



Oneida Lake Association
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SAVE THE DATE!

The Board of Directors of the OLA will host their **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** at the end of this month! Mark your calendar for Wednesday, April 29 at the Millard Hawk School in Central Square. Doors open at 6:00 if you would like to visit our variety of exhibitors. The meeting itself starts promptly at 7:00. As always, we have a great line-up of speakers including representatives from the Fish Hatchery, the DEC, the Cornell Field Station, Law Enforcement, and much, much more!



Special Guest: Ben Walsh, new Director of the NYS Canal Corporation.

It will be a great night of information, displays, answering questions, meeting with friends, and, as always, plenty of raffle prizes, including gift certificates and a grand prize! (You must be present to win.).

We hope to see you there!

Water Level Update

As lakeside dwellers and frequent visitors, we are concerned about the recent, rapid rise in water levels on Oneida Lake. Always vigilant about such matters, the OLA Directors have been monitoring the situation closely. In fact, I have pulled runaway kayaks onto my yard, and watched helplessly as picnic benches, lawn chairs, dock pieces, and huge logs floated by well out of reach.

I reached out to our contact at the NYS Canal Corporation to get a statement from their perspective. She writes: "The water level on Oneida Lake is above flood stage by 0.5'. This has been caused by extremely high flows in Fish Creek, which were larger than the August 2021 storm! Inflows are now lower than outflows so we

don't expect it to get higher than this. We do expect it will take into next week to get out of flood stage."

When asked about specifically about the Caughdenoy Dam, she replied, "It is fully open." ~John Harmon, OLA Past President

A Message from the Syracuse Sail and Power Squadron



The ice has cleared, time to launch!
Please contact me for your annual vessel safety check, no cost, no marketing, all confidential.

ALSO, as many of you boat on Oneida Lake, I wanted to tell you about our upcoming Boating Safety certificate classes at the nearby Brewerton library, starting Saturday, May 2, 2026.

America's Boating Course is an approved basic boating safety course for a New York State Boating Safety Certificate offered by America's Boating Club/United States Power Squadrons. The cost for the class is \$35 (\$10 for a second family member sharing text). Remember—as of January 1, 2025, Brianna's Law requires all operators of power-driven vessels to have a New York State Boating Safety Certificate. You must be at least 10 years old to earn a boating safety certificate in New York. All operators of personal watercraft must be at least 14 years of age and must hold a boating safety certificate.

Course for the Brewerton/Oneida Lake area:

Brewerton Northern Onondaga County Public Library, 5440 Bennett Street,
Brewerton, NY 13029

Saturdays, May 2 and May 9, 2026
Review and Exam Saturday, May 16, 2026; 12:00 pm

10:00 am to 3:00 pm (with lunch break)
Two 4-hour classes, plus exam

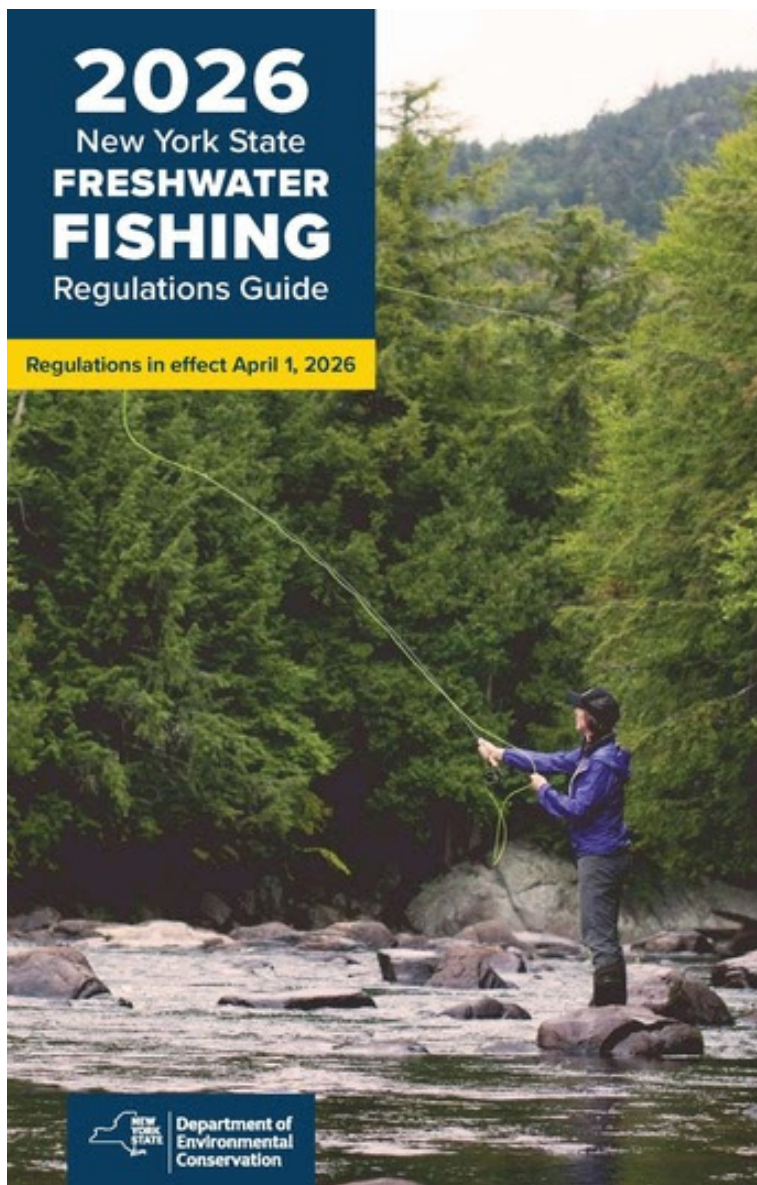
To register, call Brewerton NOPL at 315-676-7484.
For all SSPS instructional programs, CONTACT TESS FREEDMAN FOR MORE
INFO: tbfreedm@gmail.com.

I look forward to bringing your 2026 sticker out to you this spring. Please contact me for a time/date and if you have any questions.

Dave Krause
Syracuse Sail and Power Squadron Vessel Safety Chair

DEC Fishing Guide for 2026

Click on the link for the the latest [Fishing Guide](#) from DEC.



Green Sunfish . . . Who Knew??

Here is an interesting article from OLA Member Doug Carlson



A fish identification class from SUNY Morrisville has been coming to Chittenango Creek at Bridgeport for over 25 years, and there is always something new that they can see. Chittenango Creek is a major tributary of Oneida Lake and is the second longest at 48 miles. Several fish species from Oneida Lake migrate into this tributary for spawning, with the lower 3 miles inhabited mostly by Oneida Lake fish, such as Yellow Perch, Smallmouth Bass, White Sucker and the occasional Walleye. Among the 41 fish species found in this lower 3 miles of Chittenango Creek there are 14 kinds of minnows, 3 kinds of suckers, and 7 members of the sunfish/bass family.

One of the sunfish members, **Green Sunfish**, has been found in Oneida Lake only in recent years (since 2010) and is probably caught by anglers with some regularity without knowing it is a recent addition. Green Sunfish have been regularly caught at Bridgeport by the SUNY class since 2012. They are known for their ability to hybridize with other sunfish species, and this is neither good nor unfavorable. Hybridization is just how some animals cross the boundaries of species integrity, and the offspring are often not recruited or successful at reproducing. Green Sunfish grow to about the same size as Pumpkinseed Sunfish and perhaps slightly shorter than Bluegill or Rock Bass. Their colors are not particularly green, but their mouths are longer than most sunfish and more like that of Rock Bass. They favor stream habitats and are often assertive in driving off other sunfish occupying those places. The hybrids that were caught in 2025 by the class from SUNY Morrisville were mostly from crosses with Pumpkinseed, and they look somewhat like both parents. These fish are of interest to those who like to know “who is new, and who is who.”

Many fish are hard to tell apart, but it gets easier after you catch and look closely at a few hundred of them. A second unusual fish caught in October 2025 was Shorthead Redhorse, sometimes known as redfin sucker or redfin mullet. They were among the commercially marketed fish from Oneida Lake in the 1800s and were valued by Indigenous peoples. A few dozen of them were seen on recent sample trips to Bridgeport. They are also rarely caught in Oneida Creek and in Oneida Lake itself. Like other suckers, they come to tributaries to spawn in April and otherwise don't expose themselves to angler temptations.

For more information see [https://www.oneidalakeassociation.org/About Oneida Lake.html](https://www.oneidalakeassociation.org/About%20Oneida%20Lake.html).

(Photos by W. Snyder)



Green Sunfish-Pumpkinseed Hybrid



Shorthead Redhorse

Spring Cleanup

OLA Director George Reck will head up our Annual Spring Clean Up on the stretch of roadway that the OLA has adopted. Mark your calendar for Friday, April 24. Plan to meet at the Bartel Road 81 North on-ramp at 9:00 am. Dress for the weather, and bring some gloves. George will supply large trash collection bags. We have a prize for the most unusual item bagged! Come join us in our mission to keep the lake area clean!

The Mission of the Oneida Lake Association is to protect the fisheries, wildlife, and natural resources of Oneida Lake by promoting science-based conservation and management through education and outreach, in partnership with our members and local communities.

Pay your dues, and HELP PROTECT ONEIDA LAKE!!!!

\$8 annually

Recruit your neighbors and friends TO JOIN US!



Donate

Memorials and contributions to our program are most welcome.

OLA is a 501(c)4 organization serving and protecting the Oneida Lake environment.



[OLA Website](#)

OLA is a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization.

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/>.

Please remember to obey all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of ethics as they pertain to boating, fishing, hunting, and the management of Oneida Lake and its tributaries.

[Report environmental violations.](#)
1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267)

Edited by John Harmon

Send us your notes and articles for use in future ENews!

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