

Nicole Paris**The Effect of Riparian Zone Health on Vertebrate Diversity**

The goal of this study was to determine if there is a relationship between stream/riparian zone health and the diversity and visitation of vertebrates in the riparian zone. Field research was done at Allen Creek at the east and west catchments in Pittsford and Henrietta, NY as well as at the Irondequoit Creek catchment in Mendon, NY.

Observations of vertebrate activity were made from May 21, 2008 to June 18, 2008. The data was organized by catchment and the frequency of invasive species, as well as the areas where least frequent species were found were compared in each catchment. Due to the lack of riparian zone in Allen Creek West, it was hypothesized that the vertebrate richness and visitation would be less, and the data supported this strongly. Allen Creek East, however, showed much higher values than Irondequoit Creek. This did not support the hypothesis, as Irondequoit Creek is much more rural and Allen Creek East is more suburban. These results suggest that the maintenance of green space in Pittsford may be playing a part in preserving vertebrate species in stream riparian zones.