

Red Cedar Lakes Association Fall 2015 Newsletter

RCLA Board 2014-2015

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President's Letter

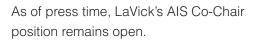
It has been another busy summer for your RCLA Board of Directors and the many volunteers who all graciously volunteer their time on the numerous projects covered in the articles within this newsletter. I want to thank all of you for helping us drive towards achieving Our Mission: To preserve, protect and improve the Red Cedar, Balsam, Hemlock and Mud Lakes, their watersheds and ecosystem.

Board of Director Changes

At our RCLA Annual Meeting in July, the Board and attending members recognized some Directors whose terms were expiring and who decided not to pursue another 2-year term. Specifically, Matt LaVick decided to step down after serving for four years as AIS Committee Co-Chairperson. Also, Larry Quillen and Carol Quillen decided not to pursue another term after leading our Coupon Committee for four years. On behalf of our entire membership, I want to really thank Matt, Larry and Carol for their commitment and dedicated service over the past four years. All three have voluntarily agreed to stay involved on their committees to ensure a smooth transition.

Also, the membership unanimously voted to accept the Board's recommendation to renew Directors Rich Hokanson and McKensey Voller for 2-year terms. Rich is the Shoreline and Island Restoration Chairperson and McKensey is the Newsletter and Website Committee Chairperson. Thank you to both of you for signing up to serve another term.

The membership also unanimously voted to approve the Board's recommendation of Patty Riccho to the Board and to lead our Coupon Book Committee. Patty grew up in Racine, WI and relocated to Hemlock Lake in 1995. Patty has spent 35 years in public education, with her most recent assignment at Rice Lake Schools in the District Technology Office before retiring in 2014. Thank you, Patty, for volunteering to lead this important committee.





Patty Riccho

Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership (RCRWQP)

Myself, along with Bill Miller, President of the Big Chetac and Birch Lakes Association, have both been invited to join the RCRWQP and represent the northern part of the Red Cedar River Watershed. So why is this important? Allow me to explain.

In 2012, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) as developed by the Wisconsin DNR for Lakes Tainter and Menomin in the lower watershed, as well as all inputs into these lakes from the entire watershed. The TMDL describes the extent of the phosphorous issue in the entire watershed, and prescribes levels to which phosphorous inputs need to be decreased in order to improve water quality. The US Clear Waters Act requires that states develop such TMDL's for those waters deemed "impaired", meaning they are not meeting minimum water quality standards.

Once the TMDL is established and approved by Wisconsin and the EPA, an implementation plan needs to be developed to address the impaired water quality issues throughout the watershed. The plan is developed to describe the management measures and regulatory approaches necessary to address the pollutant load issues affecting the watershed, the parties responsible for such management measures, costs, sources of funding, key stakeholders, key strategies and tactics, timeline for implementation, ways to measure success and adaptive change techniques as the plan moves forward.

This implementation strategy details the approaches and techniques that will be initiated over a 10-year period to reduce the levels of phosphorous entering the Red Cedar River Watershed. Those leading the RCRWQP include UW-Extension, DNR, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, county and city officials and departments, lake associations, non-governmental organizations, farmers, land managers and cooperative representatives.

While many of the key strategies of the developing plan focus on implementing successful farming best practices for areas between Rice Lake and Menomonie, it is recognized that the Northern portion of the Watershed is a contributing source as well. RCLA and Big Chetac/Birch Lakes Assn. are implementing 3-year DNR grants to proactively locate, treat and aggressively reduce over 620 acres of invasive Curly Leave Pondweed (CLP) in the Northern Watershed, which is a major source of phosphorous in our lakes. We have a long way to go up here.

This is why it's important for our two lake associations to get involved, provide input and gain share of voice – to ensure we also become eligible for Federal and State funding to address our phosphorous reduction goals.

Signs of Improvement

In an Aug. 12 article in The Chronotype, DNR officials and the Rice Lake Protection District reported water quality improvements in Rice Lake attributed to efforts to curb runoff and control/treat invasive CLP in the watershed.

Our lakes also showed improved water clarity in July, with water quality testing showing visibility as deep as 19 feet in the north basin of Red Cedar Lake. This was the best reading since 2009.

However, heavy rains in late July and August increased run-off and higher CLP die-off in Big Chetac created more phosphorous loading coming downstream, affecting our water clarity in late summer.

Enjoy the fall boating and fishing season.

Gerry Johnson RCLA President



Aquatic Invasive Species Committee

Greetings from your AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species)
Committee!! With all of you as volunteers, 2015 has been another year of completing significant tasks on the final year of our current grant with the Wisconsin DNR.
THANK YOU to ALL VOLUNTEERS who again have put in significant hours this summer, from RCLA members, lake shore owners, Boy Scout Troops #28 and #106 and Birchwood High School Conservation Club members.
AIS Coordinator, Tanner Zesiger, Birchwood High School graduate, joined us late in the spring, to also make significant contributions during the summer of 2015.
Thanks to all for assisting RCLA in continuing to preserve our wonderful natural resource-the waters of Balsam, Red Cedar, and Hemlock Lakes!!!

Within the same areas on Hemlock and Red Cedar Lakes, this was the third year in the treatment and control of curly-leaf pondweed (CLP). As we stated in the Spring 2013 newsletter, our current 3-year grant is an education, prevention and control grant from the Wisconsin DNR. During the winter months, we contracted with Mr. Mike O'Connell with Lake Management INC. to assist us in obtaining the necessary permits, public notification requirements and the actual herbicide application-according to DNR specifications. We also contracted with Mr. James Johnson, Freshwater Scientific Services, to do pre-treatment/post treatment plant surveys of both CLP and native plants which is a requirement of the permit to apply the herbicide.

Our treatment area in Red Cedar Lake was increased from 2.3 acres to 7.4 acres due to increased CLP plants present this spring. In the spring of 2013, we treated 10.3 acres in Red Cedar Lake. The Hemlock Lake treatment area stayed the same at 6.4 acres all three years. Treatment occurred on May 8, 2015.

From James Johnson, Freshwater Scientific Services, quote,

"During the 2015 pretreatment survey, we found more widespread curly leaf than in 2014 in both Hemlock (54% vs. 29%) and Red Cedar Lake (29% vs. 9%). However, these levels are still substantially lower than seen in either plot in 2013, before the initial treatments (76% and 82%), and the overall density of all curly leaf growth was sparse

(no rake density >1). Curly leaf sprouting is quite variable between years, so the increase we saw this year is very typical of treated lakes and does not likely mean that the 2014 treatments failed. In fact, I see it as an opportunity to further reduce the number of turions in the lake sediment. Since turion "removal" can only happen when they have sprouted, the increased sprouting suggests that 2015 may be an opportunity for more effective long-term curly leaf control."

Our post treatment plant survey work will be completed in October, due to RCLA wanting to have additional turion study work done on two additional CLP beds (one is in front of and south of the public landing at Pigeon Creek, and the other is the bay on the north end of Red Cedar just east of Stout Point). CLP plant density has been quite high for three years and we need to have a turion study completed to confirm and possibly apply for an additional grant to control these areas.



In July 2015, nine students and their Advisor, Jenny Landes, from the Blue Hills Charter School, (Birchwood Charter School) launched canoes from John Bolles' dock. The students paddled to the bay just to the south and released beetles to control purple loosestrife. The students raised the beetles from eggs to maturity. Red Cedar Lakes Assn. would like to give the Blue Hills Charter School along with Lisa Burns-Washburn County AIS Coordinator a big "THANK YOU" for their efforts. Also, each of the lakes have purple loosestrife Team Leaders and a big "THANK YOU" to them for all the efforts in monitoring and doing actual manual cutting and herbicide treatment to help control the spread of this invasive species in other areas of our three



lakes.

Tanner Zesiger, along with your RCLA AIS Committee and our many Volunteers, participated and completed many other tasks within our grant this summer as well. Up to this point of the summer, we have recorded over 750 volunteer hours this year, and are well on our way to satisfying our requirement to supply volunteer labor on our current grant. This summer, we have submitted and received over \$8,000.00 from the Wisconsin DNR as part of the monetary expenditures incurred during our control of invasive species this summer. We couldn't do it without the great support of the staff at the Wisconsin DNR.



Tanner Zesiger, Cheyenne Okey, Eric Bjugstad doing manual pull of CLP on Balsam I ake channel.

A big "THANK YOU" to Boy Scout Troup #28 and #106!! The Scouts have put in countless hours, mostly on holiday weekends, at the Red Cedar lake system boat landings on a mission to stop the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in the lakes. At the landings, the Scouts talk to boat

owners about how they can help stop the spread of AIS. The Scouts inspect trailers, boats, live wells and motors for any AIS. The Scouts also make sure that any live bait was not used on any other lake. Forms are filled out asking what lake, county or state boaters are coming from. At the time of this writing, we have the Labor Day weekend left and the Boy Scouts are scheduled to monitor our four busiest landings. We will give you a total summary in the spring newsletter. Anyone, on any day, can help at the boat landings. Please consider an hour or two at your favorite landing and contact RCLA when you would like to help.

There are now laws in place to stop AIS. Please don't be caught driving down the highway with weeds on your trailer or water in your live well. Not only fisherman spread AIS, any and all boaters including jet skis, canoes, kayaks and even the boats out for that evening sunset cruse will spread AIS. It takes everyone using the lake to help control the spread of AIS.

We saw this happening again this summer!! Electric anchors spread aquatic invasive species in our lake system! It's not the fault of the anchor, but rather, it's the fault of the little button that is so easy to push and up comes the anchor- out of sight and out of mind. Please take a few seconds to clean the weeds off any anchor before you move down the lake.



RCLA Volunteers have gotten together to cruise the three lakes with a rake, to monitor and look for invasive species and do water quality monitoring on our three lakes. The water quality chart we included in the Spring 2015 Newsletter, will again be included in the Spring 2016 Newsletter when all the 2015 data has been received. Volunteers, in early summer, have been bed mapping the CLP in our lakes. The RCLA Nature Committee also took on the task again, of bed mapping our wild rice plants that are found in Balsam Lake.

For next summer, your RCLA continues our "call to action" request to each of you for volunteer hours. We will continue to need your help! The weather did not cooperate for us this summer, but we are going to try again next summer to

host a "plant identification cruise" on our lakes to all who are interested. This will be educational viewing of both our native plants and the invasive plant-curly leaf pondweed. Our commitments to continue protecting, preserving and improving our great natural resource-Red Cedar Chain of Lakes-should be unwavering. We hope each of you feel, we together, are making a "positive difference" in the quality of our natural resource.

Please contact us on your volunteer interests!

Larry Johnson AIS Committee

Fish Habitat Committee

The summer of 2015 has been a hot one. Lake temperatures have been near 82 degrees on the surface. Great for water sports but a little tough on fishing. This summer brought many activities to our lakes keeping all of our Committee Members and Volunteers quite busy. From AIS to eradication of Buckthorn, Purple Loosestrife, Nature Committee Program at the Beech Club and the catching of a Juvenile Eagle up on North Shore Drive. Wild Life Specialist Chris Cold transported the bird to Rapture Education Group, Inc in Antigo, Wisconsin for observation and treatment. This is the same facility that treated and released "Bobbi" the loon last year who had a bobber and line wrapped around it.

This winter we are gearing up to place 2 Fish Habitat Structures on the east side of Stout Island. The trees for these structures have been located in hopes that Dave & Mary Helen Drew,





owners of Seasonal Power Toys in Birchwood who donated trees last year will make it possible again this year. There were 14 fully grown Tamarack located in position on the east side of Stout Peninsula this past winter when the ice was a minimum of 14 inches thick. Severson Logging will be cutting the living trees and Peterson Tree Cutting Service will be taking them to the County V landing as we did this past year.

The structures provide shelter for young fingerlings and the micro organisms that grow on them are a rich food source for our fish.

If you would like to join in you may contact me at 715-307-2407 for an update on ice conditions and timing. Fun is had by all.

Dave PetersFish Habitat Committee

Nature Committee

What an awesome summer it has been for anyone spending time on our beautiful Red Cedar Lakes ... it sure seemed like we had some great weekends with warm weather. little rain and until recently, the bugs have even been manageable!! Our hummingbirds will start leaving by the end of September and our loons will soon follow in October.

The RCLA Nature Committee had a busy summer, starting off with organizing another very successful Nature Program "Extinction ... and the Future of Wildlife". For the second year in a row, we had over 100 people in attendance as Chris Cold, DNR Wildlife Specialist, not only discussed the historical rise and fall of animal populations, but also provided suggestions on how we can manage and maintain wildlife into the future. The committee is already planning next year's program so mark your calendar for the first Saturday in June (2016) ... we are planning on doing an educational program on raptors such as owls, eagles or hawks (look for additional details on posters and in the RCLA Spring Newsletter).

The Nature Committee was also very active in monitoring our loons as part of the Loon Watch Program and this year we were fortunate to participate in the 5 year Wisconsin Loon Survey. Red Cedar Lake was chosen among the 270 lakes to participate, so on July 18, members of the committee were out on the lake between 5 a.m. - 10 a.m. to count the loons and it was amazing how many we spotted ... 12 adults, 3 chicks and 1 juvie. Our Red Cedar Lakes had a great year for loon chicks with 6 still flourishing (2 from Bass Lake, 2 on Hemlock and 2 on Red Cedar). A great story was when we found out the 2 chicks born on Bass Lake actually walked over to Red Cedar Lake in early July (~5 weeks old) and have been doing well ever since. We would not have believed this had a member not seen this with her own eyes and we confirmed with the Loon

WI that indeed the adults will guide their chicks over

Watch program in Ashland, to a bigger lake if they feel



the feeding will be better there. We also were able to confirm at least 5 eaglets from the various nests on our lakes ... wow, what an awesome year for the little ones!!! And let's not forget about the bear that was spotted swimming across the widest part of the Red Cedar mid August. What a sight that was!

In addition to the loon monitorina and nature program, the committee participated in the annual wild rice mapping



on Balsam Lake and led the Tree Planting Program. We have mentioned this before in articles, but it's worth another important message ... as we try to keep our waterfowl safe for future generations, please remember to use non-lead tackle when out fishing on our beautiful lakes and if you lose your fishing line, please make every attempt to retrieve any hooks, bobbers, and sinkers

The Nature Committee currently has 7 active members, but we are always looking for more volunteers to help promote

our vision and make the Red Cedar Lakes a safe refuge for wildlife. If vou would like to be a part



Nature Committee members at program: Debbie Johnson, Cindy Goodwin, Chris Cold, Nicole Engler

of this great committee or you would like to join us at our next

meeting to learn more about our 2016 activities, please contact Valerie Bausch (Chairperson) at vbausc@yahoo.com.

Valerie Bausch Nature Committee Chairperson

Shoreline & Island Restoration Committee

Island Restoration Update

I am happy to report the "rocking" of the island close to the Waldo Carlson county park has been completed. It has suffered much erosion during the last 10 years or so. The Wisonsin DNR and Barron County worked to get a permit issued to proceed with "limited" riprap. Some of the rock and fabric was put down last summer. With the help of volunteers Larry and Debbie Johnson, Tanner Zesiger, Len Christianson, Jerry Triden, Mic Maloney, and Patty Ricchio. The project was completed the week of July 6, 2015. See pictures.

I will continue to monitor the erosion situation on this island. Additional attempts at getting grass and native plants to take root on the eroded surfaces will be done this fall (2015) and next spring (2016). If you have any ideas as to what plants to use, please let me know. In the meantime, if you visit this island please try to stay off of the eroded slopes. This island is basically a big sand pile and erodes easily. This Island Restoration Project is an attempt to stop this erosion trend.

Rich Hokanson Island Restoration Chairperson





Landing Kiosks & Signage Committee Update

The Kiosk & Signage Committee has been active this summer updating the kiosk at Waldo Carlson and building brand new kiosk at Pigeon Creek (still under construction). All kiosks on our lakes will be updated with new material in the near future so stop by and take a look!!

Chuck Evitch

Landing Kiosks/Signage Committee Chairperson





New Pigeon Creek Kiosk (under construction)

Shoreline & Island Restoration Committee

Lakeshore Restoration - Wisconsin's Healthy Lakes DNR Grant Program

I wrote about this program for the 2014 Fall Newsletter. The program was just being introduced to the public. Now one later we know a lot more about how it works. Your Red Cedar Lakes Association has agreed to be a sponsor. The goal is to submit a grant by Dec1, 2015 for work to take place in 2016. So far we have interest from three property owners. Projects so far would include five rain gardens, one 350 sq. ft. native planting area and one "Fish Stick". I am hoping that this newsletter article will prompt more interest from our membership.

Healthy Lakes is a grant program developed in the summer of 2014 by the Wisconsin DNR to make it easier for property owners to implement water runoff reduction projects and improve fish habitat. It is a modification of the current program, Shoreline Habitat, which will continue to be available for large, complex projects. The new program is more limited in scope and does not require deed restrictions. The intent is to help fund shovel-ready projects that are relatively inexpensive and straight forward. It does ask for a statement that the project will remain in place for at least 10 years. The scope of this new program is to help improve three areas or zones using selected best management practices.

- 1. Shallow in Lake Zone improve fish habitat. Fish Sticks would be supported.
- 2. Buffer(transition) Zone along shorelines
 - 350 Sq Ft native planting areas
 - Water diversions to slow water runoff
- Upland Zone manage water runoff from structures and impervious surfaces
 - Rain gardens
 - Rock Infiltration/holding ponds

A DNR permit is required for the "Fish Stick" practice but not for the other four. Approvals will be issued on May 15, 2016. Projects must be completed in 2 years. Maximum amount of the grant will be 75% of the total project cost not to exceed \$1000 per practice. Additional information about this program can be accessed on the DNR website: http://tinyurl/healthylakes.

Please give me a call if you have any interest in participating in this program.

Rich Hokanson Lakeshore Restoration Committee Chairperson 715-354-3912

There's an App. for that!

FishBrain http://fishbrain.com

FishErain is the world's largest community-based fishing App.
Join other anglers in yoor area and contribute to the world's smartest local fishing forecasts. FishErain has also recently joined forces with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to enlist the help of over 750,000 App. users in logging sightings of endangered and threatened species.

Swim Guide http://theswimguide.org

Experience the freedom of

beachhunting from your smartphone.

Swim Guide connects you to beaches and swimming holes everywhere.

Discover a variety of beaches, ranging from city parks to remote lakes ideal for camping, and identify at-a-glance which beaches are clean for swimming (green) and which have water quality problems (red). You can also use the App. to help protect your waterway by reporting pollution or environmental concerns.

Midwest Invasive Species Information Network

httn://misin.msu.edultools/apps/

The Midwest Invasive Species
Information Network (MISIN)
smartphone App. provides a mobile
solution for the capture of invasive
species field observation data. You
can play an important role in the
early detection and rapid response
to new invasive threats in your area
by contributing invasive species
observations to the MISIN database.

(2015). There's an app. for that. Lake Tides, 40(3) 9.

Water Quality and Safety Committee

At this year's annual meeting it was approved to transition the Boater Safety and Buoy Committee to the Water Quality and Safety Committee. Over the past two years, the Boater Safety and Buoy Committee's accomplishments included: re-registering our markers appropriately with the WDNR, establishing a relationship with Red Cedar Services to install and remove markers, developing a condition report of all markers for future fixes and replacements, removing a log or two from the middle of the lake and completing the annual Boater's Safety Course lead by Larry Johnson. Whew - pretty impressive accomplishments from our volunteers! Thank you to Roger Menk and Larry Johnson for your commitment and services.



Conservation Warden Josh Loining congratulating Bianca Reitz from Powell, Ohio on her successful completion of RCLA's Boater's Safety Class for 2015

With the above items in place, we decided that our resources would be better utilized with other initiatives. So, what is Water Quality and what is Safety? These are the two questions we are now asking. Both have broad definitions but as we work to identify them more specifically, we will be better positioned to answer these questions in future articles and news releases.

We have started to discuss this as it relates to Water Quality. Earlier this summer some of us met to discuss the work Larry Johnson and the many volunteers have done over the past several years to manage the invasive species. We realized water quality is another element. We also recognized there are other attributing factors to water quality beyond invasive species. To include this with Larry and team would be much too big a task. So, we formed the

Water Quality Committee. We pretty much identified that if "it grows" it is part of the Aquatic and Invasive Species Committee and if "it flows" it is part of the Water Quality and Safety Committee.

Next steps: In order to identify where to focus our water quality efforts, we recognized we should start by understanding where our lakes are today. This effort to understand our water quality started a number of years ago with a water quality report. Unfortunately, this report is quite dated so we are looking into the steps to complete a current assessment. Additionally, we will be conducting paleocore testing this fall. Ok, what is that? Trust me, I Googled this as well. Essentially, it is conducted by pulling core samples from various locations from our lake beds. The sediment in the samples is used to identify what has occurred over time similar to growth rings on a tree. Next spring we will have more information and hope to share our findings.

As for the Safety part of the committee, we are still in process of identifying the various aspects this will encompass. I am excited that this will be more than just boating safety since there are many other aspects of safety on and around our lakes. For now, just remember if you find yourself standing by a swimming pool about to skinny dip with Christie Brinkley saying, "This is crazy. This is crazy.", like Clark Griswold in the movie National Lampoon's Vacation, it probably is. Sadly, I saw way too many people this summer riding on the front of pontoons, dangling their feet, while the boat was under way. Crazy. Unfortunately, this is not only illegal but extremely dangerous. More to come on safety next spring.

Be safe, be respectful and have fun on the lake. See you on the ice soon!

David Voller

Water Quality and Safety Committee Chairperson

Member(s)

Gerry Johnson

Ok, anyone interested in joining us? We would love to have one or two more members.

Membership Committee

I'm certain that everyone has their own method to determine that the end of another glorious summer season is at hand. This year, for us, it was the ever-increasing feeding frenzy of the 'hummers' at our feeders. Given their voracious appetites, they should have a pleasant migration to their winter home. Kathy and I truly enjoyed hosting our 'hummers' and our many friends and family members. We hope you and your family and friends had an enjoyable summer on our 'great lakes.'

Now, let's talk membership. At this writing, we have 606 members, a slight increase from the 604 we had at this time last year. Twenty five of our members are new to RCLA this year. We welcome you to our organization and look forward to your active participation. Our committees are always looking for new energy to assist with our many projects. To volunteer, please contact one of the board members listed on the front page of this newsletter. Also, on behalf of the entire RCLA Board, I thank each and every member for your generous contributions to our various project funds. We appreciate it very much as this is one of the only ways we can accomplish our mission.

Renewal packets for 2016 will be sent out in late October or early November. Hopefully you will be able to respond by the end of the year. Your board of directors recently approved the following categories for our 2016 project funds: Fish Habitat Donation; Water Quality & Safety

Donation; Invasive Species Prevention Donation; Shoreline and Island Restoration Donation; and, Fireworks Donation. Please consider donating to these important activities as you renew your membership for 2016.

Two other notes of importance with respect to your renewal notice. First, the RCLA Board instituted new communications guidelines this summer. Your renewal form will have a check-off box if you are interested in receiving e-mail communications from RCLA if we choose to issue a message to members. This is your choice as we don't want to bother those who may not be interested in receiving e-mail messages. Also, to conserve our precious resources, we will again be inserting order forms for the Spring Tree Planting Project. Pay special attention to the deadline associated with this great effort.

As always, you should contact me directly if you have any questions regarding RCLA membership. I can be reached by e-mail: rsmenk@yahoo.com or by phone 612-247-4591. Thanks!

If you live on the lake, we may see you in the coming months. If not, have a great winter and we'll see you on the lakes next spring!

Roger Menk

Membership Committee Chairperson

Coupon Book Committee

How often have you looked out at the beautiful lakes we all enjoy and hope these waters will be preserved for future generations to enjoy? The Red Cedar Lakes Association and its members constantly strive to help accomplish this through the projects you are reading about



in this newsletter. Many of these projects have a cost. Four hundred Coupon Books were printed and distributed this past spring (2015). Our RCLA owes a big thank you to Larry and Carol Quillen for the many volunteer hours they have spent the last four years not only

contacting businesses to participate by placing coupons in the book, but organizing the book to be printed and distributed to members and businesses in our area.

Donations so far for the 2015/2016 Coupon book total \$6,730. The coupons in the current book do not expire until April 30, 2016. If you have not made your donation yet, it's not too late!

Over the winter I will be working on the 2016/2017 coupon book. If you have any suggestions for new vendors or services that might like to have their business in our coupon book, please contact me at patriciaricchio@gmail.com or 715-790-0619. Thank you.

Patty Ricchio

Coupon Book Committee

Starry Stornwart Update

By Paul Skawinski, CLMN Statewide Coordinator, UW-Extension Lakes with contributions from Tim Plude and Heidi Bunk, Water Resource Management Specialists, Wisconsin DNR

A species of invasive, aquatic algae known as starry stonewort (Nitellopsis obtusa) was discovered in September, 2014 in Little Muskego Lake, Waukesha County (as discussed in our last issue of Lake Tides - Volume 40, Issue 2). Intense monitoring efforts by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WONR) and others have resulted in three additional populations of starry stonewort being identified. These occur in Long Lake, Racine County; Big Muskego Lake, Waukesha County; and Silver Lake, Washington County.

Rapid Response

Little Muskego Lake has responded quickly to this new invader, receiving a rapid response grant from the WDNR. Residents of the lake have partnered with a local Boy Scouts Venture Crew to manually remove starry stonewort via SCUBA diving. In addition to this effort, the lake district has hired a consultant to perform a special type of manual removal called diver-assisted suction harvesting (DASH). With a DASH system, a diver can dislodge a target plant by hand and move it into a suction hose floating on the surface of the water. This allows the plant to be sucked out of the lake and moved to the shoreline or onto a special boat, minimizing fragmentation of the plant and time/effort of the diver. In the case of Little

Muskego Lake, the material was pumped into large geotextile bags on shore, which contained the solids and allowed water to flow back out into the lake. This ensured that any bulbils or fragments of starry stonewort were contained and not allowed to return to the lake.

Learning More

WONR and UW-Extension Lakes held a series of public informational meetings on starry stonewort in Southeast Wisconsin this summer to brief the public on what we know (and don't yet know) about starry stonewort and its implications for Wisconsin lakes. We do know that starry stonewort does not produce viable "seed" in the United States, and therefore, it can only spread by fragments of the plant or its bulbils. You can help prevent the spread of starry stonewort the same way you prevent the spread of other aguatic invasive species - be sure to follow the Clean Boats. Clean Waters prevention steps (see page 9), and take time to familiarize yourself with how to identify starry stonewort. To learn more, please visit the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network website at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/clmn. Click on Monitoring Types, then click on the Aquatic Invasive Species button.

Reporting New Discoveries of Aquatic Invasive Species

Late summer is a perfect time for identifying aquatic invasive species (AIS) in your local lake or river. While you are out swimming, fishing and enjoying our lakes and waterways during this time of year, you can help track and slow the spread of AIS! Just follow these steps to report anything you haven't seen before:

- **1.** Make sure the suspected invasive species has not been previously found in the waterbody. Type AIS in the search bar on the DNR website (dnr.wi.gov) to find an alphabetical list of water bodies by county.
- **2.** Take a digital photo (if possible) and make note of the species location and how large of a population is present. Collect five to ten specimens. If it is a plant, try to get the root system, all leaves, seed heads and flowers. Place in a zip bag with no water, place on ice, and transport to a refrigerator.
- **3.** Fill out an Aquatic Invasive Species Incident Report form. A link to these forms can be found at http://dnr.wi.gov/topicIInvasives/report.html.
- 4. Contact your DNR Regional AIS Coordinator or email invasive.species@wisconsin.gov.

For more information search Reporting Invasives on dnr.wi.gov, or contact your local DNR office.

Check out these handy aquatic invasive species fact sheets to belp with identification. Go to www.uwsp.edulcnrlUWEXLakes/clmn and click Resources, then AIS Fact Sheets.

Skawinski, Paul, (2015). Starry Stoneworth Update. Lake Tides, 40(3) 8.

(2015). Reporting New Discoveries of Aquatic Invasive Species. Lake Tides, 40(3) 9.





BALSAM, RED CEDAR & HEMLOCK LAKES

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