



March - April 2004

Published by the Community Involvement Office
Building 130, P.O. Box 5000
Upton, NY 11973
Phone: 631 344-5658 Fax: 631 344-3654
www.bnl.gov

Exploring Earth's Mysteries.... Protecting Its Future

- Brookhaven National Laboratory has developed a Natural Resources Management Plan with the assistance of its Technical Advisory Group, which includes participants from local agencies and the community. The plan focuses on identifying and protecting the habitat and natural resources on the Laboratory property.
- During the last four years the Lab has done extensive surveying and monitoring of songbirds, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and tiger salamanders. Songbird surveys are conducted with significant help from a volunteer. During the four-year period, 103 species of birds have been identified, most of which are breeding on the 5,300-acre Lab site. Other bird enthusiasts have documented the first nesting record for New York of Summer Tanagers on site.
- The Peconic River begins west of Laboratory property, flowing through Brookhaven from northwest to southeast, and is fed largely by groundwater. Currently, on site portions of the river are being cleaned up due to contamination from past Lab practices. The Lab is working to restore the river and will re-vegetate excavated areas with native species to minimize the likelihood of invasive plants becoming established there. The Lab has established photo points along the river to document the clean up and recovery process.

1.



2.



3.



1. Summer Tanager – This brightly colored bird is one of a pair discovered in 2002 nesting on the Lab site. The nesting pair was confirmed to be the first New York record for this species.
2. This Eastern Bluebird is using one of the more than 45 nest boxes located at Brookhaven.
3. These juvenile Red-bellied Snakes, discovered by Jeremy Feinberg on the Upton Reserve, are the first reported on Long Island in over 40 years.

(over)



Browse line caused by deer feeding on the trees is an indication of overpopulation.

- White-tailed deer numbers are currently estimated at 1,400. While the deer population has declined through the winter due to the weather and lack of food supply, the number still far exceeds the 250 or less considered ideal. Over population in deer is a regional issue and affects all of Suffolk County and eastern parts of Nassau County, as well. Last month, an aerial survey of Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge, BNL, and the Rocky Point Wildlife Management Area was conducted. The results of the survey will help to determine how properties with deer management (hunting) and those without compare.

- Going Native – The Laboratory has begun to use native vegetation in much of its landscaping efforts. Native grasses and trees have been used to re-vegetate construction areas and areas cleaned up under the Environmental Restoration Program. Native vegetation is better adapted to the Long Island climate and requires less maintenance and care.

- The Lab places a high priority on educating students. Under the Natural Resource Management Program, undergraduate interns work on a variety of research topics ranging from water quality studies to population ecology. Interns also gain experience working with school-age children attending the Laboratory's Science Museum Summer Camp. During 2003, interns studied damselflies, dragonflies, salamanders, and Hog-nosed Snakes, and mapped invasive species. The work of the interns added to the list of species on site, which currently includes more than 220 species of plants and 163 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Additionally, approximately 27 endangered, threatened, or species of special concern, including the state-threatened banded sunfish, are on the property.



Participants in the Summer Camp at Brookhaven's Science Museum learn about insects and aquatic life in an outdoor classroom.

- Brookhaven Lab was pleased to be featured by Newsday in their "Long Island, Our Natural World" series, this past year.

Upcoming Events Open to the Public

April Verch, Wednesday, March 31, Noon, Berkner Hall: Outstanding fiddle-player April Verch will perform music drawing on the folk traditions of France, Eastern Europe, and the British Isles. Verch has won over 400 awards for her playing. Free.

Stony Brook Opera, Wednesday, April 14, Noon., Berkner Hall: David Lawton returns with members of the Baroque Ensemble to give a semi-staged presentation of highlights from Handel's *Agrippina*. Free.

Women in Concert, Friday, April 16, 7:30 p.m., Berkner Hall: Three-hour concert featuring three popular female singers – Yvette Malavet-Blum, Robin Greenstein, and Cathy Kreger. Tickets are \$12 at the door or from the BERA sales office. For more information, call (631) 344-3846.

Visitors to the Lab ages 16 and over must have a photo ID.