



Our Glimmerglass

Newsletter of the Otsego Lake Association

Notable limnological observations in Otsego Lake Summer 2018

By Kiyoko Yokota

Summer 2018 was hot. Now thanks to the high-frequency data from the continuous lake monitoring buoy, I have some interesting information to share with you.

While water temperature near the bottom of Otsego Lake was about the same (4.6 °C = 40.3 °F) as in summer 2017 through June to September, the maximum temperature near the water surface was a whole Celsius degree higher this year (27.8 °C = 82.0 °F, 4 July 2018 at 2:15 pm) than that recorded last year (26.8 °C = 80.2 °F, 1 August 2017 at 12:45 pm).

Furthermore, in 2017 the surface water temperature was above 26.0 °C (= 78.8 °F) for only once for 1.5 hours; in 2018 the surface water reached above 26 °C for a total of 55 hours on 11 separate days, spanning from 1 July to 5 August. On three distinct occasions, the surface temperature remained above 26.0 °C until past 11 pm, once as late as 12:45 am the next day! My undergrad research student, Amy Shultis and I appreciated warm water when we were setting up experiments and collecting samples on Otsego Lake this summer, but the warmer surface temperature appeared to have contributed to more observations of Ophrydium colonies and localized cyanobacterial blooms by lakeside residents.

If you have seen green gelatinous balls attached to aquatic plants, rocks on the lake bottom, and other immersed surfaces, they were most likely colonies of Ophrydium or “dead man’s eyeball”. The first picture below shows a couple of colonies found in Otsego Lake in summer 2017 by Paul Lord. It is actually made of hundreds of tiny unicellular ciliates (a type of protozoan or “early animal”) containing symbiotic unicellular green algae (“Zoochlorella”) embedded in a gelatinous matrix, as shown in the second picture. Neither Ophrydium nor its symbiotic green algae are known to be toxic or otherwise harmful, and they are most commonly reported in relatively nutrient poor waters. Its prevalence this summer in Otsego Lake, therefore, can be taken as a positive or neutral sign in terms of water quality.

The other notable sightings in late summer were localized surface scums, suspected to be harmful algal blooms (HABs). The one reported on 4 September 2018 by Joan and Wayne Bunn, shown in the third picture, turned out to be a localized cyanobacterial bloom of Dolichospermum (formerly Anabaena) and Microcystis near Five Mile Point. While we are not able to locally analyze cyanobacterial toxins in lake water (samples must be sent to SUNY ESF through the NYSDEC HAB Program), both Dolichospermum and Microcystis are known as potentially toxic genera. Another bloom of similar appearance was reported on 27 September near Seven Mile Point. While these cyanobacterial blooms at Otsego Lake are very localized and dilute, when you see them it is best for humans as well as pets to avoid direct contact with the water until it dissipates. Detailed HAB information is available from NYSDEC as a brochure (https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/water_pdf/habsbrochure.pdf). These localized late summer blooms coincided with a small but steady increase in cyanobacterial signal received by the 4 m deep sensor attached to the lake monitoring buoy in the middle of the lake. This indicates that cyanobacteria, although at low concentration, increased throughout the surface water layer (0 to about 10 m or 33 feet deep). Complex interactions among wind speed and direction, surface and subsurface water currents, and buoyance control by the cyanobacteria (they produce and collapse gas vacuoles within cells) likely resulted in these localized surface blooms.



Image 1: Photo by Paul Lord; Image 2: Colonial peritrich ciliate Ophrydium versatile by Anatoly Mikhaltsov, CC BY-SA4.0 wikimedia.org; Image 3: Localized cyanobacterial bloom near Fivemile Point on 4 September 2018. Photo credit: Wayne Bunn.

References:

- Baker, A.L. et al. 2012. Phycokey -- an image based key to Algae (PS Protista), Cyanobacteria, and other aquatic objects. University of New Hampshire Center for Freshwater Biology. <http://cfb.unh.edu/phycokey/phycokey.htm>. Accessed 8 Oct 2018.
- Bruce. 2018. Ophrydium versatile. In Encyclopedia of Life, <http://eol.org/pages/2915474/overview>. Accessed 8 Oct 2018.
- M.D. Guiry in Guiry, M.D. & Guiry, G.M. 2018. AlgaeBase. World-wide electronic publication, National University of Ireland, Galway. <http://www.algaebase.org>; searched on 08 October 2018.

OLA ANNUAL MEETING - August Recap

The 2018 Otsego Lake Association Annual Meeting was held on August 11 at the Glimmerglass Festival's Thaw Pavilion. Following an informal coffee hour where members had the opportunity to socialize, visit displays, and participate in the silent auction, the meeting proceeded with election of the slate of officers and board.

An informative and entertaining historical program, Winter on the Lake, was presented by Tom Heitz. Tom's talk was accompanied by photographs from the Smith and Telfer Collection that had been organized by Cindy Falk of the Cooperstown Graduate Program.

OLA Technical Advisor and SUNY Oneonta Faculty member, Kiyoko Yokoda began the scientific part of the program with a discussion of the changing temperature variations on Otsego Lake and How Winter Conditions Influence Summer Algae Blooms. This was followed by a discussion by OLA Board Member and SUNY faculty member Paul Lord of winter salting of the roadways, its effects on the lake, and the pros and cons of alternatives. The final scientific contribution was Haley Dower's presentation of her data regarding walleye breeding in Otsego Lake (Ice Leaves/Walleye Breed).

Before adjournment, OLA President, David Sanford, presented the Lake Citizen Award to the Otsego County Conservation Association. This was accepted by OCCA Executive Director, Leslie Orzetti. A Special Award was also presented by Paul Lord to Dale Webster for his many contributions to the Biological Field Station volunteer dive team.

Many thanks go to meeting chairman, Bob Sutherland, and his committee for organizing this great event. OLA is also particularly grateful to the Glimmerglass Festival and Francesca Zambello for again allowing us to hold the meeting in the Thaw Pavilion. We would also like to recognize Glimmerglass staff members, Meagan Priest and Joel Morain who were responsible for the set-up and technical assistance for the event.

Annual OLA Decorated Boat Parade

- Always a "Hot" Event...

by K. Wayne Bunn

However, the July 2nd boat parade this year was really hot in more ways than one. In spite of the temperatures in the high 90s, plus the heat index in triple digits, the truly stalwart, dedicated boat parade lovers still joined in and adorned our pristine Otsego Lake with some very creatively decorated boats. See the OLA website for more photos. The 2019 boat parade is already scheduled for Thursday July 4th at 4:00 PM with a theme of "Red, White, and Blue - It's the 4th of July".



Summer 2018 Boat Parade Photos courtesy of Wayne Bunn



Paul Lord presents awards to Leslie Orzetti (OCCA Exec. Dir) & Dale Webster (OLA Dive Team); Photo by Paul Donnelly

OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 2002

OUR MISSION is to educate, advocate and actively participate in protecting the health, beauty, and well-being of Otsego Lake by facilitating the implementation of the Otsego Lake Watershed Management Plan.

OUR MEMBERSHIP is open to any individual concerned with the health of Otsego Lake. Our membership consists of year-round residents, seasonal residents and local businesses.

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Salt on Roads

by Paul Lord

This issue is one of a camel's nose under the tent. No one is paying much attention to the increased salinity of our ground water and lake water, but it is increasing steadily. The BFS has been tracking this for years. The data correlate well with rock salt sales in the NE United States. The litigious culture we live in demands more salt to prevent accidents. One study published in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences predicts widespread salinity issues with drinking water and widespread loss of freshwater aquatic species in the NE by the year 2100. We should be focusing attention on the problem and encouraging the use of brine in lieu of rock salt and the use of more efficient plows.

Study: State-spread salt pervades water, June 8, 2018, By GLYNIS HART - Lake Placid News

SARANAC LAKE - A study of 358 private wells scattered across the Adirondacks found that salt used to de-ice wintertime roads is contaminating groundwater and seeping into private wells.

Daniel Kelting, executive director of the Adirondack Watershed Institute and a professor at Paul Smith's College, presented the findings of the study to the public at the Saranac Lake Free Library Wednesday, May 30. Officials from several state agencies attended, including the departments of Transportation, Health and Environmental Conservation.

READ THE FULL ARTICLE at <http://www.lakeplacidnews.com/page/content.detail/id/528522/Study--State-spread-salt-pervades-water.html>



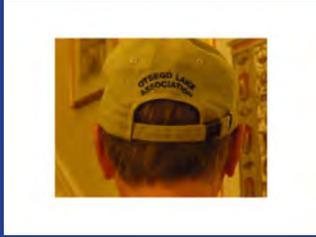
Image above "Silhouette" by new board member Peter Regan. Peter, pictured at right with spouse Aviva Schneider.



Otsego Lake 'Reflections'

Top left - Otsego Lake Waterlogue 2018 Artwork by David Sanford; Top right - Image by Jim Howarth; Bottom left - Artwork by David Sanford; Bottom center - Image by Debbie Creedon; Bottom right - Artwork by David Sanford

Heads Up! OLA VISOR CAPS - \$18



Long time Member Tom Chase proudly wears his 8th (EIGHTH) OLA cap!

OLA Expressed Great Concern about NYSDOT's Rte 80 Ditching



The NYS Department of Transportation undertook efforts during the early part of summer 2018 to clean out their storm water ditches along Route 80 on the westerly side of Otsego Lake. Please see the photos and OLA's letter to NYSDOT dated June 14, 2018 (below) expressing great concern about their current ditching practice and the harm that it can do to Otsego Lake. As of the date of this newsletter, OLA has not received any response (either verbal or written) from NYSDOT but the ditching did stop after our letter (see page 6) was sent in mid-June.

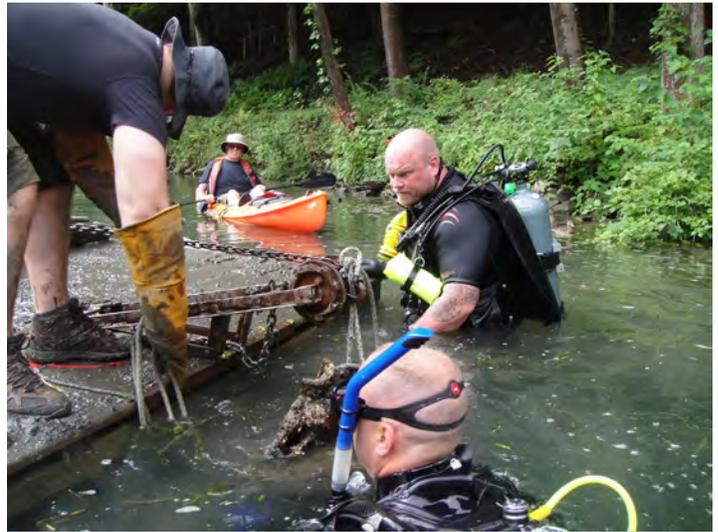
OLA Shirts Come in All Sizes! OLA T-SHIRTS \$15



OLA Board Member David Sanford and Technical Advisor Kiyoko Yokota with our OLA Shirts (Otsego Lake topological map printed on back)

Dive Team Assists with River Clean-Up

Photos by Paul Lord



Above: Dive Team Volunteers haul debris out of Susquehanna River on a clean-up day held in September 2018 near Council Rock in Cooperstown.

Below: Paul Lord, Dive Team Leader



Reflecting on OLA's Good Work

By Bill Murdock

As a recent board member, I have been impressed by the hard work it takes to keep a high standard of water quality for our Otsego Lake. I am proud to be a member of this team, dispersing information to new owners of lake property and visitors about regulations for development and boating, vigilance of harmful run-off into the lake and the fight against invasive species, to name only a few of many accomplishments.

Support the Good Works of OLA!

- T-shirts - \$15
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To place an order, contact:
 Scottie Baker
 (607) 547 5356
npscottieb@gmail.com

Reflections of Otsego Lake - 65 Years in the Making *By K. Wayne Bunn*

For the past 65 years or so, I have either been on, in, or next to Otsego Lake. It all started when I used to tag along with my dad on his numerous fishing trips to Otsego Lake. He was an avid fisherman who loved to fish for Otsego Bass and lake trout – either trolling in a boat during the summer months or from shore in the spring. I can still remember making “oatmeal balls” to throw out to the Otsego Bass while fishing from shore in the spring. Needless to say, we ate a lot of Otsego bass while I was growing up in Hartwick. My dad and uncle would rent a boat from Willie Thayer (an Otsego Lake legend) and join the other 25 or 30 boats on the lake that were also fishing for the Otsego Bass. Thayer’s boat livery was the clearing house for information about the Otsego Bass – where to find them, what type and color of lure to use, and what depth they were at that day.



Woman reflects on decades of memories of Otsego Lake; Photo courtesy of K.W. Bunn

It was also during that time frame that I spent a lot of time at the Winslow camp in Hyde Bay with my very close friend and neighbor John Winslow. We spent many days fishing, canoeing, boating, swimming, and just having a great time on the lake. It was a very sad day for me when I heard that he had been killed in Vietnam while serving with the USMC. Soon after graduating from college, I bought my first 18 foot power boat and kept it on Otsego Lake. I later sold that boat and bought a small Sunfish sail boat from Sam Smith (another Otsego Lake legend) which I learned to sail by reading a book on sailing and by “trial and error” (that means I tipped over a lot!).

Shortly after I got married and our two children were born, my wife and I started to rent a cottage for a week or two each summer at Aalsmeer Motel and Cottages on the lake (owned by Ray Frey, another Otsego Lake legend). That was also about the time that I sold the sail boat and bought a 14 foot aluminum fishing boat, again from Sam Smith, which I used for trolling for the Otsego Bass and lake trout – following in my dad’s footsteps and using a lot of his fishing equipment. Actually, I still use some of that same equipment today! Those one or two weeks at Aalsmeer were some of the best vacations that our family had over the years while our kids were growing up. We became good friends with

the other renters who would return each summer plus our kids would see their lake friends each summer again. It was so much fun swimming, boating, fishing, and enjoying the nightly camp fires each summer. Our daughter now rents a cottage at Aalsmeer each year and brings her husband and three kids there for the same reasons we did. Other friends she met while growing up there also now rent each year at the same time. Aalsmeer does not change with time!

As our kids took on summer jobs and approached graduating from high school, we stopped renting at Aalsmeer, bought an 18 foot power boat, and started renting a boat slip next door at Bayside Inn. We rented that boat slip for a few years before we finally bought an older one bedroom camp on the west side of the lake just north of Five Mile Point. It was truly a “camp camp” with only poorly constructed concrete piers and piles of wood for a foundation. However, my life-long dream of having a camp on Otsego Lake was finally achieved! Basically, it was fine for my wife and me but, as grandchildren started to arrive, we needed more room so we tore down the old camp and built a new year-round camp with a full basement and three bedrooms. Our daughter and her family plus our son and his family now use the camp regularly and have fun swimming, boating, fishing, tubing, kayaking, and water skiing. Otsego Lake has been the one common denominator for our family over the years.

Now that my wife and I are fully retired, we spend the summer months at the camp and are involved in many of the local activities. I have been an active member of the Otsego Lake Association since it was formed in 2002, serving as a Director at Large, Secretary, and President. I am also associated with the SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station’s volunteer Dive Team as a dive tender and boat driver. Both the OLA and the BFS have allowed me to help preserve and protect the health, welfare, and future of Otsego Lake - truly a local treasure. Otsego Lake has been a big part of my life since I was a kid and still is. I have so many wonderful memories and experiences with Otsego Lake. I hope that my kids and my grandchildren can say the same thing when they are my age.



Mother & son reflecting on great memories; Photo K.W. Bunn

OLA Letter to DOT Re:Ditching

Mr. Mike Adams, P.E.
 Otsego County Resident Engineer
 NYS Department of Transportation
 4359 State Highway 7
 Oneonta NY 13820

Re: Storm Water Ditching, State Highway 80 (West Lake Road),
 Along Otsego Lake, Towns of Otsego and Springfield

Dear Mr. Adams:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Otsego Lake Association (OLA) regarding the NYSDOT's current practice of maintaining the storm water ditches along Otsego Lake (State Highway 80 – West Lake Road) in the Towns of Otsego and Springfield. Not only are there environmental problems with this practice but it just looks terrible - not only to the local people but to the thousands of tourists and visitors traveling this route expecting to experience the beauty of the famous Leatherstocking region of New York State.

During the past few weeks, the NYSDOT crews have been cleaning out the ditches and side banks by removing the existing grass and vegetation and then leaving the bare soil exposed to the elements. OLA is very concerned about this practice since this leads to increased sediment loading into Otsego Lake after rain events. This is problematic as fish, especially the lake trout, require spawning areas free of silt and mud. Increased turbidity of the lake also harms fish and other animals that depend on their vision to feed. Soil particles in roadside runoffs contribute phosphorus and other nutrients that are additional to the amount entering the lake via streams, which also increases after storms. These additional nutrients are known to promote cyanobacterial blooms or harmful algae blooms (aka HABs), which could produce potent toxins that damage nervous, liver, and skin tissues of humans and pets via ingestion, inhalation, or skin contact.

The HABs are a very serious public health issue as well as an economic issue (especially for tourism and property values) in the Finger Lakes and many other water bodies across NYS; cases of dog deaths and human illnesses have been confirmed by NYSDOH. Otsego Lake serves as the drinking water source for the Village of Cooperstown, plus many lakeside summer residents, and is a popular site for swimming, paddling, boating, and picnics. Once HABs start to occur regularly in a lake, there are currently few options to manage them effectively and to restore the lake permanently to the pre-HAB condition. Prevention of HABs through reduction of sediments and associated nutrients entering a lake from the watershed is the most practical and cost effective strategy, and stabilization of exposed soil with vegetation is widely recognized as one of the watershed best management practices (BMPs).

Hydroseeding is a process where a slurry containing plant seeds and mulch is sprayed onto the ground to help establish vegetation in erosion-prone areas. The Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has hydroseeding equipment on hand and would be very happy to work with the NYSDOT; SWCD will perform hydroseeding to the bare soil on the embankments and ditches to help control erosion. This, in turn, could prolong the effect of the recent ditch clearing by NYSDOT as the heavier fraction of roadside erosion (i.e. gravel, and compacted blocks of soil) will inevitably accumulate in the ditches instead of washing all the way into the lake. The hydroseeding areas might need watering after hydroseeding – if precipitation is light and until the grass germinates and develops roots. It is our understanding that the NYSDOT has not coordinated with the SWCD and that the NYSDOT has not availed itself of the hydroseeding equipment. It is also our understanding that the SWCD has been (or will be) in contact with your office to offer their assistance and the use of their hydroseeding equipment. We highly recommend that the NYSDOT take full advantage of the SWCD's offer. The SWCD's point of contact is listed below for your convenience.

The above technical information regarding the HABs and their effects on the lake, humans, and pets was provided by Dr. Kiyoko Yokota [SUNY Oneonta Associate Professor of Biology, Researcher at the Biological Field Station, and a Certified Lake Manager (North American Lake Management Society)]. Dr. Yokota is also the current technical advisor to the Otsego Lake Association.

Please feel free to contact the Otsego Lake Association if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation in protecting and preserving Otsego Lake – truly a local treasure!

Very truly yours,
 OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION
 K. Wayne Bunn, P.E.
 Secretary and Director at Large





**“Helping to Protect a Local Treasure”
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Photo by Natúra Productions

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Annual Membership Dues (Check One): Renewal New Member
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Relections on Endeka Dakwa

Article & Images by Mary Sisson Eibs

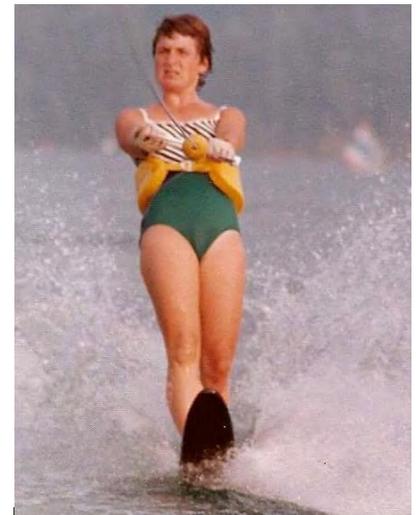
My father, Dr. Reade S. Sisson, purchased a “camp” on Otsego Lake from a member of the Ibbotson family (of Horrocks Ibbotson Fishing Reels fame) in 1954. This was either right before or right after the death of his first wife, Winnie. With two young boys to raise alone and a very busy medical practice he probably felt that he needed a place where he could relax and where the boys could experience the outdoors without the constraints of the city. He chose this camp specifically on the west side of the lake so that he would be able to see the sunrise and avoid the hot afternoon sun. The name of the camp, Endeka Dakwa (morning sun), was chosen after writing a letter to Arthur Caswell Parker, a member of the Seneca Nation and a noted authority on American Indian culture asking for suggestions from a local Indian dialect. Dad proudly displayed the letter he received in return with an explanation of the name. Although there were no plans filed when the structure was built I was able to determine, through tax records, that it was built by Orange VanHorn, a Cooperstown lawyer, in the late 1920s. The property was once a sheep farm owned by a woman named Domenica Sgro and it extended across the road.

Dad was an avid collector of local memorabilia and made friends with local people easily. We still have many of the pieces that he displayed on the mantle of our fireplace. Two items, a cane and a baseball bat, were carved by an Indian that dad said worked or lived at the Totem Village, which was located just across the road from our camp. We also have a delightful ox cart and driver that was carved by a man named Fred Foote. Dad also had a Heddon fly rod and carrying case given to him by a patient. There’s probably even an Ibbotson fishing reel somewhere around here. One of the wives of past owners of the camp was a tole painter who left behind several sweetly painted items which I still love and display. There’s just so much fun history to look at.

Dad married my mother in 1956 and I was born two years later. I have photos and movies, filmed either in the camp or out on our boat deck, showing both parents and grandparents holding and playing with me. There’s also a fun photo of me in my play pen on the dock pretending to water ski. A stain on the wood floor near the bathroom door is the result of a wet diaper that dad had dropped and left sitting overnight. My parents loved to entertain and my mother often cooked fairly elaborate dinners in our tiny kitchen for their friends. I remember clam and lobster bakes and huge amounts of barbecued chicken cooked on old blacksmith forges that my grandfather had made into grills. Past owners of the camp, which was once called the Pagoda camp because of its curved roof line, hosted Chinese-themed parties. We found the ribs of authentic Chinese paper lanterns in the attic left over from these events.

My summers spent here were magical. I had a whole different group of summer friends, entirely removed from my usual city friends, with whom I would spend long hours swimming, water skiing, boating, and exploring with on the lake. My parents hardly ever knew where I was during the day and probably never worried about it. A great deal of my time was spent at Willie Thayer’s boat rental and boat gas station. Although it sounds disgusting, I will never forget the smell of boat gas mixed with various fish parts that permeated the air around the docks. What an amazing group of local characters there were among his regular customers. Late nights at Willie’s were often filled with the sound of howling coon dogs or wild poker parties. Willie always provided a running commentary on the weather or the local gossip. It was truly a very sad day when Willie, Rufus, and Mrs. Thayer left the planet. The lake has never been the same.

We are so blessed to still be able to spend summers here at Endeka Dakwa. Fortunately, my husband Jonathan is a very talented carpenter and all-around handy man. As any old camp owner will tell you, the work never ends. It is truly a labor of love and we manage to find time to do some east-coast travelling and to entertain friends and family members. We plan to keep this place for as long as we can. We just hope that whoever is lucky enough to be the next owner will appreciate its history and charm as much as we have. There’s no guarantee, of course, but we will cherish our memories no matter what.



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