

## BioBlitz

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

York Sports Club off the parkway and some 10 minutes into the woods.

Munshi-South, who is also a member of the Wild Metro, a nonprofit environmental group that seeks to protect wildlife and natural areas in the metropolitan area, and his team set small mammal traps in the late afternoon. "We captured what should be there, which is a good sign," Munshi-South told the Enterprise. The white-footed mouse and field mice were among those in Munshi-South's traps, which he said indicates a healthy habitat for the area.

On Saturday, the mammal team tracked footprints and droppings to identify local species. "Deer are obviously super abundant in Westchester County and along the Saw Mill River, as well. We also found ample evidence of raccoons, another mammal quite common in the suburban environment," Munshi-South said. The group also came across some coyote droppings. Munshi-South said coyotes are becoming more numerous in the area.

At 9:30 Saturday morning, City College of New York graduate students Olga Calderon and Xenia Freilich, accompanied by Freilich's horticulturist husband Jeff Freilich, started their work in the River-towns. This crew was at Macy Park snooping around Woodlands Lake looking for as many species as possible. Jeff Freilich was in charge of identifying trees and plants, while Xenia Freilich kept an eye out for amphibians, snakes, and reptiles, with Calderon covering insects. The trees yielded a colony of wasps, while nearby plants were food for honey and bumble bees. While they were at it, they also started identifying birds.

The trio then headed across the parkway and up the hill to a little meadow off of Cyrus Field Road. After overturning logs and pulling bark off of fallen trees,



TIM LAMORTE/RIVERTOWNS ENTERPRISE

**Xenia Freilich takes photos as she and Calderon explore the meadow in Irvington.**

Xenia Freilich found male and female salamanders. Though many types of beetles were discovered, Calderon said they didn't find too many species of insects out there. "A lot of them are starting to go into diapause [a state of sleep for the winter] because the weather is changing. This might be the reason we didn't find that many," Calderon said. "Insects are not crazy about the cold weather.

"It's fun to go out in the field. It's great to see how organism live and interact with each other," Calderon added.

Charlie Olson of the New York City Department of Environmental Protection was working on the riverbed at Farragut Avenue near the South County Trailway on Saturday when he found a caddisfly, which is said to indicate the presence of clean water. The larvae of these insects live in cold, well-oxygenated rivers and streams, and need unpolluted water to thrive.

Whatever could not be identified in the

field was brought back to Pace University in Pleasantville at the end of the day. By 4 p.m. the university's Kessel Student Center was filled with scientists comparing notes, looking in giant books, and using microscopes to identify unknown species, racing to come up with their final species count before keynote speaker William Schlesinger of the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook gave his presentation.

The day ended with a final count of 642 different plant and animal species found in the habitat of the Saw Mill River. "The Saw Mill isn't just a parkway. It's back there [the river] and it's really cool," Mitroff said. "Who would have thought there would be this much diversity there?"

Mitroff plans to compile a report of findings from the BioBlitz for local municipalities surrounding the river, including Ardsley, Irvington, Dobbs Ferry and Hastings, and hopes to hold a second BioBlitz in the summer.

## Sidewalks

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Maple Avenue sidewalk is concrete and 70 percent is slate. To keep this look, a portion of the sidewalk will be re-set with concrete, and the rest with slate. Any usable slate salvaged from Washington Avenue will be used on Maple Avenue. "I'm going to score the concrete to match the scoring pattern of the slate," Lopane said.

Lopane said slate couldn't be used for the entire length of the sidewalk because it is too expensive. Many Maple Avenue residents expressed their concern over losing their slate sidewalks at the Sept. 22 village board meeting where Lopane gave a presentation. Some homeowners on the street offered to buy their own slate to be used in the renovation.

"It could be kind of odd — in front of number 55 to be concrete, but not 58, and back and forth like a patchwork quilt," Lopane told the Enterprise. "I understand their concern. It's hard because I think if they actually go to try and buy the slate themselves they'll find it's really expensive and say, 'There's no way I can afford this.'"

Conversely, Frobels is open to the idea of having residents contribute to the project. "I think that's a wonderful idea. Our local law requires that sidewalk maintenance is the homeowner's financial responsibility, to keep it in a passable condition," Frobels told the Enterprise. "To use village money, CDBG money, and to work something out with the residents would be very attractive."

A decision hasn't been made over whether or not Maple Avenue residents can supply their own slate. Frobels said he hopes to hold a meeting with residents to discuss the project before Thanksgiving.

Sidewalks on both streets, which could have been constructed prior to 1925, are intended to last for 40 years after they are re-constructed, according to Lopane.

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