



ECOS NEWS



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse

Celebrating Our 48th Year in Environmental Education

Volume XLVIII

Number 5

October/November 2020



SAVE THE DATE

Rachel Carson Celebration

A virtual celebration

Tuesday, October 27, 2020

Reservation form enclosed



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse will hold its annual Rachel Carson Celebration using Zoom. Dinner will be provided by SUNY Schenectady. Mark Lowery, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation will be the evening's speaker. For more on Mr. Lowery, please see page 6.

How Does It Work?

Return the bottom half of the reservation form with your payment by Friday, October 16, 2020.

The speaker will be broadcast via Zoom beginning at 7 PM Tuesday, October 27, 2020

Pick up dinner at SUNY Schenectady in front of the entrance to the Casola Dining Room between 5:00 PM and 6:30 PM on Tuesday, October 27, 2020. Re-heat it at home.

Access the email that confirms your reservation. It will have a link that will take you to the meeting. This can be done ahead of time. Plan to begin actual log-in 15 minutes before the meeting. See detailed instructions below.

When joining your first Zoom Meeting you have 2 options to download the program to your computer or device. You will have the option to download Zoom when attending your first meeting. When you click on the link that invited you to a meeting, you will be prompted to **Download and run Zoom**. If you choose this option, it is recommended that you join the meeting about 15 minutes early to have time to download. You can also download Zoom ahead of time by going to the Zoom website, zoom.us and scrolling down to the footer. Then click on download and follow the instructions. Once installed you will only need to click on **launch meeting**, then click on **Open Zoom Meetings**.

ECOS NEWS

Published six times per year by

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.

P.O. Box 9118, Niskayuna, NY 12309

Office phone: 518-370-4125

E-mail: info@ecosny.org

Web: www.ecosny.org

Editor: Maureen Gebert

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ruth Bonn, President

Art Clayman, Vice President for Outreach

Cindy Elsenbeck, Vice President for Programs

Sarah Celik, Secretary

Mike Howard, Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Margie Amodeo Andrew Kulmatiski

Josh Bennett Darwin Roosa

Rebekka Henriksen Connie Young



Get Ready for Snow!

Ski and Snowshoe

Trail Clearing

Featherstonough State Forest, Duanesburg

Tuesday, October 13, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Help clear trails for our winter ski trips. Bring loppers and/or a small saw. This area can be wet, so boots are recommended.

Meet trip leader Will Seyse at the corner of Lake and Hardin Roads in Duanesburg at 9:30 a.m. If you have questions, please call Will at (518) 369-4254.

BOARD NEWS

Two board members have joined the ECOS Executive Board. Cindy Elsenbeck has accepted the position of Vice President of Programs and Sarah Celik, the position of Secretary.

Before joining the board, Cindy started her own educational program about bees. She is an avid beekeeper and her program explains about the life of a bee and takes a look inside a beehive. Cindy now conducts her program via Zoom. Cindy is replacing Art Clayman who has transitioned to Vice President of Outreach.

Sarah started a new program for ECOS this year. Neighborhood Tree Photo Share was designed for children up to 12th grade. Each child was to find a particularly interesting tree and take a picture of it. It was then sent to ECOS along with a comment about the tree and why it was interesting. The comments from the children were delightful! The photos and comments were then posted on the ECOS' facebook site. For the fall, the subject is Puddles, Creeks & Rivers (see p.7). Sarah replaces Janet Hollocher who resigned from the board to spend more time with family.

BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

The ECOS Board is looking for a few good men and women. This is an opportunity to have your ideas heard and make a difference.

The Board meets about 10 times per year and works to educate and inspire a passion for our environment. We do this through programs, walks and a variety of outreach.

If you or anyone you know is interested in serving on the ECOS Board, please get in touch with Andy Kulmatiski (kulmatiski@aol.com).



Note: ECOS president, Ruth Bonn is unable to write her piece for this newsletter. She has had a close encounter and it has impacted her typing ability. We wish her a speedy recovery!

A Visit to Christman Sanctuary



A hike in this sanctuary is one of the “Seven Preserve Challenge” walks. I first visited this preserve in the late 1980’s, and it’s been a favorite ever since. I’m pleased that the Nature Conservancy preserved this area. We need natural areas to visit. Then we value them and advocate for their conservation.

I am attracted to:

1. The variety of communities here (old field, young forest, mature woodland, apple orchards and tree plantations),
2. The beautiful, free-flowing Bozen Kill stream with a 30 ft. waterfall,
3. Beautiful well-crafted stone fences, and
4. good trails for hiking, nature walks and cross-country skiing.

The different habitats provide homes for a wide variety of spring wild flowers, such as: mayapple, Dutchman’s breeches, squirrel corn, foam flower, trout lily and star flower. In the fall there’s goldenrod, snakeroot and other composites. It’s also a good place for birdwatching and animal signs.

The Bozen Kill is clean and goes through both sandstone and shale. The shale erodes from under the sandstone, which makes cliffs in the sandstone and provides the waterfalls.

I recommend going clockwise on the blue trail to get to the waterfalls. From the parking area, follow the blue trail for about 0.2 mi, watching for a left turn. Take that turn down into second-growth forest. The trail then makes a switchback and runs along the boundary between the preserve and the Christman homestead. The trail then follows the Bozen Kill to a yellow trail to the

waterfall. The yellow trail goes among and over huge chunks of sandstone on a steep bank of the stream. As the trail approaches the waterfalls, one hears them long before seeing them. Note, if you’re on the blue trail approaching the yellow trail on the bank of the Bozen Kill, and the blue trail takes you uphill, you missed the turn to the yellow trail. To complete the blue trail loop, turn left from the yellow trail. Partway up the hill there is a short wooden fence all by itself. Turn right in front of the fence to stay on the trail.

To go counter clockwise on the blue trail, don’t take the left turn near the start of the blue trail. This branch follows a forest-field boundary then goes straight and drops down a short-steep bank to a bridge. This loop is a shorter route to the falls, but the trail is poorly marked in the last part before the turn onto the yellow trail. That’s why I recommend going clockwise. Note that there are lots of herd paths in the forest just before the bridge, so following the marked trail is a challenge there.

This Sanctuary was formerly part of the Christman homestead, which has been designated a National Historic Landmark. There is a memorial on a second yellow trail.

Across the Bozen Kill is an orange trail loop through an old pasture and mixed plantation. The stream crossing from the blue trail is on stepping stones and is not passible when the stream is high. I’m interested in stone fences, because some of my ancestors were stone masons, and my uncles taught me the trade. The stone fences in the Sanctuary are mostly on the orange trail.

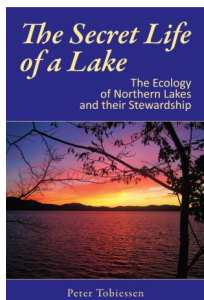
Directions: The address is: 3281 Schoharie Turnpike, Delanson, NY 12053. Use this for GPS directions.

Using maps: from Duanesburg, follow Rt 7 (Duanesburg Rd) west to the first left (Weaver Road). Take this and turn left again onto Schoharie Turnpike. Go 0.75 miles to the Sanctuary parking lot on the right.

— Ed Kautz

BOOKS BY ECOS MEMBERS

The Secret Life of a Lake by Peter Tobbiessen



As you canoe or kayak over your favorite lake, have you ever wondered what's going on below you? Most summer lakes are really two lakes—a warmer upper level and a cooler lower level—each with different chemical, physical and biological characteristics.

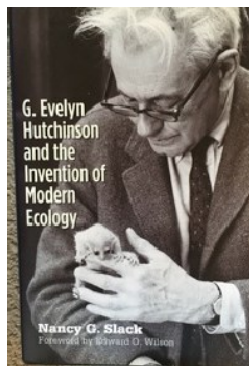
Lakes are complex ecosystems with fascinating creatures interacting in weird and wonderful ways.

The Secret Life of a Lake gives you a peek into a lake's secrets, like microscopic animals with no eyes that can not only sense the presence of a predator but can change their behavior as well as their shape. The book focuses on an Adirondack lake, but the principles discussed are relevant to all medium-sized lakes in northern US and Canada.

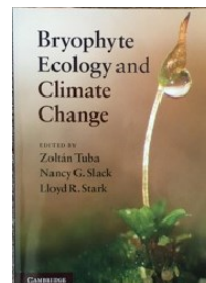
A reviewer in the Daily Gazette wrote, "If you love the Adirondacks the way I do, read this book. You'll learn so much about the lakes of the region and how important that water is to maintaining such a beautiful and vibrant park."

Available at the Open Door and at Amazon and makes a wonderful gift for lake-loving children and grand children.

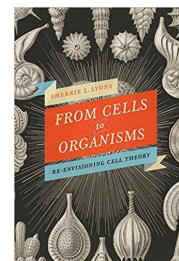
Nancy G. Slack, Ecologist, has written two books relevant to current environmental problems. One is a biography for the general public, *G. Evelyn Hutchinson and the Invention of Modern Ecology*. Hutchinson was a fascinating man and according to E.O. Wilson "One of the few scientists that could undoubtedly be called a genius." Whether or not, he was widely considered the most important ecologist in America during the 20th century and was instrumental in creating several new fields of ecology. But he was also a very active environmentalist, one of the first to write about the loss of biodiversity and carbon dioxide and other problems of the biosphere. His personal life included anthropologist Margaret Mead and writer Rebecca West and an early important woman biologist, his wife, Grace Pickford.



The second book is *Bryophyte Ecology and Climate Change* by Zoltan Tuba, Nancy Slack and Lloyd Stark. It is about recent international ecological studies on climate change using small plants very susceptible to environmental changes. Bryophytes include liverworts, the first green plants on land, and mosses, familiar to most, which had previously been used in many air pollution studies. Mosses have been called the "canaries in the coal mine" because they are directly in contact with their environments and detect and react to small changes in acidity, moisture levels, and especially temperature. Rare species are disappearing with climate change in the alpine and other ecosystems. Many authors have written in this book about their own research including Nancy Slack. Since the publication of the book she has been working on Mt. Washington in New Hampshire on snow bed communities which are very vulnerable to climate change.



More than a history, *From Cells to Organisms* by Sherrie L. Lyons delves into the nature of scientific practice, showing that results are interpreted not only through the lens of a microscope, but also through the lens of particular ideas and prior philosophical convictions.



Before the twentieth century, heredity and development were considered complementary aspects of the fundamental problem of generation, but later they became distinct disciplines with the rise of genetics. Focusing on how cell theory shaped investigations of development, this book explores evolution, vitalism, the role of the nucleus, and the concept of biological individuality. Building upon the work of Thomas Huxley, an important early critic of cell theory, and more recent research from biologists such as Daniel Mazia, *From Cells to Organisms* covers ongoing debates around cell theory and uses case studies to examine the nature of scientific practice, the role of prestige, and the dynamics of theory change.

"Sherrie L. Lyons's fresh insightful, succinct, and accessible reinterpretation of the history of cytology is essential reading for students and general readers who seek to understand the ideas underpinning not only cell biology, but ultimately life itself."

—Marsha L. Richmond, Wayne State University.

Eight Big Environmental Problems

that you can help solve at home

by making your yard more
environmentally friendly

Catastrophic Global Warming

Dead Zones in the Oceans

Insect Armageddon Flooding

Water Pollution Invasive Species

Extinctions of Birds and Amphibians

Loss of Pollinators

Can you really help solve these problems?

Yes!

If you have a yard,

or access to a patch of lawn,

here are five things you can do:

1

Reduce your lawn

By reducing your lawn, you reduce mowing and leaf-blowing, pesticides, fertilizers, and run-off during rainfall.

Problems you help solve:

global warming, water pollution, flooding, insect loss

2

Add native plants

Native plants feed and shelter birds and sustain ecosystems. Healthy native plant communities are better able to resist invasive species.

Problems you help solve:

Bird extinctions, insect loss, habitat loss, invasive species

3

Don't use pesticides

By not using pesticides, you help baby birds, amphibians, and beneficial pollinating insects. You benefit soil micro-organisms and diverse plants. You prevent pesticides from entering streams, drains, and groundwater, and reduce the fossil fuels used in production and transport.

Problems you help solve:

Bird and amphibian extinctions, insect loss, water pollution, global warming

4

Use home compost in your garden

Composting of leaves and vegetable food waste keeps organic matter out of landfills. It reduces pollution, greenhouse gases, and fossil fuels for transport. By using home compost in your garden, you return nutrients and organic matter to the soil, reduce the need for chemical fertilizer, and sequester carbon.

Problems you help solve:

Global warming, water pollution, dead zones in the ocean

5

Make a rain garden

A rain garden catches rainfall and slows run-off from lawns and pavement. Native water-loving plants add diversity to your garden to benefit wildlife.

Problems you help solve:

Flooding, water pollution, bird and amphibian extinctions

J. Hollocher 9/8/20

Favorites from Neighborhood Tree Photo Share



*Mark Lowery,
Department of Environmental Conservation*

New York's Response to the Challenge of Climate Change

New York State is responding to the challenges posed by climate change through programs to reduce the state's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the inevitable consequences of climate change. In particular, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 puts the state on a nation-leading path to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring a just transition to a clean-energy economy.

Mark Lowery will describe anticipated effects of climate change on New York's communities, residents, businesses and natural resources, and necessary solutions. His presentation will include a summary of the CLCPA's requirements and an update on implementation of this law. He will describe New York's continuing work to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, despite the current lack of federal leadership, and programs to identify and mitigate climatic hazards. Finally, he will describe the critical role local governments must play in meeting the state's emission reduction requirements and state support for local action through the Climate Smart Communities program.



Bryce R. captured this image of a cherry tree in his yard in Wyantskill, NY. He writes, "I like this tree because it is full of flowers for a little while. People come and take pictures of our trees in our yard. The thing I like most about the tree is that it makes me feel like I am home."



Jessica D., a rising senior, submitted this photo of a tree at Union College in Schenectady, at the intersection of Union Avenue and Union Street. She writes, "I love the way the trunk wraps around the posts of the gate. It must have taken several years for this to happen, which I think is really interesting. It is an example of how nature triumphs over man. And it shows what would happen if we left nature untouched."

See P. 7 for the fall photo share

Puddles, Creeks & Rivers

Photo share for school age kids

Like a downhill waterslide, water takes a fascinating journey! A single raindrop might fall onto your roof, spout over your driveway, sweep down the street catch basin, tumble out the culvert into a creek, Join into larger streams, and empty into a river that flows into the ocean.

1. Snap a local photo of water anywhere along this journey
2. Email your photo to CelikECOS@gmail.com before November 15, 2020
3. Include:
 - Your Name
 - Your School Grade
 - The Water's Location
 - A Brief Description
4. Check the facebook page of ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse to see favorite puddles, creeks or rivers around the capital region.

On November 20th

Look for ECOS Board's top picks for each age group on our facebook page
ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse

1st thru 5th grade

6th thru 9th grade

10th thru 12th grade



MEMBERSHIP FORM

ECOS Membership

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse

Please check your membership contribution level.

___ \$40 Individual

___ \$75 Donor/Organization

___ \$150 Sustainer

___ \$50 Family

___ \$100 Supporter

___ \$250 Benefactor

___ \$500 Patron

Please make your check payable to ECOS.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

___ As a current GE employee my contribution is eligible for GE Foundation Matching Funds. I have registered with GE for the matching gift by computer at www.gefoundation.com. If you do not have computer access, call customer service at 1-800-305-0669.

___ My employer will match my contribution. I've enclosed my matching gift form.

___ I would like to be a volunteer. Please send me more information.



ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 9118
Niskayuna, NY 12309

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit #20
Rexford, NY

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is located in the Niskayuna Community Center, 2682 Aqueduct Rd. Niskayuna, NY.

UPDATE ON ECOS' ACTIVITIES DURING "PAUSE" 2020



Seven Preserve Challenge

Fall is officially here and the perfect time for a walk in one of the area's nature preserves. Out of caution ECOS is still not offering guided walks but you can explore the preserves on your own.

Trails are well marked and not overly difficult. And remember, there is always a magical memory to take home.

Download the forms at www.ecosny.org.

Want to be involved? Here are some suggestions:

- Join the trail clearing group on October 13th
- Write your own book recommendation
- Recommend a walk you enjoyed with a photo if you can
- Assist with the Universal Trail Assessment by contacting Carole Fraser gypsyparker@gmail.com
- Rachel Carson Dinner October 27, 2020
- Plan on joining the ski and snowshoe outings beginning in January

Seven Preserve Challenge

We are pleased to report that as of September, ECOS has awarded over 125 patches to people completing the Seven Preserve Challenge.

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is a non-political, not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources. ECOS is funded through the support of our members and the community.