

## Didymo Pollutes the Esopus:

### Invasive Species, The Harm They Do, and How to Block Them

Commercial developers trying to pave over our mountain-sides...climate change that threatens our recreational and agricultural economies...the month of June "lost" to soaking rains: As if all this weren't enough, now comes didymo — *didymosphenia geminata* — the thickly matted algae that is clogging the Esopus River between the Shandaken portal and the Ashokan Reservoir.

Known also by the unpleasant nickname "rock snot," didymo is biological pollution — a non-native invasive species that can adversely affect stream conditions and will choke the organisms on the stream bottom even in flowing, nutrient-rich streams. That makes didymo a direct threat to trout and other fish in the Esopus, to recreational kayaking and tubing, and of course to the water supply for more than half the population of New York state.

Perhaps worst of all, didymo probably found its way into the Esopus through us. Like the fast-growing knotweed imported from Japan that now threatens stream banks, like the emerald ash borer transported in a camper's firewood that has destroyed ash trees across the Midwest (and is

*When the didymo gets transported to new territory — like the Esopus, it typically arrives without the predators and diseases that might keep it under control in its native habitat.*

headed our way), didymo probably entered the Esopus accidentally and incidentally. Most likely, a microscopic amount of it was in a drop of water on some angler's felt-soled waders or some paddler's gear. But the consequences for our environment and our economy may end up being dramatic and far-reaching.

That's because when the didymo gets transported to new territory—like the Esopus, it typically arrives without the predators and diseases that might keep it under control in its native habitat. In effect, therefore, there's nothing to stop the algae from growing and spreading, and didymo has thus far also been found in the east and west branches of the Delaware, the White, the Connecticut, and the Battenkill rivers. Eradication of didymo after the fact is very difficult, and as New York's Department

*Continued on reverse side.*

## Coming up this fall...

**Galli-Curci Mansion Tour:** First, take a special tour of the unique Galli-Curci Mansion as the guest of its current owners. Hear about both the famed diva, Amelita Galli-Curci, and the architect who designed her exceptional home, Harrie T. Lindbergh, who trained at the famed McKim, Mead & White. Stroll the glorious grounds, now threatened by the proposed commercial resort development. Enjoy a glass of wine and the voice of the diva herself as you gaze at the extraordinary views. This special event will be held this autumn, when the mountains are at their most spectacular. Date and time to be determined...

**CHA Turns Ten:** Second, the Catskill Heritage Alliance is ten years old, and we're throwing ourselves a birthday bash! We're waiting for the really cold weather—when we really need a party. Details on date and venue to come...

Watch for emails with dates, times, and details for these events. Or check our website at [www.catskillheritage.org](http://www.catskillheritage.org). Still not a member? Click on BECOME A MEMBER, and you can join immediately. Want to make a contribution? Click on DONATE. Your gift is tax-deductible.



Catskill Heritage Alliance  
[www.CatskillHeritage.org](http://www.CatskillHeritage.org)  
A member of 

### From CHA Chairman Rich Schaedle

Holding pattern. That seems to be the watchword for the summer, as we continue to await the issuance of a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Belleayre mega-resort. Unfortunately, the timing of that next step and of the review process that will follow the document's publication is not within our control. All we can do—and it's a tall order—is to be prepared and ready when it happens.

With your help, we will be.

Difficult as it is to ask you time after time to reach into your pocket yet again, I know you understand how important it is that we see this process through—step by step. Every step costs money—for legal fees, expert witnesses, getting our message out. Won't you please help us take the next step? We've included a coupon below. Please contribute whatever you can; your donation is tax-deductible. And please be sure to include your email address so you receive instant alerts on next steps.

#### Help us take the next step

- \$500    \$250    \$100  
 \$50    \$25   Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to CHA and send it, **along with this form**, to:

CHA Treasurer  
P.O. Box 88  
Shandaken, NY 12408

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

*The Catskill Heritage Alliance is a grass-roots organization dedicated to preserving the harmony between the villages of the central Catskills and the surrounding wilderness through community revitalization and open space conservation. The CHA is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, and your donation is tax-deductible to the full extent provided by law.*

# MOUNTAINWATCH

August, 2009

of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has made clear, "there are currently no known methods for controlling or eradicating didymo once it infests a water body."

The only remedy is prevention, and that requires conscientiously and consistently performing a procedure the DEC calls Check, Clean, and Dry before you enter any body of water. Check the body of water you intend to fish or paddle or swim in, and remove any algae you find. Make sure you have soaked your gear and scrubbed your boat with a quaternary ammonium compound—found in Fantastick, Formula 409, and other household cleaners. Dry your equipment well.

In addition, be aware of how easy it is to "introduce" an invasive species, and act preventively. That means restricting your garden to native plants—and asking your local nursery not to stock non-native plants. It means not moving bait or fish from one body of water to another, not transporting firewood, and not releasing any fish — including bait-fish — or animal or seed or plant "into the wild."

For more information:

DEC's website:

[www.dec.ny.gov/animals/265.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/265.html)

New York's Invasive Species Clearinghouse (<http://nyis.info/>) is an online library of invasive species information.

<http://imapinvasives.org> tracks invasive species; and you can join a PRISM, a Regional Invasive Species Management, at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/47433.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/47433.html).

## Come to a Meeting

The Catskill Heritage Alliance membership meets on the **last Sunday of each month at 4 pm** in the Pine Hill Community Center, Main Street, Pine Hill, New York. All are welcome. If you would like to be on the email list for meeting announcements and other alerts, please submit your email address to [info@catskillheritage.org](mailto:info@catskillheritage.org).

## Write Letters

It's difficult to overstate the importance of keeping up a steady stream of citizen letters expressing opposition to the proposed Belleayre mega-resort. Whether your opposition is rooted in your fears of the resort's environmental destruction, its adverse impact on our economy or community character, the evasion of public review and failure of good governance embodied in the Agreement in Principle, the developer's attempts to obtain public subsidy for his private profit, or something else altogether, let your voice be heard by your elected representatives.

**To find your state Assembly representative, go to:**

<http://assembly.state.ny.us/> and click on Click Here to search by Zip Code.

**To find your state Senator, go to:**

<http://www.nysenate.gov/senators> and type in your address and zip code.

**To communicate with your Ulster county legislator, go to:**

<http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/legislature.html#1>.

**To locate your town supervisor in Delaware County, go to:**

<http://www.co.delaware.ny.us/departments/cob/bos.htm>.

**And don't forget:**

**Governor David A. Paterson**

State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224

518-474-8390

## Officers of the Catskill Heritage Alliance

*As of the Annual Election June 28, 2009*

Chairman, Rich Schaedle

[rschaedle@earthlink.net](mailto:rschaedle@earthlink.net)

Co-Chair, Kathy Nolan

[fusho@earthlink.net](mailto:fusho@earthlink.net)

Treasurer, Mary Herrmann

[maryherrmann@hvc.rr.com](mailto:maryherrmann@hvc.rr.com)

Secretary, Maureen Nagy

[maureennagy@yahoo.com](mailto:maureennagy@yahoo.com)

### Members of the Executive Committee

Ezra Birnbaum

[easyez@catskill.net](mailto:easyez@catskill.net)

Karen Charman

[panaurora@earthlink.net](mailto:panaurora@earthlink.net)

Susan Colosimo

[clara26@hvc.rr.com](mailto:clara26@hvc.rr.com)

Pete DiModica

[wackimac@mac.com](mailto:wackimac@mac.com)

Freddi Dunleavey

[freddiandgo@yahoo.com](mailto:freddiandgo@yahoo.com)

Ben Korman

[BenK@candkproperties.com](mailto:BenK@candkproperties.com)

Mary Macy

[mdmacy@earthlink.net](mailto:mdmacy@earthlink.net)

Kevin Millar

[kjmilow@yahoo.com](mailto:kjmilow@yahoo.com)

Beverly Rainone

[brainone@hughes.net](mailto:brainone@hughes.net)

Roger Wall

[rlwall@mindspring.com](mailto:rlwall@mindspring.com)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 7088  
KINGSTON, NY

Catskill Heritage Alliance  
P.O. Box 88  
Shandaken, NY 12480