No Zebra Mussels in the Susquehanna

In April of 1992, and in 1993, zebra mussel larvae (veligers) were reported at the New York State Electric and Gas Company’s Goudy Station on the Susquehanna River in Johnson City. At the same time, Field Station personnel started sampling for mussels in the River. Five sites were established between Otsego Lake and Sayre, PA. which are sampled biweekly during the growing season. This includes a location about 1/4 mile upstream from Goudy Station.

One hypothesis credited the presence of veligers at Johnson City to the spawning activities of an undisclosed population of adults situated upstream.

In order to explore that possibility, we expanded the monitoring during 1993 to 12 additional sites. In the summer of 1994, 21 more areas were surveyed. During the fall of 1994, the same methods were used at 40 additional sites. In the spring of 1995, collections for larvae were made just downstream from Goudy Station at Union-Endicott High School on 14 different dates.

Neither zebra mussel veligers nor adults have been found by consultants at Goudy Station since 1993. Our collecting efforts over three growing seasons have yielded no evidence of mussels. It is apparent that colonies no longer exist in this system in New York State. This is the first documented introduction of zebra mussels into a river system in North America which has not resulted in successful colonization.
Spotlight on 1996 Summer Interns

More than 30 college undergraduates applied for summer internships at the BFS this spring. Seven have been chosen. They are:

Eric Jorczak from Binghamton University. He is sponsored by the Lake and Valley Garden Club to develop materials for natural resource education at Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary.

John O’Conner and Brenda Hewett from SUNY Cobleskill Ag. and Tech. They are Robert C. MacWatters Interns in Fisheries Sciences, sponsored by the Otsego County Conservation Association, SUNY Cobleskill and SUNY Oneonta.

Kristen France from Williams College holds a Rufus J. Thayer Otsego Lake Research Internship, sponsored by the Otsego County Conservation Association (OCCA). This is her fourth year at the BFS.

Sarah Good from Vassar College and Rebekah Perlmutter from Colgate University. These students are sponsored by the Village of Cooperstown and the Otsego County Conservation Association to work on the “Otsego Lake Watershed Homeowners Survey” and “Otsego Lake Management Plan”.

Robin Basile from SUNY Oneonta as a Greenwoods Conservancy Intern (Cranberry Bog biological survey). She is sponsored by the Peterson Family Trust.

Carrie Miller from Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School who was given a Village of Cooperstown Internship to study water quality in the Upper Susquehanna River.

Tavis Austin from Cooperstown Central School who was awarded a Lake and Valley Garden Club Internship.

Jennifer Lopez from Richfield Springs Central and Emera Bridger from Cooperstown Central who received FHV Mecklenburg Conservation Fellowships sponsored by the OCCA.

Three students were sponsored by the New York Academy of Sciences as High School Research Trainees. They are:

Renee Ferguson from Richfield Springs Central, Mary Miner from Cooperstown Central, and Allison Barra from Cherry Valley - Springfield.
Summer at BFS
The 5th Annual Susquehanna Sojourn sponsored by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, started on June 15th at the Station. Participants were on the River eight days, paddling south to Binghamton. We provided a field trip on the Lake, demonstrating water quality sampling and testing. Members of the Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee were deeply involved in project organization.

Cooperstown’s Lake and Valley Garden Club is working to upgrade Goodyear Swamp Sanctuary. The club is sponsoring and supervising two summer interns and providing supplies and signs for improvements.

Carrie Miller, a 1995 summer intern from Cherry Valley-Springfield Central School, recently presented a paper entitled “Fecal Coliform Analysis of Otsego Lake’s Tributaries and the Upper Susquehanna River” at the New York Junior Symposium for Science and the Humanities in Albany. She was one of 17 student researchers from the State selected to present her work which was sponsored by the New York Academy of Sciences.

Bill Harman made two presentations at the New York Federation of Lake Associations meetings held at Lake George, NY., May 3-5. The sessions were on Zebra Mussels and the impacts of powerboats on water quality. He was appointed to the organization’s Scientific Advisory Board. He also presented a talk on professional opportunities in aquatic biology to more than 60 students at the Oneonta High School Career Week Program in March. In addition, he addressed the Cooperstown Rotary Club on July 16 focusing on the Lake’s problems and proposed solutions.

Three new graduate students are starting work at the Station. They are Jeane Bennett O’Day, David Warner and Scott Stanton. They are interested in plant taxonomy, trophic dynamics of the alewife and salmonid migration behavior, respectively.

Emily L’Heureux Simpson, a 1995 summer intern from Morris Central School, won this year’s Liberty Bell Award given by the Otsego County Bar Association. She has recently been admitted to Williams College. Congratulations!

Val Stein, BFS building manager, has retired. Tim Toth has assumed those responsibilities. Our best wishes to both of them.

Kerry Steere, Jessica Harman and Geof Schoradt from Cooperstown Middle School spent several nights after school and weekends at the Station developing a display on recycling for the New York State Senate I-MA GREEN-NATION CELEBRATION which pitted elementary environmentalists from across the State in competition. They won First Place in their class Statewide!

Fiscal challenges in recent years have constrained the work of the Biological Field Station. Private gift support from individuals, foundations, and corporations is essential and an investment in the Biological Field Stations’ continued success and services to the community. For more information, call or write:

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The Biological Field Station is a facility of the State University of New York College at Oneonta.

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