

THE LAKESIDER

Newsletter of the Greater Pushaw Lake Association, serving Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond

Check out GPLA's new **WEBSITE!**
www.greaterpushaw.org

December 2009

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For several years now, GPLA has worked toward a goal of having an organizational website to improve its membership outreach and public education efforts. We are happy to announce that we have finally reached that goal, thanks largely to the volunteer efforts of Joanne Van Voorhis, a professional website designer who resides for part of the year on Pushaw Lake in Glenburn. Members of the GPLA steering committee identified what they wanted to see on the website, and Joanne procured the website space and produced a multiple-page layout that is both aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate. Check it out for yourself at www.greaterpushaw.org.

If you would like to contribute photos, articles, or any other content to make the website even more relevant for your fellow Lakesiders and the general public, please submit your contributions to GPLA President Sandi Duchesne. Sandi will collect all submissions and send them to Joanne Van Voorhis (who will continue to serve as the GPLA Webmaster) on a quarterly basis. Be sure to check out the website the next time you go online, and please provide feedback on how we can improve it in the future!

Invasive Plant Patrol News by Sandi Duchesne

Fourteen GPLA members from Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond participated in the Penobscot County Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) training sponsored by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP) at the University of Maine on Tuesday, July 21, 2009. Here's proof that the program works: a trained IPP volunteer discovered hydrilla in a cove while conducting a patrol on Damariscotta Lake in September 2009. He alerted VLMP at once, and his prompt action triggered a massive eradication effort to destroy the plant before it spread to other parts of the lake. We can work together to protect uninfested Maine lakes by removing and destroying any visible plant debris that clings to hulls and propellers, and by periodic monitoring for the appearance of non-native water weeds in our own lakes. If you would like to train to join the GPLA Invasive Plant Patrol, please contact me at smduchesne@roadrunner.com or 827-3782.

Inside this issue:

Water Quality Update for 2009	2
Results of 2009 Loon Survey	3
Loon Photos by Pam Griffith	3
Join GPLA Today!	3
Lost & Found Dept: 1 Lake Monsters: 0	4
Saluting our Pushaw Partners	4

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Maine Dept. of Conservation has installed permanent buoys in Pushaw Lake to mark boating hazards. The buoys tend to submerge under ice and snow, so they won't hinder winter sports.
- The new buoys replaced seasonal buoys that were installed and removed each year by GPLA volunteers Lou & Dorli Cloutier, with the support of the Bangor Bass Club.

Water Quality Testing: Fall 2009 Update by Jeff Hayward

Water testing continued on Pushaw Lake this past summer with GPLA members trained by the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program (VLMP). Testing is performed bi-weekly from late spring to early fall.

The 2009 water testing duties were performed by GPLA members Louis and Dorli Cloutier, seasonal residents of Hudson. Their bi-weekly testing started in May and lasted into mid-September. Thanks to Lou and Dorli for their volunteer efforts on this extremely important GPLA activity.

Overall, the results were down in quality for 2009 compared to historical trends. Clarity (the distance that an object can be viewed under the water from the surface of the lake) was lower than normal, and phosphorus levels were higher than normal. Although this was a potential cause for concern, VLMP reviewed the results and indicated that they were in line with overall state results. Water quality declined statewide in 2009 due to the excessive rainfall in June and July, followed by two weeks of hot weather with little wind in August.

Phosphorus levels continue to be the primary cause of concern on Pushaw Lake. Although not all of the 2009 samples had been returned from the lab as of this newsletter, most of the analyzed samples continued to show phosphorus concentrations in the mid to upper teens, expressed as parts per billion (ppb). That is high enough to support an algae bloom. It is believed that Pushaw's colored water may actually be helping the lake avoid an algae bloom, because the sun cannot penetrate to the bottom levels where phosphorus is highest in the sediment. As a result, algae growth is inhibited. Nevertheless, we should all work to decrease phosphorus contributions to the lake from our properties.

Deep Hole Clarity Summary			
Year	Minimum (Worst) Result	Maximum (Highest) Result	Average Result
2009	2.3 meters	3.0 meters	2.7 meters
1995-	2.4 meters	5.3 meters	3.6 meters

Deep Hole Phosphorus Summary			
Year	Minimum (Best) Result	Maximum (Worst) Result	Average Result
2009	13.4 ppb	21.7 ppb	18.0 ppb
1995-	7.0 ppb	34.0 ppb	15.0 ppb

Dissolved Oxygen (DO) testing for 2009 continues to show healthy levels of oxygen in the water, with little stratification from the surface to the bottom of the lake. This indicates that the lake is mixing well and not becoming "layered" with levels of low oxygen.

Deep Hole (Bottom) Dissolved Oxygen Summary			
Year	Minimum (Worst) Result	Maximum (Highest) Result	Average Result
2009	2.0 mg/l	9.1 mg/l	7.9 mg/l
1995-	2.7 mg/l	10.5 mg/l	7.3 mg/l

For more information on water quality and the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, please visit www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org.

2009 Annual Loon Count Results

From Rich Dressler (Pushaw Lake): The total count this year was 35 adult loons and 2 chicks. We know that one of the two chicks seen on the count is no longer alive, but a third late-hatch chick was spotted in the northern part of the lake in late July. Hopefully it will mature enough to get off the lake before ice-up. Thanks again to all who helped in the 2009 counts; it was mostly the same crew as in 2008. Everyone was flexible for the change to a Sunday count due to poor weather on Saturday.



From Pam Griffith (Little Pushaw Pond): A total of three loon chicks hatched on Little Pushaw this year. Unfortunately, one of them disappeared within two weeks of hatching. The morning of the loon count was rainy and calm with some fog – not the best of conditions. We counted 8 adults and one chick. Three days later, I saw nine adults and two chicks. Since then, the two chicks have grown. In mid August we saw 12 adults in a group.

(Photo credits: Pam Griffith)

WHAT GPLA MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY SUITS YOUR LIFE ON THE LAKE?

- Patron:** \$15-50 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment
- Underwriter:** \$51-100 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment
- Sustainer:** Over \$100 per year dues, no minimum volunteer commitment
- Helping Hand:** \$0-35 per year dues, 1-15 hours per year for GPLA activities
- Activist:** \$0-35 per year dues, 16-36 hours per year for GPLA activities
- Watershed Warrior:** \$0-35 per year dues, 37+ hours per year for GPLA activities

JOIN OR RENEW YOUR GPLA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!



Name _____

Address (Please list primary and seasonal addresses, if applicable)

Phone and E-Mail Address _____

Mail this form with your dues to: Ty Sullivan, GPLA Treasurer
 PO Box 302
 Stillwater, Maine 04489

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*“Never doubt that a small
committed group of
citizens can change the
world. Indeed it is the
only thing that ever has.”*

Margaret Mead

GPLA Lost & Found Department Scores a Victory

Within hours of the morning mail delivery of the June 2009 Lakesider, the tow raft that Bill Phillips recovered after a heavy rainstorm was restored to its rightful owner! If you have either lost or found objects along the shoreline of Pushaw Lake or Little Pushaw Pond, please contact Bill at 827-0454. We can't control the weather, but we can help to ensure that people don't lose their favorite water toys and dock sections to the Lake Monsters every time a major squall comes through.

GPLA Salutes Our Pushaw Protection Partners!

GPLA is fortunate to have a core group of active and strongly committed volunteers. We are grateful to all of our GPLA members, donors, and volunteers for their ongoing support, and to the many organizations that help us protect the watershed surrounding Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw Pond: **Penobscot County Soil and Water Conservation District, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, New England Grassroots Environmental Fund, Maine Council of Lakes Associations, Bangor Bass Club, Orono Land Trust, Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, Maine Department of Conservation**, plus our four Municipal Partners: **Town of Orono, Town of Hudson, Town of Glenburn, and City of Old Town.**