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Coalition Against Water Disposal of Contaminated Sediments
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TREES CAN SAVE THE WORLD, BUT WE COULD NOT SAVE GRANITEVILLE WETLANDS FOREST

By Jack Bolembach

One of the major factors causing global warming is the massive destruction of the Earth's forests and wetlands. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, greenhouse gas and emit oxygen. Trees also can mitigate the pollution.

Most devastating is the cutting down of trees throughout tropical regions like Brazil, Africa, and Indonesia. Since 1970, huge tracts of natural forest and wetlands have been destroyed while at the same time, in direct correlation, the Earth's temperatures and sea levels are rising.

New York City is no exception. Since 1970, acres upon acres of wetlands and trees have been eliminated. Unbelievably in a post-Hurricane Sandy Staten Island with the threat of another deadly storm looming and increased air pollution adversely affecting the diverse ethnic neighborhoods on the North Shore, the 18 acre Graniteville Wetlands Forest is about to be destroyed.

For what purpose? This natural wetlands landscape was supposed to be protected by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. These 18 acres of trees were tagged for preservation by the NYS DEC in the 1990s. Unfortunately, Governor Cuomo appointed a new Commissioner of the NYS DEC who abandoned all efforts to protect this unique wild landscape. In August 2012, it was decided by those with power and money that there is more value and importance in creating a huge box store with a large asphalt parking lot.

It was erroneously determined there was no value in preserving and protecting a bucolic natural landscape. False claims were accepted that the natural wetlands forest was devoid of any wildlife. The fact is it's a landscape of vernal ponds, diversified plant life, and wildlife. It's also a natural conduit where wildlife can migrate between other natural areas creating a thriving, healthy, larger natural environment. Contrary to the false claims, these 18 acres of trees are very valuable as part of an ecosystem where many wild animals survive including deer, fox, skunk, raccoon, muskrat, opossum, frogs, salamanders, turtles, snakes, hawks, and other birdlife. Currently, a narrow greenway connects these 18 acres of Graniteville Forest with Mariners Marsh a mile away. It's utilized by deer and foxes.

The marsh is now undergoing remedial work from damage caused by contaminated oil from a nearby five-alarm warehouse fire. Only a few years ago beavers made a dam at the marsh but they have since moved elsewhere.

Within days bulldozers will eradicate this rare, natural 18-acre habitat at the Graniteville Wetlands Forest as the greedy builders go on to make fortunes. I was told that this is progress, that it will provide jobs and products for local residents and consumers to purchase

In this Edition

and it will generate tax revenue. I say build it somewhere else and do not sacrifice this unique natural environment.

Times have changed but the greed of people has not. In the early 1890s, Oscar Wilde wrote "nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing." Sadly, this summarizes the destruction that will soon befall the precious, irreplaceable natural wonder of the Graniteville Wetlands Forest.

COASTAL STAPLETON 2021

By Jim Scarcella

In June, NRPA teamed with Kayak Staten Island and UAU Environmental Protectors to tackle the Front Street Shoreline. The day was beautiful, a little warm, with outgoing tide. We set up tables and supplies behind the Clifton SIR station. Howie Fishbein helped me set up the table and our NRPA banner.

Vinnie Rocconova used a large broom to sweep up broken glass bottles and cigarette butts and discarded e cigarette parts. Nicole Doz and John Benedetto started cleaning Gatorade, Red Bull and dog poop plastic bags from the beach. Canada geese scat is polluting the water here along with people discarding straws and condoms. PPE like rubber gloves and "paper" face masks. Here was a smattering of beverage refreshments cans that we were able to recycle. The United Activities Unlimited (UAU) team stopped by to help pick up discarded fishing tackle and bait boxes. The biggest surprise of the cleanup was a four-foot-long cartilage with a few bone plates. After further examination and discussion, we concluded it was the skeleton remaining of a short nose sturgeon, a federally protected endangered species.

We had some walk-up volunteers and saw our friends from the SI Bicycle Association pedal by.

This area once housed the "watchtower" or harbor watch house where the ships bringing in goods could be directed to safe port.

Thanks to a prompt response by Dept. of Sanitation the trash was carted away, but sadly there was no trash cans in sight.

Stapleton waterfront is beautiful let's keep it that way.

BUONO BEACH NOTES

By Jim Scarcella

NRPA was able to keep things going even with the onset of some warmer and/or stormy weather. In July, we worked with Urban Park Rangers, Raiders of the Tossed Trash, and UAU Environmental Protectors to keep our Parks and beaches clean. We met down at Hylan Boulevard, Rosebank with spectacular views of Lower NY Bay and Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. In attendance was Howie and Vince, Zsakee and Rob from UAU, Tony Rose, and Jack Bolembach. It was great. We collected three separate strands of 2 -inch-thick tugboat rope, steel sheeting from a refrigerator frame, all kinds of plastic containers, beverages. We also cleaned between the rip-rap boulders placed here about 20 years ago. Johnny Benedetto and Nichols Doz led the charge on these items.

This particular cleanup was organized by Katie Leung, a graduate student at Miami of Ohio, who is doing a graduate thesis on reducing plastic use and plastic waste in our society. We know that for sanitary reasons, many medical procedures required plastic use and disposal. But please let us be more conscious of our decision when we are food and beverage shopping. Do

we really need so many single-use straws, plastic bags, excessive packaging, oversized plastic containers, and more garbage for our backyard and our beaches parkways and ocean?

In addition, there are great groups that work to reduce plastic consumption, like Ocean Conservancy, Clean Ocean Action and a new team called "4 Ocean" and I was fortunate to get steel drink containers and 100 percent cotton Shirt from 4 Ocean recently.

Jack Bolembach states that this strange looking piece is formed from illegally dumped grease by restaurants into Storm Water Catch Basins flowing untreated directly into the river or harbor.

Jim Scarcella says that although it is not a protected species and unfortunately, it was dead already, I think you would like this, the largest pufferfish I've ever seen.

Also, NRPA teamed up Special Tees for new polo shirts, navy blue T shirts and caps that are confident and comfortable.

Back at the cleanup, Tony Rose piloted a drone done the Beach to get an aerial view of the shoreline. I rescued two fiddler crabs from a small green plastic container and someone went swimming at the conclusion of the clean-up with a report that the water was refreshing.

Special thanks to Carmine Raimondi of Partnership for Parks who helped us facilitate the cleanup.

TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY -FIVE YEARS LATER

By Jack Bolembach

I went with friends to the Revolutionary War Museum in Philadelphia on Thursday. On display in the section about the British Invasion of NYC was a drawing made by British Army Engineer Archibald Robertson on July 12, 1776.

Archibald sketched the drawing seen below from the top of today's Wards Hill facing southeast towards the Narrows in New York Harbor. The British fleet began arriving on June 28th. off the east shore of Staten Island. Staten Island had a combined population in June 1776 of around 3,000 people. Mostly Dutch, French Huguenot, and English settlers. There were also about six hundred Black Slaves on the island.

By mid-August, 40,000 soldiers and sailors had arrived on Staten Island over six weeks consisting of English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, German, American Loyalists, Loyalist Native Americans, and former Slaves or runaway Slaves. They prepared and trained for the upcoming Battle of Brooklyn. Staten Island was the staging ground for the largest battle of the Revolutionary War which was an American Army defeat.

On the day Archibald drew this drawing the British Commander of all forces in North America, Admiral Lord Howe was arriving on Staten Island.

The second picture below is a photo I took Sunday evening with my cell phone around 7:30 near the same location Archibald was when he sketched the panoramic view of the British fleet in the Harbor.

The location where Archibald was 245 years ago was not difficult to find. I knew it had to be somewhere on the top of Wards Hill facing the Narrows. The area today is overdeveloped with housing and streets despite being within the Special Hillside Preservation District.

There are actually more trees today than what existed in 1776. The landscape in colonial times was mostly farmland as you can see below in Archibald's eyewitness drawing of the British fleet, surrounding landscape, and the Narrows.

I parked my car and walked around searching for the site. Houses and trees blocked the view but luckily one small area above a steep embankment gave me the same panoramic view that Archibald had.

The Staten Island shoreline today due to landfill over two centuries extends about half a mile into the harbor beyond Bay Street. In 1776 the shoreline was at present-day Bay Street as it was at Edgewater Street. I don't know if there exists another modern photo to compare and show the change from the time Archibald drew this scene.

BARCLAY BEACH

By Jim Scarcella

In June 2021, NRPA paid a visit to Barclay Beach, Annadale. It was a beautiful sunny day and the southwest wind was substantial.

We parked on the Barclay Avenue Street end next to the tall green plywood construction fence that's been in place since the demolition of Carmen's Restaurant (750 Barclay Ave), which was unfortunately destroyed by Hurricane Sandy, October 29, 2012. There were some attempts at rebuilding, but nature proved too powerful to tame. Carmen served great seafood risotto and sangria, and had a large saltwater fish and lobster tank.

The corrugated steel sheeting wall is deeply rusted but it looks like it's uncompromised. There is a layer of stone (rip rap) west and north of the sheeting, and a step-down series of boulders closer to the water's edge. The chain link fence is mostly in a shambles, posts missing and fence ties removed. After the fence is a waterside "plaza" about eight hundred square feet. Alongside the plaza is a retaining wall with the fence removed by various storms and/or vandals, then come beautiful vistas of Raritan Bay.

Climbing unto the boulders rip rap, soon you are walking on the beach sand. there is a well-worn breakwater nearby, and the beach is beautiful. We transverse south towards the old Spanish Camp parcels where Dorothy Day used to live. Dorothy Day was a great organizer and helper for thousands, even published a newsletter called

(continued next page)

the "Catholic Workers" which informed many of issues and helping the poor and homeless. Incredible strength and fortitude.

There are some old, well rusted auto parts from cars dumped around 1960. I found a two-foot length, half inch diameter piece of copper tubing that looked fully bronzed, and an insulated brass pipe and coupling that may have come from a yacht's diesel engine. There also was a well-worn refractive clay brick product with a skim coat of white cement.

This is a wonderful place for a waterfront park, there is ample parking, and the lot size is 200' by 800'. NRPA will inquire of our elected and report back on possibility

of a passive recreation waterfront park for this location.

NRPA revisited the site in July 2021 and picked up about twenty-four aluminum cans (beer, iced tea, and soda) a dozen plastic water bottles, a microphone cover, E cigarette cartridges and oils, a rubber handball, and sent a photo of the site to our elected officials for follow up. Also, my nephew, John Scarcella, and I visited Barclay Beach in early August. We carefully navigated the rip rap boulders to discover this beautiful beach at low tide and had a wonderful time.

HOW WILL CONSUMERS MOVE AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS?

by Ida Sanoff

We have all heard that in order to stop global warming, we must stop using fossil fuels and transition to electricity that is generated by wind or solar energy. We are seeing the impacts of global warming right now with out-of-control wildfires, unprecedented flooding, and killer storms. We are trying to head in the right direction by moving away from fossil fuels. But unless more attention is given to how consumers incorporate these changes into their daily lives, the transition will take so long that the climate damage cannot be undone.

A while back, I started looking at how the move away from fossil fuels would impact consumers. Recently, I did some research to look at some of the choices we will all have to make in the coming years.

We've heard that by 2030, almost all new cars will be powered solely by electricity. I went online and checked out some well-known brands to see what was available now. Some manufacturers offered a wide range of hybrid models with a few that were all-electric. Others only had a few all-electric models. It was difficult for me to understand how mileage was calculated for electric cars, because how do you compute a "gallon" of electricity? So, I'm just going to go by what I saw on the websites when I say that it looks like you will get much better mileage with an electric vehicle than you do with gas. For most manufacturers, the cost of a

hybrid model was just a little higher than a car with a gas engine. But for others, the price of all-electric cars was substantially higher than for gas-powered models. As with most new technologies, I assume the cost will go down over time. If you get a used car in the coming years, almost all that will be available will probably still be gas-powered.

When it comes to charging your car, there are several levels of chargers. It will cost more to charge your car with a slower charging station than with a faster one. Most electric cars come with a plug that can go into a standard home 110-volt outlet with a 20-ampere circuit. But it will take several hours to fully charge, maybe overnight. The second-level charger will cut your charging time by almost half. But you need a 240-volt line on a 40 to 100 amp circuit. A Level 3 charger will charge your car three times as fast as a Level 2 charger and some may even charge in about an hour, but there aren't many Level 3 charging stations around. The national average cost to install a charging station is $750, but can go as high as $1900. Of course, this does not include any additional wiring that will have to be done in your home or because we live in NYC, travel time for the electrician.

OK, you installed your new high-speed charging station in your garage and you are happily charging your car. But your home is heated by what used to be called "clean gas heat". At the time, it was cleaner

than your old oil-burning heating system and it was a lot cheaper than using an electric heating/hot water system. Although it may have cost more to install, over the long run, it was cheaper to use gas than electricity. But as more electricity is generated by wind and solar power, electric heating and hot water should become a lot cheaper. In addition, electric hot water heaters have fewer parts than gas heaters and usually last longer. So, the costs of switching from gas to electricity should be offset by your lower energy costs.

But what if you don't live in a private home and you park your car on the street? Although NYC recently announced that they will begin installing street charging stations, it will probably take decades for charging stations to appear on every block. It took years just to switch over from coin-operated parking meters to Muni Meters. And we've all had problems with Muni Meters that don't work. Either it won't take your credit card or it's out of paper or there is some sort of malfunction. But there is usually another Muni Meter on the same block that is working. Getting a parking space in NYC is a miracle in and of itself. Imagine circling around and around trying to snag a parking spot and charger and you finally get one. But the charging station by your spot isn't functioning and you need to charge your car. What are you supposed to do then? Also, large parts of NYC are in flood zones. Most of us in the flood zone did not have electricity after Sandy. If you were lucky, you were only without power for a few days. In some parts of southern Brooklyn, it took weeks for power to be restored. We have not heard anything about whether charging stations will be able to withstand floods.

If you live in an apartment building that provides parking and you are lucky enough to have scored a parking spot, it's like hitting the lottery. But what happens when more and more people purchase electric cars?

Some high-rise complexes in southern Brooklyn have large outdoor parking lots. Several years ago, there was a proposal to install solar panels above some of the lots. But these needed underground storage batteries for the times when there was no sun and that's where the project collapsed. Doing the necessary installation and wiring in an outdoor lot shouldn't be too complicated although it will certainly be expensive. It will be up to the individual buildings to investigate if there are practical solutions now to use solar energy to for charging stations.

What about buildings that have garages? Will your building install charging stations in the garage? Will it be a few stations or will there be one for each parking space? This will entail some complex and expensive rewiring. Who will pay for it? Will you, as the renter of the garage space, see your rental fees skyrocket to offset the cost? If you live in a co-op or condo, will you get hit with a large assessment? To make matters worse, many high-rise buildings in the flood zone have literally spent the last ten years repairing damage after Hurricane Sandy and raising their electrical systems above flood level. This was time-consuming, complicated, and costly. Insurance did not cover all of the costs. There were holes in walls and ceilings, asbestos abatement, and increased cleaning costs because of all of the dust. Residents were not happy when gyms and children's playrooms were closed for months or even years as the work went on. There are many 1960's era high-rise buildings in southern Brooklyn. It remains to be seen how many can afford to install charging stations for cars.

Ok, but what about using electricity for heat and hot water? Our buildings recently installed three new gas-burning boilers, at considerable expense. Since we are a co-op, the cost was covered with an additional mortgage plus an assessment. But there is only so much debt that a building can carry. Luckily, boilers are usually good for quite a long time. But if the building has to switch from gas to electricity in the coming years, what will this entail? Will we need new boilers that can use electricity instead of gas?

Then I thought about my gas oven which is pretty old. What if I wanted to replace it? I went to the websites of some well-known appliance chains and began a search for a hypothetical new oven. Wow, ovens have really changed. Many are now loaded with features like built-in air fryers, griddles, convection, and steam cleaning. And the kitchen has become the showplace of the home. I was astonished to see ovens that cost $8,000 and even more! But I found several gas ovens that were the size I needed and didn't have too many fancy features that I probably would never use. My hypothetical gas oven would cost me about a thousand dollars and my existing wall outlet would power the electronic ignition. I would probably need a licensed plumber to hook it up to the gas line and figured that my co-op's plumber would charge about two hundred bucks. So, the cost of my hypothetical new gas oven plus installation would cost roughly $1200.

But wait! Fossil fuels are being phased out. Maybe I should get an electric oven? An electric oven of the same size and with the same features as my hypothetical gas oven would cost about the same - $1,000. Ok, so all I have to do is get it delivered, plug it into my wall outlet and I can start cooking Thanksgiving

dinner. Not so fast. I started to look at the installation instructions for the electric ovens that I had selected, which were produced by various manufacturers. Some ovens needed complex electrical wiring connections. Others needed 220 volts and I only have 110 volts in my apartment and ovens that worked on 110 volts needed a 40-ampere fuse and the largest fuse in my existing fuse box is 20 amps. In addition, a few years ago when I had to replace a wall outlet, the electrician told me that my building which was built in the early 1960s, had some quirky wiring configurations which were commonly used at the time but have since been phased out. The configurations involve certain wires that are shared with more than one fuse. There are literally thousands of buildings similar to mine that were constructed all around the city in the same time frame. Many of them have the same configurations. If I turn on a light while I am cooking with my new electric oven, will I start blowing fuses?

So now the installation of my hypothetical electric oven has raised some pretty big problems. It looks like my 1960's building may have some major wiring issues. Of course, I will need an electrician to come in and do extensive work. Can the wiring in my building accommodate a 220 outlet, not just for me, but for every other person that will now need an electric oven? How about the need for larger fuses? Do I need to install a new fuse box or circuit breakers? Will this work impact the other apartments in my line? And how much is this going to cost me? When I first looked at my hypothetical electric oven, I thought it would be a lot easier to install than another gas oven. I figured that it would come out of the box, get plugged into the wall and I'd be all set. But it looks like getting the quantity of electricity that is needed is going to be a costly rewiring job which will likely involve some holes in my walls.

If you live in a private home, you are the master of your universe. You can buy whatever you like and spend whatever you like to accommodate it. When water-saving toilets were mandated, changing them was relatively simple. You can now buy a water-saving toilet for maybe a hundred bucks and installing it involves little more than putting a new inexpensive wax ring on top of the drainpipe, putting the toilet in place, plastering, or grouting around the base, and reconnecting the water line. But if you have to start rewiring entire apartment buildings to accommodate electric ovens, that's another story entirely. But it seems as if no one has considered what will be needed for moving away from fossil fuels at the consumer level.

If moving away from fossil fuels is imperative, why has no thought been given to encouraging and helping consumers to make the switch? And why are there so many contradictions in the big picture? As I write this article, many elected officials have banded together with people in northern Brooklyn to oppose the construction of a new underground gas pipeline. However, much of the needed infrastructure is supposedly already in the ground and utility companies claim that they are simply keeping up with needed demand. Meanwhile, in southern Brooklyn, installation of new gas lines is going on all over the place and the only thing that people seem to be upset about are the bumpy streets that are left behind. Not a peep from any of the elected officials!

But once all of our offshore wind farms are up and running and generating electricity, we can close down all of the massive, fossil fuel burning, electricity generating plants within the five boroughs. Well, maybe not. Several months ago, I was at an outdoor meeting. A rep from a fossil fuel company was there but he was driving an electric car. As we waited for everyone else to get arrive, we started to talk. He said that fossil fuel companies were now very involved in wind and solar energy, but the electricity demand was only going to increase. After all, today everyone has at least one big-screen TV, multiple computers and smartphones, smart homes where you can see who is ringing your doorbell while you are on vacation and your window shades automatically raise and lower as the day goes on. Plus, you don't need to write down your grocery list on a piece of paper anymore, your smart refrigerator has a touchscreen where you can list things as you run out of them. You don't have to wind your watch anymore either, because your smartwatch is linked to your smartphone.

Bottom line? The guy said that our old, fossil fuel-burning generating plants are going to be with us for a long, long time. That really shook me up.

Moral of the story? On the one hand, if we don't move really fast, it may be too late to save the planet. But on the other hand, it appears that little thought has been put into how to help consumers make the transition away from fossil fuels. Without that piece of the puzzle, there will be no

urgency for consumers to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels.

SEASIDE NATURE PARK CLEANUP

By Jim Scarcella

In early August, NRPA teamed up with the Friends of Seaside Nature Park, Olivia Drabczyk, Rebecca Del Vecchio and Partnership for Parks to clean and garden at Seaside Nature Park (Nelson Avenue and Tennyson Drive), Fitzgerald's (aka Great Kills). Yes, this area was called Fitzgerald's for the hotel and resort that was located 500 ft. from the park. It also was called Plum Island Marina.

NRPA founder, Lou Figurelli, was a night watchman for the Plum Island boatyard. There was a launch and dock and you could rent a dory rowboat, life jackets and oars to row out in the harbor to go crabbing and fishing. Now the area and park are threatened by a proposed condo development in the coastal floodplain next to the park.

Back to the cleanup, we met Rob Carrano and Howie Fishbein, Chuck Perry, Johnny "Bikeman" Benedetto, Olivia, her son, Henri, Boro President Candidate Mark Murphy and Conan. The Park is also known as "Pirate Ship Park" for the large piece of climbing play equipment. We used the power saw to trim back tree branches and invasives that were threatening the infrastructure of the park. Olivia, Rebecca and Henri planted native flowers for pollinators. Overall, we collected 30 lbs. of trash and removed 200 lbs. of invasive species and overgrowth.

Join us on our next clean up! Thank you.

NY STATE WATER QUALITY CLASSIFICATION

By Jim Scarcella

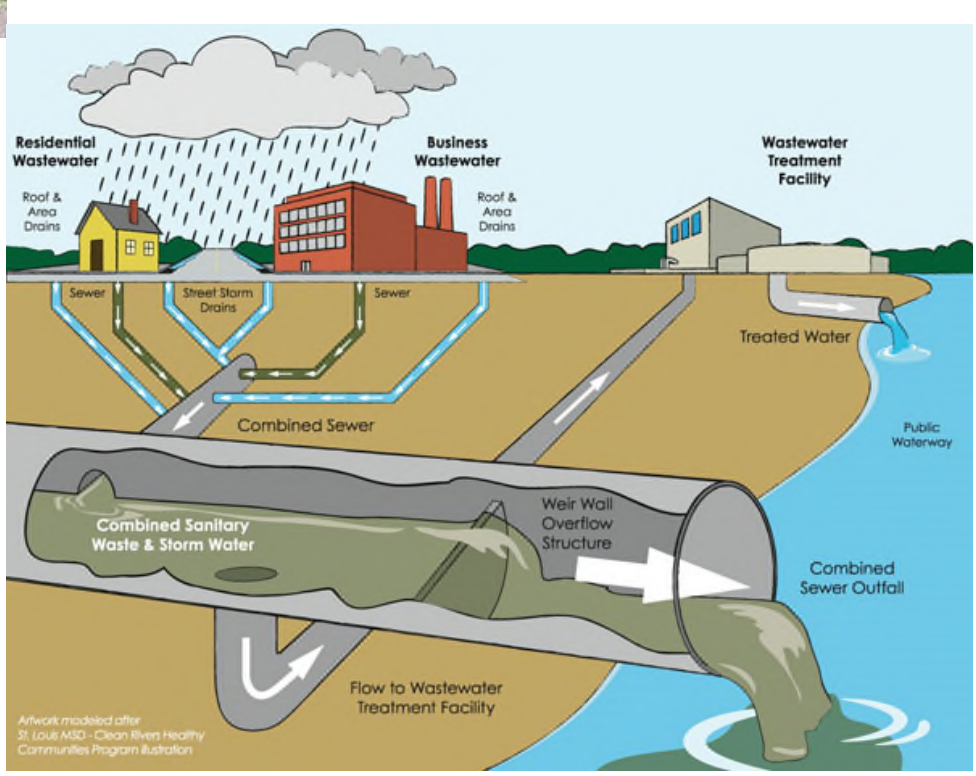
The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) allows a certain amount of pollution to enter our waters. The primary offender is Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) with 18 billion gallons per year. We need DEC to tell the polluters that our Kill van Kull, Arthur Kill, Gowanus Bay, Newton Creek and Flushing Bay watersheds should be Class SD (swimming and contact recreation allowed). Recreational contact includes kayaking, fishing and surfing. When we touch these waters, we should not have to worry about exposure to Enterococcus sp, which is found in feces.

DEC is considering allowing four times more of the Enterococcus bacteria than the EPA standard which is currently 35 CFU per 100 milliliters. CFU stands for Colony Forming Units. If you look at a water sample under a microscope, you cannot differentiate between live and dead bacteria. But if you place your water sample on a petri dish containing a medium that supplies nutrients for bacteria, they will grow and form visible dots called colonies. In theory, each colony arose from a single bacterium that multiplied over and over again, so if you count the number of colonies that grew from your water sample, you can determine how many bacteria it contained.

This is what Combined Sewage Overflow (CSO) can look like.

Let us remind our Assembly Representatives and State Senators to tell DEC to reduce our contact health risk, not to make it 4 times more likely you'll get "swimmers ear" or worse, diarrhea and nausea, from touching polluted water.

The Natural Resources Protective Association proudly joins the NY Soil and Water Conservation District (NYSWCD), Riverkeeper, Gowanus Canal Dredgers, Village Boathouse, Friends of Flushing Bay, Billion Oyster Project, North Shore Waterfront Conservancy (NSWCSI)



NY/NJ Baykeeper, Clean Ocean Action, and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to fight for clean water.

We thank the above organizations, congratulate them for their selfless work.

Please contact the elected officials below and ask them to demand that NYS DEC maintain EPA's current water quality standards. NYS should improve water quality instead of making it worse.

Senator Diane Savino 718-727-9406
Assemblyman Charles Fall 718-442-9932
Assemblyman Mike Cusick 718-370-1384
Congressional Representative Nicole Malliotakis 718-568-2870

Thanks for contacting our elected officials on behalf of all of us.

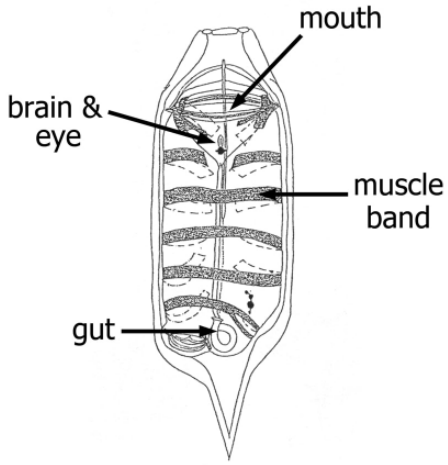
IT'S A SALP YEAR!

By Ida Sanoff

If you were swimming in early August, you may have noticed that the water felt lumpy. Every time you moved, you felt little bumps. If you scooped one into your hand, you may have seen some little ridges along the bump as well as long chains of bumps. The little transparent bumps washed up along the shoreline and in some spots, there were so many that the shoreline felt like it was covered in a slippery layer of clear Jell-O.

Many people call these things "baby jellyfish" But they're not jellyfish at all. And they don't sting or bite. Sometimes one or more summers go by and you don't see or feel one of these little bumps. But some years, the water is just loaded with these things. They're called salps.

Salps are plankton, animals that get from place to place by drifting on ocean currents. They are not jellyfish and not even related to them. They are tunicates, very distantly related to animals that have a backbone, which includes us, humans. They are basically just a little, gelatinous bubble that takes in water at one end, passes it over a membrane that removes nutrients, and squirts it out the other end.
But some years are "salp years".



Their population can increase as much as 1,000 times and then decline just as quickly. There was a hint that this was a salp year and I didn't even realize they were coming. Usually, as soon as we get into late June and early July around here, the water warms up a bit and it turns green from all of the phytoplankton. These are microscopic organisms, mostly plants, that contain chlorophyll and can trap energy from sunlight, just like your houseplant does. But this year, the water has been crystal clear, despite all the rain and I couldn't understand why. Then the salps appeared and it all made sense: Salps consume algae and other phytoplankton like little vacuum cleaners. The algae are devoured as fast as they are produced and the water stays clear.

Well, the little salps are very good at eating and they are very good at something else too: Reproduction. They have a complex reproductive method, but it is very, very successful. When the water starts to warm up, a single salp which is sometimes called an oozoid can make long chains of clones of itself, without a partner. You may have even seen some of these chains in the water. The little buds are called blastozooids and they float along and feed while attached to each other in the long chains. But the buds are hermaphrodites, which means that they are both male AND female at different points in their development. Before you know it, there are salps everywhere!

But this remarkable rate of reproduction is the salp's downfall. The population quickly becomes larger than the food supply and the salps start to die off.

Unfortunately, salps are not an attractive food for sea creatures because they are mainly water. But they may play a role in moving carbon from the atmosphere. There are so many of them that when they die and decompose, they literally move carbon away from shallow water into deeper water, which may help reduce the greenhouse gases that cause climate change.

So, enjoy the nice clear water that we have now, courtesy of salps.

Join NRPA Today

WATCH OUT FOR ASIAN SPOTTED LANTERNFLIES

By Ida Sanoff

The Asian Spotted Lanternfly has invaded the shoreline.

At the end of August, social media accounts were loaded with photos and reports of encounters with this pest. In Coney Island, people reported them rolling in on incoming waves. One person posted a photo of one perched on his knee. A local TV station reported that a ticket agent at one of the Coney Island rides heard a plop, turned around, and saw one on the counter next to him. Reports are coming in from Breezy Point too. Staten Island was Ground Zero for the Asian Spotted Lanternfly in NYC. The first one was reported there exactly a year ago, in August 2020 at Clay Pit Ponds Park.

The Spotted Lanternfly's first appearance in the U.S. was in 2014 when it was seen in Berks County, Pennsylvania. It was spotted in New Jersey in 2018. Since then, it is spreading rapidly.

I must say that as insects go, this one is rather pretty. But appearances are very deceiving. This is one nasty bug.

This invasive insect is native to China, India, and Viet Nam. Despite its name, it's not really a fly. It's called a "planthopper" and it's related to cicadas, aphids, and grasshoppers. The immature form is called a nymph and it can jump for short distances. Black nymphs with white spots appear in early April and are seen through early July when they begin to turn red. The red nymphs are usually seen from July through September when they transition to their adult phase. The adult Lantern Fly is about an inch long and half an inch wide. When they are at rest and hold their wings closed, they appear grayish with black spots. But when they open their wings, their appearance is unmistakable. Underneath the gray spotted wings, there is a brightly colored hindwing. The top portion is black with a wide white stripe and the lower portion is red with small black spots. But they are not very mobile. They can only fly for short distances.

So how have they become so widespread? They are terrific hitchhikers and rely on us humans to move them from place to place. In the fall, they lay inch-long brownish-gray egg masses on everything from firewood and tree trunks to rocks and cars. The egg masses can be transported long distances in shipping materials, grills, lawnmowers, plants that you bought at the garden center, and furniture. It probably got here in the first place in a shipment of contaminated wood. The nymphs can cling to just about anything, including your clothes.

Why is it so bad? NYC is like a gourmet buffet for the bug because we are loaded with one of its favorite foods – Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus sp.) This is the tree that is so hardy that if you look down, you can see it growing below sidewalk grates. It's found in every vacant lot and disturbed habitat. But the Spotted Lantern Fly eats dozens of other things too, including fruit trees, grapevines, and maple trees. The nymphs feed on the sap of the plants, but the infestations can be so heavy that the plants become more vulnerable to various diseases. You may see trees that are so damaged that they have large, open wounds that ooze sap.

But they do even more damage. They excrete a sticky substance that is sometimes called honeydew. If you walk through a heavily infested area, you may get this gook on your

clothes or skin. The honeydew attracts other insects and frequently becomes covered in layers of black mold. The mold can get so thick that sunlight cannot get through it and the plant can no longer make food through photosynthesis. There are a lot of agricultural areas in NYS and growers are concerned about impacts on apple trees and other crops.

In order to control these bugs, we humans need to become Spotted Lantern Fly exterminators. Rule Number One: If you see 'em, squash 'em! Rule Number Two: Be very careful when you move things around or walk through natural areas. Do not move wood products from one area to the next. Don't bring firewood that you've collected from one area to another area. NYS even has regulations about transporting goods from other states into New York because of the risk of contamination. Make sure you don't have any attached to your camping equipment or clothes after you've been in the park. And given what's been happening around here lately, make sure they're not hitching a ride on your beach towel or bag. Rule Number Three: Scrape off any egg masses that you see. You can find numerous photos of the egg masses online. New egg masses are waxy, older ones look brown and scaly.

The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation wants you to report this pest if you see it. Take a picture and include something in the picture to indicate its size, such as a coin or ruler. Email it to spottedlanternfly@agriculture.ny.gov Make sure to include where you found it such as a street address or intersection, location in a park, GPS coordinates if you have them, etc.

And remember – if you see one, squish it!

Schedule of Events:

NRPA Calendar All events, including face to face monthly meetings are **TENATIVE** due to **COVID-19**, please call to confirm Jim Scarcella to confirm - 718-873-4291

Tuesday, September 7, 2021, 7:30 PM, NRPA monthly meeting (tentative), at SIUH North, Regina McGuinn Center or email notification for link for Zoom video meeting

Saturday, September 18, 2021, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Sharrott Lowlands Arthur Kill cleanup with Protectors of Pine Oak Woods and NY State DEC for International Beach Cleanup day. Meet across from 155 Androvette Street, Kriesherville. Gloves bags refreshments provided; community service certified. Info: Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291

Sunday, September 19, 2021, from 10 AM to 12 noon, Beach Cleanup at Ft. Wadsworth, 210 New York Avenue, Gateway National Park. Info: Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291

Saturday, October 2, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Lemon Creek (Lou Figurelli) Park, Seguine Avenue Beach Cleanup with NYC H2O Gloves, bags, refreshments provided, community service certified, sponsored by Councilman Borelli and Anti-Litter Campaign. Info: Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291

Tuesday, October 5, 2021, 7:30 PM, NRPA monthly meeting (tentative), at SIUH North, Regina McGuinn Center or email notification for link for Zoom video meeting

Saturday, October 16, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Oakwood Beach, Tarlton Avenue with NYCH2O. Sponsored by Baykeeper and Councilmember Steve Matteo. Environmental Education, Gloves, Bags, refreshments provided, cloth bag giveaway, community service certified. Info: Jim Scarcella, 718-873-4291

Tuesday, November 9, 2021, 7:30 PM, NRPA monthly meeting (tentative), at SIUH North, Regina McGuinn Center or email notification for link for Zoom video meeting

Sunday, November 21, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, Beach Clean Up at Richmond Terrace Waterfront Park Sponsored by Baykeeper and Assemblyman Charles Fall. Daffodils planting also. Gloves, bags, and refreshments provided. Community service certified. Info: Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291

Tuesday, December 7, 2021, NRPA Holiday Gathering with Friends of Blue Heron Park. Location TBD. 7:30 PM Info: Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291

Saturday, December 11, 2021, from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM, Beach Clean Location to be announced. Sponsored by SI BP Anti-Litter Campaign. Gloves, bags, refreshments provided, community service certified. Info: Jim Scarcella, 718-873-4291

Saturday, January 1, 2022, 32nd Annual New Year's Day beach walk at Gateway NRA Great Kills Park, 12 noon to 2 PM. Sponsored with Protectors of Pine Oak Woods. Bring a snack or refreshments to share. Info Jim Scarcella 718-873-4291 or Cliff Hagen PPOW 718-313-8591

Dedicated to preserving the marine environment, the Natural Resources Protective Association is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

All memberships expire on December 31, so please renew NOW!

(All memberships paid after October 1 will also receive credit for the upcoming year)

Are You A Member? Have You Renewed? Please Join Us NOW!

- ☐ **$15.00 Individual**
- ☐ **$25.00 Organization**
- ☐ **$500.00 Lifetime Member**
- ☐ **$20.00 Family**
- ☐ **$100.00 Sponsor** (after 5 payments you become Lifetime member)

YES! I/We want to join the fight!

Name:_____

Address:_____

Phone:_____ Email: _____

Mail to: Natural Resources Protective Association
C/O Richard Chan, Treasurer
Post Office Box 050328
Staten Island, NY 10305

Join NRPA today