



THE LAKESIDER

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

Keeping GPLA on course during Covid-19

October 2020

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We are hoping you had a safe and enjoyable summer on the lake despite Covid-19. Please continue to follow CDC safety guidelines. Hopefully, we will have a vaccine by early to mid 2021.

As with many other aspects of our lives we have made adjustments in how GPLA is functioning in the age of Covid-19. Meetings are now on Zoom, at least for the foreseeable future, and our direct interactions among members and lakeside residents are being limited. We are relying on our newsletters as a primary communication tool. Our water testing has continued with the efforts of Lou and Dorli Cloutier on Pushaw Lake and Laura and Quinton Hurst on Little Pushaw. Our LakeSmart program has been put on hold (see separate item).

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2020 Loon Counts on Pushaw Lake

and Little Pushaw

Based on the loon count on all fourteen segments of Pushaw Lake in July 2020, a total of 30 adults and 3 chicks were counted on Pushaw Lake. Laura Hurst reported that the count with Pam Griffith on Little Pushaw found 11 adults and 1 chick. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the count this year. Over recent years the adult count on Pushaw Lake has been primarily in upper 20s to low 30s; chick numbers this year were about average. Results on Little Pushaw are comparable to recent years. Additional chicks were observed on Little Pushaw after the formal count. As of mid-September there were three surviving loon chicks on Pushaw Lake and three on Little Pushaw. -Rich Dressler

Pushaw Lake Paddle/Rowing Race 2020

GPLA again provided assistance during the 2020 edition of the Paddle/Rowing Race on Pushaw Lake. The July 19th race, part of the Maine Canoe & Kayak Racing Organization series, was conducted following Covid-19 guidelines prior to, during and after the race. This event is highly compatible with GPLA efforts to provide for uses of the lake which maintain the lake water quality. Funds raised during the race are donated to GPLA. Thanks to all who participated.



See GPLA on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/GreaterPushawLakeAssociation

2020 Lake Water Testing Update

2020 summer water quality was off to a stressed start, high June temperatures, early minor stratification (layers of temperature and dissolved oxygen differences), and observed pockets of algae. Pushaw Lake and Little Pushaw phosphorus sampling were scaled back to one test in mid-June and one in mid-August. This was aligned with historical sampling results.

Phosphorus levels continue an overall trend upward for Pushaw Lake despite late summer favorable readings and algae bloom potential still exists! Little Pushaw has been somewhat stable but algae bloom potential still exists. See graphs below.

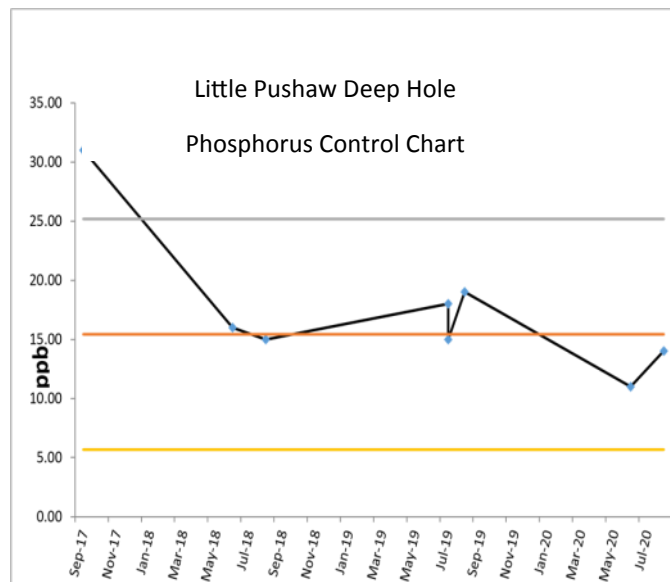
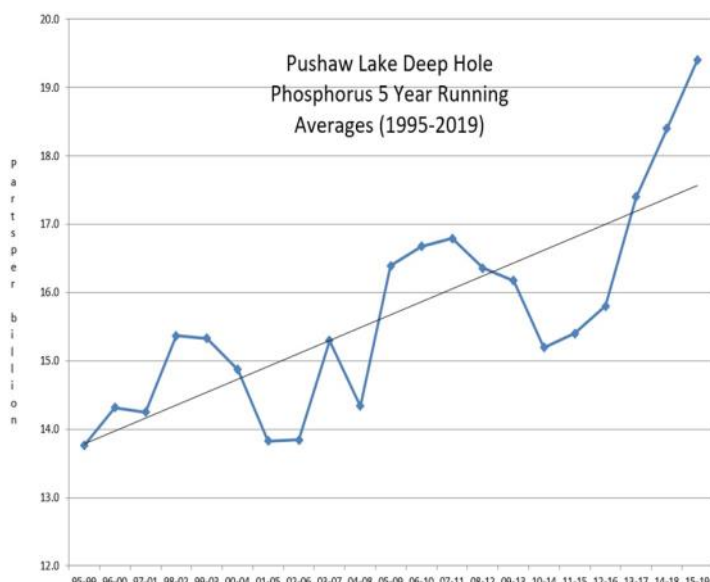
Also very interesting to note that the 9/20/20 clarity reading for Pushaw Lake was 5.6 meters! Little Pushaw clarity was similar, in that you could see the bottom. The clarity in both lakes in September was amazing. This was likely due to the overwhelming dry summer (with little runoff).

Phosphorus: the lower the better

The measure of phosphorus content in water is in parts per billion (ppb). Factors affecting phosphorus levels include rainfall/runoff, faulty septic systems, lakeside hygiene, shoreline buffer removal, etc. **Phosphorus numbers in the low teens are enough to trigger an algae bloom!**

Pushaw Lake 2019 averaged 19.9 ppb, our highest annual average on record, with the best result of 15 ppb recorded in September. The June 2020 result was lower at 17 ppb which is a good start, but still high enough to support an algae bloom. August's result was improved at 15 ppb.

Little Pushaw averaged 17.3 ppb in 2019, an increase of about 2 ppb from 2018. The first sample for 2020 in June, however, was favorable at 11.0 ppb. The August sample was higher at 14 ppb.



Living in Loon Territory (Maine Audubon)

Please obey Maine's laws that protect wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Common Loons are protected by both state and federal laws prohibiting harassment of wildlife. For more information or to report violations, contact the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

To report a potential violation 24 hours a day, please contact the dispatch operator at the Regional Communication Center (Bangor) at 800-432-7381.

The Bangor regional game warden headquarters can be reached directly during weekday working hours at 207-941-4440.



Shoreland Zoning

Activities like logging, clearing, and construction are restricted within 250 feet of lakes and ponds 10 acres or larger and within 75 feet of streams by Maine's Shoreland Zoning Act. Your town may have additional rules, so check with your town office for details or call the Maine Department of Environmental Protection at 207.287.2111.

Boating

- Watercraft operators should not disturb, chase, or harass wildlife.
- ***All watercraft must be kept at or under head-way speed and leave no wake within 200 feet of any shoreline, including the entire inlet and outlet.***
- All motorized watercraft on inland waters must display a "Preserve Maine Waters" sticker, also known as a "Milfoil Sticker."
- All vegetation must be cleaned off boats and trailers before entering and after leaving a lake or river.

Angling

The sale of lead sinkers and bare-headed jigs 1 ounce or less or 2 1/2 inches long or less is banned in Maine.

Loons need clean, clear water so they can catch fish. Shoreline development can impact water quality by increasing run-off, erosion, and contamination by household chemicals. Shoreline development may eliminate nesting habitat or reduce habitat quality by increasing disturbance and predation.

LAKESMART START

Due to the pandemic, LakeSmart visits by GPLA volunteers are postponed until Covid19 guidelines allow us to do so. **Meanwhile, this simple do-it-yourself questionnaire will help you gauge how well your home helps protect Pushaw Lake:**

<https://tinyurl.com/lakesmartstart> . As you'll see, most questions focus on managing stormwater. Your answers will help you identify ways to protect lake water quality, wildlife habitat, and the value of your home. The survey may also lead you to see your lakeside home in an entirely new way.

Then, let us know if you would like to schedule a future visit by contacting us at

pushawlakesmart@gmail.com. Our trained volunteers will not only walk your property with you and suggest ways to protect the lake; you will also receive a written **personalized summary** of your property with recommendations and resources specific to your waterfront. What you do after that is completely up to you; LakeSmart is free, non-regulatory and carries no obligations.

Perhaps your property is already LakeSmart? In that case, you are eligible for an award. Did you know that lakes are so important to Maine that we have special laws to protect them? LakeSmart also helps you stay on the right side of those important laws.

Thank you for helping protect Pushaw Lake!

**Greater Pushaw Lake
Association**

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Name(s): _____

Address: (please provide both summer and winter addresses, if applicable):

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

If you are interested in learning more about LakeSmart, check here: ☐

Please mail \$15 annual dues (more if you wish, and if you can) to: GPLA, PO Box 302, Stillwater, ME 04489. If you prefer, you can now **donate securely online** at: www.greaterpushaw.org/membership.html. **Thanks!**