

# INTRODUCTION

Willard N. Harman

## **Internships:**

Sara Zurmuhlen and Kyle Stevens from Richfield Springs and Schenevus Central Schools, respectively, were supported via a FHV Mecklenburg Conservation Fellowships and by the Village of Cooperstown. Sara was involved with coliform analyses on the upper Susquehanna just south of Cooperstown, on Otsego Lake and in several areas in local watersheds relevant to the spring flooding. Kyle analyzed chlorophyll a in Otsego Lake as a proxy for algal population abundance.

College undergraduate intern Caitlin Snyder from Cazenovia College held a Rufus J. Thayer Otsego Lake Research Assistantship. She was involved in work at Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary working with purple loosestrife control (with support from the Cooperstown Lake and Valley Garden club) as well as the traditional Otsego Lake watershed monitoring carried out by the Thayer Assistantship. Erika Reinicke and Georgette Walters from SUNY Cobleskill held Robert C. MacWatters Internships in the Aquatic Sciences. They both worked with a diversity of fisheries oriented research projects. Alex Scorzafava from St. Bonaventure received an internship to monitor Lake Moraine vegetation management from the LAKE Moraine Association. Brian Butler, from SUNY Oneonta, received support from the Peterson Family Conservation Trust. He worked on Cherry Valley water quality and fisheries surveys at the Thayer Farm and Greenwoods Conservancy with Aaron Payne. Aaron was supported by a Biological Field Station Internship dedicated to SUNY Oneonta students.

## **Graduate students:**

Six graduate students in the Biology MA program have been involved with BFS faculty in 2006. Karen Tietlebaum and Kathy Suozzo have not yet defined their graduate research. Connie Tedesco continues her work with wetland vascular plants. Willow Eyres is involved in monitoring a multifaceted water chestnut control program carried on in an Oneonta wetland. Wesley Tibbits has been employed by Washington State monitoring salmon migration on the Columbia River. His thesis should be completed before this summer which is the last requirement before his degree is awarded. Todd Paternoster completed his work with zebra mussels in the Susquehanna, developing a cooperative monitoring program with several high schools. His degree was awarded in December of 2006.

## **Intensive offerings:**

About 200 students were enrolled in several SUNY Oneonta and SUNY Cobleskill on-campus courses and attended field exercises on site. More than 1,200 K-12 students visited the BFS and received hands-on experiences on Otsego Lake and BFS woodlands over the year enrolled in the to the pre-college [ALearning Adventures](#) and "Agricultural Environmental

Quality” programs. David Alfred, Georgette Walters and Erika Reinicke served in the program as interpreters in the latter programs with BFS staff and faculty.

### **Faculty and staff activities:**

Tom Brooking, from the Cornell BFS, was the 2006 BFS visiting researcher and continued to work with Mark Cornwell utilizing acoustic monitoring to document alewife population dynamics in Otsego Lake. Bill Butts has been the most active biology faculty from SUNY Oneonta working at the BFS this year. Renee Walker, SUNY Oneonta Anthropology Department, and David Staley, Archeologist and Project Manager, Cultural Resource Survey Program, New York State Museum, continued work on the cultural resources at the Thayer Farm.

For the 7th year, we stocked Otsego Lake with walleye fingerlings varying in size from two to more than 6 inches in length. Monitoring was continued, staffed by former BFS graduate student Mark Cornwell (SUNY Cobleskill) with advice and help from Dave Warner (USGS Great Lakes Research Center, Ann Arbor) and Tom Brooking for monitoring the impacts on both the fishery and water quality impacts. Walleye from the first year of stocking are now about 30 inches in length. Support for the purchase of walleye pond fingerlings comes from Lou Hager, Jr., on behalf of the Gronewaldt Foundation, now matched by the NYSDEC Region 4 Fisheries Managers. A SUNY Cobleskill student, Isaac Golding, worked with Erica Reinicke (MacWatters Intern) and John Foster (Chair, SUNY Cobleskill Fisheries and Wildlife Technology) on the tele-monitoring of several mature walleye in Otsego Lake over the year.

The BFS provided personnel and boats for Otsego Lake Cleanup and Water Chestnut Days. For the 7th year no water chestnuts (*Trapa natans*) were found in Otsego Lake despite a day of intensive searching by BFS interns, graduate students and a cadre of volunteers. Early recognition of the problem and removal of plants in 1999 apparently contributed to its eradication. We will continue to keep an eye on the situation. Thanks to Otsego 2000 and the OCCA for their far-sighted support. We are now actively involved in water chestnut control, 1. In a wetland near Oneonta supported by Millennium Pipeline, Inc., the NYS Power Authority and senator Jim Seward and with help with citizen volunteers organized by the OCCA, and 2. With OCCA and the Goodyear Lake Association controlling a population in Goodyear Lake.

Cleanup, building stabilization and renovation at the Thayer Farm continues. Upgrades at the boathouse are essentially complete. We have improved conditions in “Willie’s Apartment”, a small facility next to the boathouse suitable as a short-term commons area. The Upland Interpretive Center has been completed and is attached to the World Wide Web. It is an all season trail head shelter housing a hands-on interpretive museum/classroom and conference space, office, kitchen, work and storage spaces with full bath and laundry facilities. We have received \$125,000 from the National Science Foundation to begin work on the Hop House renovations this spring. The latter will provide year around facilities, a reception area, two laboratories, conference space and two faculty or graduate student offices. It will become the Administrative Center at the Thayer Farm.

Jeane Bennett-O’Dea continues to work part-time in the office assisting with administrative tasks. Dale Webster has done a great job fulfilling BFS construction

responsibilities at the UIC and continues to work part-time improving and maintaining all facilities at the Thayer Farm. Several talented citizen volunteers again helped at the BFS during the year. They included Kathy Ernst and the following SCUBA divers: Paul Lord, Dale Webster, Brain Benjamin, Jerry Munnett, Ed Lentz and Cyndi Benjamin.

Public support makes our work possible. Funding for BFS research and educational programs was procured in 2006 from many citizens and organizations. Special thanks go to the Clark Foundation who generously supports our annual needs. Thanks also to the Gronewaldt Foundation for providing the resources for the Otsego Lake walleye stocking program, The Peterson Family Conservation Trust, the OCCA, Otsego 2000, the Otsego Lake Association, the Village of Cooperstown, SUNY Oneonta, and the SUNY Graduate Research Initiative.

Willard N. Harman