



Reconnect with your environment

Learn about environmental issues, their effect on your community and actions for your involvement.



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Harding students, from left, Gaston Crosby, Xavier Granberry and Demarco Cleveland did research on the invasive snakehead.

Harding students hooked on snakehead research

By ANNA MCCARTNEY
Contributing writer

Three Harding students have been reading the Tuesday newspaper and enjoying the NIE Environment page, according to their teacher, Jane Ross.

"These awesome boys drew pictures and researched the invasive snakehead fish, (the subject of a recent page) and found some interesting facts they wanted to share with your readers," said Ross.

The snakeheads are members of the freshwater Perciform fish family Channidae, which is

native to Africa and Asia.

The snakehead got its name because its scaled head is shaped like a snake.

The giant snakehead is known in Thailand's language as Pla Chado.

The students who did the research are Xavier Granberry, grade 5; Demarco Cleveland, grade 5; Gaston Crosby, grade 6.

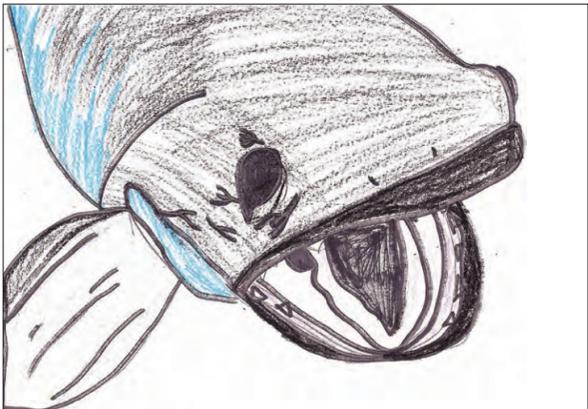
ANNA MCCARTNEY, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at axm40@psu.edu.



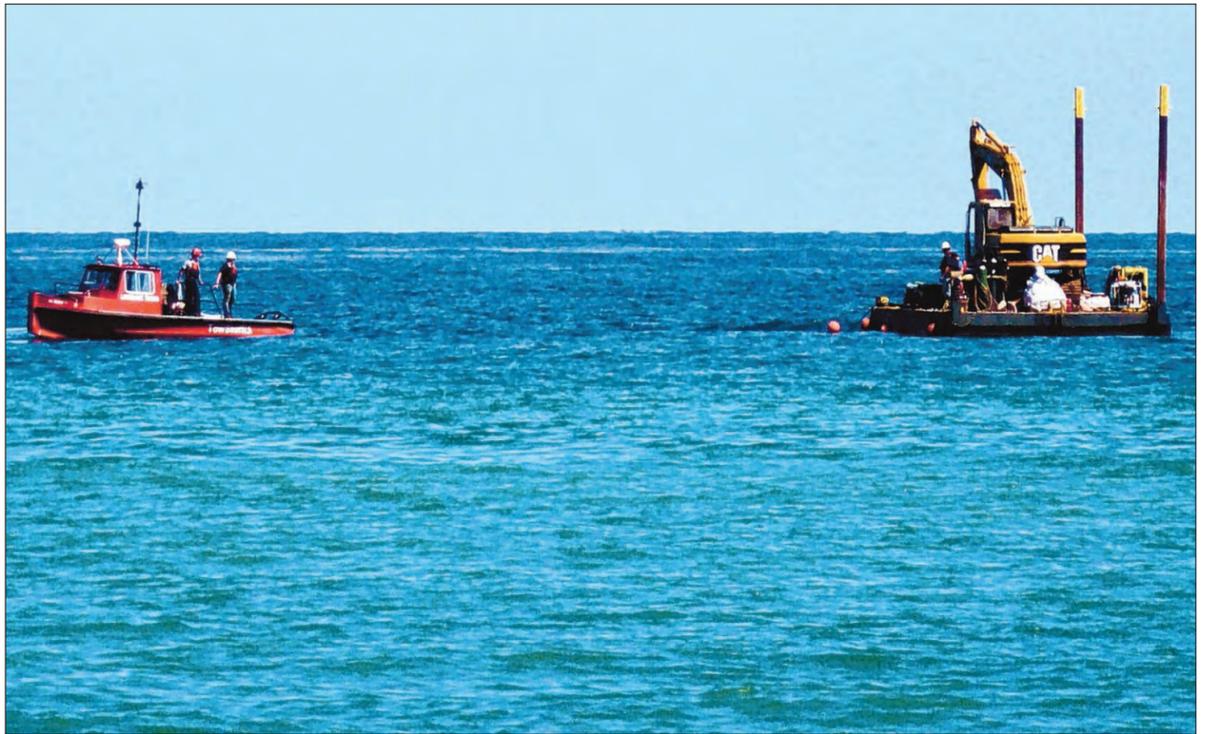
▲ Gaston Crosby, Harding School, sixth grade



▲ Xavier Granberry, Harding School, fifth grade



▲ Demarco Cleveland, Harding School, fifth grade



ANNA MCCARTNEY/Contributed photo

A crew does maintenance on the Lake Erie water intake that provides water for North East Borough and Township. More than 11 million people in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and Ontario get their drinking water from Lake Erie. While you may think there is an endless supply of water, water scarcity is becoming a worldwide problem due to increased demand, pollution and climate change.

Tapped out?

Why our supply of freshwater faces threats

By ANNA MCCARTNEY
Contributing writer

Without water, there is no life.

So protecting this valuable resource should be at the top of everyone's list.

If you are not yet convinced, water scarcity and the serious recent droughts and severe flooding in the U.S. and worldwide should be wake-up calls.

The supply of freshwater may seem endless if you have access to clean water. But what do you really know about the Earth's water supply and what condition it is in? How much do you know about the hydrologic cycle—the amount of water used at home, in factories, in energy production or in agriculture? Do you know how water shortages develop or how to protect the health of natural ecosystems so they can sustain life today and for future generations?

In a 2011 poll, the Nature Conservancy found that 77 percent of Americans didn't even know where their tap water comes from. This disconnect with the water cycle results in poor choices about using and protecting precious water resources.

Instead of conserving water-cleaning forests, grasslands and floodplains, we have been decimating them for development at an alarming rate. And we are also polluting and depleting our streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and groundwater.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that about 40 percent of U.S. rivers are too polluted for swimming or fishing. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, groundwater depletion has been a concern in the Southwest and High Plains for many years, but increased demands on our groundwater resources have overstressed aquifers in many areas of the nation, not just in arid regions.

Knowledgeable active citizens are needed to combat these avoidable problems. Starting today, this weekly page will focus on water literacy and what you can do to protect this elixir of life.

Take the following quiz to put your water knowledge to the test.

ANNA MCCARTNEY, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at axm40@psu.edu.

QUIZ

1. How long can you live without water?

- A. About three months
- B. Around a week
- C. One day

2. How much of your body is made up of water?

- A. 75 percent
- B. 25 percent
- C. 1 percent

3. How much of the water on Earth is available for people and other life that depends on freshwater?

- A. 97 percent
- B. 28 percent
- C. Less than 1 percent

4. A hundred years ago, Earth had _____ water than now.

- A. Much more
- B. Much less

C. The same amount

5. One half of the world's fresh water lies within the borders of one nation. That country is:

- A. The U.S.
- B. Canada
- C. Russia

6. Most of the Earth's freshwater is in:

- A. Lakes
- B. Man-made reservoirs
- C. Aquifers

7. In which step of the water cycle does liquid water transform into gas?

- A. Evaporation
- B. Condensation
- C. Precipitation

8. For the price of a 20-ounce bottle of water at a convenience store, many community water supplies can deliver how many gallons



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Don't take water for granted. Do you know the source of your drinking water and are you doing everything you can to protect it?



ANNA MCCARTNEY/Contributed photo

The Delaware River flows between Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Dams and reservoirs on the river's headstreams control flooding and provide water for millions in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

of fresh, clean drinking water directly to your tap?

- A. 1,000
- B. 500
- C. 100

9. Between 1950 and 2000, the U.S. population grew by 89 percent; approximately how much has our water use grown in the same period?

- A. 200 percent
- B. 50 percent
- C. 100 percent
- D. 25 percent

10. What accounts for the vast majority of world water use?

- A. Industry
- B. Farming and ranching
- C. Drinking water
- D. Electricity generation

11. How many people in the world lack access to clean water?

- A. 1 in 8

- B. 1 in 15
- C. 1 in 50

12. How many people die every day from waterborne disease?

- A. 880
- B. 1,200
- C. 2,500
- D. 4,800

13. What percent of people around the world do not have water piped to their homes?

- A. 5 percent
- B. 22 percent
- C. 46 percent
- D. 70 percent

14. Which is not one of the five great lakes?

- A. Ontario
- B. Superior
- C. Conneaut
- D. Michigan
- E. Huron
- F. Erie

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Check out these websites to learn more:

- <http://water.epa.gov/>
- <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/freshwater>
- <http://water.usgs.gov/>
- www.education.noaa.gov/Freshwater/
- www.paseagrant.org

Water supply and quality issues are challenging communities across the U.S. and the world. Will the decisions we make today protect water needed by future generations? What will the trade-offs be? Are there any issues brewing in your community related to water quality or quantity? Read the daily newspaper to find out. Then share your ideas to let adults know why they need to be more protective of water rights. Send them to axm40@psu.edu for possible publication in the "Your Space" feature.



Answers: 1-B, 2-A, 3-C, 4-C, 5-B, 6-C, 7-A, 8-A, 9-A, 10-B, 11-A, 12-D, 13-C, 14-C