



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 23, Number 8-9, August-September 2010

Message From The President

We collected over 200 signatures at the Clearwater Revival asking the County to renew their sponsorship of our long-running ShadFest Festival at Croton Point Park. We also had a successful seining event with Naturalist Scott Williamson on Friday, July 23rd on the beach at Mothers Lap. This was a swan song for Scott, as he is being transferred to another County park, and we wish him success in his new position.

Our Annual Riverlovers Sail is on Thursday, August 19th from 6 to 9pm, leaving from the dock at Beacon. We are asking for a donation of \$10 from members and \$20 from non-members (children are free). To get to the dock from route 9D in Beacon, turn down Beekman Street to the railroad station, the Beacon Sloop Club and the dock area.

Looking ahead to September, our kayaking trip is on Sunday, September 12th at 1:00pm, and we will meet at Annsville Paddlesports just north of Peekskill on route 9 (around the circle and to the left a short way). Approximate cost is \$40 per single kayak, and about \$70 for a tandem kayak. Call Warren for reservations and further details.

Our monthly 3rd Friday Potluck in September will discuss composting in your backyard. Come and learn what and how, from those with “down to earth” experience.

Finally, we’re planning a hike in the Hudson Highlands Gateway Park, from Sprout Brook Road off of route 9 north of Annsville Circle. The date is Sunday, October 17th at 1pm. Plan to join us for a Fall scenery adventure.

Entergy’s Indian Point Propaganda

The public meeting on the Indian Point Water Quality Permit was held at Colonial Terrace in Cortlandt on July 20th, hosted by two administrative law judges from the New York Dept. of Environmental Conservation. To say the least, the show put on by Entergy and its minions was a circus, full of untruths, half-truths, mis-representations and irrelevancies.

Let’s put Entergy’s propaganda aside and try to look at the facts. There is no question that the operation of Indian Point is harmful to the Hudson River ecosystem. Their cooling water intake system uses up to two and a half *billion* gallons of river water every day, and kills over a *billion* fish, fish eggs and fish larvae every year. In comparison, New

York City’s eight million residents use less than half that amount of water a day.

To make matters worse, scientific and governmental reports show that ten of the thirteen “signature” fish that define the health of the river are in decline, and a number of commercial fisheries, including the historic American Shad fishery, have had to be closed to prevent depletion of the stocks below the endangered level. Entergy makes the bald-faced claim that “the overall fish population in the Hudson is generally stable or increasing.” They’re hoping the “big lie” technique works for them!

In addition to the impingement and entrainment mortality due to the once-through cooling operation, there is the thermal plume from the water returned to the river at higher temperatures. Because this warmer water has less dissolved oxygen, many fish species are stressed and weakened, leading to reduced biodiversity in the river.

Additional harm to the river results from the radioactive water leaks that have contaminated the groundwater under the plant, and continue to leach toxic waste into the Hudson. And Entergy has the chutzpah (that’s a technical term I’ve heard used) to insist that their two Indian Point reactors should be re-licensed for another twenty years because they are “safe, secure and vital”—none of which is true.

So what has Entergy spent millions of dollars to convince gullible members of the public? That the denial of a State water quality permit will shut the plants down, that jobs will be lost, that taxes and community donations will be lost, and that fossil fuels will have to make up the loss of energy output and lead to increased levels of asthma.

Nowhere do they mention that all they have to do is obey federal and state laws by installing modern low-profile closed cycle evaporative cooling towers. Entergy has been making about a billion dollars profit a year, and it would cost them less than a year’s worth of profits to do the right thing, but they would rather spend millions trying to fool the public into believing they have a better (read *cheaper*) solution. They make the fear-mongering claim that the plumes from the cooling towers would increase asthma rates and cause other public health problems, but not a shred of evidence for this has been presented.

Continued on page 3

Pay your dues now—support our river! \$15 Individual & \$20 Family

It cost \$7.60 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Please consider adding at least that much to your annual dues.

Stormwater Runoff Pollution

Why is stormwater runoff a problem, you might ask? That's a fair question, and here are some of the reasons. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants, and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal waters. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we want to use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water.

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people as well. Sediment can cloud water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment can also destroy aquatic habitats.

Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with too low a dissolved oxygen content.

Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making beach closures necessary.

Debris—plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles, and cigarette butts—that wash into waterbodies can choke, suffocate or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles and birds.

Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint solvents, used motor oil and other automotive fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick or even die from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.

Finally, polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs. So stormwater runoff and its consequences are a real problem, and we need to remember that pollution *prevention* is the real solution the next time we are tempted to just “toss it away.”

Why Invasives Are A Problem

Anyone who has driven on the Saw Mill River Parkway—or on many other local roads—is familiar with the sight of roadside trees, shrubs and other objects—living or not—completely smothered by rampantly growing vines. You might even feel that, if you slow down just a bit in the road, you too might be quickly swallowed up under waves of aggressive growth.

It's not just vines. Walls of 10-foot high Japanese knotweed, and the common reed, phragmites (an aggressive wetland species now advancing into dry ground as well), spring up along the roadside and through the smallest cracks in the pavement. These are impressive and sometimes frightening examples of plant vigor. But the relentless advance of invasive plants is a problem beyond aesthetics. Their spread pushes out native plants and animals, transforms whole habitats, and costs the nation millions of dollars annually in economic losses to the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries, and in the management of waterways, especially navigable ones.

Most people are aware of this growing problem, which is accelerating along with the spread of human development

of the land. Many invasive plants are those that thrive in disturbed conditions. They include those that can colonize roadsides, cleared land, and other byproducts of development sprawl.

A number of invasive plants have also been shown to thrive in environments of increased carbon dioxide and are thus positioned to become increasingly robust in a warming climate. Research has shown that, in an atmosphere of enhanced carbon dioxide and heat, such as that in most urban settings, the result is domination by invasive weed trees of the most undesirable sort, like ailanthus, Norway maples and mulberries.

The definition of “invasive plant,” just as the definition of “weed,” is a subjective one. The term is often used casually for an aggressive plant growing where we would rather that it didn't. However, the increased dominance of invasive plants through our fields, forests and other landscapes, poses extreme challenges for conservation, for agriculture, and the health of our entire ecosystem.

Other than deploring the situation, what can we do? One step would be to support local efforts to preserve open space, such as Saw Mill River Audubon Society does in its eight sanctuaries, and the Town of New Castle does with its Open Space Acquisition bonds. These reserves and parklands limit land disturbance, allow native plants to survive and to re-establish themselves, and permit some parcels of land to maintain their vital ecosystem functions of cleaning our air and water.

Another step is not to purchase invasive species for your garden. A number of invasives found in local woodlands are escapees from home gardens, such as barberry. Better understanding of the problem is another good step. A number of organizations offer suggestions and information for what individuals can do. Here are a few websites:

www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/InvasivePests.html
www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov
www.plants.usda.gov
www.ipcnys.org
www.invasiveplants.net
www.cce.cornell.edu
www.fs.fed.us/

The Saw Mill River Coalition schedules periodic volunteer vine-cutting days along the Saw Mill River Parkway. Check www.sawmillrivercoalition.org for details.

Of course, not all invasive species are plants. Many are insects and other animals. Some are introduced exotics that run rampant once they are out of reach of their natural predators, but not all invasive species are exotics. Some are actually native species, like the white-tailed deer, whose population has exploded by taking advantage of habitat disturbances caused by humans. In turn, excessive deer browsing is depressing regeneration of native plants in our forests, impoverishing habitat for songbirds and other wildlife, and enabling invasive species to predominate.

Managing invasive plants requires taking a larger view than just looking at plants. We need to understand the interactions of all components of our ecosystem, including the actions of the ultimate invasive species, *Homo sapiens*—that's us!



What's Happening When

Sundays at the Beacon Sloop Club, **Farmers' Market** 10am-4pm. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, lamb & mushroom spring rolls.

August 15, Sun, noon-5pm, **Beacon Sloop Club's Corn Festival**, at the Beacon waterfront. Feast on 1000 ears of corn (just a buck an ear) & vegetarian & non-vegetarian chili. Live music, free sails on the Woody.

August 19, Thurs, 6-9pm, **Riverlovers annual sail on the Clearwater**, sailing from the dock at Beacon. Mark your calendars! Info & reservations: Call Warren or Gunnar.

August 21-22, Sat-Sun, **Garrison Fine Arts & Crafts Fair**, at Garrison waterfront.

Sept 12, Sun, 1pm, **Riverlovers kayaking trip**, at Annsville Paddlesports, Annsville Circle, Peekskill. Info & reservations: Call Warren at 739-9028.

Sept 17, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Topic: Composting in your yard. Info: www.Riverlovers.org.



Here's your opportunity to get out on the water and enjoy the river. Sunday, Sept. 12, 1pm at Annsville Paddlesports.

Continued from page 1

Closed-cycle cooling is the legally-required "best available technology" that would reduce fish kills by 93 to 98%, and this is not disputed by Entergy. All new power plants must be built with it, and nearly half the nuclear power plants in the country have been using it since it was developed in the 1970s. Both the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the EPA determined in the 1970s that Indian Point must retrofit to closed-cycle cooling because of the impacts to fish, but a succession of managements has used every trick in the book to avoid or delay the exercise of responsibility on this issue.

Of course Entergy has reaped enormous profits from delaying the upgrading of Indian Point to the closed-cycle cooling that the law requires. They simply decided—purely for financial gain—that it was cheaper to pay lawyers than to comply with the law and protect the environment. How's that for a "good neighbor" policy?

GE Loses Superfund Appeal

In case you didn't hear about it, a Federal Appeals Court has rejected GE's contention that the Superfund Law is unconstitutional. This suit was filed in 2000, and has wended its way through the judicial labyrinth for a decade. Since it is unlikely that GE will appeal this issue further, holding the polluter responsible now appears to be settled law.

Here's how to join Riverlovers...

(the local Clearwater Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area)

Application for Riverlovers Membership

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

Renewal ___ New ___ Additional Contribution \$ _____

Please send check (\$15 individual, \$20 family) for 2010 to: Riverlovers, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

I want to have *Riverlovers Currents* delivered electronically.

Send to this e-mail _____

Yes! I Also Want To Join Clearwater

Please sign me up in the following membership category:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual \$40 | <input type="radio"/> Mariner \$500 |
| <input type="radio"/> Family \$55 | <input type="radio"/> Sailing-Master \$1000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Contributor \$100 | <input type="radio"/> Benefactor \$5000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Sponsor \$200 | <input type="radio"/> Student \$10 |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Visa | <input type="radio"/> MC | <input type="radio"/> Discover | <input type="radio"/> Amex |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|

Account No. _____

Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

Mail To: Clearwater, Inc.
112 Little Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Your Clearwater membership gets you the *Navigator* and other benefits, along with being part of Riverlovers' "parent" organization representing individuals and Sloop Clubs up and down the Hudson Valley "working for the River."

Riverlovers - Who We Are

Riverlovers, Inc. is a chartered Sloop Club of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., an environmental non-profit membership organization whose most visible symbol is its member-owned and operated 106-ft. sloop "Clearwater." As a local affiliate, Riverlovers' purposes are:

- Maintaining an active Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area;
- Meeting the needs and interests of individuals through a variety of interest groups, including monthly Potluck dinner meetings with varied programs, environmental education and awareness, boats and sailing, concerts and festivals;
- Organizing trips and recreational activities, seminars and workshops, learn-to-sail programs and Clearwater visits;
- Research, education and action to protect our rivers and our environment;
- Working for access and effective land use along the Hudson River and its tributaries;
- Boating projects on the Hudson River, to reach out to the surrounding community for educational and recreational purposes.

We invite you to join us. Contact our interest group coordinators, or write to Riverlovers, Inc., P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Together we can do a lot!

Riverlovers Officers

President:	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeriti	Eric Marshall	827-3696
	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112



Interest Group Coordinators

Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Envir. Education	Bill Flank	238-8240
Membership	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Newsletter	Bill Flank	238-8240
Newsletter Distribution	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Outreach		
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Publicity		
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

Web Page: www.riverlovers.org

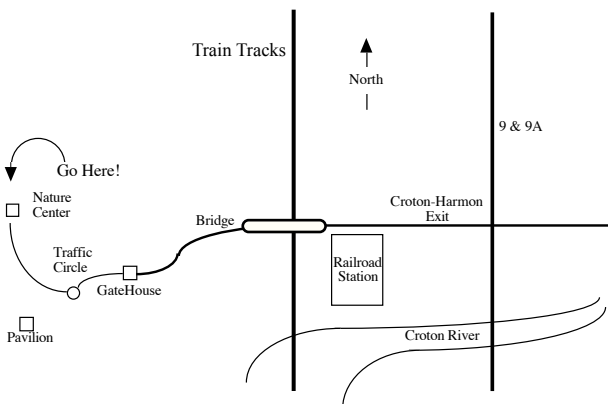
Newsletter Submissions

Please send news articles and other items of interest to Riverlovers Currents, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Include your name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted on request.

Newsletter Committee: Editor, Bill Flank; Associate Editor, Mel Fitting

August-September Newsletter Contributors: Stephen Coleman, Warren Lindholm, George Shakespear

Riverlovers Monthly Potluck Topic: the ins and outs of composting



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Friday, September 17, 2010

6:30pm

Croton Point Nature Center