



New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation

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Environment DEC Newsletter

August 2006

In this issue:

More than \$10 Million in Grants Awarded for Brownfield Projects Across the State

Innovative Energy Programs to be Located at Saratoga Technology and Energy Park

More Than \$1.6 Million Announced for Parks, Waterfront Revitalization and Preservation Projects in Central New York

Governor Announces Opening of Scaron Manor Day Use Area

The Return to Glory of Onondaga Lake

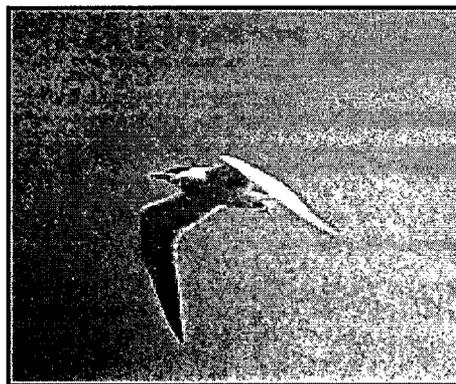
DEC Announces Record State Natural Gas Production in 2005

Investigation of Lake Ontario Shore Bird and Fish Deaths Continues

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is still investigating the cause of the deaths of birds found along the shores of Lake Ontario and the Thousand Islands area of the St. Lawrence River. DEC advised the public to take precautions in handling birds and wildlife from these areas until the investigation is completed. Gulls and terns collected from Little Gallo Island during the second week of July tested positive for Type E botulism.

Botulism Found in Fish-eating Birds

In recent years, Type E botulism (*Clostridium botulinum*) has affected fish and birds in lakes Huron and Erie, and was first documented in birds near Lake Ontario in 2002. Type E botulism is a specific strain of botulism most commonly affecting fish-eating birds. It causes paralysis in the affected birds and is often fatal. The disease results from the ingestion of a toxin produced by the botulism bacterium and can be harmful to humans who eat birds or fish that have been poisoned by this toxin.



Terns from Little Gallo Island in Lake Ontario have tested positive for Type E botulism

Virus Found in Fish NOT a Threat to People

DEC Opens New Long Island Sound Boat Launch and Preserves Important Tidal Wetlands

Erie Canal Greenway Grant Program Announced

In June of 2006, DEC announced the discovery of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS) virus in several fish species from Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, including round goby, muskellunge, and smallmouth bass. VHS is a pathogen of fish and poses no risk to human health. Swimming in Lake Ontario or St. Lawrence River waters poses no risk to human health from either botulism or VHS virus.

No Reports of Human Illness

DEC Announces Finalized Bay Scallop and Oyster Regulations

DEC Helps Flood Recovery Effort

Ground Broken on Tribeca Segment of Hudson River Park

An outbreak of Type E botulism first appeared in southern Lake Huron in 1998 and spread to Lake Erie in 1999. In the fall of 2000, the botulism had spread to the eastern part of Lake Erie and thousands of water birds were found washed up on the shoreline. DEC subsequently confirmed Type E botulism in several species of fish and waterfowl from Lake Erie. In July of 2002 and August of 2005 several gulls were tested around the eastern basin of Lake Ontario and many of those tested positive. There have been no reports of any human illnesses associated with these outbreaks.

Monitoring Continues

DEC Acquires Chautauqua Lake Waterfront Property

Comment Period Continues on Revised Superfund/Brownfield Regulations

Type E botulism has not been found in any fish from Lake Ontario or the St. Lawrence River. DEC is continuing to gather sick and dead birds and fish to check for botulism or other diseases. As part of annual monitoring for the disease, sweeps of specific stretches of the Great Lakes shorelines occur each fall, and any dead birds collected are tested for the disease.

Hunter/Angler Advisories

DEC Rangers, Other Staff and Volunteers, Dispatched to Southern California

Ground Broken for the First Ethanol Refueling Pump on the Thruway

Come Celebrate Smokey Bear's

Hunters and anglers are advised not to harvest waterfowl or fish that are sick or acting abnormally. A sick fish typically will have a hard time remaining upright, in other words, swimming on its side, belly up, or sometimes floundering on the surface trying to swim down, among other potential signs of sickness. See a link to the complete press release that this story was taken from in "Related Links" below for a list of precautions for anglers and hunters when handling fish and game.

Reporting Sick or Dead Wildlife

62nd Birthday at
Mount Loretto

State Agencies
Announce Effort
to Restore a Rare
Plant in Stewart
State Forest

DEC Protects Bat
Hibernaculum in
the Adirondacks

Report Finds PCB
Damage to
Navigation in
Champlain Canal

If you must handle dead or dying fish or birds, use rubber or plastic protective gloves or a plastic bag. Any discovery of dead or distressed fish or wildlife, such as water birds showing a condition known as "limberneck" that results from paralysis of the neck muscles, should be reported to DEC's Division of Fish and Wildlife offices in Buffalo at 716-851-7010, Allegany at 716-372-0645, Avon at 585-226-2466, Syracuse at 315-426-7400, Cortland at 607-753-3095, Watertown at 315-785-2261 or Cape Vincent at 315-654-2147. See "Related Links" below for links to web information on the topics in this story.

Related Links

[Complete Press Release](#)

[DEC Regional Offices](#)

[Virus Confirmed in Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River Fish; July 2006 Environment DEC](#)

[Type E Botulism in Lakes Erie and Ontario - Q & A](#)

[DEC Investigating Death of Birds on Lake Ontario Shore](#)

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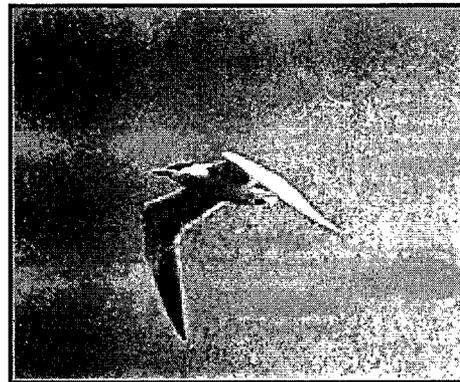
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