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PLEASANT | PARKER Lake | Pond ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Dear Members of the Pleasant Lake/Parker Pond Association (PL/PPA) and others who enjoy our lakes:

Even though the days are shorter, preserving the health of Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond is always on our minds. As part of that mission, we are committed to raise awareness about the threats posed by aquatic invasive species.

Earlier this year, Lake Stewards of Maine released a 20-minute documentary showcasing the united efforts of the local Grand Lake Stream community as they combat an invasive aquatic plant: variable milfoil. "The Battle for Big Lake" is a compelling look at the 2019 discovery of invasive variable milfoil in Big Lake (located in Princeton, Maine and part of the Grand Lake Stream region) which prompted the local community to survey the lake thoroughly for infestations. The film "beautifully illustrates the dedication and resilience of the community, showcasing the unity of Maine residents in their determination to preserve something dear to them."

To view "The Battle for Big Lake" documentary, visit the Lake Stewards of Maine's website: <https://www.lakestewardsofmaine.org/the-battle-for-big-lake/>

Thankfully, our 2023 Invasive Plant Patrols found no signs of invasive infestations on Pleasant Lake and Parker Pond. And while this is great news, there was an abundance of non-invasive Purple Bladderwort in Parker Pond (see next page for more details). If you have concerns about any aquatic plant, please let us know!

If you have questions, ideas for new PL/PPA activities or programs, concerns, or anything else to communicate, please email me at plppassoc@gmail.com.

I wish everyone a healthy, safe, and peaceful 2024.

David Randall,
President
Pleasant Lake/
Parker Pond Association



NEW BOATING SAFETY AND EDUCATION COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A new state law will kick-in January 1, 2024, requiring recreational boaters in their teens and early 20s to complete a boater education course.

- A person born on or after January 1, 1999, may not operate a motorboat of 25 horsepower or greater for recreational boating unless the person is at least 12 years old and has completed a boater safety course. These persons must possess and present a boater safety and education course certificate for inspection upon request to a law enforcement officer.
- Anyone under the age of 12 may operate a motorboat if the motor is between 10 horsepower and 25 horsepower, but must have supervision.
- Anyone under the age of 12 may operate a motorboat alone on Maine waters as long as the engine is less than 10 horsepower.

The course can be taken in-person or online and teaches about safe boat operation, Maine boating laws, preparing for emergencies, and preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species. For links to approved courses visit: <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/programs-resources/educational-programs/safety-courses/boating-safety.html>

ANNUAL PL/PPA MEETING

The 2024 PL/PPA Annual Meeting will be Saturday, July 20, 2024, from 9:30-11:00AM.

Join us at the Casco Community Center!
940 Meadow Road, Casco

Membership is not required. ALL ARE WELCOME!



PURPLE BLADDERWORT

Many Parker Pond residents have the misfortune to know exactly what this is: purple bladderwort harvested from the water around their properties. For reasons unexplained, 2023 was a banner year for purple bladderwort. There are two silver linings for this dense vegetal cloud. The first is that it is not an invasive species, though that may provide little comfort as you remember slogging through it during your morning swim. It is present throughout Maine and grows prolifically every so often. The second is that it does not attach to the lake bottom and thus one can remove it from the water without obtaining a Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permit. Unfortunately, there are no governmental funds available to pay for its remediation, just as there are no governmental funds to remediate other native nuisances such as poison ivy and field mice that move into one's house during the winter.

For more information on purple bladderwort, see Lake Stewards of Maine's "Know Your Bladderworts" webinar and the "Maine Field Guide to Aquatic Phenomena" app.

- www.lakestewardsofmaine.org/resources/videos/know-your-bladderwortswebinar/
- www.lakestewardsofmaine.org/volunteer-programs-tools/field-guide-aquatic-phenomena-app/



TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE PLANT: PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

This summer, two invasive plant patrollers spotted purple loosestrife -- a land based invasive plant -- near the southern end of the Pleasant Lake, just north of the former Camp Samoset. They alerted the property owner. We received no other reports of purple loosestrife, but that's no guarantee we are infestation-free.

Purple loosestrife is a perennial plant found rooted in a range of wet soil habitats. It can grow in a couple feet of water or on dry shore near the water line.

Invasive purple loosestrife is damaging because of its ability to work its way into lakes, rivers, and wetlands and take over large areas. As it makes its advances, it edges out other plants and the animals that depend on them, leading to negative biodiversity impacts for native wildlife and flora. Please continue to be diligent and report purple loosestrife sightings immediately.



Photo: <https://www.lakescientist.com/purple-loosestrife/>

If you see aquatic vegetation that looks suspicious, please let us know! It's better to get a sample and identify it, than let an unwanted intruder multiply.

Send us an email at plppassoc@gmail.com; provide your name and the location of the suspicious aquatic plant. If you can take a photo of the plant or collect a sample, that would be extremely helpful. One of our Invasive Plant Patrollers will respond and help identify the species.



CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY: IT'S THE LAW

Maine Public Law 2023 Chapter 190, an Act to Minimize the Propagation of Invasive Aquatic Plants, became effective this past June. It requires that just before launching a boat in a lake, pond, river, or other inland waterway, and also when preparing to leave a launch site, boaters must open or remove hull drain plugs, bailers, etc., to drain the water, and do so in a way that does not allow the drained water to enter a lake, pond, etc. Courtesy Boat Inspectors are trained to remind boaters of these important steps.

PLEASE make sure you CLEAN, DRAIN & DRY your watercraft BEFORE putting it in the lake.

What do we mean by this?

- **CLEAN** off any mud, plants, and animals from your watercraft (boat, kayak, canoe, jet ski, wave runner, paddle board, etc.), trailer, motor, and other equipment. Discard removed material in a trash receptacle or on high, dry ground where there is no danger of them washing into any water body.
- **DRAIN** all water from boat, boat engine, and other equipment away from the water.
- **DRY** anything that comes into contact with the water. Drying boat, trailer, and equipment in the sun for at least five days is recommended.

Why is this important?

Invasive aquatic species have been detected in nearby water bodies such as Long Lake, Thompson Lake, Songo River, and Sebago Lake. Be part of the solution to help prevent and slow the spread of aquatic invasive species!

2023 COURTESY BOAT INSPECTIONS

This year we staffed Courtesy Boat Inspections (CBI) at the Parker Pond ramp and Pleasant Lake's Casco and Otisfield ramps from May to September. This table comes from the final 2023 CBI Grant Report we submitted to the state.

Lake / Ramp	# of inspections	# of inspections which found fragments	# of invasive plant fragments
Pleasant / Casco	299	0	0
Pleasant / Otisfield	270	0	0
Parker / Casco	248	3	0
Totals	817	3	0

The "0" in the lower right is the most important number: our inspectors found no fragments of any of the eleven invasive aquatic species on Maine's watch list. The second column speaks to the effectiveness of Maine's programs to educate boaters about monitoring for and removing plant fragments from their watercraft, trailers, and vehicles. The first column underscores why we need CBI inspectors at every ramp.

Some inspections are of boats that go into Pleasant Lake or Parker Pond in the spring, come out in the fall, and never touch another body of water. Most, though, are for short-term visits by boat owners who may launch in many water bodies during the season. It takes only one fragment to introduce an invasive species, and even a diligent boater is not immune to mistakes. Thank you to all of our inspectors for their diligent and patient interactions with boaters, and to Lakes Environmental Association (LEA) for administering our CBI program.

BECOME A PL/PPA MEMBER

Your support makes it possible for us to continue to do everything we can to keep our lakes healthy and clean for all to enjoy. You can donate:

- By check (Pleasant Lake/ Parker Pond Association, Post Office Box 419, Casco, ME 04015)
- Online (debit, credit or PayPal)
- Or a Qualified Charitable Distribution

Visit here for full details:
<https://plppa.org/contribute/>

Or scan this QR code to contribute online and for other contribution options



LOON COUNT 2023

Since 1983, on the third Saturday of July between 7 and 7:30 am, volunteers have counted the number of loons sighted on inland bodies of water and reported their results to Maine Audubon. 2023 marked the 40th anniversary of these efforts!

This summer, 1503 volunteer loon counters headed out to 374 lakes to gather important data. For 2023, counters tallied 2,299 adults and 178 chicks.

How did our lakes do this summer? This year our spotters counted 12 loons on Pleasant Lake and 1 loon on Parker Pond. Next year's count will be on Saturday, July 20, 2023.

For more information on the Maine Audubon's Loon Count, check out their website:

<https://maineaudubon.org/news/numbers-are-in-for-maine-audubons-40th-annual-loon-count/>



Photo: www.boatus.com

UPDATE: STUDYING THE IMPACTS OF WAKE BOATS

In June, the Governor of Maine directed the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IF&W) to study the effects of wake boats on shoreline property and the environment.

Wake boats are designed to produce extra-large waves to facilitate surfing and water skiing. Coupled with powerful motors pointing their propeller at a downward angle, the boats produce strong, high-energy wakes and prop wash.

IF&W has invited participation in a stakeholder group from numerous constituent groups including Maine's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Maine Audubon, Lakes Environmental Association (LEA), and members of the water sports industry.

This stakeholder group will review completed studies relating to wake boats, paying special attention to issues relating to the types of boats used, the appropriate distance from the shoreline, the depth of the body of water, enforcement mechanisms including fines, and the definition used for "wake boat." IF&W shall report the findings and recommendations of the stakeholder group no later than February 1, 2024.

NEW LAW HAS CLOSED THE LOOPHOLE FOR PAINTED LEAD FISHING TACKLE

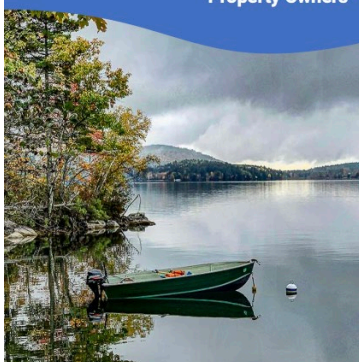


On June 20, 2023, the Maine Legislature passed LD 958, which will phase out the sale and use of painted lead fishing tackle, finally closing a dangerous loophole. Lead poisoning has long been one of the leading causes of death for adult loons in Maine.

For more info, check out: <https://fishleadfree.org/me/>

Protecting Our Watersheds

A Guide for Home and Property Owners



COMING SOON!

We are in the final stages of updating the "Protecting Our Watersheds" pamphlet. It will go to print this month and be available in early 2024. Much thanks to the Otisfield Conservation Committee and Maureen Howard for their collaboration on this effort AND for securing grant money for an initial print run!