

# CONSERVATION UPDATE

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Megan McAnn, Technician
Melissa Rivelis, Technician

## Directors

Edward Morgan, Chairman
William Eick, Vice-Chairman
James Neal, Farm Bureau Rep.
John DeFilipps, Legislative Rep.
John Kast, Farm Rep. at Large

## OMG (OH-SO MANY GRANTS)

Over the last year the Orleans County Soil & Water Conservation District has been hard at work trying to secure various grant funding's. The goal with these grants is to improve water quality.

We were awarded funding through 3 different grant opportunities, cov-

ering 4 types of conservation projects for 19 farms. These funds total at over \$900,000! The projects that will be funded are for 3 years of cover crops, 5 agrichemical mixing and handling facilities, 7 drip irrigation systems, and 1 precision sprayer. All these pro-



jects work towards reducing the amount of nutrient and sediment runoff from the farms, resulting in less pollution in our local waterways.

## TREE PICK UP

Don't forget to pick up your trees! For those who have placed orders, the tree pick up is at the Orleans County Department of Public Works located at 425 West Academy Street in Albion on April 23rd from 8 am to 6 pm and April 24th from 8 am to 12 pm.

If you are unable to pick up your order on either of these days, please make

arrangements to have someone else pick them up for you. Or if you pre-



fer, we can deliver your trees for a minimal charge.

If you forgot to place your order there are still a few trees available for purchase. Quantities are very limited. There will also be some trees available for purchase during the above dates and times until gone. For more information call 589-5959.

## SPRING INTERN

Orleans County SWCD is happy to introduce Jacob Turrie as the districts newest intern! Jake is a student at SUNY Brockport, where he is currently a senior with hopes of graduating with his bachelors this spring. He is majoring in Earth Science, which is the combination of geology, meteorology, and water resources. During this internship he hopes to supplement what he's learned in the classroom with first hand field experience. "While my role in the department may be small I can't wait to work with members of the community to help improve our soil and water. I am excited to be working with the Orleans County Soil & Water Conservation District through the months of April and May."





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## WINTER 2021 WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECTS

This winter the district, with the help of the Orleans County DPW, cleaned several miles of debris out of the Oak Orchard muck ditch with the Slashbuster. This has been a multi year project working with the Oak Orchard Small Watershed Protection District. These ditches are so deep it is hard for the association to maintain them. With our help we were able to remove woody debris and keep the water flowing.



Before



During



After

The Orleans County Soil & Water Conservation District and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service prohibits discrimination in all their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

## AEM and Grown & Certified

As part of our continuing support of the food industry, New York State has introduced a voluntary program to meet the consumer demand for high-quality food and responsible environmental practices. The program is called New York State Grown & Certified, and is designed to create awareness and visibility for New York's Safety and sustainability programs, as well as make customers feel more confident about buying New York-made products in stores, markets, and restaurants.



Show New Yorkers that your products meet farm safe protocols and environmentally responsible practices by joining the New York State Grown and Certified Program.

To qualify producers must meet certification criteria:

- Products are grown and produced in New York State
- Farms participate in a third-party food safety verification program, if applicable
- Producers participate in an Environmental Management Program, such as AEM, through their local Soil & Water District

**Commodities Eligible to be Grown & Certified Include:**

Produce	Dairy	Eggs	Christmas Trees
Poultry	Pork	Cider	Craft Beverage Ingr.
Maple	Beef	Seafood	Cut Flowers
Spirits	Beer	Sheep & Goat	Nursery/Greenhouse
Firewood	Wine	Honey	Processed Products

If you are interested in being a part of the NY Grown & Certified program or would like more information on that or the AEM program, please contact Orleans County Soil and Water at 585-589-5959, or contact Megan McAnn at [megan.mcann@ny.nacdnet.net](mailto:megan.mcann@ny.nacdnet.net)

Visit NY Grown and Certified Website at <http://certified.ny.gov/> for more information



## TAKING TO THE SKIES!

Earlier this year the district made the decision to upgrade our technology and invest in a drone. We purchased a DJI Mavic 2 Pro and Smart Controller to explore the sky. A drone is an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) that will allow us to take aerial pictures and videos of district projects, the lake's shoreline, and difficult to access places such as landlocked farm fields. With lake levels rising, increased storm events, and more frequent droughts, the use of a drone will be



beneficial in recognizing the effects of these events and recording evidence of degrading land and water. Because the drone is for commercial use, the employees needed to register with the FAA and take the unmanned pilot knowledge test. We passed the test and are now certified commercial drone pilots! We can't wait to be birds in the sky and view Orleans County from above! For more information on our drone, please call us at 585-589-5959.



## Invasive Plant Spotlight: Swallow-wort

In this seasons newsletter, we want to talk about not one but two invasive species, Pale Swallow-wort (*Vincetoxicum rossicum*) and Black Swallow-wort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum*). Both species of swallow-wort are very similar, with the flowers being the easiest way to differentiate them (see images below). Swallow-wort is an invasive vine that is native to Europe, but made its way to the US for landscaping purposes.

Swallow-wort are moderately aggressive growers. They can easily overtake woodland areas where they will drive out native species. One of the species they outcompete is milkweed, the only plant monarch butterflies will eat. They also find their way into farm fields, which can get mixed in with crops and sicken livestock.

Pale swallow-wort and black swallow-wort are very similar looking. Their flowers (pictures below) are the easiest way to differentiate the two. They both have shiny green leaves and produce smooth slender seed pods in the summer, which soon open up to release fluffy white seeds similar to dandelions. Pale swallow-wort's pods (pictured right) are thinner than those of the black swallow-wort.

Unfortunately, like with most invasives, they can be difficult to control once they become established. Small patches can be manually removed before they seed, but the roots must be thoroughly removed as well. Chemical control works, but must be applied carefully to avoid harming nearby native species. Biocontrol



Pale Swallow-wort seed pods and seeds

Photo: John M. Randall, Nature Conservancy

efforts are currently being tested as a means for long-term control options. For now the best thing to do if you see these plants is to report the finding to iMapInvasives and take care not to spread the seeds.



Pale Swallow-wort (left) and Black Swallow-wort (right)

Photo: Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut

## HYDROSEEDER

The District is expanding its hydroseeding program. Hydroseeding is a grass seed planting process that spreads out a slurry of seed, fertilizer, and mulch with water over bare ground to prevent soil erosion. We just purchased a hydroseeder that we can easily tow to drainage ditches and erosion control projects to reduce erosion more effectively than the traditional seeding and mulching processes.



# GRASS CARP AND FISH

Triploid Grass Carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) is one of the largest members of the minnow family and are a natural way to control aquatic weeds in ponds. Grass carp feed on softer aquatic vegetation but won't eat plants that are tough and fibrous (such as cattails, algae, or water lilies). While they can certainly help with weed control, it's important to know how many to put in the pond, otherwise they'll overeat the vegetation and disrupt the ponds health. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) can calculate how many carp you are permitted to stock using the information in the permit application.

If you are thinking to have a pond stocked with grass carp the first steps

will involve obtaining a stocking permit from the DEC. The application can be found at the NYS DEC's website ([www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)) or by coming into the Orleans County Soil & Water Conservation District's Office. It's recommended to stock carp in the late spring when the new plant growth is just beginning. While it is possible to stock them later in the summer the results will be unsatisfactory.

If this is the first time you are stocking fish into a pond it is a smart idea to build up a food base for larger fish to forage on. The best place to start is by releasing small minnows, and letting them establish themselves. The following spring it may be time to introduce larger fish such as bass. There is also the option to stock sunfish for a year allowing them to spawn and reproduce, and then the following year bass can be introduced. This will allow the offspring of the sunfish to be a food source.

When you are trying to determine how many fish you should be adding to your pond it is recommended that for every acre of surface water, you can release approximately 100 largemouth bass (fingerling sized around 1"- 3" long). When you stock a waterbody



with a fish such as bass you will need to have a forage base of at least 5 bluegills to 1 bass. The ratio will change if you decide to stock with fathead minnows instead (10 minnows to 1 bass is recommended). Additionally, fathead minnows are highly favored for their ability to control mosquito larvae that could potentially carry deadly diseases.

It is important to note that it is illegal to release fish into any water body without having a permit. If you want to stock grass carp you will have to obtain a separate permit. If you do want to stock carp, the pond cannot connect to any other water body. This is in place to help stop the carp from spreading throughout the state. There are a handful of other permits related to stocking fish either for private use or fishing. All permit information can be found at the DEC's website.



Photo: Ryan Hagerty, U.S. Fish and Wildlife

## 2021 FISH ORDER FORM

Name:			Phone:	
Address:			Cell Phone:	
			E-mail:	
Species	Size	Price	Quantity	Cost
Bass (Large Mouth)*	3" - 4"	\$64 (per 25)		
Bluegill*	2" - 4"	\$55 (per 25)		
Fathead Minnows*	1"	\$15 (per 100)		
Grass Carp**	12" - 14"	\$20 (per fish)		
* "Farm Fish Pond License" required for new ponds and ponds that have not been stocked in the last five years				
** D.E.C. Grass Carp Permit Required (Tax already included in price of fish)				
			Total	\$

	Grass Carp	Other Fish
Order deadline	May 27, 2021	July 8, 2021
Tentative Pickup dates	June 3, 2021	July 16, 2021

<p><b>Make Checks Payable to:</b>  Orleans County SWCD  446 West Avenue  Albion, NY 14411  Please include all permits when placing order!</p>
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