOG IN, then click the FUNDING tab and follow the instructions for submitting your application. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please contact us early if you experience technical difficulties with the website or need assistance with your application.

Applications will be reviewed and ranked by the EBTJV based on their ability to meet the partnership's key priorities and strategic objectives (refer to the document that lists the EBTJV's conservation priorities, common state-level objectives, and habitat objectives). The partnership has also prioritized subwatersheds for protection, enhancement, and restoration actions (the higher the subwatersheds score the higher the priority). Each State's Intact, Reduced, and Extirpated subwatershed priority rankings can be found on the EBTJV website - <http://easternbrooktrout.org/resources/maps/priority-watershed-maps>.

Applicants will be notified of their project's rating and funding status as that information becomes available. The amount of funding and time of availability is unknown at this time. All projects that receive NFHAP funding are required to provide annual reporting to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and project completion forms with after project photos to the EBTJV.

Applications are due by midnight on Monday, September 30, 2013.

www.easternbrooktrout.org/funding-opportunities

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Steve Perry
Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture
(603)528-1371 ebtjv.coordinator@gmail.com

Interesting Stuff

Autonomous Underwater Glider Maps Deep Algae in Lake Ontario

Layers of algae that grow in deep offshore regions of Lake Ontario may fuel the food web, but the spatial extent of this habitat is not known. A collaborative effort between Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystems Research (CILER), USGS-GLSC Lake Ontario Biological Station, and Cornell University scientists are mapping this deep primary production using an autonomous glider that will traverse Lake Ontario for three weeks during August. The glider changes its buoyancy to move up and down in the water while fins guide it over a path that started near Oswego, NY and will end near the Niagara River plume. This effort is funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, US EPA, and the Lake Ontario Biological Station. For more information contact USGS: Brian Weidel (bweidel@usgs.gov) or Maureen Walsh (mwalsh@usgs.gov), CILER: Thomas Johengen (johengen@umich.edu) or from Cornell: Lars Rudstam (lgr1@cornell.edu).

Youtube video of the glider being launched out of the RV Lacustris (private video, you must have this link):

<http://youtu.be/f1EXAgbGQ5g>

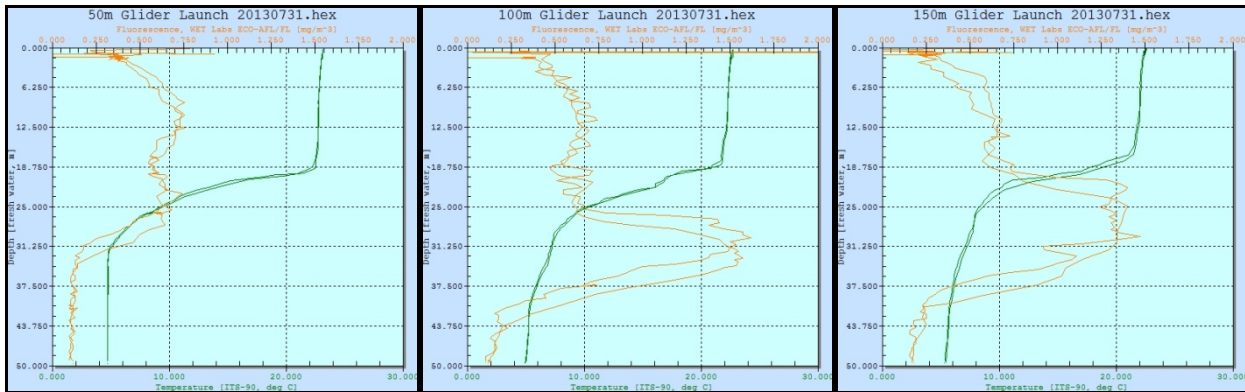
Youtube video of the glider being released from its tether (private video, you must have this link):

<http://youtu.be/Z3SplgdGSu8>



Launching the CILER glider in Lake Ontario, July 31, 2013, near Oswego, NY. Pictured at right, Russ Miller (CILER), Curt Karboswki (USGS) and Bryan Young (Cornell).

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Vertical profiles (from SeaBird not glider) of temperature (green line) and algal fluorescence (orange line) at 3 stations (50, 100, 150m) along the glider's path. Depth is on the y-axis. Note the peak in fluorescence just beneath the thermocline, this is the deep chlorophyll layer that the glider will be mapping.

Inventory of common and rare fishes in southern tier rivers

A demonstration project was initiated in June to broaden the awareness for our needs to strengthen our knowledge of fish distribution in large southern NY rivers. The project was promoted at the NY AFS meeting in Feb 2013, and the first of three sampling ventures was on June 12, 2013 in the Susquehanna and adjoining waters at Endicott, NY. Seven biologists participated from 9 AM to 2PM, and four types of fish catching gear were used, cast net, seine, backpack electrofishing and an electrified trawl. The river conditions were well suited to the intention of the day, offering challenges in avoiding the fast water and finding the refuges where fish also congregated to avoid the current.

Thirty-one species were caught or observed in backwaters of the Susquehanna River and the mouths of Nanticoke Creek and Choconut Creek. The most frequently caught fish were mimic shiner darter and white sucker. One of the most striking features of the catch was the predominance of mimic and sand shiners, which are both nonnatives. They have been known in this area for about 15 years. Darters that were also prominent in the catches included tessellated darter and two nonnatives, greenside darter and banded darter. Three species of shiners that have declined in this area, swallowtail shiner, comely shiner and satinfin shiner, were not caught. Many young of year fish were difficult to identify, and taxonomic assistance came from Rick Morse of NYSM and Jason Brewer of Region 9 fisheries. We preserved a jar of fish to be sent to NYSM, and we should have also preserved several Cyprinella, sculpins and sand/mimic shiners. The advantages of preserving fish in formalin were discussed, and cautions in its use were exercised.

More sampling of this style is expected this summer in the Chemung River near Corning (July) and the Delaware River near Hancock (Sept). Others wanting to take part should contact Carlson, and a tentative date will be set about 10 days in advance.

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Fish catches in backwaters of Susquehanna R June 12, 2013 (nonnatives are in bold)

northern pike or musky	mimic shiner	smallmouth bass
central stoneroller	bluntnose minnow	largemouth bass
common carp	blacknose dace	white crappie
cutlip minnow	fallfish	greenside darter
river chub	white sucker	tessellated darter
golden shiner	northern hog sucker	banded darter
satinfish shiner	marginated madtom	yellow perch
common shiner	banded killifish	shield darter
rosyface shiner	rock bass	walleye
spotfin shiner	redbreast sunfish	mottled sculpin
sand shiner		

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has issued the following press release:

DEC Releases Draft Sauger Conservation Management Plan Plan To Help Rebuild the Sauger Fish Populations in New York State

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today announced the release of a draft sauger conservation management plan for public review and comment. The goal of the plan is to establish and maintain self-sustaining sauger populations in all suitable waters of native watersheds by 2030.

"Sauger are a fascinating species uniquely adapted to thrive in large turbid rivers and lakes," said DEC Commissioner Joe Martens. "They once were prominent in the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River, and Lake Champlain, but have declined to the point where they are now one of New York's most imperiled fish species. This plan will start the process of restoring sauger to its native range in New York waters."

Sauger are North American members of the true perch family, Percidae, and closely resemble walleye in both appearance and function. The [draft Sauger Conservation Management Plan](#) is available on the DEC website.

The three objectives of the plan include:

- Establishing a self-sustaining sauger population in the upper Allegheny River watershed.
- Determining sauger population status and documenting and improving habitat suitability in Lake Champlain.
- Determining the suitability of Lake Erie's eastern basin watershed for sauger restoration.

These objectives are designed to be implemented through 2020. Progress made towards meeting these objectives will serve as guidance in the development of new objectives and management recommendations for the period 2021 - 2030. Additional waters will be considered for sauger population establishment during this time.

Comments may be submitted in writing through September 15, 2013 to NYSDEC Bureau of Fisheries, Sauger Management Plan, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4753 or by emailing fwfish@gw.dec.state.ny.us (with "Sauger Plan" in the subject line).

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For Release: IMMEDIATE

Thursday, August 29, 2013

Contact: Lori Severino

(518) 402-8000

DEC'S LAKE STURGEON RESTORATION EFFORTS ACHIEVING SUCCESS

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Joe Martens today announced another milestone in the state's Lake Sturgeon restoration efforts. Researchers from Cornell University and the U.S. Geological Survey have captured two wild juvenile sturgeon in two different locations.

"This is a truly significant event," said Commissioner Martens. "DEC staff and partners in this effort have been eagerly awaiting this news ever since egg-bearing female sturgeon were first detected in stocked locations one year ago. It is a great example of how, with good science and great partnerships, we can restore a species that nearly disappeared from our state."

On June 12, a researcher at the U.S. Geological Survey's Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Sciences captured a young sturgeon in the Oswegatchie River near the outlet of Black Lake. The 2 ½-pound, 25-inch fish was determined to be five years old. This fish is the only small wild sturgeon caught here for over 30 years and it may have originated from remnant wild fish in the system or from adult fish stocked into the Oswegatchie system over 20 years ago.

Jim Johnson, director of the Tunison Laboratory of Aquatic Sciences, said, "U.S. Geological Survey staff fulfills its scientific mission by partnering with states in restoration work like this. We are thrilled to be reporting this milestone."

On July 30, a second young sturgeon was captured in Oneida Lake by researchers at Cornell University's Shackleton Point Biological Field Station. That sturgeon, determined to be two years old was just over 19 inches long and weighed one pound. The capture of this fish indicates successful reproduction by fish stocked as six to ten-inch fingerlings. More than 8,000 Lake Sturgeon were stocked into Oneida Lake between 1995 and 2004. Biologists at the field station predicted that Lake Sturgeon would begin to appear in their walleye sampling nets once the sturgeon were about two years old.

Lars Rudstam, Director of Cornell University's Shackleton Point Biological Field Station, said "Our staff has worked closely with DEC to monitor the health and growth of the sturgeon population in Oneida Lake. We are proud to be able to move into this new phase of study with DEC."

Lake Sturgeon are the largest fish native to the Great Lakes and can grow up to seven feet in length and may weigh more than 300 pounds. Once abundant throughout the Great Lakes, St. Lawrence River and Lake Champlain, overfishing and the impacts of dams and dredging nearly drove them to local extinction by the turn of the 20th century. Sturgeon harvesting, primarily for caviar, peaked in 1885 when tens of thousands of sturgeon were taken from Lake Erie. The commercial fishery for Lake Sturgeon was closed in 1976 and it was listed as a New York State threatened species in 1983.

Scientists estimate that Lake Sturgeon populations in the Great Lakes area are at about one percent of their pre-1850 numbers. DEC has been actively working with federal, tribal and university partners to protect and restore Lake Sturgeon throughout New York. DEC has raised and released more

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than 65,000 juvenile Lake Sturgeon since 1995. In 2012 and 2013, DEC received assistance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Genoa National Fish Hatchery in raising sturgeon for release in tributaries to the St. Lawrence River.

In addition to stocked fish, some natural recovery has been observed across the Great Lakes, the Niagara River and the St. Lawrence River. In 2009, Lake Sturgeon began using spawning beds created by the New York Power Authority near Iroquois Dam in St. Lawrence County.

"While we are pleased with the increasing numbers of Lake Sturgeon reported by scientist and anglers across New York, I want to remind everyone that these fish are listed as a threatened species in New York and fishing for them is prohibited," said Commissioner Martens. "Lake Sturgeon take a very long time to mature and reproduce. We ask our anglers to continue their role as environmental stewards and avoid targeting these fish."

There are simple steps anglers can take to prevent harm to Lake Sturgeon. First, avoid catching a Lake Sturgeon by staying away from locations where they gather for late spring spawning. Avoid bottom fishing with worms in areas where sturgeon are found. If one does hook a Lake Sturgeon, it must be released unharmed immediately. Avoid bringing it into a boat or out of water if possible and minimize its time out of water. If it must be removed from the water, support its body horizontally; never hold it vertically or by head, gills or tail. The hook may be removed with pliers.

If a sturgeon is tagged, it is important to note the tag number and call the contact number on the tag or call DEC at 518-402-8924. For more information on Lake Sturgeon, visit DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/26035.html>.





AFS – New York Chapter Newsletter – Summer 2013

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