

A Case for conservation



Alene N. Case

One of the disappointments of my life occurred in Hawaii during the first year of our marriage. My husband, a Navy diver, wanted to share with me the wonders so close to shore but hidden from the landlubbers on the beach. He got me all outfitted with snorkel, mask, and fins and was beginning my first skin diving lesson. It soon became obvious to both of us that the Bell's palsy which had left my face partially paralyzed was going to prevent the necessary seal around a snorkel. A jellyfish was all I saw.

As I have spoken with others over the years, I realize that I am not the only one who dreams of exploring reefs. Most students who want to go into marine biology either want to study whales and dolphins or they want to study coral reef ecosystems. There are good reasons for this enthusiasm. Coral reefs are not only beautiful — they are also quite unique in the oceans. They are literally islands of high productivity in tropical seas where nutrients are very scarce. They are oases in the desert.

1997 has been named the International Year of the Reef. In the United States, NOAA is responsible for the publicity and research associated with this event. The reasons for all this attention are almost as variable as the reefs themselves, but a sentence in a 1994 environmental science textbook encapsulates the urgency: "Coral reefs are being destroyed or damaged in 93 of 109 significant locations." Another author states that 10 percent of these reefs have already been "degraded beyond recognition."

Coral reef ecosystems are the only major ecosystems on this

The year of the reef

planet that actually construct themselves. It all begins when a tiny coral polyp settles on a hard surface (the side of a volcano, a sunken ship, or an old reef) and begins to grow. There are tiny algal cells that live in the tissues of the tiny polyp and these zooxanthellae (now there's a long term for you!) can photosynthesize and assist the coral in making a hard calcified "shell." As the coral multiplies and other corals settle and multiply, a reef is gradually formed. Fragile as they may appear, these structures protect islands, coastlines, lagoons, and harbors from tides, waves and storms.

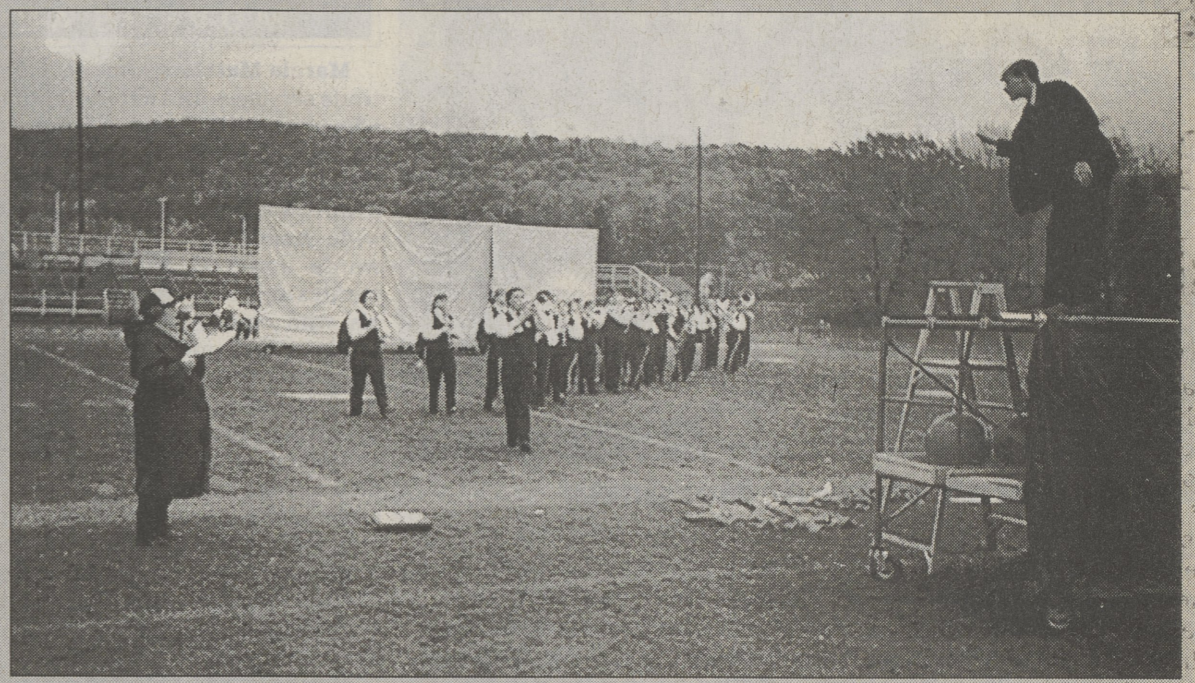
The fact that photosynthesis is a necessary component of the development and growth of a reef should give us some clues to the real fragility of this ecosystem. For instance, the slow-growing corals must compete not only with each other but also with all types of algae. When the fish and other animals that graze on the algae are eliminated from the system through collection or over-fishing, the algae take over and the coral dies. Sometimes the coral is shaded out not by algae but by excess particles in the water that come from construction or agricultural activities on the land nearby. Since the natural erosion of the reef continues, these situations may be irreversible. The coral may sink under the waves, become covered by sediment, and the associated animal and plant life will either die or move elsewhere.

As anyone who has seen pictures or videos of coral reefs knows, the many beautiful species of coral (some reefs have hundreds of kinds) are only the beginning of the incredible variety of life on these reefs. Fully one third of the species of fish in the oceans depend in some way on coral reefs. Then, there are the brightly colored snails known as nudibranchs, sea urchins, anemones, brittle stars, sea cucumbers, and tube worms. Space and time are carefully divided among the inhabitants. The reef is most active

at night, but some creatures are only active during the daylight. You may be wondering if there is any relevance for the Year of the Reef here in Penn's woods. Are you planning a trip this winter to some tropical destination? If so, you can ask your travel agent and hotel or ship manager what they are doing to help protect the reefs. Are you thinking of setting up an aquarium? You should be aware that tropical fish are often caught by blasting or poisoning the reef and only one in nine fish actually make it to market alive. You should also be aware that coral is almost impossible to keep alive in an aquarium. It is best not to try it. Over-collecting for aquaria is one of the hazards reef face. Do you use fertilizer on your lawn or garden? You should be aware that reefs are particularly sensitive to high nutrient concentrations and that every excess amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that arrives in the oceans could impact a reef at some time in the future. Do you enjoy fish and seafood for dinner? Let's begin to learn where these creatures live and how they are harvested so that we can make intelligent market decisions.

We can all support organizations that protect coral reefs and other ocean environments. More than 60 countries have set aside some reef areas as parks and reserves. We can all enjoy good books such as Jacques Cousteau's *The Ocean World or Realms of the Sea* published in 1991 by the National Geographic Society (both have great photographs!). There are documentaries on television showing the Great Barrier Reef or other wonders of the seas. And, some of us can log on to the NOAA website on the internet (www.rdc.noaa.gov) to find out the latest information.

In this International Year of the Reef, let us not give up as I had to do on my first and only diving expedition. Let's learn as much as we can about these habitats and resolve to protect them in any way we can. Join me, won't you?



POST PHOTO/MIKE TWICHELL

Bands score high at Chapter championships

The Dallas and Lake-Lehman High School Marching Bands traveled to Vestal, NY this past Sunday to compete in the annual Tournament of Bands, Chapter VII Championships. Dallas finished second in Group I with an overall score of 89.65, and won awards for Best Drum Major, Best Percussion and Best Auxiliary in Group I. Lehman won first in Group II with an overall score of 95.75, also winning the special awards for Best Drum Major and Best Percussion in Group II. Both bands are now eligible to attend the annual Tournament of Bands Atlantic Coast Championships this coming Saturday and Sunday at Lackawanna County Stadium in Moosic. Dallas drum major Jason Vozzak leads the band in competition.

PROPERTY TRANSFERS

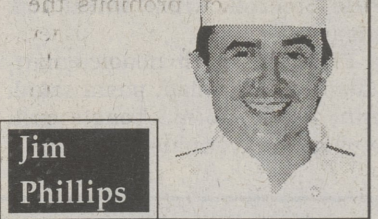
The following property transfers were recorded at the Luzerne County Courthouse for the week of Oct. 17-23:

Carlos Creamer, et ux, to Prudential Residential Services, Lot 9 Deer Meadow Estate, Dallas Borough, \$332,000.
Prudential Residential Services, to William Philps, Jr., et ux, Lot 9 Deer Meadow Estate, Dallas Borough, \$332,000.
Luzerne County Commissioners to Candice Fike, 200 Warden Ave. Lot 30, Dallas twp., \$200.
Vernon R. Varela, et ux, to Richard J. Duckworth, et ux, 28 Orchard View Terrace, Dallas Twp., \$205,000.
Paul R. Mancina, et ux, to Robert F. Wright, Jr., et ux, Dallas Twp., \$211,000.

Carl Nichols, et ux, to Richard W. Titus, Jr., Lots 11, 12, 13, Harveys Lake Bor., \$6,000.
John J. Anglovich, et ux, to Robert A. Yuhas, et ux, see deed, Harveys Lake Bor., \$130,000.
Rita Burdick, to Al-Sar Realty Corp., Bowman's Creek Rd., Harveys Lake Bor., \$9,125.
Kent R. Boggs, et ux, to David J. Sudimak, et ux, 3888 Chase Rd., Jackson Twp., \$145,000.
Lehman Homes Inc. to Charles A. Castellino, Lot 20 Meadow Crest Dr., Jackson Twp., \$170,946.
Joel Zitofsky, et ux, to Margaret Simms Fried, Lot 1, Sutton Rd., 1.905 ac., Jackson Twp., \$352,750.
Eugene Zannetti, et ux, to Loy

L. Harman, et ux, Lot 7 & 8, Trucksville Gdns., Kingston Twp., \$28,500.
Gerald R. Fisher, to Andrew J. Pilch, et ux, Lot 36 Meadowcrest Dr., Kingston Twp., \$24,000.
Patrick Deats, et ux, to Robert M. Shedlowski, et ux, Terrace Ave., Lot 104, Kingston Twp., \$139,000.
Charles J. Balavage, et ux, to Charles J. Balavage, 73.20 ac. Lake Twp., \$78,500.
Paul W. Warmouth, ux al, Whitfield E. Warmouth, uxal, 137 Perches & 12 ac., Lake Twp., \$15,000.
Monique A. Paluck, to Richard Boice, et al, 2 parcels, Lehman Twp., \$65,000.
Kenneth E. Digivacchino, et ux, to Ann Marie Benoski Karcenski, 2.01 ac. Ross Twp., \$25,000.

Food 'n' fun



Jim Phillips

I have long considered the apple to be an American original. I mean why else did that old jingle go: "baseball, hot dogs, apple pie and Chevrolet?" I guess you now know what emphasis I placed on history during my formative years!

The truth is when the pilgrims arrived, the closest thing to an apple they (or the Native Americans) found was a small, sour, inedible variety of the crab apple. The apple that we know today originated in Eastern Europe and by prehistoric times had spread west to other parts of the continent. The first apple tree grown in America is credited to John Endicott, a governor of Massachusetts, in the early 1600's. Because the apple tree grew well and was adaptable to most climates, it soon became a feature of the early settlements.

Today apples are perhaps the most common of all fruits. They are popular because of their convenience, taste, variety and availability. There are hundreds of known apple varieties, but only 20 are significant in the United States. The flavor and texture vary from sweet to tart and crisp to soft respectively.

When selecting apples, look for clean, smooth, unbroken skin and above all firm fruits. You can store apples for up to six weeks, but they usually get soft as they age and lose much of their crisp quality.

If I had to pick which apples were my favorites, two varieties

An American classic

come to mind. First, the Crispin or Mutsu, harvested from late October through May or June. It has a natural yellowish green color with creamy white flesh that is firm in texture and juicy in flavor. The Crispin is a cross between a Golden Delicious and an Indo (Japanese variety). It originated in Japan and was introduced in 1940. It is an excellent eating as well as a cooking apple.

My other favorite is the Red Delicious, harvested from mid-October through June. It has dark red skin and creamy white flesh that is firm and crisp. The Red Delicious was discovered growing in Peru, Iowa. It is the most popular eating apple in the U.S.

Here are a few recipes I came across. Enjoy!

McINTOSH CIDER CAKE

Yield 12-15 servings
1/2 c. butter or margarine
1 c. brown sugar
2 eggs
1 t. vanilla
2 1/2 c. all purpose flour
2 t. baking soda
1/4 t. salt
1 1/2 t. Apple Pie spice
1/4 c. All Bran
2 c. McIntosh apples peeled and chopped
1/2 c. apple cider
3/4 c. nuts, chopped

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

1 3-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 c. powder sugar, sifted
1 t. vanilla
2-3 T. milk
Preheat oven to 325°F. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs. Beat 1-2 minutes. Add remaining ingredients. With mixer, beat on medium speed 2 minutes. Pour into greased and floured bundt pan. Bake one hour. Remove from oven. Cool 10 minutes. Invert on plate. Cool. Mix frosting

ingredients until smooth and of desired consistency. Spread on top and sides of cake.

CHICKEN AND APPLE COUSCOUS

6 2-cup servings
2 1/2 c. cooked cubed boneless chicken
2 1/2 c. couscous (uncooked)
2 1/2 c. Granny Smith apples, cored, sliced
2/3 c. raisins
2/3 c. slivered almonds
3 c. chicken broth warmed
1/4 c. vegetable oil
1 t. garlic salt
1/2 t. ground cinnamon
1/4 t. ground red pepper
Spray baking dish with non stick spray.

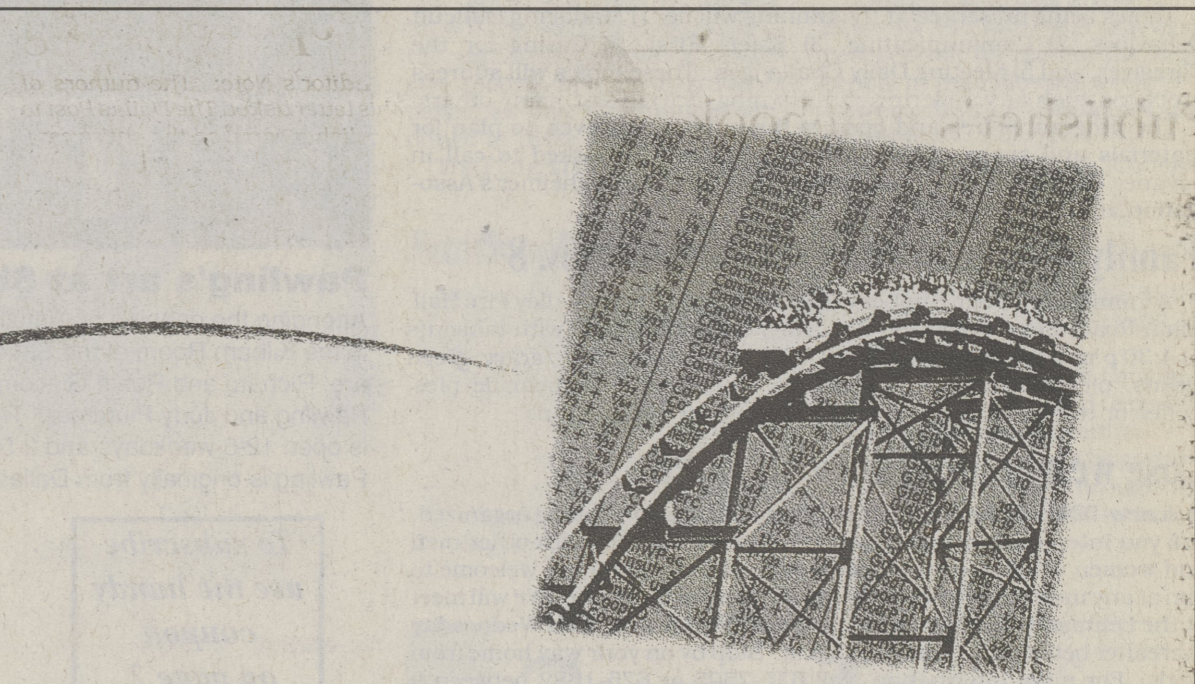
In large bowl, combine chicken, couscous, apples, raisins, and almonds. Add to baking dish.

Blend oil, coriander, garlic salt, cinnamon and red pepper into chicken broth. Stir into chicken mixture in baking dish.

Cover and bake for 20 minutes at 400°F or until liquid is absorbed.

CARAMEL CRUNCH APPLE PIE

28 vanilla dairy caramels
2 T. water
4 c. peeled, sliced apples
1 unbaked 9-inch pie shell
3/4 c. all-purpose flour
1/3 c. sugar
1/2 t. cinnamon
1/3 c. butter or margarine
1/2 c. chopped walnuts.
Melt caramels with water in top of double boiler, stirring occasionally until mixture is smooth. Layer apples and caramel sauce in pie shell. Combine flour, sugar and cinnamon. Cut in butter or margarine until mixture is crumbly; stir in walnuts. Sprinkle over top of pie. Bake at 375° for 50 to 60 minutes or until apples are tender.



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