

Pesticide Update

Staff Report

AUDUBON NEW YORK recently completed the first phase of its public education and outreach effort on pesticides. This campaign, which is intended to provide people with an understanding of the real impacts of pesticide use in their homes and communities, has been focused on getting good peer reviewed scientific information into the hands of over 100,000 citizens in New York State. This program has been focused on Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk Counties in the down state region.

In this first stage Audubon has reached out through the media with press releases, radio shows and television spots.

Audubon is continuing to track the research on bird mortality in New York State. There are now three years of data on the impacts of pesticides on bird populations. The ongoing research continues to show that pesticides are a leading cause of death for birds in New York State. Hundreds of thousands of birds are killed each year in New York State by pesticide poisoning. Audubon believes that as people learn more about the clear connection between pesticides and wildlife

damage, those same people will reduce or eliminate their use of pesticides.

So far, the response from the public has been very supportive. As more attention is focused on pesticides through the Suffolk County "no spray" list, through the "neighbor notification" law, and through the West Nile Virus efforts, the general public is getting more involved. They are beginning to question how they use pesticides, and what is appropriate for pesticide use as a society.

As the scientific community continues to explore pesticides and their impacts, it has become clearer that we need to reduce their use wherever possible. Should the aesthetic use of pesticides be prohibited? Should the use of pesticides be banned completely? Should the use of pesticides be allowed only for agriculture? These are some of the questions now being asked.

Audubon believes that citizens at large should have a better understanding of pesticides and their impacts, and these same citizens should be more involved in the decision-making that clearly affects themselves, their families, and ecosystems upon which all life depends.

Habitat Stamp

Legislation signed by Governor George E. Pataki this year creates a new Habitat Stamp that is available to people who want to support the Department of Environmental Conservation's efforts to conserve habitat and increase public access for fish and wildlife-related recreation. This stamp is available to anyone for \$5.00, wherever sporting licenses are sold. The 2002 Habitat Stamp features a pen and ink rendering of a ruffed grouse about to flush from a fresh stump. Ruffed grouse often benefit from forestry practices that create early succession stage habitats.

A habitat stamp is not required to hunt, fish or trap; nor do you have to purchase a sporting license to buy a habitat stamp. Habitat is the key to fish and wildlife abundance, and the new Habitat Stamp will provide money to help improve and conserve fish and wildlife habitat for the future as well as increase public access to public and private lands for fish and wildlife-related recreation. Buying a Habitat Stamp is the perfect way for young or old, angler or hunter, birder or photographer to help conserve New York's fabulous wildlife heritage. By law, all monies raised through purchases of the Habitat Stamp must be deposited in the State's Conservation Fund in a newly created Habitat Account.



Let Your Voice Be Heard

Join the *Audubon Advocate* E-list

When you are needed to make a difference in Congress, we'll e-mail you a sample letter that you can tailor as you see fit. After your alterations, print the letter, and send it directly to your member of Congress. Your voice will join thousands of others calling on Congress to support conservation issues. The network is completely free and will not cost you anything.

YES! Please sign me up for the *Audubon Advocate* E-list.

Clip and mail to Audubon NY, 200 Trillium Lane, Albany, NY 12203.

Name: _____

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Areas of Interest:

Advocacy Volunteering Conservation & Science Education (Centers, Teaching etc.)