



Oneida Lake Association
PO Box 3536 Syracuse, NY 13220-3536
info@oneidalakeassociation.org



Greetings!

Your Board hopes that you had memorable holidays, and that you have had a safe winter season so far. Traditional winter sports have been challenging for enthusiasts such as our lake's ice fishermen and sledders! If and when those of you who venture onto the ice do so, please be careful. Warm tributary inflows and the under-ice currents they impart leave thin spots and pressure ridges as the ice floats, sinks, flexes and moves off shore. Don't go through, and don't venture out unless you are prepared to self-rescue.

In this issue we speak more to ice, and some of the cold reception to one of our lake management issues that frosted us last year. Then there is a snippet of one topic that may warm some of your hearts in April.

We hope that you enjoy receiving and reading the OLA ENews. Let us know if you have specific items needing exploration, or send us newsworthy text that we can consider for use in upcoming issues.

Meanwhile, prepare to "Re-Up" your membership.
And to enroll others whom you know enjoy Oneida Lake.

WHAT'S UP?



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

(1) For those of you in CNY getting WCNY TV, set your recorders. ***Making Waves: Battle for the Great Lakes*** is wonderfully informative documentary on the invasion of Lake Michigan and what has come into Oneida Lake. The two-part

series will repeat Tuesdays, Feb. 7 and 14 at 1 p.m.

(2) THE OLA Natural Resources and Government Relations Committees have finalized an inter-agency **NUISANCE GOOSE SEMINAR** to be held the morning of Saturday **March 25** at Central Square High School, from 0900-1230.

FREE, free, Free!

COME AND LEARN about Canada goose biology and behavior, regulatory framework, role of Federal and state government in resident goose management, options for homeowners and land managers, see a goose shepherding dog demonstration, and ask your questions of the experts.

(3) The OLA general **Annual Members Meeting** is scheduled for **May 3, 2017**. It will be held at the **Gillette Road Middle School** 6150 South Bay Rd, Cicero. Doors open at 6 PM with presentations starting at 7 PM. Bring the family!

****** NOTE THE CHANGE IN LOCATION!! ******

This school is about a mile south of Route 31 in Cicero, a just south of the intersection of Thompson Road and South Bay Road, and about a mile north of Driver's Village.

(4) **Be careful on the ice.** The photo below was taken February 1 bear Chapman Park. There is a lot of open water and only skim ice.



WATER MATTERS



After watching the lake trying to freeze this at Christmas, a member asked about the history of Oneida Lake ice cover. Another member wondered on New Year's Day - or if - there will be safe ice for fishing outside the nearshore bays. A cold snap finally put a ice across the entire lake on January 7. For a few days ice fishermen were able to get out from



The Double-Crested Cormorant (Phalacrocorax auritus) has been a major predator of Oneida Lake's walleye and perch for nearly two decades. Observed little in the latter half of the last century, the predatory migratory bird - therefore Federally protected - became established in large numbers at the same time the zebra mussel arrived. Together these two species

Chapman Park. The mid-January news showed a swimming deer being rescued off Lewis Point. Two mature ice fishermen (not OLA members) unfortunately drown January 23 in North Sandy Pond. At the time of this writing most of Oneida Lake is either open water or 2' thick pans of rotten ice, pushed along the shore on varying winds. Weather forecasts point to more open water in the near term.

And then there is the climate change discussion, and not just by fishermen staring into tiny holes. The debate is not that climate is changing – for it always has and will – but how much of this change is caused directly by human population growth and activity.

On January 18 it was reported that Earth's 2016 surface temperatures were the warmest since modern record-keeping began in 1880, according to independent analyses by NASA and NOAA. This makes 2016 the third year in a row to set a new record for global average surface temperatures.

One research paper reports that that between 1986 and 2005, global air temperatures have increased by 0.61 °C or 1.1°F. The authors found that lake water temperatures tend to coincide with regional air temperatures. However, in some regions, such as around the Great Lakes region of North America and northern Europe, bodies of water are warming more rapidly than ambient air. Oneida Lake was one of the 291 lakes around the world in this study.

As reported in the last Oneida Lake Profile (see figures below), ice formation usually begins in December, and complete cover occurs in December or January. The earliest and latest ice-in dates from 1975 to 2001 occurred on December 3, 1976 and January 31, 1998, respectively. In 2002, complete and sustained ice cover did not occur, a new record for Oneida Lake. Average ice residence time from 1975 to 2000 was 95 days; minimum and maximum residence times were 55 and 121 days (winters of 1997-98 and 1977-78, respectively).

The observed trend is a shortened ice season when compared with a few generations ago. Records of ice break-up (ice-out dates) have been kept by the Oneida Fish Culture Station in Constantia since 1846. The earliest and latest recorded ice-out dates were March

altered the lakes traditional fishery and fishing. The Oneida Lake Association advocates for active management of DCC populations, and maintenance of NYSDEC's approved target of no more than 100 birds on the lake, with no successful nesting. (Photo by David Stephens, Cornell Ornithology Lab)

CORMORANT MANAGEMENT IS NEEDED!!!

The OLA Board learned that some of the restrictions imposed on March 29, 2016, by a Federal court have been lifted for the 2017 double crested cormorant (DCCO) management program.

Last spring US Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services self-imposed a stand down order, and state agencies across the nation stopped active management of the bird under respective permits issued by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) following a 2003 Final Environment Impact Statement (EIS).

The 2003 USFWS EIS made changes to the regulations governing the take of cormorants. The final rule, published in the Federal Register in November 2003, established a Public Resource Depredation Order (PRDO; 50 CFR 21.48) and made changes to the 1998 Aquaculture Depredation Order (AQDO; 50 CFR 21.47).

In 2009, the depredation orders were extended an additional five years. If not renewed, the PRDO and the AQDO would expire on 30 June 2014. The USFWS performed a Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) to determine whether the depredation orders should be continued, and if doing so is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. It concluded that permits could be renewed in 2014.

In 2015 a group of public environmental employees contended to the court that USFWS had done insufficient reviews of the effects of PRDO's on DCCO populations and did not consider a wide enough range of alternatives to lethal management actions. Work stopped. For all of 2016, **thousands of DCCO preyed on Oneida Lake fishes.**

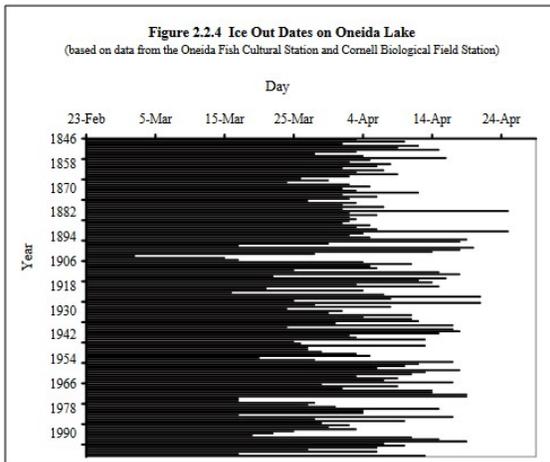
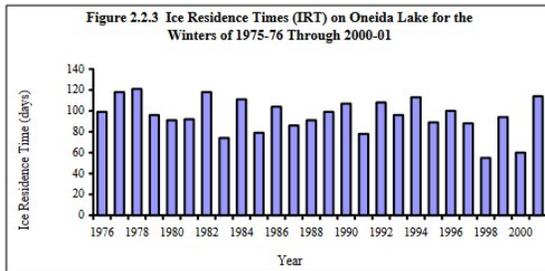
Wildlife Services informed us in January that it can resume harassment and removal activities under its Depredation Permit from the USFWS. This permit is valid for all of NYS. However, the number of cormorants Wildlife Services is

2, 1903 and April 25, 1881 and 1891, respectively. Ice thickness reached as much as 120 cm in the mid to late 1970s (Cornell Biological Field Station, CBFS records), and in the last decade, maximum ice thickness has averaged about 31 to 36 cm, about 14 inches.

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher, is quoted as saying "the only constant is change."

Some suggest that by the end of this century, the temperature of Oneida Lake – New York State's largest interior lake – will likely be higher by about 6 degrees Fahrenheit. This would be enough to remove oxygen from its bottom waters, alter its species composition and eradicate its remaining cold water fish species, according to a report by Cornell researchers in the journal *Ecological Modelling*. A three degree temperature increase could increase lake stratification by 61 consecutive days. (www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304380014006310)

None of this helps the ice angler, particularly when Briggs Bay is open water at the what should be the peak of the hardwater season.



to take under this permit is limited. The USFWS cormorant depredation order formerly used by those individuals and agencies without a permit, such as NYSDEC, is still not available due to the lawsuit brought against the USFWS.

At this time NYSDEC cannot resume harassment and removal under that agency's 2014 depredation order.

The OLA Board is lobbying for some effective and active management in spring 2017 to enable researchers to continue validating and adding to the unique, long-term predator-prey relationship in the Oneida Lake fishery as it changes.

To do so, some DCCO must be collected for stomach content analyses and trends analyses. Wildlife Services could help us, under their depredation permit, to collect an adequate number for this research.

OLA is facilitating conferencing of NYSDEC, Wildlife Services, and Cornell, seeking common ground in their respective missions so that the research and data set continues in and beyond 2017. Doing so enables accredited validation of future management programs and targets that protect the Oneida Lake system.



An Oneida Lake "Pancake" covered by quagga and zebra mussels. These ferromanganese nodules grow in the deeper lake area by a specialized bacteria's (*Shewanella oneidensis*) extraction of the element from sediments.

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. Our low dues covers basic communications. Donations help support expenses associated with special programs as arise from time to time. Thank you for remembering this organization and its mission.

As you take your snowmobile out, or drag your ice shanty back to shore, please remove your debris from the ice.

Let's not let float the metal cans and propane tanks. Pick up and recycle (or simply do not purchase) the plastic coffee dispensers (cups, covers, pods, machines), glue-laden sawdust furniture, and assorted packaging materials that are merely discarded. Consider being a better consumer, and becoming a minimalist purchased of imported products that are destined only for landfills. We ask also the lakefront owners pick up, remove, and properly dispose of trash that blows into their shoreline.



RECYCLING ELECTRONICS

As the snow falls and melts, we see mini-glaciers advance and retreat around our roadsides and lakesides. With each snow melt, however, we also see all kinds of debris revealed. Some of this debris is natural—unraked leaves and twigs, dying vegetation, and rocks and dirt scattered about by the snowplows. All too often, however, melting snow reveals discarded electronics—TVs, obsolete VHS recorders, old laptops, computer monitors, tablets, and many other cast-offs. Public lands – like the road to our boat launches and Wildlife Management Areas – are not dumps! [{See the last note of this newsletter.}](#)

As we all know, it has become increasingly more difficult to properly dispose of these unwanted items. Far too often, folks take the lazy way out, tossing them into a convenient snowbank, as if the spring thaw would eventually melt them away. Unfortunately, in addition to presenting an eyesore, many of these items contain toxins and other dangers to our soil and water.

The OLA is committed to keeping these discarded electronics from contributing to the waste which too often surrounds our beautiful shores. And it's the law! The 2010 Electronic Equipment Recycling and Reuse Act makes it illegal for consumers to throw these items into the trash. There are options, however, for discarding these electronics properly. Fortunately, the law also requires many manufacturers and retailers to take back these items, once sold.

Below are some local retailers which participate in this take-back program:

Best Buy—Call ahead for details and possible fees.

Staples—Most computer related items, but no TVs.

Walmart—See Customer Service for details. Consumers might be eligible for a

trade-discount.

Battery World—Accepts large TVs, but charges 26 cents per pound for CRTs; free for flat screens.

For more info, visit www.ocrra.org (Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency).

They have plenty of help information on their website. Or look at a list that DEC maintains of sites that take back e-waste for free or low cost:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/73670.html>



[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)**

Oneida Lake Association | P.O. Box 3536, Syracuse, NY 13220

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