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DEP to Celebrate American Wetlands Month With Special Discovery Event at Ashokan Reservoir




DEP scientists will display wetland plants and wildlife May 11 at Ashokan walkway

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that it will celebrate American Wetlands Month by hosting a wetlands discovery event May 11 at Ashokan Reservoir. The event will be located at the Olivebridge Dam parking area on Route 28A from 1:30–6 p.m. DEP wetland scientists will display living samples of plants and wildlife found in nearby wetlands, and answer questions about these unique habitats.

The month of May is set aside each year to recognize the vital role that wetlands play in our nation's ecological, economic and social health. American Wetlands Month has been celebrated each May since 1991. Wetlands are transitional lands between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Wetlands include many varieties such as forested swamps, vernal pools, wet meadows, marshes, bogs, and fens. These ecosystems cover a relatively small portion of the landscape—approximately 7 percent on average in New York State—but they provide a wide variety of benefits. Wetlands reduce flooding, absorb excess nutrients and pollutants to improve water quality, provide fish, wildlife, and plant habitat, and offer recreational opportunities for hunters, fishermen and outdoor enthusiasts. Nearly half the nation's endangered species rely on wetlands to survive, as do 80 percent of breeding birds, half of protected migratory bird species, and nearly all fish and shellfish harvested both commercially and recreationally. Globally, wetlands have significant potential to mitigate climate change. They cover up to 8 percent of the earth's surface, yet they store 30 percent of the world's soil carbon, making them an important sink for greenhouse gases.

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