

# ROOTS

INVASIVE SPECIES NEWS IN THE ADIRONDACK REGION

*A Newsletter of the Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program*

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Issue 2

## Prevention Programs, Response Teams Gain Traction

Several initiatives on APIPP's wish-list became a reality in 2011. For more than a decade, APIPP and partners have advocated for key programs to better armor the region from invasive species: coordination, an early detection network, regional response teams, innovative prevention programs and policies, education and more. Slow but steady progress has been made. Since 2008, the Environmental Protection Fund has supported regionally coordinated efforts via APIPP (the Adirondack Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management). And, thanks to private and federal funds, partners rolled out three new regional initiatives this summer: a terrestrial response team, an aquatic response team and an expanded Watershed Stewardship Program (aka boat launch stewards). Plus, elected officials got on-board with passing village, town or county-wide aquatic invasive species transport laws. Awareness is also on the rise among new interest groups, like landowner associations and garden clubs. Expect these efforts and more in 2012!

## New Landowner Notifications

APIPP staff focus inventory and control efforts for terrestrial invasive plants largely on public lands. Many infestations, however, are on private lands. APIPP designed a series of four door-hanger notification cards to place on doorknobs when they see troublesome plants on private lands. Each card informs the landowner about proper identification and management techniques.



## Events

- **Cornell Invasive Species In-Service Training, Nov 15-17, Ithaca, NY**
- **Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel, Nov 29 – Dec 1, Providence, RI**
- **Northeast Aquatic Plant Management Society, January 17-19, New Hampshire**
- **National Invasive Species Awareness Week, Feb 26 – Mar 3, Washington, D.C.**
- **Northeast Natural History Conference, Apr 15-19, Syracuse, NY**
- **APIPP Spring Partner Mtg, Apr TBD**

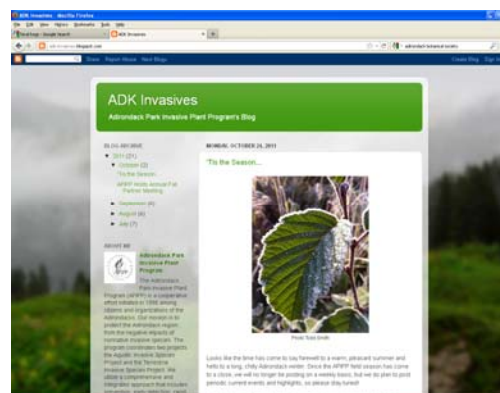
## Species Snapshot

Every field season brings with it the anticipation of species that may show up on the scene. Most arrive as inadvertent "hitchhikers" via pathways such as mowing equipment, infected fill (soils), nursery stock, bait buckets, watercraft or firewood. This summer featured a few familiar species, and some new ones, that became the poster-species of 2011.

Giant hogweed, a federally-listed noxious plant, got the limelight in various statewide media outlets which led to several new sightings in the central (Tupper Lake) and eastern (Essex) Adirondacks, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html>. Partners in Lake George and beyond worked daily on Asian clam response efforts, <http://www.stoptheasianclam.info/>. Meanwhile, emerald ash borer (EAB) continued its march across NY, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html>. EAB is not yet reported in the park. And, as the season came to a close, boaters discovered hydrilla in Cayuga Lake in the Finger Lakes region – treatment is underway for this aggressive aquatic plant, <http://www.nyis.info/index.php>.

## Blog On!

May through September is APIPP's busiest time for detecting and treating infestations. Every day finds the APIPP team in a new corner of the region working with community partners to address top species threats. APIPP started an activity blog this summer to keep partners and citizens current on team activities and whereabouts. Check it out online at <http://adk-invasives.blogspot.com/>.



## Invasive Species Soundbytes

Meghan Johnstone is APIPP's new Aquatic Invasive Species Project Coordinator. Welcome aboard, Meghan! Warren County Board of Supervisors passed the first county-wide aquatic invasive species transport law in New York. Celebrate Adirondack flora by joining the newly formed Adirondack Botanical Society, <http://adkbotsoc.org/>. View the latest invasive species news in NYS via the NY Invasive Species Information Clearinghouse, <http://nyis.info>. Stay informed by phoning into the monthly invasive species conference call, held the last Wednesday of every month from 11:00-12:00. Contact Leslie Surprenant [lsurpre@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:lsurpre@gw.dec.state.ny.us) for more information.

## Cheers

### *APIPP Aquatic Volunteers Aquatic Invasive Plant Monitoring Project*

This year marked APIPP's 10<sup>th</sup> season of coordinating region-wide aquatic invasive plant surveys. Since starting in 2002, APIPP's Aquatic Project trained nearly 700 citizens in plant identification and survey techniques. A four hour training session jam-packed with plant samples and expert presentations prepares citizens to search for and report aquatic invaders. To-date, volunteers surveyed 300 waters. Their findings established a baseline of the distribution of invaded and uninvaded waterways in the Adirondack Park – this information is critical to inform effective prevention and management programs.

When it comes to safeguarding waters from aquatic invasive species, volunteers are an essential part of the equation. Their time, dedication and stewardship are necessary to help keep watchful eyes for new infestations.

The aquatic volunteer profile is diverse. Some volunteers are year-round residents, others are recent arrivals. Some volunteers are students, seeking experiences to take forward, and some are retired professionals, seeking opportunities to give back. Some volunteers are visitors, here for only a short time, choosing to spend time helping to search for aquatic invasives! The common denominators? All have a love of the water and all are appreciated!

Thank you, Aquatic Volunteers, for your commitment to protect Adirondack waters from aquatic invasive species!



Nearly 700 volunteers attended aquatic plant training sessions and helped to survey 300 Adirondack waters since 2002.

Photos courtesy Meghan Johnstone, APIPP.

## Species Alert

### *Feral Swine (Sus scrofa)*

*The information that follows is an excerpt from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/70843.html>.*

Many people are aware of the feral swine problem in southern states like Texas and Florida, but these animals are also a growing problem in New York. Also called feral pigs, feral hogs, wild boar, wild hogs, razorbacks, Eurasian wild boar and Russian wild boar, feral swine are a harmful and destructive invasive species.

DEC's goal is to eradicate feral swine from New York's landscape. Feral swine have tremendous negative impacts on plants, wildlife, livestock, agriculture and humans. They eat the nests and eggs of ground nesting birds and reptiles, almost any agricultural crop and also tree seeds and seedlings. Their rooting and wallowing habits destroy crops and native plants, cause erosion and negatively affect water quality. They also have sharp tusks and can be aggressive toward humans and their pets.

Feral swine can include domestic pigs that have been released or escaped captivity and "gone wild," wild boar (native to Eurasia) that escaped from licensed shooting preserves or a hybrid cross between domestic pigs and wild boar. Their color, patterning and size range. They are highly adaptable and prolific. If weather is good and food is plentiful, feral swine can breed as early as 6 months of age and breed several times a year with a litter size from 2-8, often tripling the population size in one year.

Report sightings in the wild to your Regional DEC.



Feral hogs are becoming established in New York, including in Clinton and Washington counties. Their impacts to agriculture, natural areas and human health are far reaching.

Photo credits: (l) North Carolina State University, College of Natural Resources News Central; (r) Brendan Quirion, APIPP

## On The Horizon

*Here is a snapshot of APIPP's near-term priorities:*

- Compile and evaluate field reports and summarize results in APIPP's 2011 Annual Report.
- Collaborate with partners to draft the APIPP PRISM Strategic Plan.
- Develop a regional invasive species communications plan.
- Chair the New York State Invasive Species Advisory Committee.
- Collaborate with NY PRISMs and the Office of Invasive Species Coordination.

**Looking for a way to get involved?**

Give us a call today about volunteer opportunities that reflect your interests.

*APIPP is housed by the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Funding is provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Fund.*

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