



# ECOS NEWS

*ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse*



ECOS provides environmental experiences and education for youth and adults to develop enjoyment and understanding of the natural world and foster action to preserve it.

**Celebrating Our 49th Year in Environmental Education**

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## *Rachel Carson Celebration*

**Thursday, October 21, 2021**

*Due to the concerns about Covid the board has decided to hold the celebration virtually. Dinners will be available for pick-up at the Turf Tavern from 5pm-6pm. See the enclosed flyer for details.*

### **Featured Speaker Darwin Roosa**

#### **A Future with No Ice? Iceland's Changing Climate**

Iceland, an island country in the North Atlantic Ocean, can be studied as a model for how climate change is occurring there and at the latitudes of other places in the world -- including New York State.

In 2018, Darwin Roosa traveled to the West Fjords region of northern Iceland to compete in a 50 km cross country ski marathon. His experience near the Arctic Circle offered "spring snow" on spectacular landscapes formed by lava flows and shaped by glaciers past and present.

Moreover, there were opportunities for Darwin to talk with local scientists and citizens about how the world's changing temperatures are shrinking Iceland's 269 named glaciers, causing a rise in sea level as well as crustal uplift near coastal cities affecting the fishing industry. The environmental awareness by citizens and their collective actions work to preserve this unique landscape.



Darwin Roosa

Darwin Roosa has a varied background as an environment educator—teaching high school science, working with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation in citizen participation program, and in communications in the NYS Governor's Office. He is actively involved in a number of environmental and outdoor organizations, including ECOS. He is a dedicated cross-country skier and long-distance ski competitor as well. He enjoys making presentations that interpret various issues and themes.

**ECOS NEWS**

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ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.

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**The Board is grateful to Matt Tate, ECOS' Summer Intern. Thanks Matt!**

**From Matt, ECOS Summer Intern**

I remember anxiously searching for internships before the end of my junior year at Boston University. The frantic chase had led me to rejection and stress as I noticed my colleagues had already succeeded in finding a place to work over the summer in the city. Then, I found myself scrolling through environmental organizations back in my hometown of Niskayuna, New York. I stumbled upon the ECOS website and I thought... why not?

I recall watching Cindy demonstrate her love for bees at the first ECOS virtual presentation I attended and thinking that I found an organization similar to what I had prepared for in college environmental clubs and classes on campus.

The past three months at ECOS have been an exciting opportunity for me to dive into a leadership role of an environmental organization that serves my local community. As an intern at ECOS, I was responsible for the organization and coordination of two presentations called "infrastructure talks" which took place at the hill at Blatnick Park and the Schenectady County Composting & Recycling Facility. I taught gardening to third and fourth graders as a volunteer at Central Park for the elementary school summer enrichment program in Schenectady. I also attended my first ever professional Board meeting in July and wrote articles for the newsletter. The breadth of my experiences at ECOS and the trust that the board members had in me to take on new tasks allowed me to explore all the ups and downs of a small environmental nonprofit.

I have tremendous gratitude to the board and members of ECOS who welcomed me into their family with open arms. I am happy to have given back in a small, yet meaningful way to the community that raised me. I look forward to transferring the skills and experiences from this summer to environmental service in the future.

Let's all aim to make the planet a greener place wherever life ends up taking you! —*Matt Tate*

**A SUCCESSFUL NO-OCTANE SALE! THANKS FOR YOUR DONATIONS**

Our no-Octane Bike and Boat Sale was a huge success. Our final total was over \$3,000. Thanks to all our members who contributed bikes, boats or related items. **Your generous donations are what made the sale such a success.** A special thanks to Will Seyse who stored unsold boats in his garage and kept advertising them for months until they finally sold for the price we were asking . Persistence paid off!

**Shopping From Home?**

**Another way to support ECOS**

You can help support ECOS through Amazon. Join Amazon Smile where a portion of your purchase will go to the non-profit of your choice.

Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and type in ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse as your non-profit. Follow the simple instructions and .05% of your purchase of eligible goods will be credited to ECOS.



**PRESIDENT’S PIECE**

—*Ruth Bonn*

**Dealing with the Present; Planning for the Future**

At the September Board meeting, the Board reluctantly made the decision to hold the Rachel Carson Dinner virtually, again. The dinners will be real...catered by the Turf Tavern...but, we will meet on Zoom. We, and many of you as well, were looking forward to being able to again get together, but the responses to our survey indicated that, considering the increase in Covid cases due to the Delta variant, more members were feeling uncomfortable about meeting indoors for the event than were fine with it. The Delta surge is discouraging. The ignorance of science which is exacerbating it, underlines the importance of first-hand observation and understanding evidence, two skills ECOS fosters in its classes and programs.

Outdoor programs will continue with appropriate precautions and limited enrollment. We are especially excited to be able to offer two workshop programs specifically for families, thanks to a Stewart’s grant. More information on all programs is on our website [www.ecosny.org](http://www.ecosny.org) as well as in this newsletter.

At the September meeting, the Board also voted to begin the process of hiring an executive director. Earlier in the summer, the Board engaged in a SWOT analysis exercise to identify ECOS’ internal *Strengths* and *Weaknesses*, and external *Opportunities* and *Threats*. The lack of an executive director was universally seen as a weakness. Other areas identified as needing improvement were membership growth, especially among younger people, and fundraising to grow the organization. These are two competencies we will be looking for in an Executive Director. By necessity, the position will be part time, since funding for a full-time director is not available. Even at part time, without significant development of additional funding sources, funding to support the executive director position will last only a few years.

Given that a part-time executive director cannot be expected to do everything required to make ECOS function effectively, the Board is engaging in a process of defining priorities, and establishing clear lines of responsibility to identify who (a committee, an officer or individual) is responsible for the completion of various tasks. The ECOS board is a working board; it will continue to do a good part of the work involved in making ECOS effective. Additionally, to prevent the director’s time being sucked away by office tasks, the office manager position will be maintained.

We looking ahead to better days, for a time when we can again meet indoors in large groups. And we are planning for the future of ECOS. ECOS is almost 50 years old now.

We are making plans and laying the groundwork, to try to ensure that ECOS will grow and thrive for another 50 years! *There is still plenty for ECOS to do. Our work is to open people up to the natural world so that they value it and take actions to preserve it. The Earth needs all the help we can give it, in whatever small ways we can!*



**One of Our Foremothers**

On September 12<sup>th</sup> Junice Wusterbarth, a founding member of ECOS, celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with a car parade. Born September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1921 in Schenectady, NY, Junice’s love of the natural world started at an early age by playing on the sand dunes (part of the pine bush ecosystem) and woods near her childhood home. Junice and her husband, Harold, were members of the Sitz-markers and OYK, two groups of young professionals who hiked, boated, and skied in the Adirondack Mountains. The groups also helped to maintain the trails and restore the shorelines of various Adirondack lakes. These groups later formed the Schenectady Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club. As a self-taught naturalist, she shared her knowledge with her four children, eight grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren while on nature walks in the woods and on Schenectady Municipal Golf Course near her home on Daniels Avenue. Junice was also a founding member of the Friends of the Schenectady County Public Library, of which she served as treasurer for 33 years. Junice continues to live by being “grateful for gifts, unearned and undeserved”.

Cindy Frisoni, Junice’s granddaughter-in-law, is on the ECOS Board. Junice introduced her to ECOS!

### ECOS at the City School District Summer Enrichment Program in Central Park

Children are the future caretakers of this beautiful planet on which we live. When we have an opportunity to reach them and spark their interest, we are fortunate.

For four weeks in July and early August, ECOS volunteers were able to interact with over 300 children, as well as teachers and volunteers, in Central Park. We were able to bring to them exciting, interactive programs focusing on nature. The children participated in everything from discovering stream life, identifying trees, bird migration, the science of gardening, and pollinators including honeybees. They were able to learn about stream flow by racing corks, compare the leaves of different trees, test common household liquids for pH, explore the challenges faced by a migrating bird, look into a beehive and get their hands dirty examining soil types. Some children tasted honey for the first time ever. When you look into a child's face and see fascination, you know you have succeeded in reaching them.

Every year the Schenectady School district offers this enrichment program. It provides outdoor activities for children and gives them an opportunity that they may have never otherwise had. In addition to our environmental programs, they swim, play tennis and learn about nutrition. There are also programs from Cornell Cooperative education and MiSci. The children rotate through the various programs throughout the four week program.

The success of the program was made possible by the volunteers who led programs and assisted with managing the children and keeping them engaged. I want to thank the following program leaders: Darwin Roosa, Arden Rauch, Matt Tate, Steve Jones and Ed Kautz. Also our exceptional ECOS volunteers: Ruth Bonn, Sarah Celik, Connie Young, Elizabeth Stehl, Margaret Novak, Elyn Hiscox, Nancy Parry, Lisa Biega, Nora Biega. Thank you everyone who worked together to make this a tremendously successful 2021 season.

—Cindy Elsenbeck,  
Program Vice-president



Cindy Elsenbeck



Arden Rauch



Matt Tate, Intern



Learning about water flow



Steve Jones



Darwin Roosa



BeeKeeper

Ed Kautz and  
Gypsy Moth s



## BOOT BRUSHING STATION INSTALLED TO CURB INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

If you have hiked in area nature preserves over the last few years, you may have noticed structures at trailheads for cleaning your boots and shoes. Above the boot brush is an attached sign that provides information on several invasive plant species that are of concern in that preserve. In addition to helping to prevent the spread invasive plants into and out of the preserves, these structures have served to educate the public about commonly seen invasive plants such as bittersweet, multiflora rose, and pale swallow-wort.

The newest area station was installed at the entrance to the Sanders Preserve in Glenville. This station was designed and built by Glenville high school senior Arrianna Stark, who was awarded a grant from Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (CapMo PRISM). Arrianna, who is a member of the Schenectady County Invasives Committee, worked closely with Glenville town official Vicki Hillis on this Girl Scout Gold Award project.

The boot brush station was installed on September 7th at 12:30 pm at the Sanders Preserve on Sanders Road in Glenville, NY. Town officials, Glenville Park Planning Commission members, and members of the Invasive Species Committee, which is a committee of the Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council, were present.

## NOVEMBER WALK IN WOLF HOLLOW ANNOUNCED!

On Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy and ECOS are sponsoring a walk in Wolf Hollow. George Shaw, of the Union Geology Department, and Sarah Walsh, the MHLC Conservation Director, will lead the walk. The walk is on a mile long, closed, paved road. Registration information will be posted on our website.

Wolf Hollow is picturesque ravine in Glenville Hills featuring steep cliffs, a small creek and towering trees. Located directly on Hoffman's Fault, it's a destination site for geology field trips. The rock on one side of the gorge slipped 650 to 1,100 feet in relation to the other about 450 million years ago, leaving the contrasting layers of rock clearly visible. The varied habitat of the gorge supports a wide variety of plants species including rare ones, and some rare amphibians as well.

## BOOT BRUSH BRIGADE



## RECYCLING NEWS---New Recycling Educator hired by the Cooperative Extension.

Schenectady County Cooperative Extension has hired Maxfield Sorkin to be the new Recycling Educator for the County. Each month he will be publishing an e-magazine on recycling and composting topics. To subscribe and have the e-magazine delivered to your e-mail, contact him at [mms397@cornell.edu](mailto:mms397@cornell.edu). For help with your recycling or composting questions, contact him at 518-372-1622 ext. 264, or e-mail [mms397@cornell.edu](mailto:mms397@cornell.edu).

I thought his thoughts about the value of recycling were worth sharing:

Reducing waste is easy to do as part of your daily life. Each individual choice to reduce waste collectively makes an incredible difference in lessening our impact on Earth's natural services and resources.

Recycling is a symbolic behavior. When we choose to recycle, we send a message not only to our friends, families, and co-workers, but to everyone around us. When we choose to recycle we are exercising stewardship for the Earth by conserving its natural resources and preventing environmental pollution. With every single bottle, can, or piece of paper we recycle there is not only an environmental impact, but also an economic benefit from extending the life cycle of reusable raw materials.

Recycling shows leadership in your home, work place, and community. Together we can all work to make Schenectady County neighborhoods more environmentally sustainable by choosing to recycle and encouraging others around us to do the same.

ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse, Inc.  
 Annual Financial Report  
 Fiscal Year April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

**Upcoming  
 speaker series**

We are excited to announce that we are going to continue to offer our virtual speaker series for the upcoming year. It is a great opportunity to provide environmental programs to members and stay connected.

Last year we were able to experience visual presentations on the history of the Pine Bush, Adirondack conservation, climate change, achieving Netzero, composting, Union college students' environmental projects, land stewardship grants and benefits of pollinators.

We are currently exploring the speakers for this coming year. If you are interested in being a presenter, or have a suggestion for a speaker, please let us know. You can email the office at [info@ecosny.org](mailto:info@ecosny.org) and provide us with the name and contact information.

Membership 283

**Operating Funds:**

Trustco Checking Account \$67,799  
 Trustco Savings Account \$1,869

**Investments:**

Wells Fargo \$13,096

**Restricted (included in Checking):**

Schoharie Nature Guide \$10,000

**INCOME:**

	Budget	Actual
Membership	\$12,500	\$15,680
Contributions	5,500	9,458
Foundation & Trust Grants	5,250	6,930
Annual Appeal	4,500	5,825
Programs	2,750	100
Publications	1,100	1,203
Rachel Carson, Annual Dinners	5,350	3,785
Misc.	400	361
Total	\$37,350	\$43,342

**EXPENSE:**

	Budget	Actual
Salaries	\$11,530	\$13,994
Employer Taxes & Service Fees	2,333	2,402
Contract Services	10,000	0
Printing & Copying	2,500	2,077
Postage & Mailing	1,100	1,562
Rent	1,608	1,474
Rachel Carson, Annual Dinners	2,500	2,438
Insurance	2,219	2,077
Schoharie Nature Guide	3,500	0
Programs	3,250	0
Misc.	1,680	1,493
Total	\$42,220	\$27,517

Net Income/Loss- \$-4,870 \$15,825

2021 CALENDAR

October

- Oct 2: Lake Bonivita walk, 10 am- LF
- Oct 5: Thacher Park Nature Trail walk, 9:30 am-TW
- Oct 9: Hennig Preserve walk, 10 am-LF
- Oct 12: Mohawk State Park walk, 9:30 am-TW
- Oct 16: Moreau State Park walk, 10 am-LF
- Oct. 16: Connecting Children to Nature, 10 am
- Oct 21: Rachel Carson Celebration
- Oct 23: Wolf Creek Falls Preserve walk, 10 am-LF

November

- Nov 6: Wolf Hollow Walk-MHLC
- Nov 18: Speaker Series 7 pm via Zoom
- Holiday Party Date TBD

LF: Leaders Favorites  
 MHLC: Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy  
 TW: Tuesday Walks

CONNECTING CHILDREN TO NATURE

Our next session of "Connecting Children to Nature" is scheduled for Saturday, October 16th, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in Central Park, Schenectady. This program is for children ages 6-12 (with children under 10 accompanied by a caregiver), and is led by Rebekka Henriksen. Each gathering features a hike where we will look for and explore native plants, insects and animals, a nature-based craft/activity, and outdoor play. To register, please go to: [ecosny.org](http://ecosny.org)

Rebekka is a long time nature educator who has taught a variety of programs for children in the Capital District over the past 12 years. She currently works for the Schenectady City School District as their Farm to School Program Coordinator and is an ECOS Board Member since 2020.

For addresses and additional details on walks or other events visit Upcoming Events on our website: [www.ecosny.org](http://www.ecosny.org)



**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**ECOS Membership  
 ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse**

Please check your membership contribution level.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Donor/Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 Sustainer  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporter         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student    |  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Patron     |

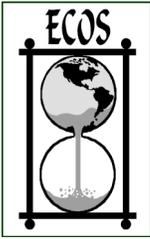
Please make your check payable to ECOS.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

As a current GE employee my contribution is eligible for GE Foundation Matching Funds. I have registered with GE for the matching gift by computer at [www.gefoundation.com](http://www.gefoundation.com). If you do not have computer access, call customer service at 1-800-305-0669.

My employer will match my contribution. I've enclosed my matching gift form.

I would like to be a volunteer. Please send me more information.

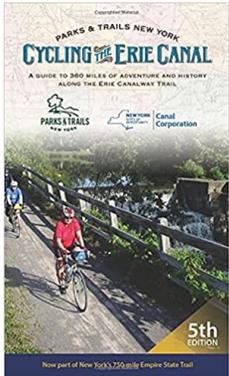


**ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse**  
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ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is located in the Niskayuna Community Center, 2682 Aqueduct Rd. Niskayuna, NY.

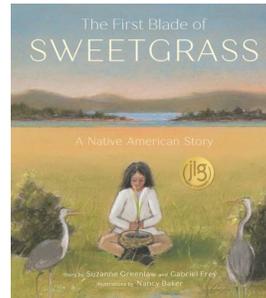
**Cycling the Erie Canal, Fifth Edition: A Guide to 360 Miles of Adventure and History Along the Erie Canalway Trail by Parks & Trails New York**



The guidebook is designed primarily for use by bicyclists, but it is also useful for those planning to enjoy the trail on foot, travelling the canal system by boat, or visiting the Canal corridor's many sites by car. The fifth edition includes information on the statewide 750-mile Empire State Trail, which the Erie Canalway Trail is now part; updated maps, trail routing, and surface conditions; and an

updated, comprehensive listing of attractions, historic sites, visitor centers, public transportation options, easily accessible lodging, bike shops, parking, and other services. This guide is an indispensable resource for dedicated cyclists planning to bike across the state or the casual rider looking to take the family out for a couple of hours.

**The First Blade of Sweetgrass; A Native American Story by Suzanne Greenlaw and Gabriel Frey**



In this Own Voices Native American picture book story, a modern Wabanaki girl is excited to accompany her grandmother for the first time to harvest sweetgrass for basket making.

Musquon must overcome her impatience while learning to distinguish sweetgrass from other salt marsh grasses, but slowly the spirit and peace of her surroundings speak to her, and she gathers sweetgrass as her ancestors have done for centuries, leaving the first blade she sees to grow for future generations. This sweet, authentic story from a Maliseet mother and her Passamaquoddy husband includes backmatter about traditional basket making and a Wabanaki glossary.

*ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is a non-political, not-for-profit organization. Our mission is to provide environmental information and educational opportunities that enhance appreciation of the natural world, build a community that is aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and advocate informed action to preserve our natural resources. ECOS is funded through the support of our members and the community.*