



**Indian River Lakes**  
**CONSERVANCY**  
Protect • Learn • Enjoy • Forever

**Newsletter**  
Spring 2021



# Can you find all of these unique features at Grand Lake Reserve?

Grass Lake Overlook



Grass Lake Overlook #2

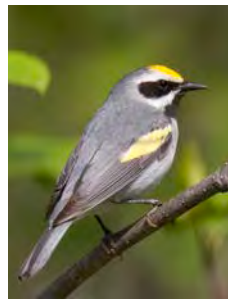


Stone Face Rock Cut

Historical Lead Mine



Golden-winged Warbler



Yellow-Spotted Salamander

American Phlox



Abandoned Sugar Shack

# Thank YOU for making it all happen!

As I write this letter, the miracle of spring is unfolding all around us. A walk in the woods reminds us of how amazing our natural world is as it reawakens from its winter's slumber. This perpetual rebirth is remarkable considering that only a few short weeks ago these spring ephemerals, amphibians, and reptiles were underground in a state of suspended animation.

In the coming weeks the birds will be busy singing, courting and defending of territories before everything quiets down for the brooding season. The loon residents of our lakes will be splashing about, inviting us to consider taking that first chilly plunge for ourselves... And most importantly, for us fishermen, bass season opening in the coming weeks!

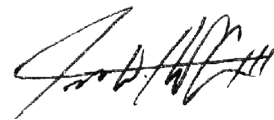
Our staff and volunteers are final preparations for another wonderful summer full of programs enabling children's experiential learning in nature. We have built a fantastic lineup of presenters for our Summer Science series which

are all geared to increasing our appreciation and care for protecting our water quality and unique habitats that are home for all of our flora and fauna residents.

But we are most excited about reconnecting with you – our members and supporters. We've missed you during the past year, and we are really looking forward to catching up with you and seeing you at our programs, on our trails, while volunteering, and at our Celebration of the Lakes fundraiser.

Please stop by the office to say hello when you have the chance. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Happy Spring!



James Wylie Huffman III  
Executive Director

## Celebrate the Indian River Lakes with us...

We are about to spend another summer floating in kayaks, dipping into cool Lake water, listening to the call of loons from our back porches, taking peaceful pause under ancient trees, praising sunsets, and sipping in the purity and freedom of all that Nature has to offer in the Indian River Lakes Region.

This is something to celebrate.

We've missed you, our community, over the last year, and we are over-the-moon excited to invite you to a party and fundraising dinner for the Indian River Lakes Conservancy.

Bella Brooke Vineyard, overlooking Black Lake, has once again offered to host us on their beautiful grounds for a fun night out. You can start the evening with a wine tasting of their local selections. For this year's event, we are bringing Dinosaur BBQ for a fun, (mostly) outdoor event.

The menu isn't 100% set yet, in most part because every time we start reading it, we have to break for lunch.

Funkadelphia, a band from Central NY, will bring the Funk - that's what they are known for - along with harmony and upbeat energy. Dancing is optional, but we highly recommend tapping into your childlike joy and at least moving a free toe or knee to the beat.

We're expecting plenty of interesting auction items to bid on. Our local businesses and donors always come through with some neat things so stay tuned for more info, and thank you to the local businesses that have already signed up as sponsors!

Celebration 2021 promises to be a night filled with great food and music, good friends, and opportunities to invest in the Future of the Lakes and the Preservation of Land in our Region. What more could you ask for!

# Protectors of Water & Habitat on the Indian River Lakes

## Restore Water Quality & Monitor Forests

Spring is here and Project WHIRL, our environmental education program for teenagers is focused on learning about our local natural habitats and ways to protect them through preventative and restorative measures. The Project which started with a summer intensive program, now in its third year, has expanded to include year-round excursions.

In March, the club's hike focused on learning early detection methods in preventing the spread of the invasive insect, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) which was discovered this winter in Oswego County, near the shore of Lake Ontario.



March's HWA hike was hosted by The Nature Conservancy's education and outreach coordinator Megan Pistolese. Megan lead a group of 10 students through Baker Woods Preserve showing them how to look for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Lucky for us none of these invasive pests were found. The students also were able to listen to Ruffed Grouse drumming while learning about native and invasive plants along the trail.

In May, Club WHIRL will use restorative measures for Boyd Pond, introducing 1,000 six to eight inch Largemouth Bass. Boyd Pond is a tributary to Lake of the Woods. The stocking was recommended in the Lake of the Woods Lake Management Plan developed by Ryan J. Elliot, a State University of New York Oneonta master's student. Mr. Elliot was funded to research and write the plan as part of a partnership between the IRLC, Lake of the Woods Lake Association, and SUNY Oneonta.

## Welcome Sarah Trick, Watershed Coordinator

Sarah Trick joined the IRLC team in the position of Watershed Coordinator this spring. She is a recent graduate from the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry with a B.S. in Environmental Studies: Policy, Planning, and Law.

Sarah recently moved to Theresa from Syracuse and her hometown is Binghamton, NY.

Sarah's previous work includes a position as Invasives Species Technician at the Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Sarah will lead the IRLC's Watershed Protection Programs and serve as an educator for Project WHIRL's Teen Environmental Education Program. It is a major goal of the IRLC to be able to provide outreach and assistance to all the Lakes in the Indian River Lakes Watershed.

Sarah will also head up the Eurasian Watermilfoil Strike Force, and she will be kayaking each Lake this summer to get to know the ecology, limnology, and people of the area. If you're interested in joining her, reach out at [strick@indianriverlakes.org](mailto:strick@indianriverlakes.org).

Jacob Ball, our first Watershed Coordinator has accepted a position with the Fort Drum Environmental Division. We wish Jacob the best of luck in his career!



Bass Stocking should improve the water quality through “Top Down” management, a type of management in which predators are added to the top of the food chain in hopes that the effects trickle down and exact change at the bottom, in what’s known as a “trophic cascade.”

This effort should restore balance to the food chain by using Largemouth Bass to increase the predation on Minnows that prey on Zooplankton, which are small organisms that consume bacteria and algae. By decreasing the Minnow population, we predict the Zooplankton population will increase and limit future water quality challenges, including reducing the number of hazardous algal blooms (HABs) found within Boyd pond and resulting in improved water quality in both Boyd Pond and Lake of the Woods.

This method of management is still theoretical, but has been shown to be effective in other, similar water bodies. By including WHIRLers in this program the IRLC is hoping to inspire the next generation of environmentalists while engaging in a sustainable, cutting-edge approach to this environmental issue.

Like all things in nature, the effect of this treatment will take time to be seen, but the IRLC and WHIRL programs will continue to monitor the lake’s health and progress while having fun and learning the science behind invasive species management and water quality improvement.



## Kids at Redwood Hill Learn All About Earthworms and Composting



# Protected and Stewardred Lands are Your Legacy

*Your Donations mean more Stewardship,  
Less Development in Biodiverse Habitats*

The Indian River Lakes Conservancy is deeply committed to supporting the Land Trust Alliance's efforts in committing to the conservation of 30 percent of U.S. lands and oceans by 2030. This is an ambitious goal, and we cannot do this without our support.

The time for conserving, protecting, and stewarding land is now!

Rural areas are experiencing more and more pressure to provide housing and retail services to humans every day. It is imperative that we, as a society, think about what we want our landscape to look like ten, twenty, and even a hundred years from now.

Smart development means planning for biodiverse lands to be preserved as habitat. It means preserving native species, maintaining climate, and keeping free and open spaces where we can recreate in the wild.

Every day we are working with our partners in land conservation including Ducks Unlimited, Fort Drum Environmental Division, the Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative, The Northeast Wilderness Trust, and our north-country partner land trusts, Thousand Islands Land Trust and Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust to ensure our habitats remain connected enabling migration corridors and diversity of habitat.

In order to continue conserving land and protecting the areas that we love, we need your funding support. As an accredited land trust, we are obligated to manage the lands that we protect in perpetuity and we cannot do this without you, our supporters, members, volunteers, and donors.

The IRLC stewards more than 2,500 acres and maintains 20 miles of trail systems. We hope to grow this number every year and ensure that the Indian River Lakes Region that we know and love always remains the gem that it is.

This is our legacy to our children, our grand children, and all future generations. Will you join us?



# Partner Spotlight: The Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative

The Indian River Lakes Conservancy and Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative are working together to preserve and protect land in the Algonquin to Adirondacks (A2A) region.

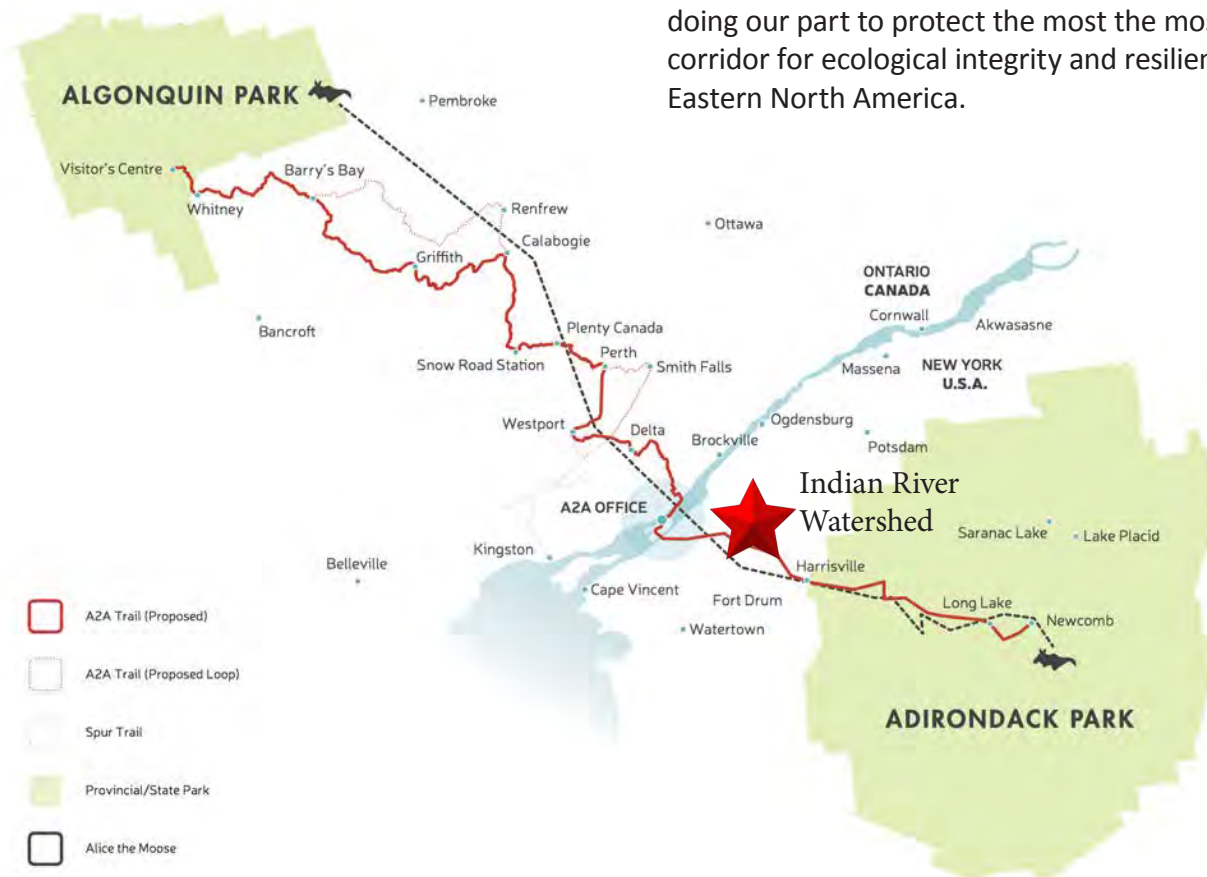
The A2A region is a unique diverse bioregion that connects Algonquin Park in central Ontario to the Adirondack Park in northern New York through the Frontenac Arch and surrounding lands including the Indian River Lakes area.

Home to a vast array of plants and animals, it is one of the last large-scale, intact forest and wetland linkages left in Eastern North America. It is however, under threat from an array of factors including habitat loss, the effects of climate change on species and landscapes, pollution, increased

prevalence of invasive species, and human-wildlife conflicts particularly around road corridors and mortality.

The IRLC is proud to be working with the A2A and associated partners to include the Northeast Wilderness Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Thousand Islands Land Trust, and St. Lawrence Land Trust with the common goal to “patch together” a mosaic of parcels that protect critical migration corridors and integrate regional landscape ecology.

We look forward to working within the A2A partnership in addressing our conservation challenges by connecting lands and people throughout the North Country in an effort to identify threats, strategies, and actions to protect our natural areas and increase resiliency, thereby doing our part to protect the most critical corridor for ecological integrity and resilience in Eastern North America.



*The A2A Trail, A Pilgrimage for Nature*

*The Trail is a 600 km multi-modal active recreation travel route connecting the two great parks using existing trails, rail trails, and backroads to raise conservation ethic and knowledge of the A2A corridor. The Trail travels through back roads and hiking trails in the Indian River Lakes Conservancy area and a digital trail map can be found at <http://www.a2acollaborative.org/a2a-trail.html>*



# Indian River Lakes CONSERVANCY

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## STAFF

**J. Wylie Huffman**  
*Executive Director*

**Heidi Sourwine**  
*Program Coordinator*

**Sarah Trick**  
*Watershed Coordinator*



Front Cover: Cedar Waxwing © Karen Millspaugh

Back Cover: © Matt Carney

IRLC Newsletter : Spring 2021

## Join us for an upcoming event...

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Life in a Shell: Conservation Efforts for North Country Turtles<br><i>Summer Science Series Presentation at Redwood Hill</i>                   | June 3 <sup>rd</sup>  |
| Dock & Shoreline Invaders: ID & Plant Management<br><i>Summer Science Series Virtual Presentation</i>  | June 10 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Aquatic Invasive Plant Showcase & Floating Classroom<br><i>Millsite Lake Boat Launch</i>   | June 12 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Floods and Forcings: Chronicling Glacial Lake Iroquois Floods and their Potential Climate Impacts<br><i>Summer Science Series Presentation</i> | June 23 <sup>rd</sup>   |
| Kids' Nature Camp<br><i>at Redwood Hill Preserve</i>   | July 13 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> , & 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| Celebration of Lakes<br><i>at the Bella Brooke Winery</i>  | July 24 <sup>th</sup>   |
| Water Quality Conference   | August 27 <sup>th</sup>                                       |

For a full listing of events & event details, visit [indianriverlakes.org](http://indianriverlakes.org).

