Founded in 1997.
Logo art of Tall Goldenrod,
Solidago altissima,
by Nat Cleavitt, 2006.

Solidago

Newsletter of the
Finger Lakes Native Plant Society

Volume 25, No. 4 ~ December 2024

WALK REPORT

Annual Seed-Collecting Walk

Photos by Audrey Bowe

FLNPS's Annual Seed-Collecting Walk is a cherished tradition for members who enjoy growing wildflowers and woody plants from seed. This year's event took place at Cornell University's **Arnot Forest**, ca. 15 miles south of Ithaca, on **October 26th 2024**, with 18 participants. Led by ROBERT WESLEY (*yellow jacket*), KRISSY BOYS (*far left in top photo, next page*), and AUDREY BOWE (*third from left, top photo, p. 2*), the group explored for seed-bearing plants, and collected seeds into small paper bags. They will be carefully handled until they sprout, and the seedlings planted outdoors in the spring. Audrey's vibrant photographs capture the atmosphere of this forest (and excursion) on a gorgeous, blue-sky day, with a crisp carpet of fallen leaves.

Photo by Rosemarie Parker

This year we harvested in a different portion of the **Arnot Forest Preserve** than the last two years. The area was more forested, and there was a great difference in both abundance and species when we went inside the deer exclosure. We collected 28 species this year, including more grasses & sedges than in the past. Most of these seeds will be available at the December meeting for your own sowing. — *Rosemarie Parker*

More photos of the Annual Seed-Collecting Walk

The group photo shows a remarkable rainbow of autumn outerwear! Plants grown from seeds gathered on this trip may ultimately populate Cornell's wildflower gardens, as well as private gardens in the region.

Please Contribute to *Solidago*

We welcome contributions that feature wild plants of the Finger Lakes Region of New York and nearby. We include cryptogams (bryophytes, lichens, fungi, and algae) as "flora," and recognize that green plants provide habitats and substrates for these and many animals, especially insects. We are interested in zoological associations as long as plants are an integral part of the story.

We can use a wide spectrum of material in a variety of writing styles. Our regular columns include **Local Flora** (plant lists or details of species from specific sites), **Outings** (reports of FLNPS-sponsored excursions), and **Plant Profiles** (on specific local plants). We also occasionally publish **Appreciations** (memorials to local botanists and naturalists), **Reviews** (of books, talks, meetings, workshops, and nurseries), **Letters** (commentaries and letters to the editor), **Essays** (on botanical themes), **Verse** (haiku, limericks, and poems of less formal structure), **Art** (botanical illustrations, plant designs, pencil sketches, decorations), and **Photographs** (stand-alone images, photo essays, and full-page composite plates, or originals that can be scanned and returned). We also can always use **Fillers** (very short notes, small images, cartoons) for the last few inches of a column.

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Newsletter of the
Finger Lakes Native Plant Society

Volume 25, No. 4 December 2024

Published quarterly at Ithaca, New York, USA.

FLNPS (founded in 1997) is dedicated to the promotion of our native flora. We sponsor talks, walks, and other activities related to conservation of native plants and their habitats. *Solidago* is published as a colorful online version, and a B&W paper version that is mailed. The online format is posted 3 months after publication. Please see **www.flnps.org** for details of membership, past *Solidago* issues, and updates about our programs.

American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), autumn leaf color, east side of Beebe Lake, 29 Oct. 1996. *Photo by Robert Dirig.*

Contents

*Please send *Solidago* contributions & correspondence to Robert Dirig, Editor, at editorofsolidago@gmail.com

Deadline for the March 2025 issue is February 15th !

Name That Plant Contest

The photo from last issue's Name That Plant Contest [*Solidago* 25(3), p. 5] was of **Snowberry (*Gaultheria hispidula*)**. Bob Dirig wrote, "the name conjures visions of a misty bog with a beautiful leafy vine covering the mat under a conifer along the edge, especially in northern habitats. My first sight of the white berries was in a Shawangunk 'ice cave,' but I've also found them in northern New Hampshire." If you have ever tasted **Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*)** fruits, give Snowberry a try; it has all the Wintergreen flavor and more, without even a touch of astringency. Thanks to all who entered the contest, and congratulations to the winners: **Bob Dirig**, **Ed Fuchs**, **Susanne Lorbeer**, and **Rosemarie Parker**.

This issue's mystery plant is shown below.

Common and/or scientific names are acceptable, and more than one guess is allowed. Hints and suggestions are often provided to contest participants who try. Please submit your answer to

David Werier (Nakita@lightlink.com).

The photographs were taken in New York on August 9, 2004 in Cayuga Co. (background and leaf) and July 16, 2022 in Oswego Co., by David Werier.

Letters

Solidago 25(3), October 2024

Very nice, Bob. Beautiful, as always, and it shows a dynamic and somewhat youthful organization in the field. Good mojo for getting more young people involved.

John Cryan
Catskills, N.Y., 5 October 2024

Hi Bob,

Thank you, it's beautiful. I see that Norm has another new organism for the Finger Lakes. Glad to see they are still doing fungal forays at Ringwood Ponds.

Scott LaGreca
Durham, N.C., 7 October 2024

Reds and Greens

Our native **Bittersweet**, *Celastrus scandens*, from a shrubby old field in Ulysses. Photo by Robert Wesley. *See his* Photo Essay *on pages 5-8*.

PHOTO ESSAY

Reds and Greens Are Seasonal Favorite Colors

by Robert Wesley

Late fall and early winter is a great time to view mosses and other bryophytes. They become much more apparent as the big plants go dormant. And ones that are pigmented, like the bog mosses, become more colorful. Bogs are great to visit right now, especially before they get covered up by snow.

The **Red Bog Moss** is *Sphagnum divinum* (*S. magellanicum* s.l.). The green moss is mostly **Girgensohn's Bog Moss**, *Sphagnum girgensohnii*. The greenish-tan one (with crowded centers, *right side*) is probably *Sphagnum fallax*, **Confusing Bog Moss**.

There are lots of different bog mosses. Some are more colorful than others. This is **Russow's Bog Moss** or **Red and Green Bog Moss**, *Sphagnum russowii*.

This is a really pretty moss, **Prince's-feather** or **Knight's-plume Moss**, *Ptilium crista-castrensis*. Go spend time in the woods and swamps — it is more common than you might think!

Reds and Greens

continued

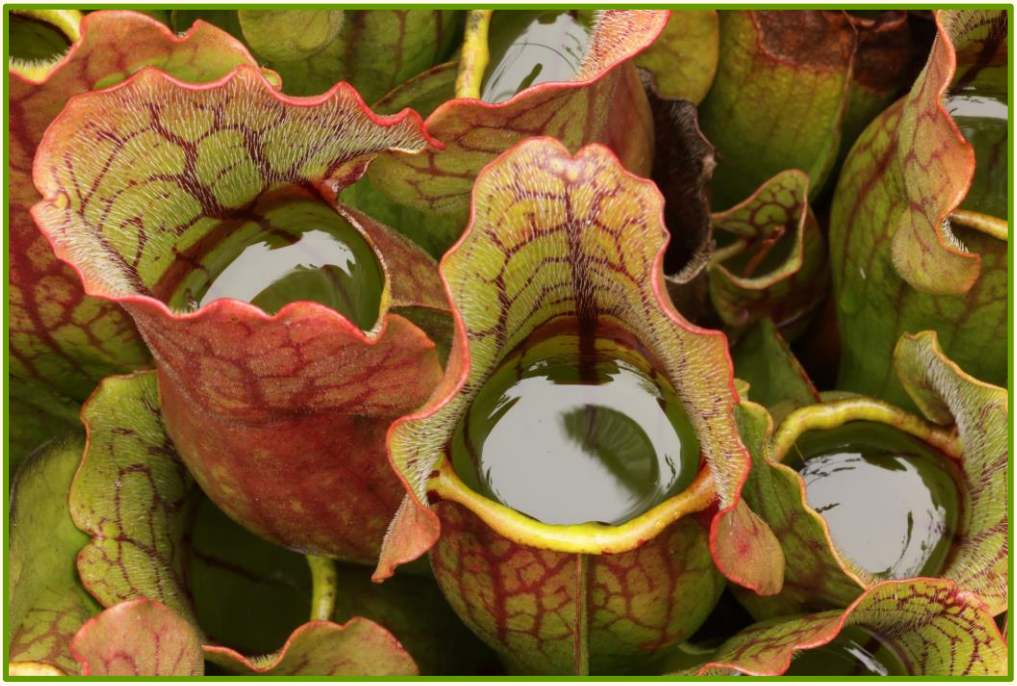
Another bog scene. The tan bog moss is probably ***Sphagnum palustre***, intergrown with a **Haircap Moss**, *Polytrichum* sp.

Another particularly beautiful moss, **Stair-step Moss** or **Mountain Fern Moss**, *Hylocomium splendens*.

This lovely one is not a moss, but a leafy liverwort called ***Trichocolea tomentella***. It often grows in swamps.

Reds and Greens *continued*

The **Northern Pitcher Plant**, *Sarracenia purpurea*, is a bog plant.



Our native **Wahoo**, *Euonymus atropurpureus*, has very colorful fruits — though I suspect most of them have dropped off by now.

Plant Trivia ◆ *by Norm Trigoboff*

1. The outside of a green pepper has what we could call valleys that run north and south. Between the valleys are what we could call hills. Does the often-trimmed white pith on the inside of a green pepper grow below the valleys, or the hills?

2. How many Finger Lakes are there?

3. Which are the smallest and largest Finger Lakes?

4. Which Finger Lake has the largest Watershed Area?

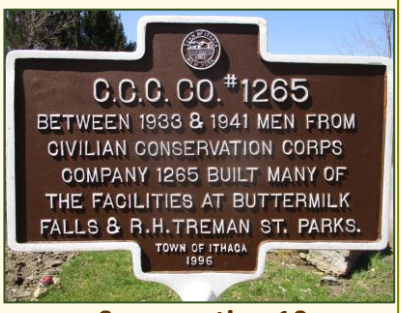
5. Which Finger Lake is the deepest? The shallowest?

6. Is the invasive aquatic plant *Hydrilla* established in the Finger Lakes?

7. The Finger Lakes hold how many gallons of fresh-water?

A. 8,100. **B.** 8,100,000. **C.** 8,100,000,000.
D. 8,100,000,000,000. **E.** 8,100,000,000,000,000.

Hint: The answer has an eight, a one, some zeroes and some commas.



See question 10.

8a. Can you name a bioluminescent plant?

8b. True or false: People who eat mushrooms that glow in the dark may pass stools that glow in the dark.

8c. True or false: People bitten by a firefly may glow.

8d. Why might a plant fluoresce? A thing fluoresces when it absorbs UV light (such as from sunlight or a blacklight bulb), then emits longer wavelength (such as visible) light. Extra credit (and sort of a clue): What is the most fluorescent carnivorous plant?

9. When is a good time of year to practice boomerang throwing in Ithaca? Hint: it helps to know wind direction so you can throw at, say, 2 o'clock to a wind from 12 o'clock.

10. According to this sign (above) on the entrance road to lower Buttermilk Falls State Park, many of the facilities there and at R. H. Treman State Park were built by Civilian Conservation Corps Company 1265. How many men worked there?

See answers on page 8.

Reds and Greens *concluded*

Our native deciduous holly, *Ilex verticillata*, **Winterberry**, is really beautiful right now, and is having an especially fruitful year.

Plant Trivia Answers *by Norm Trigoboff* (*from page 7*)

1. The valleys.

2. Eleven. Sort of a patriarchal way to count.

3. Canadice Lake is about 1 square mile in surface area. Seneca Lake is about 69.

4. Though Cayuga Lake has the second largest surface area, it has much the largest watershed because Seneca and Keuka Lakes drain into it. Cayuga Lake also is the one with the largest watershed area to surface area ratio, 24:1. This high ratio might be important when we think about how runoff affects what grows on the lake surface. Trivia: Cayuga Lake has the most developed watershed (thus more sediment, fertilizer, pesticide, road salt and stormwater runoff) and the most farmed watershed, vineyards mostly. More trivia: Cayuga Lake is the longest and has the longest shoreline length. It's a good bet that it has the most houses along its length. Still more trivia: All the Finger Lakes have had harmful ***algal blooms*** except Canadice Lake, thanks to its low development and little farming in its watershed, perhaps due to laws to protect its shoreline so it can stay a source of drinking water for Rochester.

5. Seneca Lake hits 618 feet. Honeoye Lake maxes out at only 30 feet. Fun facts: The Navy uses Seneca Lake to test sonar systems. More than half the water in the Finger Lakes is in Seneca Lake.

6. Canandaigua Lake, the only Finger Lake with *Hydrilla* established, has the most invasive species: 14. [Data for questions 2 through 6 came from https://allaboutlakes.org/finger-lakes/ and https://www.ifingerlakes.com/finger_lakes.html.]

7. D. *The Water Bulletin*, the newsletter of the Community Science Institute 2022 (of Tompkins Co.) says so.

8a. Though bacteria, dinoflagellates, fungi, copepods, jellyfish, insects and other living things may emit light, we have yet to find or make a bioluminescent plant. Efforts are underway to solve this problem (because we can). Should we? Who knows? We likely should think about it a bunch first.

8b. A big handful or more of local fungi glow in the dark. I have yet to hear of glow-in-the-dark stools.

8c. False, though it might be nice if true. Trivia: *Firefly* is already a supervillain in the *Batman* world, so squash those daydreams about getting bit by a radioactive firefly. Can I interest you in a bombardier beetle superhero? How about a dung beetle?

8d. The Khasi Hills pitcher plant, *Nepenthes khasiana*, has tissue around the pitcher opening that emits strong fluorescent light. This may lure insects and other small animals. When researchers masked this tissue, the plants caught less prey.

See: https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/407796-most-fluorescent-carnivorous-plant.

Trivia: human stool and urine generally fluoresce.

9. You can see slight changes in the wind best in early summer when cottonwoods and other *Populus* species shed their down. (Many thanks to Barnaby Ruhe who gave a boomerang demo at the Soil Factory this summer.)

10. 1937 ± 4.

PHOTO ESSAY

Looking Back to Autumn . . .

Photos by Robert Dirig

Vibrant Images of the Beebe Lake Shore on the Cornell University Campus, Ithaca, N.Y.

North shore, 14 October 1996.

▲ **Striped Maple** (*Acer pensylvanicum*), autumn leaf color, Beebe Lake overlook, southeast side, 16 October 1996.

◀ **White Oak** (*Quercus alba*), autumn leaf color, north side, 14 Oct. 1996.

▼ **Maple-leaved Viburnum** (*Viburnum acerifolium*), autumn leaf color, north side, 16 Oct. 1996.

. . . and Ahead to Winter

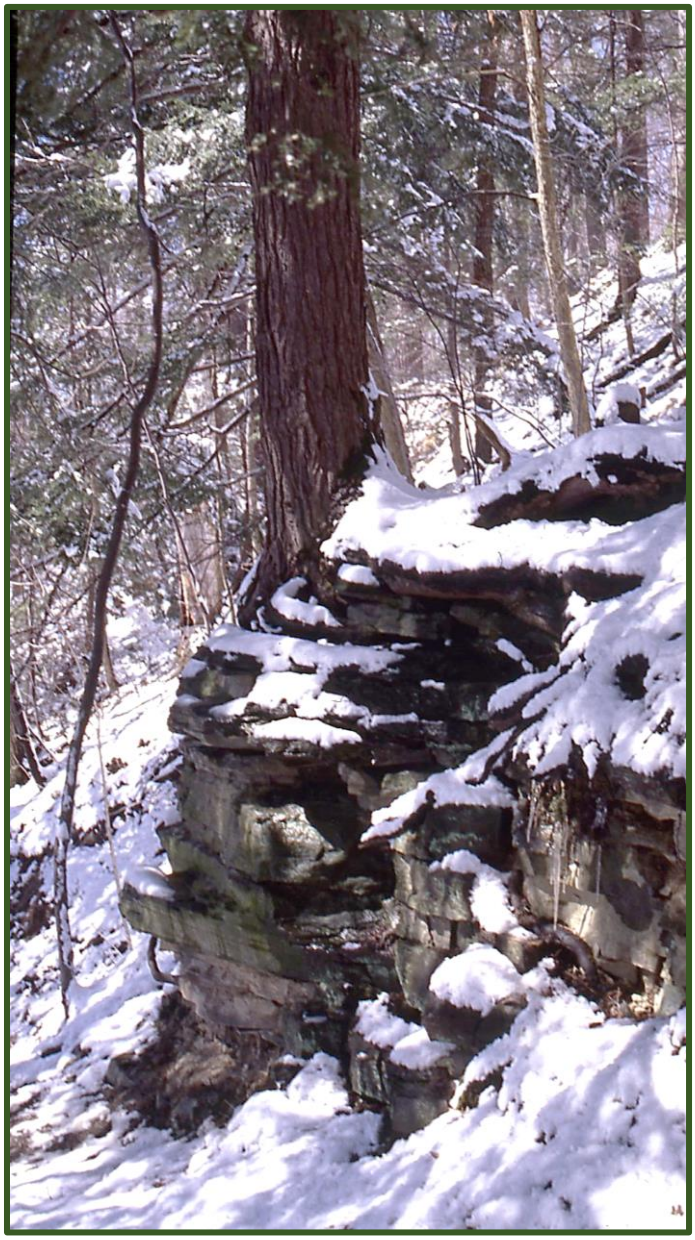
at Beebe Lake

▲ East shore, in the years of snow, 17 January 1997

▲ Northeast inlet, Sackett Bridge, with Fall Creek and the Lake under ice and snow, 14 January 1997

▼ Canada Yew (*Taxus canadensis*), northeastern corner, along the Fall Creek entry gorge, upstream of Sackett Bridge, 14 January 1997, with snow

▼ Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), just west of Sackett Bridge, 1 April 1997 (notice the lingering snow!)



Winter Calendar

Tuesday, December 17th 2024, 7:00 p.m.,
Solstice Gathering
Please join fellow FLNPS members and friends for food, fun, and native flora. Take the plant quiz, bring and sample dishes made with native plants, select native seeds from our collection, and share yours with others. Please check our website for final details closer to the date.*

Tuesday, January 21st 2025, 7:00 p.m.,
Members' Night
Please share your plant-related stories, songs, poems, artwork, photos, skills, and craftmanship! We will be recruiting presenters soon. Please watch our website for details as they develop.*

Tuesday, February 18th 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Details to be announced.*

Tuesday, March 18th 2025, 7:00 p.m.
A talk by **Fred Haynes** on
"Orchids of Western New York."

Tuesday, April 15th 2025, 7:00 p.m.
A talk by **Deanna English** on
"Habitat Restoration"

Talks are presented live at the **Nevin Welcome Center** at the **Cornell Arboretum**, and via Zoom.
*Please see our ***website*** (**flnps.org/activities**) for a map, and details and updates about these and future programs.

Thank You!

This issue marks the end of the *25th Volume* of *Solidago*, and is the *50th issue* I have edited and produced since October 2012, totaling 630 pages! It has been a wonderful journey, and I look forward to beginning Volume 26 in the coming year.

I am grateful for the continuing support of our columnists and other contributors, including ***writers*** John Cryan, Scott LaGreca, Rosemarie Parker, Norm Trigoboff, David Werier, & Robert Wesley; and ***photographers*** Audrey Bowe, (pp. 1-2), Rosemarie Parker (p. 2), Norm Trigoboff (p. 7), David Werier (p. 4), & Robert Wesley (pp. 4-8). My photos appear on pp. 3 & 9-10.

Layout & design by the Editor, ***proofreading*** by Rosemarie Parker, and ***printing*** by Gnomon Copy. Anna Stalter emailed copies, Pat Curran mailed paper copies, & Rosemarie posted to the web.

Please check our website (**www.flnps.org**) regularly throughout the coming months for announcements and details of walks, talks, workshops, and other events. Many thanks to our Steering Committee (p. 3) and all of our members for supporting FLNPS and its activities. We wish everyone in our reading audience a delightful season, filled with native plants in winter and early spring! Very best wishes for the Holidays and New Year!

— Robert Dirig

FINGER LAKES NATURAL HISTORY

BRYOZOAN UPDATE

by Norm Trigoboff

The last *Solidago* [25(3), October 2024, pp. 11-12] reported that ***Lophopodella carteri***, a tiny invasive freshwater bryozoan, lives in the inlets of Cayuga and Owasco Lakes. It has since turned up at Meyers Point. At least five native bryozoans live in and around Cayuga Lake: ***Cristatella mucedo***, ***Fredericella borealis***, ***Pectinatella magnifica***, ***Plumatella emarginata*** and ***Plumatella repens***. These small invertebrate filter feeders live on rocks, docks, pilings, other sound wood, plastic, boats, and aquatic plants such as duckweed, eelgrass and the underside of water lily leaves (except *Nuphar*). One way to census bryozoans here is to collect bryozoan statoblasts with the help of ***Dero vagus***, a minute aquatic case-building worm sometimes abundant in duckweed patches. Each worm adorns its tube-shaped case with statoblasts (and other minute things, such as seeds, duckweed, *Wolffia*, ephippia and specks of wood). ***Statoblasts*** (egg-like reproductive structures of bryozoans) usually are distinctive for each species.

Cayuga and Seneca Lakes also host large numbers of ***Cordylophora caspia***, an unrelated invasive colonial invertebrate. This fouling organism forms branched growths on hard surfaces that are about the same size as some encrusting bryozoans. Cordy is in the phylum Cnidaria, the same as *Hydra*, coral and jellyfish. It hails from the Black Sea-Caspian Sea region. It has invaded much of the world's brackish and fresh waters. Cordy reached us some time before 2007. The ones I saw while looking for bryozoans this last month were at most a centimeter tall, and often hard to spot among the other fouling organisms on rocks, docks and pilings. Young Cordy may start to grow on otherwise clean zebra mussels, and look much like way too many *Hydra* to be in one place.

MANY THANKS to Anne Marie Whelan, Gopi LaBranch, Jon Shaw, Selma Rosenthal and Thomas Phillips for help in the field and Tim Wood for how to tell young Cordy from Hydra.

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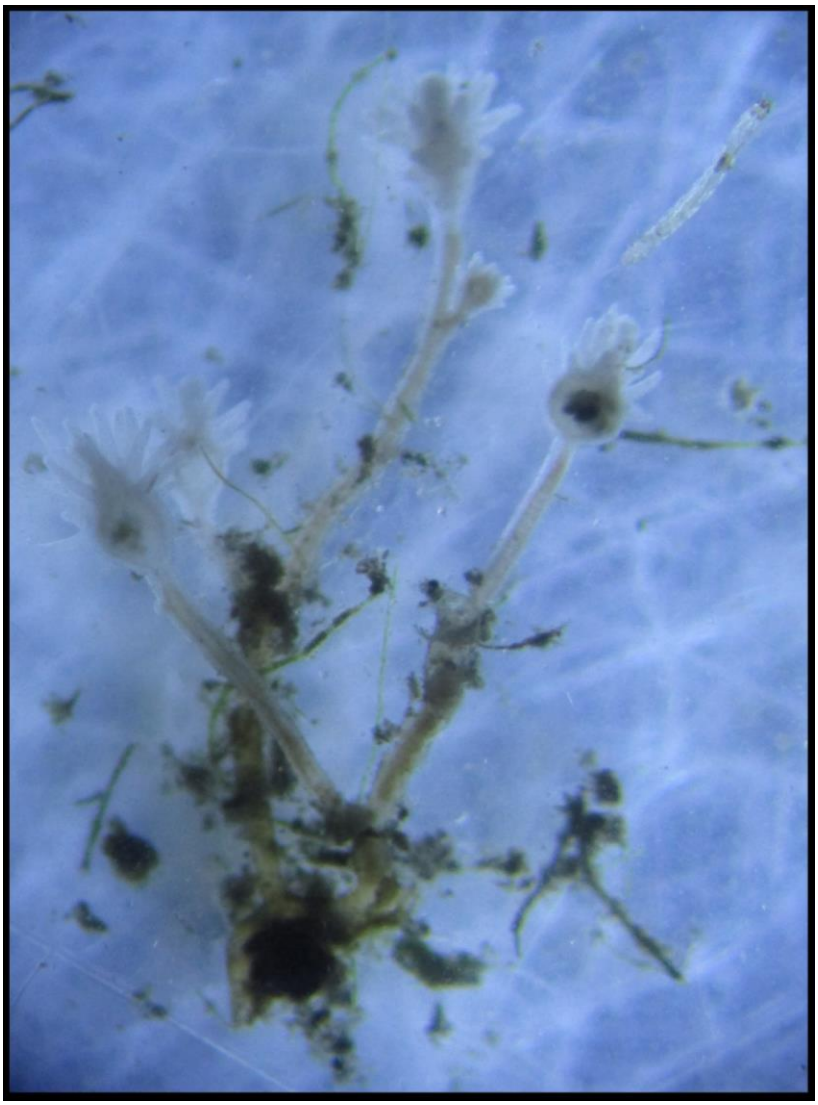

➤ *Cordylophora caspia* from Cayuga Lake