

NEW YORK STATE Conservationist



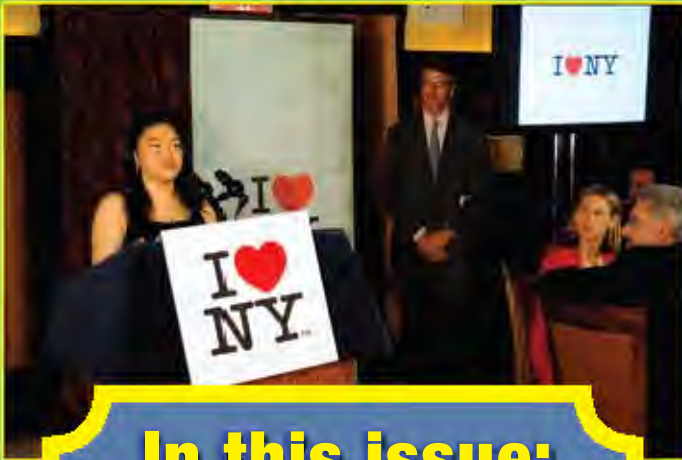
I ♥
NY™

iloveny.com/greenheart





Welcome to NEW YORK STATE Conservationist for Kids!



In this issue:

How do you



Do you take good care of the environment and think about the effects of the choices you make every day? Do you get outdoors and enjoy New York's natural spaces? Let's take a look at some of things you can see and do when you



Visit

www.iloveny.com/green

to learn about the Green Heart NY program and green travel in New York State.

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**Conservationist
for Kids**
at home?

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Conservationist magazine!**

You'll get six issues of the award-winning **Conservationist** magazine each year, plus **Conservationist for Kids** in the October, February and April issues.
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Send
us a photo
of yourself
enjoying the
outdoors.

Visit www.dec.ny.gov
for links to lots of information for kids
interested in the environment.

Write to us at:
Conservationist for Kids
625 Broadway, 2nd Floor
Albany, NY 12233-4500
or e-mail us at cforkids@gw.dec.state.ny.us

**You've
seen**



**but
have
you
seen**



?

In 2010, New York State turned their red heart green and announced a new program dedicated to eco-friendly travel and tourism – Green Heart NY! The green heart is about appreciating the natural features we have in New York State, and working together to conserve them for future generations to enjoy.

Each year for
Earth Day
I LOVE NEW YORK
will name a new
“Greenest NYer”
for the coming
year.

Meet
Kaity Tsui
(pronounced Kite-ey Choy).

I LOVE NEW YORK
named her the
“Greenest NYer” for 2010.



**Q: How did Kaity
earn this title,
and what does
she continue to
do every day?**

**A: Kaity entered I LOVE NEW YORK's first
Greenest NYer contest in 2010 and won!
In her entry, she described how she leads
by example, encouraging others to follow
in her footsteps, make wise choices, and
understand the effects that they have on
the environment.**

Kaity follows her green ideals every day.
She drinks tap water and uses a refillable bottle. She donates items she can no longer use so someone else can use them. She recycles or composts as much of her waste as possible. Tossing something in the trash is a last resort!

Kaity is involved with many organizations in her community that support green living.

During an AmeriCorps internship with the New York Restoration Project, she was the coordinator of MillionTreesNYC. Her work supported efforts to plant one million trees across New York City. More recently, as **I LOVE NEW YORK's Greenest NYer**, Kaity has helped to spread the word about green travel opportunities in New York State, like parks, waterways, walking trails and eco-friendly hotels and restaurants.

Do you know someone who shares the spirit of I♥NY?

Is there someone whose example you like to follow? Maybe it's a teacher in your school, or someone from your neighborhood or town. During the month of March you can nominate your choice for the next Greenest NYer! Nominees must be at least 21 years old. Go to www.iloveny.com/green for complete rules.

New York State has many green places to visit, like parks, nature centers and campgrounds.

Green Heart NY

has designated New York State's

TOP TEN
green destinations.

For photos and more, go to
www.iloveny.com/green



**Can you match
these to the sites
they describe?**

Visit www.dec.ny.gov to learn about more places
to explore outside, including DEC environmental
education centers and Watchable Wildlife opportunities.

- 1 At 215 feet, the waterfall here plunges further than Niagara Falls.
- 2 The "Sunken Forest" at this seaside park is a rare ecological community.
- 3 This stretch of former rail line has been transformed into a hiking trail.
- 4 Visitors come here to "take the waters."
- 5 This world-famous office tower is increasing its energy efficiency and serving as a model to others.
- 6 This park is known as the "Grand Canyon of the East."
- 7 This outdoor art gallery celebrates sculpture and nature together.
- 8 This massive waterfall attracts visitors from around the world and is the oldest state park in the U.S.
- 9 This park is known for the "Forty-Sixers," people who have climbed all 46 of its High Peaks.
- 10 Boats large and small travel this waterway connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.

Answers: 1=c, 2=j, 3=g, 4=f, 5=i, 6=b, 7=h, 8=a, 9=e, 10=d

Reduce!

Cut back what you use every day.

Do you really need to make that purchase? (Isn't a book you borrow from the library and return just as good as a new book you may only read once?) Turn lights off if they're not needed and reduce the amount of energy you use. It takes energy to get clean water to your tap, so turn off the water while you brush

your teeth; don't just watch it go down the drain. Cutting back on driving reduces your energy use and cuts back on air pollution, too. Consider walking, taking a bicycle, taking public transportation or carpooling to get around.



Reuse!

If YOU can't use it (whatever "it" may be), perhaps someone else can.

Clothing, shoes, household items and books are great things to donate to neighborhood sharing centers if they're still in good shape but you

no longer need them. What about organizing a game, sports equipment or book swap at school?



Recycle!

It's something everyone can do.

Paper, glass, metals and plastics:

the more we recycle, the less ends up in landfills. Which items are accepted for recycling varies across the state, so find out what you can recycle at home or school and do your part. Your municipal office or your garbage hauler can help you. Garden and yard waste are accepted for municipal composting programs, sometimes even food scraps!



Composted food scraps are used to enrich the soil to grow more food.

COMPOSTING is a great way of reusing.

(Kaity is working toward a Master Composter Certificate. Master Composters teach others the hows and whys of composting.)

Have you taken a close look at the recycling logo?

There are three arrows chasing each other in a loop. It's not enough to put your recyclable items in the recycle bin. To close the loop properly, you also need to buy products made from recycled materials.



(This magazine is printed on recycled paper.)

GREEN It's not just a color...

Being "green" means making choices every day to lessen what we take from the planet.

Read the situations on these pages.

Which is the "greener" choice?

Do you have other suggestions that could be even more "green"?

HINT: Which choices use the least amount of energy or generate the least waste?

1. You're going shopping. How will you carry your purchases home?

reusable cloth bag
OR
plastic bag?



A "Green New York" Factoid

Forests cover 18.6 million of New York's 30 million total acres, equaling 62% of the state.



2. You're going to the library. How will you get there?

If the library is nearby, walk **OR** bicycle?

If the library is farther away, public transit **OR** car **OR** carpool?

3. It's cold in your home. What do you do?

turn up the heat
OR
put on a sweater?



Share your ideas about how to go green. Make a poster that can be displayed in your school or neighborhood showing how easy it can be.

Need inspiration? Visit iloveny.com/green for green travel tips and www.dec.ny.gov/26.html for fun ways to learn about the outdoors.

IT'S A LIFESTYLE.

Being “green” also means making choices every day to increase what we give back. What choices do you make?



4.
You're packing lunch for school. What will you bring, and how will you carry it?

prepackaged meal and a juice box, carried in a paper bag **OR** sandwich, apple and tap water (in a refillable bottle), carried in a reusable lunch bag?

A "Green New York" Factoid
New York State has 70,000 miles of rivers and streams, some 4,000 lakes and ponds, and 2.4 million acres of wetlands. It is the only state in the nation with ocean, estuarine and Great Lakes coastline.



5.
Lunch is over and it's time to clean up. Where does the waste go?

into the trash can
OR compost the food scraps and the packaging goes in the trash
OR there's no waste because you used reusable packaging and had no leftovers?

6.

Your family is planning what to do during the school vacation this summer. What would you like to do? What would your green choice be?

A "Green New York" Factoid
The Adirondack Park is larger than Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky, and Everglades National Parks combined.

Are you an environmental steward? When you are a steward you take care of things. You behave responsibly and you know that you are accountable for your actions. When you are an environmental steward you understand that what you do today will affect tomorrow's world.

The **OUTSIDE** Page Ideas for Exploring Outdoors!

Plant a tree

Spring is a great time for planting trees. You can plant a tree in your yard or take part in a tree planting program in your community. Remember, it's not just about getting the tree into the ground. Young trees need to be cared for so they can become well established and grow to be mature trees. Mature trees offer comforting shade on a summer day. They also trap pollutants within their cells as they grow, cleaning the air.



The United Nations has declared 2011 the International Year of Forests.

Adopt a Tree

There are many millions of trees across New York State—in our forests, parks and yards, and lining our streets. Adopt a tree by keeping an eye on it through the changing seasons. Write your observations down and compare what you see season-to-season and year-to-year. Go to the **Conservationist for Kids** website for an “Adopt a Tree” recording sheet or use your own sheet to:

- ❖ List signs of wildlife – birds, squirrels, etc.
- ❖ List signs of invasive species – emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, etc.
- ❖ Sketch your tree in different seasons, or take a series of photos
- ❖ Make rubbings of the bark and leaves
- ❖ Record what kind of tree it is and how big it is



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NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

New York State **CONSERVATIONIST FOR KIDS** Volume 4, Number 3, Spring 2011

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Joe Martens
Commissioner

Conservationist for Kids

Supplement for Classroom Teachers – The Greenest NYer

Being Green

What does it mean to be green? How green are you? How did you become green? These are great questions to pose when talking with your students about Earth Day (annually on April 22) and Arbor Day (annually in New York State on the last Friday in April). Being green may include recycling, composting, cutting down on consumption, making non-motorized transportation choices, carpooling, or choosing public transportation. It can also include visiting parks and natural areas when deciding how and where to spend our leisure hours. Being green means being mindful of the effects our choices have on the environment every day, whether locally, regionally, nationally or globally.

For many, the path to being green involved someone showing the way—a mentor. Mentors help us to make wise choices, first guiding us and then sending us to discover new truths for ourselves. Consider with your students who their mentors and role models have been as they make green choices. Who is the greenest person they know? Is this person someone they look up to and learn from about how to make green choices for themselves?

In 2010, I LOVE NY initiated the Green Heart NY program to showcase green tourism in New York State. As part of that effort, they began an annual contest to name the Greenest NYer. From submissions and nominations reviewed by a panel of contest judges, a New York State resident is selected to serve for one year. The recipient is named on or around Earth Day each year. Through this issue of *Conservationist for Kids*, we introduce the first Greenest NYer (2010), Kaity Tsui, and the Green Heart NY program. The contest rules stipulate that nominees must be at least 21 years old, so fourth grade students are ineligible to win. To participate, they are encouraged to nominate someone who has motivated them to “go green.” Contest rules can be found at www.iloveny.com/green on I LOVE NY’s website. Nominations will be accepted in March and early April. Check the website each year for the exact dates and make it a new tradition to nominate the greenest person you know!

Watchable Wildlife

Across New York State are numerous places to view and enjoy wildlife. Visit DEC’s Watchable Wildlife web pages at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/55423.html or click on the owl eyes and binocular logo on the right-hand side of DEC’s home page for information about where to view wildlife and what kinds of wildlife may be found at different sites, statewide. You can search by location or by species. Tips on watching and photographing wildlife can also be found. With so many Watchable Wildlife locations and species to choose from, whether close to home and an easy day trip, or farther afield, there’s something for everyone.

Teacher Workshops

For teachers who have participated in a Project Learning Tree workshop, the activities listed below complement the spring 2011 issue of *Conservationist for Kids*. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/1913.html for information about workshops and about how to obtain curriculum and activity guides.

- Adopt a Tree
- I’d like to Visit a Place Where...
- Improve Your Place
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Trees for Many Reasons

This Issue's "Outside Page"

A fun way to spend time outdoors is planting and tending for trees. Many communities have tree planting programs which schools can take part in. DEC's tree nursery provides seedling trees for school plantings at no cost. Complete information about the Saratoga Tree Nursery's School Seedling Program is at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9393.html, including order forms. If planting new trees is not an option for you, consider taking care of or monitoring trees in your area. An "Adopt-a-Tree" copycat page is available on the Conservationist for Kids web pages, with spaces to record information about your chosen tree. Choose a class tree, or have each student choose a tree of their own to observe.

Supplemental Activities for the Classroom

Greenest Student/Class

Ask your students what criteria they would use to decide who the greenest person in their class is, or the greenest class in the school. Use their suggestions to hold your own contest and accept nominations for the greenest student and class. You can even have an awards ceremony with a trophy and decorations made from recycled materials. Does the class know an adult they would like to nominate for I LOVE NY's Greenest NYer contest? Nominating someone is easy; just write and submit a 250 word essay about why you think they're the Greenest NYer. Follow the Green Kids web page link from www.iloveny.com/green for complete rules and information. After Earth Day, check back to see who has been named the Greenest NYer for 2011.

New York Recycles Poster Contest

All students in New York State public and private schools and youth organizations are eligible to participate in this poster contest. Each participating school or youth group may submit up to 15 posters. Winning submissions will be included in the New York Recycles 2012 Calendar, available in November. Submissions must be received by May 20, 2011. Go to www.dec.ny.gov/education/32506.html for complete information.

Green Schools Challenge

Is your school participating in DEC's Green Schools Challenge? If not, plan ahead for next school year. Schools sign up during the fall and work throughout the school year to reduce their waste and increase their recycling and composting. On Earth Day of each year, April 22, schools achieving the greatest success are recognized and rewarded for their efforts. Go to www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/43349.html for complete information and an application form.

Resources

DEC's Watchable Wildlife pages www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/55423.html

DEC's Green Schools Challenge www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/43349.html

New York Recycles Poster Contest www.dec.ny.gov/education/32506.html

DEC's Saratoga Tree Nursery, School Seedling Program www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9393.html

I LOVE NY www.iloveny.com

I LOVE NY's Green Heart Program www.iloveny.com/green; click on link to reach the green kids' section

I LOVE NY's Kids' section www.iloveny.com/kids

Conservationist for Kids (C4K) and an accompanying teacher supplement are distributed to public school fourth-grade classes three times each school year (fall, winter and spring). If you would like to be added or removed from the distribution list, if your contact information needs to be changed or if you have questions or comments, please e-mail the editor at cforkids@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Printable activity sheets and links to other resources are on DEC's website. You will also find back issues of C4K and the activity sheets and teacher supplements associated with each of them. Visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/40248.html

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