



United States Department of Interior

Fish & Wildlife Service
Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office
405 North French Road, Suite 120A
Amherst, New York 14228



LOWER GREAT LAKES FISHERY RESOURCES OFFICE

MONTHLY REPORT August 2003



405 NORTH FRENCH ROAD
SUITE 120A
AMHERST, NEW YORK 14228
COMM: 716-691-5456
FAX: 716-691-6154
E-MAIL: FIRST NAME_LAST NAME@FWS.GOV
WEB: HTTP://LOWERGREATLAKES.FWS.GOV

LGLFRO Staff

Chris Castiglione, GIS Specialist
Cara Ewell Hodkin, Biological Technician
Kofi Fynn-Aikins, Chief
Mike Goehle, Fishery Biologist
Sandra Keppner, Invasive Species Coordinator
Allyson Knapp, Biological Technician
Mike Sowinski, Biological Technician
Geoff Stevens, Biological Technician
Gail Testa, Administrative Officer
Betsy Trometer, Fishery Biologist
Gwen Warren, Office Automation Assistant
Mike Weimer, Fishery Biologist
Emily Zollweg, Fishery Biologist
Jessica Morgan, Biological Technician
(on temporary duty from Iroquois NWR)

Volunteers

Mark Spara, Margaret Siller

LAKE STURGEON RESTORATION

Emily presented a paper at the American Fisheries Society meeting in Quebec (8/14) on a cooperative project with Great Lakes commercial fishers to tag incidentally caught lake sturgeon. Approximately 20 people attended the presentation.

Emily was invited to the Cornell Biological Field Station to participate in lake sturgeon sampling and food availability sampling (8/21). The field station crew demonstrated a habitat sled which more accurately samples the substrate and organisms that lake sturgeon feed upon than traditional substrate sampling methods.

Emily responded to a report of a fish kill at Niagara Shores Conservation Area (8/27). Four dead lake sturgeon were discovered along with birds, a squirrel, and freshwater drum. Estimated time of mortality was early August.

LAKE ONTARIO

Betsy continued the Lake Ontario biomonitoring program. With the help of staff and volunteers, they collected samples at three nearshore stations in Lake Ontario and one nearshore station in Lake Erie (8/4, 5, 19, 20). A total of four embayment and nine nearshore sites are sampled 12 times a year, and offshore sites are sampled a couple of times a year. Samples are collected for phosphorus, chlorophyll a, and zooplankton analysis. The purpose of this program is to monitor key lower trophic variables that will characterize overall ecosystem change.

LAKE ERIE

Betsy continued the Lake Erie lower trophic level monitoring program. With the help of staff and volunteers, they collected samples at two stations outside Buffalo Harbor (8/13). A total of 18 stations in Lake Erie and two in Lake St. Clair are sampled 12 times a year. Samples are collected for phosphorus, chlorophyll a, zooplankton, and phytoplankton analysis. The purpose of this lakewide program is to monitor key lower trophic variables that will characterize long-term ecosystem changes.

NIAGARA RIVER

American eel

Betsy, Cara, and Dawn Dittman (USGS, Biological Resources Division) conducted American eel surveys in the lower Niagara River (8/26-28). Although some eels were observed while electrofishing, none were collected.

INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM

Coordination

Mike G. gave a presentation to the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society meeting in Akwesasne, NY (8/6) titled, "2003 Invasive Species Activities at the LGLFRO." In addition to the presentation, invasive species information was distributed including ID cards and "Protect Our Waters" brochures. 31 people were in attendance.

Round Goby

Mike W. submitted a manuscript entitled "The distribution of round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) in Eighteenmile Creek, Erie County, New York" for publication in the Fall, 2003 edition of "Aquatic Invaders" (8/21). The article will provide an overview of surveys conducted in October 2001 investigating the presence of round goby in a western New York tributary of Lake Erie.

HABITAT EVALUATION/RESTORATION

Mike S., Allyson, and Natalie Brown (Buffalo State College) conducted a pre-restoration survey of the east branch of Cazenovia Creek in Holland, N.Y. (8/29). The purpose of the survey was to identify fish species inhabiting the restoration site pre- and post construction.

FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (FEDERAL LANDS)

Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (NFARS)

Impacts of grass mowing on bird species

Jessica and Cara, with the help of staff and volunteers, completed the point counts and nest searches at NFARS and the nearby BFI landfill (our non-mowing site). This study is examining the difference in bird species and nesting success between the mowed NFARS and non-mowed grassland.

Management for the Control of Purple Loosestrife and Common Reed

Jessica and Cara continued the surveys for estimating the abundance and distribution of purple loosestrife and common reed, as well as the monitoring for the presence and impact of the

released beetles on purple loosestrife. These sampling sites will continue to be monitored through the fall and next year to evaluate the effectiveness of the beetles as a biological control. In addition, the effectiveness of mowing to control both purple loosestrife and common reed will be evaluated.

Fort Drum

Emily attended the Semi-Annual Fort Drum Natural Resources Meeting (8/28). Summer field activities were reported and plans were discussed for the fall season.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Mike G., Kofi, Allyson, and Mark Spara (volunteer) represented the LGLFRO at the 2003 Fleet Waterfest (8/2-3) adjacent to the Erie Basin Marina. Office displays included invasive species, native species, geographic information systems (GIS), and live fish.

The LGLFRO entered an educational display at the Erie County Fair ("America's Largest County Fair") in Hamburg, New York (8/5-8/17). The office display, titled "The Lower Great Lakes Fishery Resources Office: Dedicated to Making a Difference", won the First Prize "Premium Blue Ribbon Award" for all natural resource/environmental exhibits entered at the Fair. Attendance at the LGLFRO booth was tallied at 12,204, the highest total recorded since participating in the 12-day event.

Mike W. and Mike G. represented the LGLFRO at the "Make Every Day Earth Day Expo" held at the Buffalo Zoo (8/17). Approximately 750 people attended the event, which included booths and displays from a variety of natural resource agencies and non-profit environmental groups from throughout western New York.

This monthly report provides a brief, in-house report on recent activities, issues or events of the Lower Great Lakes Office. Its contents should not be used or cited elsewhere in any way without first contacting our staff. This is to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information.