

# The Oneida Lake Bulletin

Spring 2006

## Oneida Lake Dead Zones????

Several months ago, a local newspaper bannered its front page with the headline, "Dead Zones Appear in Lake." An Oneida Lake map, with the lake's deeper waters colored a bright, alarming red, ran underneath the title. This headline-map tandem

**Dead zones are part of the lake's ecological history and are not a threat to its health.**

implied that areas of the lake were dying and devoid of life, and that a major problem existed.

This front page sensationalized the dead zone issue. There is no major problem.

Oneida Lake is relatively shallow for its size. Because of this, wind action usually mixes the water from the top to the bottom. Occasionally, during an extended period of calm, hot weather,

surface waters warm faster than bottom waters and, without wind-generated mixing, the lake stratifies. Warmer water rests at the top, on slightly cooler, heavier bottom water. If this stratified period lasts for a week or so, oxygen near the bottom can become depleted because organic materials decompose and use up this essential element. This creates what the newspaper described as "dead zones."

These "dead zones" are areas where the lake's bed, and up to six feet above the bottom, lack oxygen because stratification prevents the oxygen-rich surface waters from mixing with oxygen-poor water on the bottom. These zones are quite common in large, deep lakes during the summer and are not considered unusual or a cause for concern.

These areas typically exist only briefly in Oneida Lake. Strong winds mix the lake's waters, spread oxygen, and eliminate the zones. In addition, these areas are not entirely "dead." Some organisms, such as larval insects and zooplankton, are adapted for living in low oxygen environments. While fish avoid these areas, they still thrive in the waters above them. Indeed, fishing in the water column over a dead zone can be fantastic, as evidenced by the excellent walleye angling in the Buoys 109 to 113 locales last July.

We recall the summer of 2005 for its hot, calm weather. Air temperatures over Oneida Lake exceeded 90 degrees for over fifteen days. Conditions were ideal for stratification and the establishment of low oxygen dead zones. While extensive, these areas did not affect the entire lake bottom, and surface waters still held more than enough oxygen to support Oneida Lake's fish and other aquatic life.

Low oxygen events took place sporadically throughout Oneida Lake's history, and likely contributed to the collapse of the lake's once abundant mayfly (commonly called eel flies) population in the 1960s. Other bottom dwelling insects replaced the mayfly, but these organisms were more tolerant of low oxygen. Low oxygen events could easily have occurred as early as the 1600s and 1700s. Colonial travelers noted large algal blooms that, when coupled with hot, calm summers, could have produced oxygen-depleted areas.

Will dead zones occur more frequently in the future? Perhaps, if global warming persists. One point is certain, however: dead zones are part of the lake's ecological history and are not a threat to its health.

## Wildlife Services Opens New District Office in Cicero

Thanks to the support of the Oneida Lake Association and Congressman James Walsh, the USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services will be opening a new district office in Cicero.

This agency does a fantastic job controlling our lake's double-crested cormorant population and the proximity of this facility is a major plus for the Oneida Lake region. In fact, the primary focus of Wildlife Service employees working from this office will be management of and research on the impacts of cormorants.

The complex will consist of both office space and a warehouse. The office section includes permanent offices and an open area that can accommodate expansion for added employees. Also, the building will contain a conference room and laboratory.

Most importantly, the center's location provides quick access to Oneida Lake to expedite Wildlife Services' cormorant management activities.

The building should be completed and ready for occupancy by early May. A grand opening/open house, in cooperation with the Oneida Lake Association, will be held in late May or early June.

Congratulations and thanks go to Wildlife Services for their long-term commitment to the Oneida Lake region's ecological health.



## President's Message

What a strange winter! We've experienced another year without significant ice on the lake, much to the ice fishermen's dismay. As spring unfolds, the Oneida Lake region enlivens amidst seasonal warmth. A happy, productive spring to all.

You should have received your membership renewal letters in March. This is the second year that we've used this approach (instead of sending letters in January).

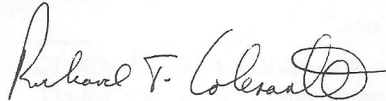
We're trying to make it easier for you to rejoin the OLA. You will note that dues have risen from \$3 to \$5 per year. This action was necessary because of increased mailing and publication costs. We've been able to function for twenty years at the \$3 rate and hopefully we can last another twenty at \$5.

Please mail in your new membership cards. Now, here's an important item. Sign up at least one new member. The OLA is strong, but we must be vigilant in building our organization. A larger membership makes us more effective.

The Oneida Lake Association's annual meeting is scheduled for April 26 at Cicero-North Syracuse High School on Route 31. We've assembled a great agenda that will update you about events around Oneida Lake and with the association. And don't forget the many excellent door prizes. Circle this night on your calendars. The evening should be informative and interesting.

The OLA will continue to expand its ability to protect the lake and its environs. While our board of directors gets things done, we all recognize that the true strength of the association comes from you - our members.

I look forward to seeing you on April 26.



Richard Colesante  
President - Oneida Lake Association

## Nominating Petitions

Under OLA bylaws, members may nominate officers and directors. A petition, signed by at least fifty (50) OLA members in good standing, must state the name of a member or members that the petitioners wish to nominate as an officer or director. The petition must be served on any present OLA officer no later than three (3) days before the annual meeting. It will be mandatory that the names on any such petition be placed on the OLA Nominating Committee list with the persons nominated by the committee, all in alphabetical order, for election at the Annual Meeting.

The OLA Secretary will make the membership list available for inspection by an OLA active member on request.

The directors nominated for terms beginning this year are Anthony Buffa,

Robert Cote, Jack Henke, Paul Metot, Robert Ripberger, and Bruce Shantz.

## National Wildlife Research Center Scientist Stationed in Cicero

In an ongoing effort to enhance science-based cormorant management in New York, Wildlife Services recently hired Dr. Travis Devault as a Research Wildlife Biologist to be stationed in the Cicero complex. This is the first time in the history of New York that a research scientist with the National Wildlife Research Center will be permanently stationed in the state.

Devault is a native of Indiana and comes from Purdue University, where he is presently in a post-doctoral research and teaching position. He has an impressive research

### The Oneida Lake Association Inc.

Founded in 1945

The Bulletin is published by the Oneida Lake Association, Inc. so that its members may be informed regarding the activities of the Association. The Oneida Lake Association, Inc., was organized in 1945 to restore and preserve the natural resources of Oneida Lake and its environs.

#### Officers

President ..... Richard Colesante  
Vice President ..... Kurt Snyder  
Vice President ..... Thomas Pierce  
Vice President ..... Lance Vella  
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**Term: April 2003 - April 2006**

Paul Metot	Robert Cote
Anthony Buffa	Robert Ripberger
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**Term: April 2004 - April 2007**

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record, conducting graduate studies on scavenger ecology and bird use of reclaimed coal mine habitats. He also published research about terns.

In his new capacity, Devault will be working closely with the New York Wildlife Services operational program to conduct collaborative research aimed primarily at reducing cormorant impacts on fish, and also on vegetation, property, and rare species.



# The OLA Fishing Corner

## EDITORIAL

### Night "Eyes" Are Your "Eyes" by Captain Tony Buffa

When walleye season opens on Saturday, May 6, most Oneida Lake anglers will use their piscatorial skills during the daylight hours in search of "ole marble eyes." The serious walleye stalker, however, understands that walleyes are night predators and only feed during the day if they had a bad foraging night.

I normally use this column to share fishing techniques related to daytime angling. This time around, let's go "night fishing." The two weeks following opening day are the best time for this activity. Post-spawn walleyes are inshore searching for emerald shiners ("buckeyes") and gizzard shad, which swim near the shore during darkness.

Night's anglers make pilgrimages to public access areas as if they're seeking a "fishing Mecca." The two sites on the north and south sides of the Route 81 Bridge in Brewerton are among the most popular locations.

Other prime nighttime casting locations include the state launch on the south shore in Bridgeport off Route 31; Larkin Point in Lakeport; Lewis Point, toward the east end of the lake; Oneida Creek's mouth, by Route 13; the Sylvan Beach pier; the state launch at Godfrey Point, off Route 49; the pier at Cleveland and the shoreline at Taft Bay Park, off Route 49.

Most walleye anglers use stickbaits at night. BassPro Shops' XPS Laser Eye Suspend Minnow (black/silver and blue/silver in the four and one-quarter inch size) is my favorite lure. It's the right size, moves with the right wobble, reflects the right finish (holographic), and sports a 3-D laser eye. But there are other excellent

lures. These include Jr. Thundersticks (black and silver, blue and silver, perch), Rapala's Shad Raps (shallow runners and floaters in sizes five, seven, nine, and eleven), and Husky Jerks.

While all you need is a good set of waders, two and a half feet of water, and a seasoned casting arm, I enjoy night fishing from a boat. Generally, I set anchor by the pin buoys at the eastern tip of Dutchman's Island, just north of the south shore launch off Route 31 between Bridgeport and Lakeport. My other favorite nightspot is Lewis Point, along the pin buoys that line up east to west. I like to get there during the last hour of light so I don't disturb the site as dusk and

darkness set. Crunch time is that last fifteen minutes of daylight. If shoreline bait is prevalent when the walleyes appear, the bite will last as long as the bait stays.

Devoted trollers emerge at night to follow the shore's contour, pulling their stickbaits just below the surface. Electric trolling motors are best in this environment. If my anchored locations prove to be fishless, I then turn on the electric trolling motor and move either down or up the coast until I find a few fish.

Generally, the bigger walleyes are caught at night. They rest and digest during the day and prowl for prey at night. Binge feeding is quite common, so prepare for a frenetic bite, particularly if you have found a small area containing bait and walleyes.

So brave the cold, break out the waders, and enjoy the walleye night bite. You won't regret it for one moment.



*Ardent Oneida Lake angler Millar Brace boated this twenty-inch walleye while fishing with Captain Tony.*

### Wildlife Services - Making A Difference on Oneida Lake

The news that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's APHIS Wildlife Services is constructing a permanent headquarters in Cicero should be welcomed throughout the Oneida Lake region and all of Central New York.

Wildlife Services (as the agency is commonly called) and its responsive, professional personnel are in charge of double-crested cormorant control on Oneida Lake. Besides harassing and removing birds from the lake's environment, Wildlife Services' employees record detailed statistics about their important tasks. These numbers clearly demonstrate that the amount of "cormorant days" on Oneida Lake have dropped tremendously. The birds once killed hundreds of thousands of walleyes and yellow perch yearly. That doesn't occur now.

What does this mean for our lake's fish populations? A quick reading of the Cornell Field Station staff's articles in this issue and last spring's *Bulletin* reveals just how much Oneida's angling has rebounded since efficient cormorant controls were instituted. Walleye fishing has been excellent and Cornell's biologists have predicted that it should remain that way. Championship caliber bass angling characterizes Oneida's fishery. Yellow perch numbers have finally increased after years of population stagnation, and white perch multiplied to historically unique highs. All indications are that Oneida Lake's anglers will enjoy a banner year in 2006.

What does good fishing mean for the Oneida Lake region's economy? Quality angling translates into prosperity, jobs, construction, and added tax revenues. New homes and developments are springing up around the lake. New businesses are locating in lakeside communities.

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# The State of the Lake: 2006

by the Cornell Biological Field Station Staff

Oneida Lake is one of New York State's premier resources and supports a variety of outdoor activities, including outstanding fishing. Our data indicate that the lake will continue to provide these opportunities for years.

## Walleye and Bass Fisheries Flourish

Anglers spent over 220,000 hours fishing Oneida in 2005. While walleye catch rates dropped off from 2004 due to abundant baitfish, the walleye population remains healthy and should offer exceptional angling over the next couple of years. Anglers caught approximately 45,000 walleyes in 2005, which was down from 190,000 walleyes caught in 2004.

However, with the fifteen-inch minimum size regulation in place, anglers were able to harvest three out of four fish in 2005, compared to one out of five walleyes in 2004.

The smallmouth and largemouth bass populations continue to increase. Oneida Lake's bass fishery is recognized throughout North America. Anglers caught almost 33,000 bass this year, which was also down from 2004. High availability of buckeye shiners and gizzard shad reduced the bass harvest.

## "Jack" Perch Population Increases

Oneida Lake's yellow perch population reversed a downward trend that started in the 1980s. We estimate that the population was around 1.5 million fish in 2005. Perch numbers are about half of those present in the 1960s and 70s. It is possible that the lake can no longer support the same perch population it nourished in earlier decades. Anglers caught 11,300 yellow perch this year, approximately half of last year's catch. The weather last fall made it harder for anglers to hit the hot spots.

## White Perch and Shad

White perch returned to levels seen in the 1980s, before disease decimated the population in 1987 and 1988. Four of the eight year-classes produced since 1997 will contribute substantially to the adult population. Expect to catch lots of white perch in 2006 and beyond. Anglers landed over 15,000 white perch this year. Whites are delicious - keep them for the frying pan!

With Oneida Lake's lower yellow perch population, walleyes may feed more on white perch and gizzard shad. Shad abundance increased over the last few years, but did not return to the numbers present from 1987 to 1991. However, the warm summer of 2005 led to the fastest growing shad on record in Oneida Lake. Shad are often observed dead along the shore during winters when they are numerous. Larger shad size, however, may allow more of them to survive the winter, which may impact the lake's future shad population. In addition, winters are getting shorter. We've recently initiated a new project studying shad mortality.

## Sturgeons Grow, Grow...

Lake sturgeons, a native fish from Oneida Lake's past, have been restocked since 1995 and their population thrives. Many of the sturgeons from the initial 1995 stocking have grown to lengths exceeding four feet. The largest collected in 2005 measured an impressive fifty-two inches and weighed over forty-five pounds! Oneida Lake sturgeons regularly exceed thirty pounds. We've netted ripe (ready to spawn) males for the past three years. Female sturgeons typically do not mature until several years later than males but, considering current growth rates, we soon may have a population capable of



Cornell undergraduate student Emily Glick hefts one of Oneida Lake's impressive sturgeons.

reproducing. Remember, lake sturgeons are protected. If you happen to catch one, it must be released. And if you happen to notice sturgeons in the tributaries during spring, please call us (315-633-9243) with the location, because our next challenge will be to document spawning.

## Those Unwelcome Guests

Zebra mussels have made it easier for new invasive species to become established. Oneida Lake's people have witnessed dramatic increases in water clarity over the last decade because of zebra mussels. This heightened water clarity caused a proliferation of aquatic plants, including water chestnuts and, most recently, European frogbit. The latter plant, common in Canada for decades, is considered a nuisance.

The latest plant invader is a macroalgae called "starry stonewort." It was discovered in extensive mats in the lake's shallows by Cornell biologists in 2005. Ocean-going ships that use Lake Ontario brought this alga to the United States. Cornell biologists also verified in 2005 that a large invertebrate linked to the zebra mussel

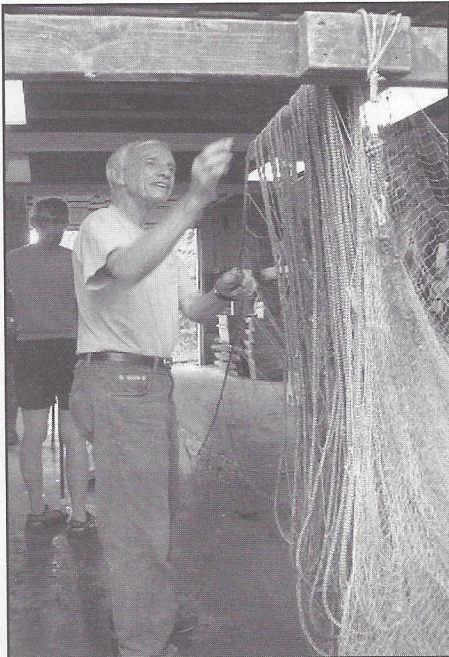
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invasion is now well established in Oneida Lake. Keep your eyes open for round gobies because these fish are likely to arrive in Oneida Lake soon. Gobies have been found in Oswego harbor, only thirty miles away.

### Climatic Changes

The summer of 2005 was among the warmest and clearest ever recorded by our staff on Oneida Lake. Offshore water column temperatures approached eighty degrees and water clarity was second only to 1995 (during a period from 1977 to 2005). In fact, the lake bottom water temperature in August of 2005 was the highest we ever recorded (statistics have been kept since 1968). Evidence clearly shows that the lake is warming and that the amount of time warmer water lasts is also increasing.



*John Forney, the Field Station's founder, repairs a gill net.*

In addition, our winters continue to moderate. Temperatures in January 2006 were the warmest ever recorded. Stable ice cover on Oneida Lake has been lacking in two of the last six winters. The early 1950s was the last modern time such an event was recorded.

What do these changes mean to Oneida Lake? Clearer waters will foster continued plant growth and bottom dwelling algae. Invertebrates like zebra mussels and fish that thrive in lake bottom habitats will also do well. Warmer summer and fall temperatures will extend the growing season for fish, but warmer winters could favor gizzard shad that are maladapted to cold temperatures.

### In Conclusion

Finally, Oneida Lake is in a state of flux. Anglers can be happy with excellent populations of walleyes and smallmouth bass. White perch continue to multiply. Anglers should harvest as many of these fish as they can. Yellow perch are the most abundant fish species in Oneida Lake, but the expanding white perch population could challenge this ranking. Dense, water clarity-reducing algae blooms reminiscent of the 1950s and 1960s no longer prevail. A parade of non-native species, mostly linked to overseas shipping, continues to become naturalized citizens in the Oneida Lake ecosystem.

Oneida Lake boasts abundant biological life, but the nature of the food web is changing rapidly. On balance, Oneida Lake is a wonderful resource. Let's do all we can to protect it.

## "Know Your Lake" Summer Lecture Series

As a part of the "Celebrate the Lake" program, the Oneida Lake Watershed Advisory Council and the OLA are co-sponsoring a "Know Your Lake" lecture series this summer at locations around Oneida's periphery. To date, the following talks have been scheduled:

**On Thursday, July 6, 7 p.m.**, at Oneida Shores Park, Craig Nels will discuss "The Oneida Lake Fishery From an Angler's Perspective."

Eugene Domack, geology professor at Hamilton College, will highlight "Natural History of the Eastern Shoreline" at the Sylvan Beach Municipal Building on **Wednesday, July 12, at 7 p.m.** Domack's research includes an in-depth study of the wave-generated "delta" that occurs at Oneida Creek's mouth.

**Wednesday, July 26, 7 p.m.**, at the Public Health Building, Wampsville, finds Geoffrey Snyder, from the Madison County Department of Environmental Health, discussing "On Site Septics on Shoreline Properties." This talk targets homeowners, codes enforcement personnel, and developers.

Two lectures are tentatively scheduled, but dates and times are still unsettled.

Cornell Biologist Ed Mills, from the Shackelton Point Field Station, and David White, from the New York Sea Grant Program, will discuss "Invasive Species in Oneida Lake." The event will occur at the Field Station's facility at the east end of Shackelton Point Road, Bridgeport.

Oneida Lake historian Jack Henke will ramble and rumble through the lake's past in his slide show/discussion presentation, "An Overview of Oneida Lake History." No date time, or location has been set.

The Advisory Council plans additional programs. The series will be well publicized. Stay tuned.

**Have any questions about the lake's biology?  
Ask them at the annual meeting.**

**Wednesday April 26 • 6:00 p.m.**

**Cicero-North Syracuse High School Auditorium**



# News From the Hatchery

by Mark Babenzien, Hatchery Manager and Carl Rathje, Assistant Manager

The Oneida Fish Hatchery is preparing for the annual spring walleye run and egg collection. During the winter months, hatchery personnel have been busy repairing and constructing specialized trap nets that are used for catching adult walleyes as they get ready to spawn each spring. Spawning lasts about seven to ten days and generally occurs between the last week in March and second week in April, depending on ice and weather conditions.

In 2005, the hatchery netted over 22,000 adult walleyes and collected over 321 million eggs from April 7 - 15. Generally, the eggs have a sixty to seventy per cent hatching success rate.

Just over 163 million fry were stocked into Oneida Lake during May 2005. Twelve other New York waters received thirty-six million fry. Our facility also provided one million fry to two other New York State hatcheries and nine cooperator groups for the Walleye Pond Fingerling Program. Under this program, the Oneida Hatchery raised 136,000 advanced fingerling walleyes (up to five inches) last summer. These fish were stocked into ten different waters around the state during September.

A complete listing of walleye stocking is available from the NYSDEC website, regional office, and the hatchery. This year's walleye egg collection and fry production will be similar to 2005. We encourage visitors to stop by and view the entire process through the season.

Our hatchery is not only the major component of New York's walleye program, but also assists the state's endangered species restoration efforts, rearing three unique species that are considered threatened.

Lake sturgeons, once native to Oneida Lake, have been reintroduced over the past decade. The hatchery receives eggs from wild adult sturgeons caught in the St. Lawrence River and raises them to fingerling size (seven to ten inches). These fish

are stocked in several select waters to re-establish and enhance native populations. We keep several larger lake sturgeons on display for visitors to enjoy. Over 7,500 sturgeons have been stocked in Oneida Lake since 1995.

Another unusual creature, native only to the Allegheny region of our state is the paddlefish. These fish can grow to seven feet in length and weigh 300 pounds! The hatchery has been getting wild eggs from the University of Kentucky and raising approximately 1,000 paddlefish annually. They are extremely fast growers when young, and reach fifteen inches within two months at the hatchery. By August, these fish are marked with specially coded wire tags and transferred to the Allegheny River for stocking. They are not found in Oneida Lake, but visitors can view them at the hatchery.

The third endangered species that the hatchery raises are round whitefish, which were once found in over 80 different Adirondack waters. Today, however, round whitefish inhabit only a few of these lakes. Each fall, fisheries biologists net wild fish from Lower Cascade Lake near Lake Placid and transfer eggs to the hatchery. These tiny fertilized eggs slowly incubate in thirty-five degree water all

winter and finally hatch in the spring. The fry are raised to about two inches and stocked in their native Adirondack habitat.

If you haven't visited the hatchery in recent years, you may want to stop by and enjoy our facility. The lobby contains several interesting exhibits of fish mounts and waterfowl, and provides information about Oneida Lake and walleye culture. We also show a video about hatchery operations and display live fish in tanks. You can observe the daily hatchery operations and our staff will answer any questions.

The hatchery is open to the public from 8:00 until 3:30 daily from April 1 to September 30. Group tours can be arranged by calling 315-623-7311.



Hatchery personnel developed a unique dry docking method in the 1940s.

## Necrology

### Anthony "Bud" Saur • 1922-2005

The Oneida Lake Association notes, with deep sorrow, the passing of former director Anthony "Bud" Saur on November 7, 2005.

Born, raised, and educated in the Syracuse area, Bud Saur enjoyed a four-decade career at Crouse-Hinds, where he served as a foreman. He and his wife, Eunice, lived on Big Bay and spent many fine hours with the lake they loved. A public-spirited couple, Bud and Eunice supported community groups in the Brewerton locale and particularly enjoyed the company

of friends at church and firemen's suppers.

Bud was an all-round sportsman who excelled in fast pitch softball and golf. His angling avocation drew him to the OLA, however, and he worked on the Board of Directors for nearly twenty years. During that era, Bud served as secretary and was also known for a spirit of volunteerism that inspired him to participate in countless association projects.

Bud Saur is survived by his wife and by two nieces: Susan Barnes and Jeanie Cook, and one nephew: David Bunts.



## Ripples

Did you ever see an Oneida Lake "ice year" like this one? Freezing and thawing formed some amazing scenes along the shore. Dick Percival reported unique ice piles in January in the Lower South Bay area. Vast fields of chunked ice wedged next to the East Shore after the first thaw. Sunlight glistening through these formations created memorable Oneida Lake crystalline exhibitions.

Paid your 2006 dues yet?

Handicapped fishing access to Oneida Lake should improve when the Town of Sullivan completes its lakefront park by the Harbor Lights development on Route 31 at Lakeport. The Town Board included a 150 feet-long fishing pier, with accommodations for handicapped anglers, in their plans.

Don't miss the annual meeting!

Anglers should keep all the white perch they catch. Whites' numbers have increased at an alarming rate. These fish compete for food with walleyes and yellow perch. More whites harvested means less competition for walleyes and jacks. Also, white perch are delicious! Fillet them as you would other fish but tilt the knife blade slightly upward when skinning the fillets. This removes the darker flesh and insures great taste.

Sign up your friends with the OLA!

Oneida Lake's public access sites are more than boat launches. Sweeping views of the South Shore and Madison County Hills fill the vista from the Godfrey Point launch. Dutchman's Isle and the North Shore frame the South Shore launch's view. Brewerton Harbor's hustle and bustle are on display from the Route 81 fishing access sites. The Barge Canal piers at Brewerton, Sylvan Beach, and Verona Beach are great spots for relaxed prom-enading. Stop at *your* public places and savor the scene.

## Thanks From the OLA

The Oneida Lake Association would like to thank New York State Assemblymen Jeff Brown, Bill Magee, and David Townsend, and Senators David Valesky and Jim Wright for their support in the recent dialogue concerning bass regulations. These gentlemen have provided our region with effective representation in state government. Oneida Lake is a better place because of their service.

## Oneida Lake's Cormorants - a Management Update

by Richard B. Chipman

*New York State Director, USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services*

Last year witnessed great success in reducing double-crested cormorant impacts on walleyes and yellow perch in Oneida Lake. This was the eighth year that USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services (referred to as "Wildlife Services" in this article) biologists have administered a cormorant management program in collaboration with the DEC, the Oneida Lake Association, and the New York Fish and Wildlife Research Cooperative at Cornell University.

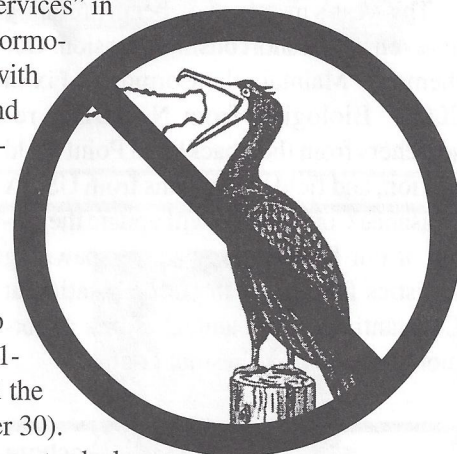
In 2005, the Oneida and Onondaga Lakes' cormorant hazing program was lead by an experienced seven-person Wildlife Services' field team. This program was divided into three phases that included: spring (April 11-April 29), summer (June 6-August 12), and the traditional fall hazing (August 15-September 30).

The spring and fall agendas included dawn to dusk harassment on both lakes. Wildlife Services' personnel dispersed cormorants for ninety-four days in 2005, using a variety of methods. These techniques included "scary-man" effigies, human effigies, Mylar tape, pyrotechnics, dispersal with boats, and limited shooting that prevented the birds from becoming accustomed to non-lethal methods.

A total of 42,506 cormorants were harassed (individual birds are often harassed multiple times) using 9,655 pyrotechnics during 2,883 staff hours on Oneida Lake. The average number of cormorants harassed per hour on Oneida Lake has continued to decline, demonstrating the program's success.

Double-crested cormorant nest management was conducted on Oneida Lake during the 2005 breeding season. Cormorant nests appeared on Long Island during the last two weeks of April. On May 13, Wildlife Services' personnel removed nine new nests located on Damon Point to prevent the establishment of a cormorant-breeding colony at that location.

In addition, our staff removed sixty-five nests and 114 eggs from Long Island in early June. A total of twenty nests were left on the island, in accordance with the Oneida Lake management plan. The twenty nests contained forty-two eggs, which were oiled according to established guidelines to prevent hatching. As a part of our population stabilization strategy, no nest on Oneida Lake produced any young in 2005.





# Annual Meeting at Cicero-North Syracuse High School

April 26, 2006

By Tony Buffa

On Wednesday, April 26, the OLA and its members will convene to hold their 61st annual meeting at Cicero-North Syracuse High School auditorium. Come and join us for an evening of Oneida Lake information. Doors will open at six. Early attendance is encouraged so that you can enjoy our numerous exhibits.

Membership renewals and new sign-ups for the association will begin at 6:15. You need not be a member to attend, but are encouraged to join forces with us to continue our long tradition of being the largest and most active lake association in New York and perhaps in the United States.

This year's meeting will begin promptly at seven with a short business session. Our theme is "Maintain the Cormorant Fix in 2006." Biologists from NYSDEC, researchers from the Shackleton Point Field Station, and field technicians from USDA Nuisance Control Unit will update the status of our fishery, the walleye spawning statistics from the fish cultural station at Constantia, and the annual efforts at cormorant and water chestnut control.

We are happy to announce that Bass Pro Shop will provide an exhibit and door prizes. OLA director and author Jack Henke will sign copies of his Oneida Lake books at our memorabilia display.

Our corps of experts will discuss information regarding the eradication and control of Oneida Lake's exotic "invaders." This is a must meeting to attend. The OLA needs your support. Your fishing future and the well being of Oneida Lake are constantly being challenged. Be a part of Oneida Lake's past, present and future. Mark your calendars "WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 6:00 - CICERO NORTH SYRACUSE HIGH SCHOOL."

The association will also award its coveted "Conservationist of the Year" plaque to an outstanding supporter of local conservation. The meeting will then close with distribution of door prizes and drawings for three Lowrance iFinder H<sub>2</sub>O Plus GPS units. One winner will be chosen from the attendees and the other two from our membership at large.

We encourage you to join us for an evening of fun, facts, and OLA solidarity.

## Directions to C-NS High School Route 31, Cicero

### From the Thruway

Take the Thruway to Route 81. Take Route 81 north to the Cicero exit. Turn right onto Route 31. The school is about 1/2 mile away on the right.

### From the East

Simply get to Route 31. Follow it west. The high school will be on the left just before you enter Cicero village.

### From the West

Get to Route 31, to Cicero village, continue east under Route 81's overpass, and the high school will be on the right, about 1/2 mile away.

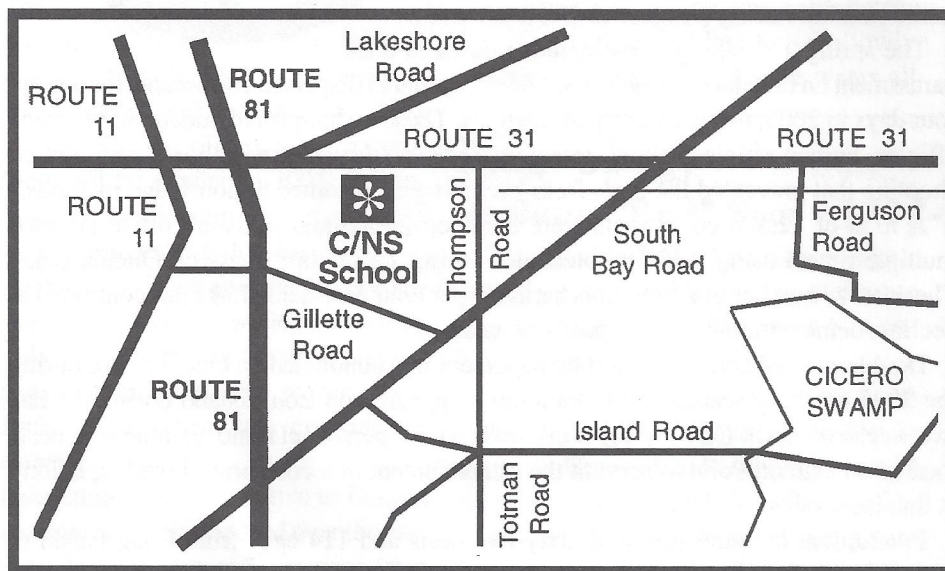
## Editorial

(continued from page 3)

Marinas that lost hundreds of patrons because the bad fishing of the 1990s now boast waiting lists of potential dock rental customers. Anglers flock to the lake on big fishing weekends and good numbers of them can be found on popular "hotspots" at all times. With these anglers comes spending – lots of it. Virtually every lakeside business has benefited from the anglers' influx. Fishing is a multi-million dollar industry in the Oneida Lake area.

And it can stay that way as long as we have effective cormorant controls. Wildlife Services' work has helped restore Oneida Lake as one of the Northeast's premier freshwater fisheries. The agency's construction of a permanent headquarters in Cicero can rightly be viewed as an investment in the Oneida Lake region's future.

Considering the economic effects thus far, this is an extremely wise investment.

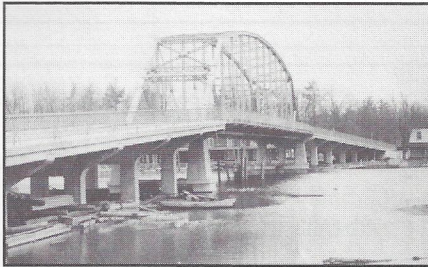




## Oneida Lake Photo History Quiz



State three names that have been given to this Oneida Lake island.



The construction of this former Sylvan Beach bridge was a part of what famous New York State project?

### Answers to the Oneida Lake Photo History Quiz

1. Demian's Island, Baldwin Island, and Indian Island  
2. The Barge Canal

## REPORT TAGGED STURGEON

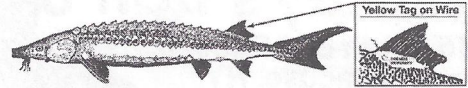
Sturgeon in Oneida Lake and nearby waters may be tagged. Biologists at Cornell University and NYSDEC need your help to track these fish. Yellow tags may be attached at the base of the dorsal fin. If you catch a tagged sturgeon, please write down the number on the tag and length of fish, release the fish immediately, and call Cornell University at (315) 633-9243 or contact NYSDEC at (315) 785-2262 as soon as possible.



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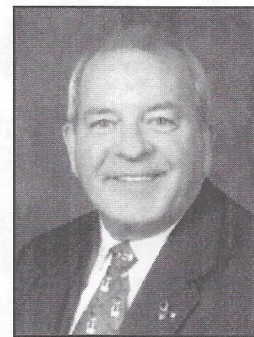
I have completed intensive training with nationally recognized IRA distribution expert, Ed Slott, who was named "The Best" source for IRA advice by the Wall Street Journal and called "America's IRA Expert" by Mutual Funds Magazine.

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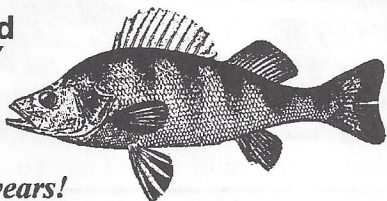
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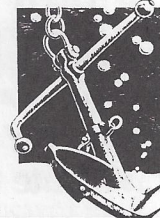
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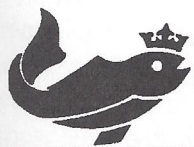
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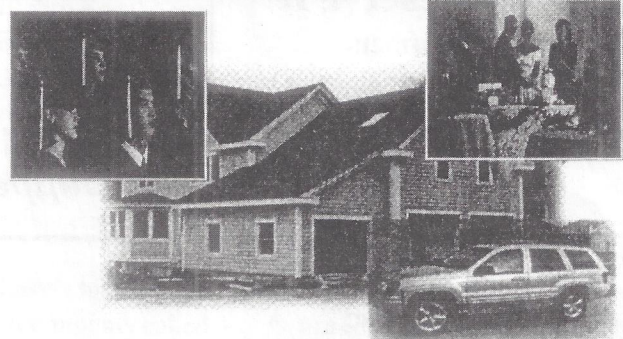
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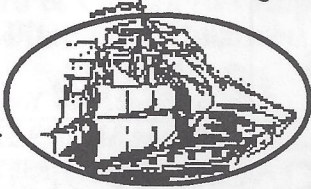
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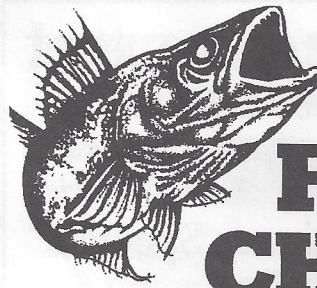
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