



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

ONE Voice

Outreach, News, and Events August 2018

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge/Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office



Partnering with College Student to Install Pollinator Garden and Living Shorelines at Lake LaSalle

The Lower Great Lakes FWCO provided support and funding for trees, shrubs, flowering plants and aquatic plants to create habitat for fish and wildlife at Lake LaSalle (Buffalo, NY). Molly Dreyer, student at the University of Buffalo proposed and coordinated this habitat restoration project. Restoration began in April with shoreline grading. The culmination of the project was a monarch butterfly release on August 3. (Contact: Betsy Trometer)

YCC Getting Down and Dirty Into Refuge Projects

Five Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) students for the Iroquois NWR and their crew lead were involved in numerous projects centered on public use and habitat conservation this year. Students learned about the various habitats and ecosystems on the refuge. They assisted in gathering data critical to the refuges ongoing management of species and habitat. They also helped band purple martins. The biggest summer project was completing the construction of a new trail by lining it with wooden rails, lying stone and trimming and clearing brush and debris. This year-round accessible trail loops from the Visitor Center through grasslands, upland forests and marshland. The group got down and dirty into the refuge projects and had a great time doing it! (Contact: Kathryn Brenner)

Photo: YCC staff accepting their accomplishment certificates after a hard day's work. Photo Credit: Paul Hess, USFWS



America's Largest County Fair

The Lower Great Lakes FWCO staffed the Erie County Fair in New York from August 8 to 19. The office has been participating for over 10 years in this annual event and saw about 6,500 people. This year's booth focused on recruiting, retaining, and re-engaging the public in outdoor recreation, such as fishing and birding, and included a hands-on activity for knot tying as well as learning about the new "Junior Rangers Angler Program" for kids! (Contact: Denise Clay)



Fish Biologists Give A Helping Hand

While the Lower Great Lakes FWCO was at the Erie County Fair last week, some of our Biological Science Technicians stumbled upon an important mission at the Iroquois NWR-- helping move these newly hatched snapping turtles to safety!! Thank you Katie, Colleen and Connor for lending a hand to the resident wildlife. (Photo credit: Colleen Kolb/USFWS)

Staff Comings & Goings at Lower Great Lakes FWCO

Over the busy summer field season, we welcomed several new employees to our office and a few also moved within the office. We welcomed Zy Biesinger to the native species program as a Fish Biologist. Zy is providing a leadership role over several native species activities such as the completion of lake sturgeon assessment in the lower Niagara River and representing our office and Region on Lakewide Management Plan work groups. Matthew Sevilla started as a Maintenance Worker Helper and is providing critical maintenance and repair needs for our boats, vehicles, gear, and facilities. Matt comes to us from the U.S. Marine Corps. Christopher Osborne and Rebecca Aubrey started as Biological Science Technicians in the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program. They're both working on field aspects of the early detection and monitoring work in the lower Great Lakes. Heidi Himes and Mandi Ohar were both hired as Fish Biologists within the AIS program. Heidi now leads development of our Ecological Risk Screening Summaries in close coordination with our Midwest Region and the Washington Office. Mandi is working as a lead field biologist for several AIS projects such as macroinvertebrate early detection monitoring and QA/QC for Ecological Risk Screening Summaries. Colleen Kolb was also hired into a new position here as the lead Biological Science Technician for the AIS program. Colleen is leading the laboratory component, field preparation and biological gear maintenance portions of the program. We also said goodbye to Katie Reed who worked with us as a Biological Science Technician in the AIS program for the past year. Katie provided important support to early detection monitoring and the Erie Canal fish and aquatic vegetation surveys. We wish her well in her new position in Region 3.

Thanks Habitat Team!

Seasonal Biological Technicians Holly Trombetta and Zach Salada provided excellent assistance with outreach events, assisted NYSDEC with trout surveys, and completed approximately 150 culvert assessments this summer. Zach transferred to a permanent fish biologist position with BLM and Holly returned to SUNY ESF to continue her undergraduate degree. We wish them both well. (Contact: Betsy Trometer)

Photo: Holly Trombetta with walleye collected during electrofishing survey on the Erie Canal near the Niagara River. Zach Salada assisting with plant survey.

