



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

ONE Voice

Outreach, News, and Events October 2018

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

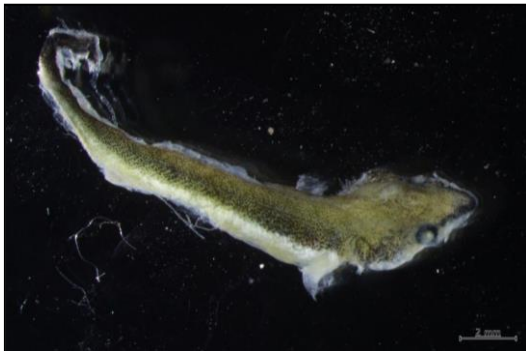
Lending a Hand across Fisheries

During the first week of October, biologist Colin Mulloy from the Lower Great Lakes FWCO traveled to Berkshire National Fish Hatchery (New Marlborough, MA) to assist with lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) spawning. In an attempt to reach the goal of 600,000 eyed-eggs for restoration purposes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees continued spawning lake trout until the end of October. (Contact: Colin Mulloy)



Connecting with Families at County Fall Festival

On October 13, Lower Great Lakes FWCO staff met with over 250 people at the Erie County Fall Festival, a family-friendly event held annually at Como Lake Park (Lancaster, NY). The County of Erie Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry presented this day's program. Festival displays included Halloween-themed activities, "touch a truck" with Erie County Department of Public Works, guided ranger tours, car seat check and child identification cards, magic shows, and live music to name a few. The FWCO's display included information about being a fish biologist, working with lake sturgeon, and other projects conducted in the lower Great Lakes. (Contact: Denise Clay)



Lake Sturgeon in the Lower Niagara River

Native fish biologists at the Lower Great Lakes FWCO have caught over 1,000 adult lake sturgeon over the past 8 years. Last year, we documented the presence of fertilized eggs in the Niagara Gorge. This year we caught our first lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) larvae! It was about 3/4" long and had that characteristic sturgeon snout. These larvae drift out of the gorge at night and are caught by very fine mesh nets. Finding individuals at every developmental stage (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults) is a good indicator of the health of the lower Niagara River population. Stay tuned as we fish for juveniles in the coming weeks! (Contact: Eric Bruestle)

Excelsior Conservation Corp Workshop at SUNY Brockport

Along with other natural resources agencies, our office presented to a group of 45 young adults from Student Conservation Association's Excelsior Conservation Corps currently being hosted at SUNY Brockport. As part of the 6-month internship program, crew members are provided with careers in conservation enrichment workshops to aid in their success following their internship. The informational session about the Lower Great Lakes FWCO, its programs and working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was well received by the crew and its leader. (Contact: Denise Clay)

Completion of Aquatic Invasive Species Early Detection Surveys

Every year the Lower Great Lakes FWCO performs early detection and monitoring surveys for invasive fish species in Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. This year, surveys were done in the Buffalo Harbor, Buffalo River, Niagara River, Irondequoit Bay, the Genesee River, the Oswego River, and Presque Isle Bay, PA. In total, 251 units of effort were conducted throughout all of our sampling sites resulting in over 31,000 fish this year. Although no new documented invasive species were caught, the office did collect for the first time adult tubenose gobies (*Proterorhinus semilunaris*) in Presque Isle Bay and collected the first documented Lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) for our program in Oswego, NY. (Contact: Colleen Keefer)

Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/iroquois/>
<https://www.facebook.com/IroquoisNationalWildlifeRefuge>

Lower Great Lakes Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/lowergreatlakes/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LGLFWCO>



Iroquois NWR Celebrates 2018 Volunteers

Thirteen volunteers were able to attend INWR's 2018 volunteer recognition event, where staff provided dinner, a talk and tokens of appreciation. A total of 103 volunteers contributed over 6,000 hours in FY2018. Projects included heron nest and acoustic bat surveys, banding 1,161 cavity nesting birds, nearly 100 forest inventory plots, 17 Iroquois Observations interpretive programs, three on-site special events, numerous off-site outreach events, the redesign of two interpretive panels, approximately 200 acres mowed, front desk coverage and routine data entry. We truly appreciate all our volunteers and everything they do for the refuge. We couldn't do it without them! (Contact: Kathryn Brenner)

(Photo: Volunteers gathered at Iroquois NWR Visitor Center for the 2018 Volunteer Appreciation.)

Strategic Conservation - Keeping Track of Refuge Water Quality

In October, staff from the New York Ecological Services Field Office came to the refuge and helped us collect samples to measure contaminants in refuge waters. Three sites were sampled including two refuge impoundments and the main channel of Oak Orchard Creek. Water, sediment, invertebrates and fish samples were collected. The contaminant data from these samples will be added to data collected in previous years at other refuge locations to provide a baseline with which to compare future data. This will help the refuge identify changes in water quality and determine the cause of any future water quality issues. (Contact: Paul Hess)

(Photo: Staff collecting sediment and water samples on Oak Orchard Creek (Photo Credit: Paul Hess, USFWS))

