



Spring 2007

Utica Marsh Council

Utica Marsh Council, Inc., P.O. Box 73, Utica New York 13503

Inside:

- Community Education
- Events
- Purple Project
- Renew your membership

About Us

The Utica Marsh Council is a non-profit, volunteer organization that promotes environmental education using the Utica Marsh. Several of our members are active in community education (*see below*). Many educational resources are available to the public through our website (http://academics.hamilton.edu/biology/ewilliam/utica_marsh.html) including a Field Trip Guide for those who wish to lead nature walks through the marsh.

The Utica Marsh Council also works for conservation of marsh resources (*see Purple project pg. 3*) and advises NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on matters affecting the Utica Marsh.

Members involved in community education

One of the functions of the Utica Marsh Council is to educate the people of Utica and surrounding communities. This past year, our members have worked with local high school students teaching the importance of diversity in the marsh and the detrimental effects of introduced species through the Purple Project (*see pg. 2*).

Last August, a local Boy Scout troop learned the basics of insect collecting. They met in the marsh and collected insects for a

few hours. The boys then learned how to pin, identify and label their insects for a collection.

Members also led a Cub Scout group and high school classes on guided tours of the marsh.

Utica Monday Nite includes a Walks and Talks Series that offers three walks in the Utica Marsh. Typically one of the Utica Marsh Council members lends their expertise and leads these walks. The topics include "Bird watching", "Life at

the Water's Edge", and "Things that fly aren't always birds".

Utica Marsh Annual Clean Up



SUNYIT students and faculty at Spring 2005 Clean up

Each spring, the Utica Marsh Council sponsors a Clean-up day in the Marsh. It usually starts at 9am and ends around 11am. There is always hot coffee and pastries for hungry volunteers.

Turnout has been good the past few years. Many volunteers from the community and students from SUNYIT, Utica College, and Hamilton College have contributed

their time and effort. Unfortunately, last year's attendance was lower than usual due to the cold, rainy weather that day. However, many people showed up despite the inclement weather and alternated working outside and warming up by the fire. We are especially grateful to all who persevered in the rain!

This year the annual clean up will be held on

Saturday, April 28th. Please bring a friend (or two!) and come down to the marsh for a couple of hours.

Volunteers are asked to sign up at the cleanup headquarters located at the Paris Gun Club on Barnes Avenue by 9:00 am. Dress for outside work; work gloves and extra plastic grocery bags are helpful.

Purple Project



Purple Loosestrife

Purple loosestrife is an invasive weed native to Eurasia. This plant was introduced into the United States during the early 1800s and is presently distributed throughout this country and in southern Canada.

Purple loosestrife covers much of the Utica Marsh. The extent of this infestation is most evident from July through September when this plant is in full bloom.

As with most introduced species, purple loosestrife was introduced without its complement of natural enemies that prevent uncontrolled population increase. Consequently, this plant has invaded wetlands and has outcompeted native vegetation (e.g. cattails)

that are essential to many wildlife species.

Biological control of purple loosestrife in the Utica Marsh currently utilizes leaf-feeding beetles that are native to Eurasia. These beetles keep purple loosestrife under control in its native habitat.

Furthermore, these beetles have been shown not to feed on our native plants in the marsh thereby making them a suitable control method.

The Utica Marsh Council and Tech Prep instituted a release program of the leaf-feeding beetle. High school and junior high school biology students from several local schools reared these beetles in their classrooms and subsequently released

them in the Utica Marsh during the spring of 2005 and 2006.

This project has been a success in and out of the classroom. We anticipate more students participating in the purple project this year.



Mary Jane Krupski and students from Whitesboro High School

Join or Renew Your Membership

Please help support the development of educational activities and general use of the Utica Marsh, and take advantage of activities, programs, and equipment that are available to our members, their families, and interested groups.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Check appropriate membership category (renewable each April)

Individual \$10 _____

Family \$15 _____

Organization \$25 _____

Lifetime \$100 _____

Check if interested in volunteering

Annual Clean up Day _____

Community Day _____

Educational Programs _____

Check if enclosing a donation

for the annual clean up

_____ Donation

Please make your tax-deductible amount payable to the Utica Marsh Council, Inc., and mail this form and check to: **Utica Marsh Council, PO Box 73, Utica, NY 13503**

Get Involved in the Utica Marsh

The Utica Marsh Council welcomes anyone who wishes to participate. We hold regular meetings on the third Thursday evening of each month at 6:30. Meetings are currently held at Utica College, 208 (Willard) DePerno Hall (check out www.utica.edu for a map of college campus).

This year's meetings will be held on:

January 18th

February 15th

March 15th

April 19th

May 17th

June 21st

Summer TBA

September 20th

October 18th

November 15th

December 20th

For further information contact
Laura Weiser-Erlandson at
weiserl@sunyit.edu



Utica Marsh Council, Inc

P.O. Box73
Utica, New York 13503

E-MAIL:
weiserl@sunyit.edu



Aerial view of the Utica Marsh

About The Utica Marsh...

The Utica Marsh is an urban wetland consisting of 213 acres that lie mostly within the city of Utica. The marsh provides a home for diverse plants and animals and is characterized by a mixture

of different wetland habitats. Bordering the Mohawk River and New York Barge Canal, the Utica Marsh is a wildlife management area of the state of New York and is managed by the NYS Dept of Environmental

Conservation. It is located at the end of Barnes Avenue and easily accessible. Come visit and enjoy the beauty of the marsh!

We're on the Web!

See us at:

http://academics.hamilton.edu/biology/ewilliam/utica_marsh.html

Utica Marsh Council, Inc

P.O. Box73
Utica, New York 13503