



Oneida Lake Association
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Greetings!

Happy Easter! Spring has finally Sprung!

It is that time to calendar an evening to meet with fellow members and
your
Board of Directors at the

**2017 ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING - 7 PM MAY
3 ***** NEW LOCATION - GILLETTE > ROAD
MIDDLE SCHOOL **** DOORS OPEN AT 6 PM**

**EXCITING UNDERWATER DISCOVERY TO BE
ANNOUNCED BY FEATURE SPEAKER, CAPTAIN TIM
CAZA.**

**FISHERIES AND STATE-OF-THE-LAKE OVERVIEWS
BY NYSDEC AND CORNELL.
DOOR PRIZES**

April 22 is Earth Day. If but one day a year you elect to do something special in the name of public service to Nature, try to participate in some local event. Make it a family day if you can.

Many of the OLA Board will meet at 9 AM to pick up trash. OLA 'adopted' the NYSDOT highway segment that comprises the Bartel Road and Interstate Route 81 interchange at Brewerton, as well as the cooperative public Angler Access from the Park-'n-Ride out and beneath the bridge over the lake's outlet. We pick up trash each spring and autumn. Volunteers from the membership and community are always welcome. If we get help, this should take now more than 2 hours. Contact Director George Reck.

Other events are taking place around the county. If you use Oneida Shores Park, consider helping plant new trees to replace the infected white ash trees that are being removed. <http://events.onondagacountyparks.com/view/504/earth-day-community-tree-planting>

Nuisance Goose Workshop Summary

On a rainy Saturday morning, March 25, over a hundred people attended a nuisance geese workshop hosted by the Oneida Lake Association. Speakers from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the US Fish and Wildlife Services, and Cornell University enlightened attendees about the biology, the problems, and possible solutions associated with resident Canada geese.

Though they are certainly magnificent birds to photograph, paint, or even watch in flight, Canada geese present numerous problems once they take up residence. They cause turf damage at golf courses and businesses. They are traffic hazards, both on the ground and in the air. Geese are very aggressive, making them unwelcome visitors at parks and in our yards. A single goose can leave behind 1 to 2 pounds of droppings every day, making an enormous health and clean-up problem. Geese are also associated with the transmission of certain diseases. Farmers report extensive crop damage once geese move in. Bacteria in their feces have caused frequent closings of Oneida Lake beach areas. For these reasons, OLA brought together experts to help us better understand the problems and search for possible solutions.

All of the speakers shared the belief that it is important to understand the issue before we begin to try to solve the problems. Dr. Paul Curtis, from Cornell University, explained the difference between migratory geese and resident geese. Resident geese—those that are at the center of our problems—have much higher rates of survival, as well as higher reproductive rates, compared to their migratory cousins. They are better adapted to our weather and to our grasses. This adaptation gives them a life span of 20 years or more. In that time, Dr. Curtis explained, a female goose can hatch more than 50 goslings. This birth rate has resulted in explosive growth in the resident goose populations. Experts estimate that there are approximately 35 times as many geese today as there were in 1970. And these geese are here to stay. Dr. Curtis stated that it is “nearly impossible to break site fidelity.” In other words, once the geese find a place they like, they stick around.

Josh Stiller, from the NYSDEC, estimates that there are approximately 250 thousand resident geese in New York State, more than three times the optimum target levels. Chris Dwyer, of the US Fish and Wildlife Services agrees that we must continue to reduce this number. He reminds us, however, that geese are protected by federal law. Of course, the one hundred or so folks who attended the workshop wanted to hear solutions. What can we do about this problem? Each of the speakers reinforced a similar theme. “It is much more effective to manage geese on a community scale, rather than by individuals,” stated Dr. Curtis. Chris Dwyer also stated that it should be a “community effort.” Carl Cranker, of the US Fish and Wildlife Services, suggested “Educate and involve the community.” The OLA has taken that first step by hosting this community workshop. Each of the speakers also outlined some specific methods homeowners can take to fend off nuisance geese.

Hazing One fairly common method is hazing or harassing the birds. Although these birds are protected by law, it is not illegal to harass them, as long as they are not taken or harmed. Dogs are a good hazing tool, as long as they are well trained and do not cause problems of their own. (If, in the hazing process, a dog should actually catch a goose, that incident must be reported to the DEC.) Many folks simply chase them off their lawns or harass them with their boats while on the water. Dr. Curtis explained that lasers are also effective, especially at night. The important factor in hazing is that it must be persistent, on a daily basis. We must be as persistent as the geese are! Pyrotechnics are also an ineffective hazing tool. Handheld launchers can be purchased for about \$40, while the cartridges (sometimes called “screamers”) are about 50 cents each. Again, care must be taken not to cause other problems, including becoming a nuisance to neighbors. Many lakeside or pond side residents also report good success using radio-controlled boats.

No feedingAs obvious as this solution may be, many of the speakers emphasized the importance of educating the public about not contributing to the food supply for these nuisance geese. Many beaches and parks which have a goose problem find visitors unwittingly contributing to the problem by tossing French fries or bread crusts to these unwelcome birds. Once again, community education is a necessity.

Oiling eggs and nestsFor those property owners who have evidence of goose nesting sites, oiling eggs and nests helps to keep the birth rate down. Oiling prevents embryo development. This option, however, requires permission from the US Fish and Wildlife Services. Homeowners who wish to spray eggs with oil must apply for a Depredation Order. Applications can be found online:

<https://www.fws.gov/permits/applicationforms/ApplicationD.html> The speakers recommend that this process calls for a two-person team--one to fend off the geese (open umbrellas are an excellent defense!) and one to do the oiling. Federal regulations require using only 100% corn oil for this process.

Taking GeeseAnother step is to actually take the birds themselves. Of course, many birds are shot and taken during hunting season, with a bag limit of up to 15 birds a day. Although many people have suggested raising this limit, the officials at DEC explain that most hunters don't currently reach the 15 bird daily limit, so raising the limit would have almost no effect. Homeowners can apply for a Depredation Permit from the USFWS. This Permit is different from a Depredation Order, in that it allows for the actual taking of adult birds. The application process is more extensive—and more expensive. Once again

visit: <https://www.fws.gov/permits/applicationforms/ApplicationD.html> Captain George Steele, of the NYS ECON police, explained that with a Depredation Permit the 500 foot rule does not apply as long as the shooter discharges over water. Again, it would be wise to alert one's neighbors before such shooting occurs.

Ground controlThere are certain chemicals that can be sprayed on lawns to deter geese. Rejex-it is one brand name. However, these applications only last about two weeks, and must be re-applied after each rain. No pesticide permit is needed for many of these products. Some landowners have resorted to grid wires. These are large areas covered by a series of wires laid out in a grid pattern. Of course, just as the geese are deterred, the area is also rendered practically useless for people. Radiocontrolled boats really annoy the birds, and are legal to use – providing no physical contact is made (by the boat or any other 'projectile').

EducationJim Eckeler, from the NYS DEC reviewed a case study of goose management done by the town of Brighton, near Rochester. He outlined that successes and setbacks of their program, hoping to enlighten the Oneida Lake community if they should embark on a similar effort.

What doesn't workAccording to Carl Cranker, from the USDA Wildlife Services, many of our efforts to curb Canada geese simply don't work. For example, the cutouts of dogs and other predators that we often see on lawns or at beaches become more of a nuisance to us than to the geese. They are intelligent animals who quickly learn that even a moving cut-out is no threat to them.

Next stepsOnce again, each speaker emphasized the importance of making goose control a community effort. The OLA is pleased to take the initial step on behalf of our community, by hosting this helpful workshop. For reference, photos and speakers' Powerpoint presentations are archived on the OLA website. Also, Carl Cranker, from the USDA Wildlife Services made his contact information available. You can reach him at 315-698-0940.

If you would like to share your ideas for success on this topic, or suggest other special programs you would like the Board to consider for the Oneida Lake audience, please contact us through our website.

ALL WATER MATTERS!



NYSDEC Constantia Fish Hatchery Manager Bill Evans briefed your Directors April 10. Nets were deployed Monday April 3. The weather cooled, delaying collections, but on April 10 workers held fish in 16 tanks (normally they use about 12, stripping and releasing fish daily). Most of the 4000 females were not quite ready to strip, enabling harvest of but 93 Million eggs. Bill was confident that improving water temperatures and calm conditions would enable the hatchery to reach its target of 324 Million eggs by the weekend. The walleye are healthy and look large; on female weighed 13.2 pounds and 'volunteered' 2.4 pounds of eggs!



Once again OLA Directors expect to volunteer to assist the North Syracuse School District using Oneida Lake as an instrument for learning during an upcoming 'science day afield'.

If you are a retired teacher or have a passion for the lake and care to help out, please contact us.

We are also looking for educators to assist us in outlining specific ideas and needs related to STEM lessons. OLA is slowly developing a series of modules and field exercises (and skilled volunteers) to enable neighboring districts to use the lake as a living laboratory.

Help OLA function. Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome. OLA is a 501(c)4 organization serving protection of the Oneida Lake environment.

[Donate](#)

CleanSweepNY

Those attending the Nuisance Goose workshop learned that 100% pure corn oil is considered a pesticide under certain circumstances. Canola, olive or using other oils is not permissible for oiling eggs under a depredation permit/order. While you may raise an eyebrow or chuckle in reading this, release of chemicals, especially pesticides, into our waters is no joking matter.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will hold its spring 2017 CleanSweepNY pesticide collection event during the week of May 8, 2017. The disposal of dangerous pesticides and chemicals can have serious consequences on our drinking water and the environment. CleanSweepNY helps remove these unwanted chemicals from our communities to ensure they don't pose a threat to public health or the environment. Find out more about [CleanSweepNY](#) or call 1-877-793-3769.

Boat Trailer Insurance Mysteries Revealed by BoatUS March 16,

If you get in an accident while trailering your boat, do you know which insurance policy will pay for repairs to the trailer? If it's a simple accident with damage to the trailer only, it's likely to be the trailer insurance coverage that pays. But what happens when you back the trailer into a neighbor's stone wall or a tree comes crashing down on your trailer in your backyard?

Boat Owners Association of The United States ([BoatUS](#)) offers these tips: **Start with the basics.** When shopping for insurance for your trailer boat, ensure to ask if the policy provides boat trailer coverage. Not all insurers provide it. **Know the trailer value.** If you decide to add trailer coverage to your boat's insurance policy, your insurer needs to know the cost of the boat and trailer separately. If you don't separate each out, the insurer may have difficulty in fairly compensating you in the event of a claim. **How far can you trailer?** Ask if there are geographic limits on where or how far you may trailer your boat. **Check your auto insurance.** Ensure your tow vehicle's insurance policy includes liability coverage for any damage to others' property caused while trailering your boat, for example, backing into your neighbor's stone wall. This liability coverage is not provided by your boat and trailer policy. **Check your homeowner's insurance.** Ask your homeowner's insurance company if your trailer is covered while stored at home. And try not to park a boat trailer under a tree. **Read the fine print.** If you store your boat trailer at your marina or other storage facility, read the fine print in your contract as it relates to insurance. Many include language that holds these facilities harmless. Review these clauses with your insurance company to make sure you're not in danger of a breach of the insurance contract, which could result in no coverage. **Roadside assistance.** For a nominal fee, many auto insurance policies offer roadside assistance. Boat trailers, however, aren't likely to be included in the coverage and if there is a breakdown of the tow vehicle or the trailer, your boat could be left on the side of the road. Consider adding separate roadside assistance for your boat trailer.



[Website](#) [Who We Are](#) [What We Do](#) [How to Help](#)

The Oneida Lake Association is a member of the New York State Conservation Council <http://www.nyscc.com/> and the New York State Federation of Lake Associations <http://www.nysfola.org/>.

Report environmental violations. Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and management of Oneida Lake and its drainage basin. Be civil. **1-844-DEC-ECOS(1-844-332-3267)**