



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# ONE Voice

## Outreach, News, and Events *September 2018*

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



### Reversing Succession to Help Shrubland Birds

Throughout August and September, Iroquois NWR enhanced refuge shrublands for migratory birds. Over time, small trees have begun to dominate the shrublands, which has reduced their value to shrubland birds. Using the regional Fecon (heavy equipment that mows down trees and shrubs), approximately 15 acres of shrubland habitat have been improved. Some areas have been clearcut while other areas have had just the trees selectively removed. These improved shrublands will provide habitat for species such as gray catbird, blue- and golden-winged warbler, and field sparrow. (Contact: Paul Hess)

### Green Team Leapt Into an Educational and Fun Summer

The Iroquois NWR, Lower Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (FWCO), and Groundwork Buffalo Green Team collaborated to educate, train, and take part in conservation efforts on the refuge and throughout the Buffalo area. Students spent a day on the refuge learning about management, habitat, and wildlife before starting their service.

They visited urban conservation areas at Niagara Gorge/Stella Niagara, Tiff Nature Preserve and Silo City to learn about their programs and participate in invasive species removal, backyard birding and Student and Nature Photography programs. The summer ended with a pop-up event featuring the refuge's new mobile educational trailer and archery set along with other community organizations.

*Photo: Some of the activities the Green Team participated in throughout the summer. (Photo Credit: Tom Roster, USFWS)*



### Connecting with Families at Reinstein Woods Fall Festival

On September 15, over 900 people stopped at the Lower Great Lakes FWCO display at the annual Reinstein Woods Fall Festival in Cheektowaga, NY. Kids both young and old had fun at the stream tables creating their own streams and using culverts of various sizes and shapes to design a fish friendly road crossing. (Contact: Denise Clay)

### Field Season Winding Down for Invasive Crews

The field component of the Aquatic Invasive Species program has started to wind down. The fall Eurasian Ruffe survey in Lake Erie and Lake Ontario harbors has been completed. Only a few sites remain for the Early Detection and Monitoring (EDM) and Erie Canal programs. With changing weather and temperatures, just a few more field days are left for field work. Once all the fieldwork is complete, the Invasive Species crew will assist other programs and start analyzing the data collected this year. (Contact: Sandra Keppner)

### Hydrilla on the Connecticut River

In late September, Lower Great Lakes FWCO biologist Heidi Himes traveled to Connecticut to conduct Hydrilla surveys on the Connecticut River, and at the Silvio O. Conte NWR. Hydrilla is an invasive aquatic plant that can harm native species as well as impede recreational uses of the waterway. She was assisted by a biologist and intern at the Conte NWR. Their survey work is part of a larger effort and survey of the Connecticut River from Vermont south through to the mouth on the Connecticut coast. Federal, state, university, and non-profit agencies are participating on this project. (Contact: Heidi Himes)



### Lake Ontario Adult Lake Trout Assessments

This September, Lower Great Lakes FWCO biologists, Dr. Dimitry Gorsky and Curt Karboski, joined the a multi-agency lake-wide assessment of Lake Trout in Lake Ontario. Each fall, for over 20 years, federal and state biologists in the region have performed gillnetting surveys in an effort to document the status of adult lake trout across Lake Ontario, and the progress of the lake trout restoration program. The assessment samples lake trout using four 1,000 foot gillnets set at each of 14 locations from the northeast end of Lake Ontario to the Niagara River. This year Dimitry and Curt took turns being the lead biologist on the survey in the spirit of collaboration with our NYS DEC and USGS partners to help staff this very important assessment. Some highlights of what we caught include up to five suspected wild lake trout and many large and healthy hatchery reared lake trout. Both types of catches really highlight the great work the Allegheny National Fish Hatchery has done raising quality fish and the work that managers have done to promote an ecosystem that can help repopulate the lake with wild lake trout. One of the important measures we collect on these fish is the occurrence of lamprey attacks. The number and severity of observed attacks helps tell our sea lamprey control program how effective the control is going. We even occasionally catch a few lampreys still attached during this survey. (Contact: Dr. Dimitry Gorsky)

