

Environment April 2018

4/2/18-BEWARE THE BEASTIES CROSSING THE ROAD. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION IS WARNING DRIVERS TO LOOK OUT FOR A MIGRATION OF AMPHIBIANS. THE COMBINATION OF WARM TEMPERATURES AND RAIN IS EXPECTED TO TRIGGER AN EARLY RUSH OF FROGS, TOADS, AND SALAMANDERS MIGRATING TO THEIR SPAWNING AREAS. THE BIGGEST THREAT TO THOSE ANIMALS IS GETTING SQUISHED AS THEY CROSS THE STATE'S ROADS.

4/2/18-A UTICA COUPLE IS EXPECTING IT'S FIRST CHILD OF 2015. THE PROUD PARENTS ARE THE PEREGRINE FALCONS THAT HAVE BEEN CALLING THE ADIRONDACK BANK BUILDING IN DOWNTOWN UTICA HOME OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. A WEBCAM SET UP INSIDE THEIR NESTING BOX RECORDED THE APPEARANCE OF THEIR FIRST EGG OF THE SEASON, AND THEY'RE EXPECTED TO ADD THREE MORE TO THE CLUTCH OVER THE COMING DAYS. YOU CAN WATCH THE LIVE VIDEO FEED OF THE HAPPY COUPLE AT UTICA.PEREGRINEFALCONS-DOT-COM.

4/4/18-LOCAL FARMERS COULD BE TRADING IN THEIR COWS FOR SOLAR PANELS. MULTIPLE SOLAR COMPANIES HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN APPROACHING FARMERS ABOUT LEASING THEIR ACREAGE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF COMMERCIAL SOLAR GRIDS. THE MOVE COMES AS THE PRICE OF MILK HAS ONCE AGAIN PLUNGED, LEAVING CONVENTIONAL DAIRY FARMERS STRUGGLING TO STAY ALIVE. THE SOLAR DEVELOPERS ARE LOOKING FOR PROPERTY WITHIN A MILE OF A POWER LINE OR SUBSTATION WITH AT LEAST TWENTY AVAILABLE ACRES OF OPEN SPACE.

4/6/18-SNOWMOBILE SEASON IS OFFICIALLY OVER. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION HAS ANNOUNCED IT'S CLOSING ALL TRAILS AND LIMITED ACCESS SEASONAL ROADS BY THIS WEEKEND BECAUSE THERE SIMPLY ISN'T ENOUGH SNOW. THE CLOSURE WILL ALSO BAN ANY VEHICULAR TRAFFIC ON THE ROADWAYS UNTIL THEY'RE REOPENED. THE SPRING THAW SEES MANY OF THOSE ROADS TURN INTO MUD. THAT CAN BE FUN FOR A-T-V RIDERS, BUT CAN EXTENSIVELY DAMAGE ROADS AND TRAILS THE D-E-C DOESN'T HAVE THE MONEY TO REPAIR.

4/10/18-DON'T FEED THE BEARS. THAT'S THE MESSAGE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION. WARMER TEMPERATURES MEAN BLACK BEARS ARE WAKING UP FROM THEIR WINTER HIBERNATION PERIOD, AND THEY WAKE UP HUNGRY. THAT CAN LEAD THE ANIMALS TO START WANDERING SETTLED AREAS IN SEARCH OF A MEAL. WHILE FORAGING BEARS ARE GENERALLY HARMLESS THEY'RE STILL WILD ANIMALS EQUIPPED WITH CLAWS AND TEETH THAT CAN CAUSE EXTENSIVE INJURIES. ANYONE SIGHTING ONE IN SETTLED AREAS SHOULD AVOID CONTACT AND NOTIFY THE POLICE.

4/10/18-NEW YORK IS GOING TO WAR AGAINST AN ALIEN INVADER. IN THIS CASE, IT'S THE EMERALD ASH BORER. THE INVASIVE INSECT HAS BEEN SLOWLY SPREADING ACROSS THE STATE, AND OFFICIALS SAY IT'S NOW BEEN IDENTIFIED IN TOMPKINS COUNTY NEAR ITHACA. . ONCE ESTABLISHED IT CAN DEVASTATE STANDS OF ASH TREES. A NEW PROPOSAL WOULD HELP ALLEVIATE SOME OF THAT DESTRUCTION BY PAYING OWNERS TO REMOVE THEIR ASH TREES AFTER THEY BECOME

INFECTED. OFFICIALS HOPE THE MOVE WILL HELP SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE DISEASE BY CREATING A BUFFER ZONE AROUND INFESTED AREAS.

4/12/18-WARM, BREEZY WEATHER IS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF SPRING. IT'S ALSO CREATING DANGEROUS FIRE CONDITIONS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION HAS ISSUED A STATE WIDE BURN BAN THROUGH MAY FOURTEENTH. LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN DEALING WITH SMALL BRUSHFIRES CREATED BY STRAY SPARKS IGNITING DRY BRUSH AND GRASS LEFT OVER FROM LAST FALL. OFFICIALS SAY THE FIRE RISK WILL BE MITIGATED ONCE PLANTS AND TREES START GROWING AGAIN

4/16/18-THE LAST GASP OF WINTER WEATHER WREAKED HAVOC ACROSS THE AREA THROUGH THE WEEKEND. BUT THIS TIME IT WASN'T SNOW THAT WAS THE PROBLEM, BUT ICE AND HIGH WINDS. A COMBINATION OF FREEZING RAIN AND GUSTING WINDS BROUGHT DOWN POWER LINES ACROSS THE AREA. AS OF THIS MORNING OVER FIVE THOUSAND CUSTOMERS WERE WITHOUT POWER, AND CREWS WERE DEALING WITH MULTIPLE LINES DANGEROUSLY SAGGING FROM THE WEIGHT OF ACCUMULATED ICE.

4/16/18-NEW YORK IS LIKELY TO SEE A BUMPER CROP OF TICKS THIS YEAR. A SOLID SNOW COVER OVER THE WINTER MONTHS HELPED SHELTER THE BLOODSUCKERS FROM FREEZING TEMPERATURES AND THEY'VE ALREADY STARTED EMERGING IN FULL FORCE. EXPERTS SAY ANYONE SPENDING TIME IN THE OUTDOORS SHOULD TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE PARASITES, INCLUDING WEARING LONG SLEEVES AND PANTS. PET OWNERS SHOULD BE EQUALLY VIGILANT AND CHECK THEIR ANIMALS REGULARLY FOR ANY HITCHHIKERS.

4/17/18-A POWERFUL WEATHER FRONT THAT PRODUCED NEARLY THREE DAYS OF FREEZING RAIN AND HIGH WINDS FINALLY DISSIPATED YESTERDAY. BUT CLEANING UP THE AFTERMATH IS GOING TO TAKE SOME TIME. HIGH WINDS DOWNED TREE LIMBS AND CAUSED SCATTERED POWER OUTAGES, WITH JUST OVER THREE THOUSAND CUSTOMERS STILL WITHOUT POWER. NATIONAL GRID CREWS ARE OUT THIS MORNING REPAIRING THE DAMAGE, BUT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER TRAFFIC SIGNALS THAT ARE OFF OR OPERATING IN CAUTION MODE.

4/21/18-SPRING IS FINALLY HERE, AND WITH IT COMES ANOTHER WAVE OF WILDFIRES. LOCAL FIRE OFFICIALS AND THE STATE D-E-C ARE REMINDING PEOPLE THAT THERE'S AN

OPEN BURN BAN IN EFFECT UNTIL NEXT MONTH. THAT'S TO PREVENT DRY GRASS AND BRUSH EXPOSED BY MELTING SNOW FROM FUELING FIRES THAT CAN DESTROY ACRES OF PROPERTY. ANY KIND OF OPEN FIRE IS RESTRICTED UNTIL MAY FOURTEENTH.

4/21/18-IF YOU HAVE A FOURTH GRADER IN YOUR FAMILY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET INTO ANY STATE PARK FOR FREE THIS SEASON. THAT'S THANKS TO A NEW STATE PROGRAM CALLED THE EVERY KID IN A PARK PASS. FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS CAN GET THE PASS AFTER COMPLETING ONLINE ACTIVITIES. ONCE IT'S PRINTED OUT ANY VEHICLE WITH A FOURTH GRADER INSIDE CAN GAIN ENTRY TO A STATE PARK OR HISTORIC SITE WITHOUT CHARGE. MORE DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE AT N-Y-S-PARKS-DOT-COM.

4/30/18-THERE ARE PARTS OF NEW YORK THAT STILL HAVEN'T THAWED OUT FROM WINTER. THE STATE D-E-C IS WARNING RESIDENTS TO BE CAREFUL IF THEY PLAN ON CAMPING OR HIKING IN THE NORTH COUNTRY. SPRING CONDITIONS MEAN MOST TRAILS ARE STILL MUDDY, BUT AT HIGHER ELEVATIONS RANGERS SAY YOU'LL STILL FIND MELTING ICE BUILT UP OVER THE WINTER. THAT COMBINATION OF ICE AND MUD CAN BE EXTREMELY SLIPPERY, ESPECIALLY ON STEEP MOUNTAIN TRAILS. IT'S NOT UNUSUAL TO FIND ISOLATED PATCHES OF SNOW AND ICE IN THE ADIRONDACKS WELL INTO JUNE.