

Poslednik is an environment and sustainability sciences major concentrating in marine sciences. Currently, she is writing a paper on the diet of the invasive round goby fish species in Oneida Lake in upstate New York.

During this past summer, Poslednik caught round gobies in Oneida Lake to conduct and compare two methods of diet analysis widely used in field ecology. One method is gut content analysis, which is when the gut of a fish is analyzed.

Another method is stable isotope analysis, which involves placing a sample tissue of the organism in a mass spectrometer to determine the ratio of isotopes present. Certain ratios of isotopes can be correlated to certain foods the fish has eaten.

Poslednik's nature-inclined upbringing contributed to her interests in ecology.

"I spent a lot of time outside and at the beach, and swam a lot. Going into freshman year of college, I knew I liked science, so I pursued that and I liked being outside, so I pursued fieldwork, and it has just kept going from there," she said.

Round gobies are a fish species from the Caspian Black Sea that are rapidly invading Oneida Lake. The lake has an estimated four million round gobies.

Poslednik hopes to obtain a Ph.D. in Marine Science, conduct research in marine ecology, contribute to conservation efforts and teach at the university level.

She is especially interested in furthering the awareness of ecological conservation through making her research more accessible to the public.

"A lot of the work I want to do has to do with solving problems that can help communities that really depend on coastal ecosystem services, and I definitely want to keep communicating conservation issues and engage the public in these issues," Poslednik said.