

Biologist: Otsego Lake is free of water chestnuts

- By Joe Mahoney The Daily Star
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COOPERSTOWN — A search for various types of invasive species in Otsego Lake found no evidence of water chestnuts, which delighted Bill Harman, the director of the Biological Field Station that led the effort.

“The water chestnuts were the prime target,” said Harman, a veteran biology professor who heads a lake-management program for graduate students at the State University College of Oneonta.

For the past 40 years, Harman was the organizer of the annual Otsego Lake Cleanup Day. With lakeside property owners no longer putting refuse in the lake, this year Harman revised the title of the event to Invasive Species Awareness Day.

The event was held last Sunday, and attracted a dozen participants, Harman said.

He said the participants in last Sunday’s event did find several invasive aquatic species that have been previously documented in the lake, including Eurasian milfoil, curly leafed pondweed, starry stonewort and zebra mussels. A story in the Aug. 2 edition of The Daily Star incorrectly listed zebra mussels as one of the species that has been eradicated from the lake.

Harman said the Eurasian milfoil appears to be on the decline in Otsego Lake, thanks to several species of insects that are feeding on it.