



Catskill Mountain House by Thomas Cole

Art Trail Expands

The renowned Hudson River School Art Trail has recently expanded to include 17 sites in New York, one in Massachusetts, and two each in New Hampshire and Wyoming. The Art Trail was launched in 2005 by the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, in partnership with the Olana State Historic Site and other organizations, to provide a series of trails that lead visitors to places that inspired America's first great landscape paintings in the nineteenth century. The artists who created those paintings, including Thomas Cole and Asher B. Durand, were part of the Hudson River School art movement and created landscapes throughout the Hudson Valley and beyond. For more information, visit: www.hudsonriverschool.org.

Archery Program Grows

The National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) continues to grow nationally, with 1.7 million students participating in the program during the 2010-2011 school year. In New York,

the program is sponsored by DEC and has reached more than 21,500 students at 141 schools from 97 school districts. NASP promotes student education and physical education, and is a great way to introduce young people to archery and other shooting sports. Anyone interested in volunteering in the program or nominating a school should contact Melissa Bailey, the state program coordinator, at



James Clayton

(315) 793-2515 or mrbailey@gw.dec.state.ny.us. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/81939.html for more information about the New York program.

Dredging Onondaga Lake

Honeywell International is scheduled to begin dredging contaminated sediment from the bottom of Onondaga Lake this summer. The project, being overseen by DEC, the US Environmental Protection Agency and the NYS Department of Health, is removing contaminants left from previous industrial activities which continue to negatively affect the lake's ecology. Hundreds of scientists, engineers and other local laborers are involved in the dredging of 185 acres of the 3,000-acre lake bottom, as well as 21 acres adjacent to the lake. An estimated 2 million cubic yards of material will be removed. Dredging and capping operations are expected to be completed in 2015 and 2016, respectively, and habitat restoration activities should be completed in 2016. For more information (including how to sign up to receive DEC's Onondaga Lake News e-mail updates), visit www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37558.html.

Invaders Alert

Summer means enjoying the great outdoors, and while you're outside, be on the lookout for invasive plant and wildlife species. Invasives are non-native species that can cause harm to people or the environment. Here are a few plants to be aware of:



Giant Hogweed: Introduced to the U.S. in the late twentieth century, giant hogweed can reach up to 14 feet, has large, compound leaves, and white flower heads that can grow up to 2½ feet in diameter. Giant hogweed can cause serious health threats. When combined with moisture and sunlight, its sap can cause severe skin and eye irritation, including blisters, scars and even blindness. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html for more information on how to identify and report instances of this plant.

Mile-A-Minute Vine: This vine gets its name from its rapid growth rate—up to six inches per day. Native to East Asia, it prefers moist soils, and has recently been spotted in the Upper Delaware River Valley. It has pale green, triangular leaves, a narrow, reddish stem with downward pointing barbs, and berry-like, iridescent blue-covered seeds produced from June through fall. Mile-a-minute has the potential to overtake native vegetation by smothering seedlings and outcompeting mature plants for space, nutrients and sunlight. If you spot mile-a-minute vine, report it at www.nyimapinvasives.org.



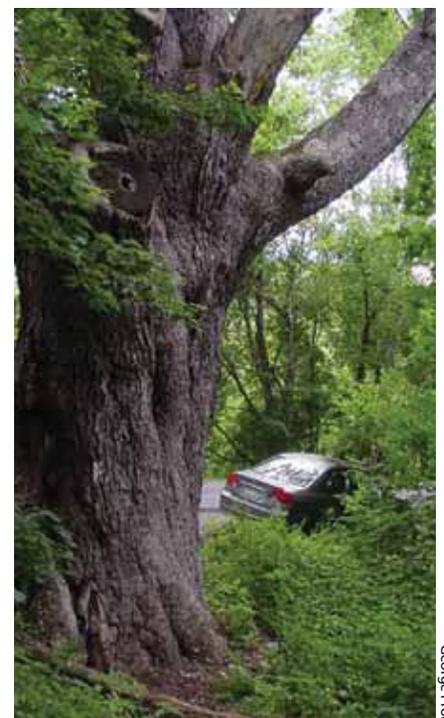
Hydrilla: A relative newcomer to the state, hydrilla is an invasive aquatic plant that is plaguing parts of the Cayuga Inlet. It is considered one of the most invasive aquatic plants in North America, and has resulted in significant ecological, recreational and economic impacts in other regions of the country. Hydrilla spreads rapidly, out-competing native species and dominating aquatic ecosystems. As a reminder, boaters and anglers must remember to inspect and disinfect equipment before using it in another body of water. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/animals/48221.html for more details.



For more information about nuisance and invasive species, check out DEC's website at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/265.html.

New Record Tree

While hiking on the Appalachian Trail in southeastern New York, DEC employee Jim Close came across a massive white oak in the Town of Pawling. Impressed by its huge size, Jim nominated it for the National Register of Big Trees maintained by American Forests. Trees nominated for the register are ranked by total points based on a specific formula. (See "Silent Giants" in the April 2011 *Conservationist*.) After measuring the "Dover Oak" (as it is fondly referred to), a DEC forester confirmed that it is a new champion in New York State. It scored 397 points; the national champion white oak has a score of 458 and is located in Clay, Indiana. Nevertheless, the Dover Oak has its own distinction: It is the largest tree of any species along the entire length of the Appalachian Trail!



George Probus