Driftwood

Spring / Summer 2023

The newsletter of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake Property Owners' Association, Inc.

Wisconsin DNR Revises Walleye Management Plan

By Jim Kohl
TFFTL-POA Fish Management Committee Chair

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently completed their revised Walleye Management Plan. The original plan was created in 1998.

The revision project was an exhaustive undertaking, some aspects of which began in 2020. One of the early phases of the project was a survey that sampled the opinions of 3000 anglers, both residents and non-residents. An important aspect of the revision was to have a clear understanding of what the angling public, specifically walleye anglers, thought about the the current state of walleye fishing in Wisconsin. The survey sought angler opinions on a variety of topics including angler satisfaction, harvest preferences, bag limit suggestions, slot size regulations, and more. The new 2022 revised plan and the survey results are available on the DNR website: dnr.gov/topic/fishing/outreach/walleyeplan.html. The plan is a 110 page document and the survey is a 50 page document. Both can be accessed on the site.

In addition to the public survey, the DNR sponsored eight regional zoom meeting sessions with stakeholder groups and fisheries personnel. Selected attendees represented: fishing guides, business owners, lake associations, walleye fishing clubs and organizations, and more. The sessions lasted about three hours. I represented our TFFTL-POA and voiced our concerns over the declining walleye population and poor size structure we have seen in recent years. Interestingly stakeholder representatives from other areas in the Northwest Wisconsin region all shared similar concerns about the walleyes in their respective lakes and rivers.

The documents are lengthy, but if you are a serious walleye angler, I think you will find the information interesting. One of the results I found compelling was that the number one opinion anglers gave for the declining walleye populations and size structure was overharvest. I believe that as a result of this revised plan, we will see more "custom" regulations, designed to address the specific issues with different water bodies.

In 2018 and 2019, our association's fisheries committee worked closely with Zach Lawson, our Iron County Fisheries Biologist, to design a new walleye regulation to protect walleyes under 12 inches and reduce mortality on walleyes over 15 inches, specifically females. Since these were regulations were unique, and not in the DNR biologist's "DNR toolbox," Zach faced challenges in getting the changes approved. But, ultimately he succeeded and, since 2020, the revised regulations have been in place.

It is May 17th as I write this article. Our 2023 fishing season opened less than two weeks ago. The article will not appear in our *Driftwood* newsletter for a month or more. But I wanted to comment on the recent fishing opener while it's fresh in my mind. Our group of five fishermen had one of the best opening weekends we've had in many years. We caught pre-spawn, spawning, and post spawn walleyes in a variety of locations, from shallow rocks to deep channels. Each of our two boats caught dozens of walleyes on both Saturday and Sunday. We also caught larger walleyes. The majority of the fish were 11 to 13.5 inches, but we also caught plenty of 14 to 15 inch fish with a few between 16 and 20 inches. We kept a few in the 13 to 15 inch range for a fish fry, but released most of our catch, especially those longer than 16 inches.

I spoke with Christa at Flambeau Flowage Sports and she experienced similar results with the walleyes, plus a few nice perch, an occasional crappie, and one big smallmouth. Another area guide, Jeff Robl, said he had very good fishing and also noticed an improvement in the average size of the walleyes he boated. He also caught some nice perch and several northern pike. One of the pike had an 11 inch walleye in it's stomach!

One of the main reasons we had such good fishing was that the walleyes were spawning. The water temperature was about 44 degrees. The weather was wet to start the day

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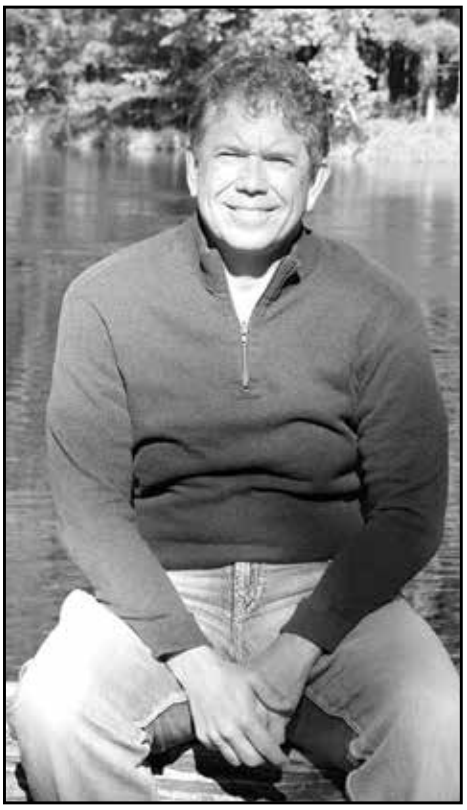
President's Letter

By Randy Schubert



As I write this letter for *Driftwood* I am sitting in a hotel room in downtown Philadelphia on a business trip. While listening to the sounds of the city, surrounded by concrete and traffic with no green areas to be seen, I am once again reminded of all we have with a special place in the Turtle Flambeau Trude Lake area. We are blessed to have it as our retreat, refuge and escape. A few days before my trip east, I was watching a spectacular display of northern lights over Big Island accompanied by a chorus of loons in the background – a sharp contrast from sirens, concrete and the hustle of a big city. It makes me long for getting back to the flowage. It also reminds me of how important it is to continue the TFFTL Property Owners Association stewardship of the flowage area. Whether through the associations' work on invasive species or participating in the long-term planning for the Turtle Flambeau Scenic Water Area, our work will continue to have an impact on current users' and future generations' enjoyment of all the area has to offer.

The association board continues to digest the information provided in the recent member survey and will be providing more updates on new and revised program ideas in the newsletter and at our annual meeting in June. The survey has provided guidance to the board, helping us better understand what you are looking for from our association. Fishing, invasive species management and water level continue to be important items.

The annual Scenic Waters Area stakeholders' meeting that is organized by the DNR was held this past February. It was a great opportunity for our association to collaborate and share accomplishments with other groups and organizations who are part of the TFF area. I would like to thank Beth Fiend for all she has done to facilitate the meetings.

In conclusion, I would once again thank all our board members, committee chairs, and members for making this association what it is. As we move forward into another wonderful summer on the flowage, I hope that everyone truly enjoys what we have in our crown jewel. See you on the water.
Randy

Association Offers Educational Pontoon Tours

By Terry Daulton

Did you know that the TFF has a voluntary quiet area designation? Do you know how many loons and osprey pairs nest on the flowage? Have you ever gotten up close and personal with a beaver lodge, kingfisher nest, or pitcher plant? If any of these questions pique your curiosity, you will want to sign up for our first ever TFF Association pontoon tour.

In response to last year's member survey, the association board wanted to help members learn more about the flowage, its natural history and the amazing wildlife and fisheries. Two board members, Jim Kohl and Jeff Wilson, will be teaming up to offer a free pontoon tour this year. This first event will "test the waters" and see if members respond and whether additional trips like this would be of interest. If successful, this pilot program may be expanded in the future.

Photo courtesy of Mary and Jim Kohl.

Jim Kohl, chair of the fish management committee, a terrific angler and fount of information will be driving the pontoon. The second guide will be Jeff Wilson, long time flowage resident. Jeff is a retired wildlife technician from the DNR, and worked on species from eagles, osprey, loons, to bears and deer. In total, ten people can attend the tour and names will be taken on a first come first served basis.

The tour will be held on July 22 from 9AM to noon and will meet at Springstead Landing. For more information and to sign up please email Jim Kohl at jimkohl52@gmail.com.

Time on the Water, Together

By Becky Jirous

Every year since 2010, my husband, Todd, gets excited about ice out on the TFF. Not only because it's time for the dock to go back in, but also because it's the start of water monitoring season! Todd's always been one to log things, look back and learn from them. He's recorded every single night he has slept in our cabin near Donner's Bay, who visited, what he fixed or tinkered with, fish caught (and missed) and the weather. He logs every game bird he bags and which of our goldens retrieved it. So, becoming a water quality monitor was a natural fit and I, by marriage, became his partner.

Together, we learned the three-part process of water sampling.

- Periodic Secchi disk readings to measure the water clarity and help calibrate satellites that measure clarity in many locations from above the TFF.
- Four water chemistry samples from ice-out until later summer are sent to a lab to aid with understanding the "age" of the TFF.
- Temperature readings taken at three-foot water intervals help understand the turning of the water and indicate its perception of the seasons – and for a fisherman – helps in understanding where various species are located in the water column.

Getting out to our assigned sampling location gives us "an excuse with a purpose" to be on the water. We pick different watercraft to get us there, be it a kayak, canoe, row-troller, motorboat or pontoon. The entire sampling process does not require much time. When we get back to the cabin, additional time is required to do the sample preparations, box them up for shipping and then log our observations, temperature and Secchi disk reading into a simple database.

Often times, we plan our water-sampling so that we can invite our guests to join in. They are curious about the process, how the data is used, and feel good about helping collect the samples used to understand the TFF in a scientific way. Kids, especially, really get into helping with the process. It is fun to look at progressive pictures of our niece as a six-year-old helping lower a Secchi disk into the water, a couple of years later wearing safety googles to process samples at the kitchen table, as a 14-year-old that just landed a 47.75" TFF musky, the day she graduated with a master's degree in Environmental Conservation and, most recently, her working at her dream job as a UW-Extension Regional Climate Outreach Manager. Then, there's the time we had four kids and no pencil in the boat. Oh, the fun they had trying to remember their assigned numbers until we got back to the cabin; laughing and trying to confuse each other all the way home. Then there was the time…. You get my drift – you can do your part for the environment, influence someone's finding their life's work in educating people about how they can help protect the environment, create memorable family moments and enjoy some time on the water by being a water quality sample volunteer.

If you'd like to learn more about water sampling (or hear more sampling stories), please contact Todd Jirous at tbjirous@charter.net and he'll probably have Becky give you a call.

WI DNR Revised Walley Plan

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on Saturday, but conditions improved and it was a perfect weekend for fishing! In my opinion, I also credit the regulation changes implemented in 2020 for the improved size structure and size of the walleye population.

We had a couple of good walleye hatches four and five years ago, and the new regulations have given those fish a better opportunity to mature and reproduce than in years prior to 2020. The next full DNR adult walleye survey will take place in 2024 or 2025. The full adult survey includes a creel census, a survey which documents angler catch results.

Once again, I encourage you to visit the DNR site: dnr.gov/topic/fishing/outreach/walleyeplan.html

I hope that you are enjoying good fishing and memorable days on the water.

*Driftwood reader submission by Sam Hittle. He calls it "*Golden Loon.*"*

Pink Rock Rescue

By Jeff Wilson

The following is an excerpt from the recently published book "Wrong Tree - Adventures in Wildlife Biology". In the story, author and narrator, Jeff Wilson, is working under contract with the U.S. Geological Survey on a research project on loon migration and ecology. Readers will note that the story location is the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and the author a TFFTL POA current board member.

It was the middle of April and my wife Terry was visiting friends in upper Michigan for the week. Kevin Kenow and his assistant Steve Houdek had come up from US Geological Survey (USGS) in La Crosse to do some early spring loon catching and retrieving of geo-tags. We were working on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage (TFF), which is a fairly remote, wild place any time of the year, but in April it is virtually deserted. Fishing season doesn't open until the first weekend in May, and April is too cold for camping. When we left the dock that spring morning for a day of loon capture, we took lunches and extra clothing. I'd left my cell phone behind. I tend to forget my phone and, besides, I thought it might get wet. April can bring some tough weather and we can have snow as late as May. The day was brisk and the water was mighty cold—ice had gone out only the previous week.

The day went well, and about an hour before dusk we decided to try to catch one more bird, the "Pink Rock" male. We often named our pairs after a feature of the lake in their nesting territory. In this case there was a big pink rock—rose quartz—that projected out of the water like a small island about the size of a Greyhound bus. The previous year a pair of loons had nested off a little gravel shoal at the base of the rock and produced chicks. The Pink Rock male was one of Kevin's satellite telemetry implant birds, and we needed to catch it and remove the geo-tag attached to its leg band.

When we got there to set up our capture nets, we picked a location on a small, one-acre island 100 yards from Pink Rock. We landed and set up the lift net trap, and Kevin and Steve hid in the shrubbery. After everything was set up, I couldn't find a good place to hide the boat, so I left Kevin and Steve to do the catching, and I motored over to Pink Rock and hid myself and the boat behind the rock. Watching through binoculars, I could see perfectly.

They started blasting out loon calls. The loon saw the decoy and responded, heading for the decoy and net. As I watched, the net came up and I could see splashing. Kevin and Steve ran into the water to retrieve the bird. I jumped in the boat to head over and help. Now, I didn't tear out of there at high speed—I backed out, turned the boat around and steadily increased the throttle. The problem was that it was almost dark, and I couldn't see into the water very well, so I ended up taking a slightly different route than when I'd pulled in. A moment later…WHAM! The boat lifted a little and stopped. I had found Pink Rock's sister. This rock was four inches under the water and about the size of a Volkswagen beetle.

I wasn't worried. The TFF is full of stumps and rock bars, and I had been stuck on plenty of them. Usually, all you have to do to free yourself is move all the way to the other end of the boat, put the motor in reverse, and give her the throttle. The combination of weight shift and thrust allows you to back off the underwater obstruction.

Illustration by Terry Daulton.

This time that technique didn't work. I was high-centered on that rock with the aluminum hull of my boat. It bobbed like a teeter-totter. I tried everything. I stuck an oar down but couldn't touch bottom. The water, it turned out, was over 10 feet deep everywhere around the boat. I had on chest waders, so I tried getting out on the rock to push, but it was slimy, slippery, and slanting. I could not get a firm boothold to push from.

By now Kevin and Steve were done processing the loon. They stood on the shoreline of the island watching me rev the outboard and spinning around in circles trying to get off the rock. It was getting darker, and I realized I had their extra clothing in the boat. As I tried different escape tactics, I thought about the fact that nobody knew where we were and it could be days before anybody casually came by, perhaps not for two weeks until fishing season opened.

I gave up my attempts to escape. The boat wasn't moving and it was now dark. I yelled at the top of my lungs to Kevin, "Do you have a cell phone?"

"Yes," he yelled back. Kevin's island was about 100 yards away and I could hardly hear him.

"Do you have reception?" I called out.

"Yes," he said, "one bar." This meant his phone would barely reach the cell tower to transmit a call.

"Call my son, Zach," I yelled. We could barely hear each other due to the distance, and it took about four tries before he got the 10-digit number right.

"Where do I tell him we are?" Kevin yelled.

"Just tell him Pink Rock. He'll know."

Luckily, the call went through. About two hours later I saw a faint light on the horizon. It was pitch dark by then, but I could see that the light was getting closer. The TFF had hired a new seasonal ranger for the summer named Kenny Pemble. Kenny had just that day gotten his ranger boat out and prepared it for the upcoming season. Kenny was a friend of Zach's and grew up in the house next door to ours. Boy, were we glad to see them. They got to me first, hooked a rope to the boat, and pulled with their 90-horsepower outboard. It took them three tries to get me off that rock, then we retrieved Kevin and Steve from the island. On the way back to the dock Kevin said he had considered leaving his phone in the truck, not wanting it to get wet.

Excerpt courtesy of Cornerstone Press

FE University Offers Fall Course Led By Association Member

Are you interested in learning more about pollinators and how to create an environment to support them? If so go to www.feuniversity.org and check out the class, *"Preserving our Pollinators,"* which will begin September 7th . The course will be taught by association member, Mary Nelson.

Beth Feind Moves On – New Faces on the Flowage this Summer

By Terry Daulton

This past winter Beth Feind announced that she would be leaving her position as Flowage Manager for a new role as Property Manager for the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. This took her from Parks Bureau to Forestry. The association would like to thank Beth Feind for all her work for the flowage and looks forward to working with new staff as they are hired.

This summer, Joe Fieweger, Northern Highland American Legion State Forest Recreation Superintendent, will be the Acting Flowage Manager, handling most of the administrative tasks. Lynn Wright will be adding flowage maintenance supervision to her already busy job as Park Manager for the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest (where she is in charge of 150 boat landings and 88 remote water access campsites). Fieweger and Wright have approximately one day a week allocated to the Scenic Waters Area.

Prior to her departure, Beth Feind hired Collin Miller as Flowage Limited Term Employee for the summer. He will be full-time on campsite and landing maintenance, and other daily tasks to keep the area in good shape for visitors. The WDNR plans to hire a new manager for the area later this year. General TFSWA inquiries can be directed to 715-356-3668 (NHAL Clear Lake Visitor Center) or email Joseph.Fieweger@Wisconsin.gov (715-385-3355 ext 119). Lynn Wright also said she welcomes information on issues or conditions from folks who are out on the water. She can be reached at Lynn.Wright@wisconsin.gov.

If you are out on the water or using the landings this summer you may also encounter staff from the Iron County Land and Water Conservation Department. Zach Wilson shares that they have hired three seasonal Clean Boats Clean Waters staff. Sam Johnson is a Fisheries and Aquatic science major at UW-Stevens Point going into 4th year. Kendra O'Dell is a Conservation Biology P. S. M. at UW-Stout, going into 2nd year. Blake Richard is an Ecological Restoration/Fisheries and Wildlife major at Northland College.

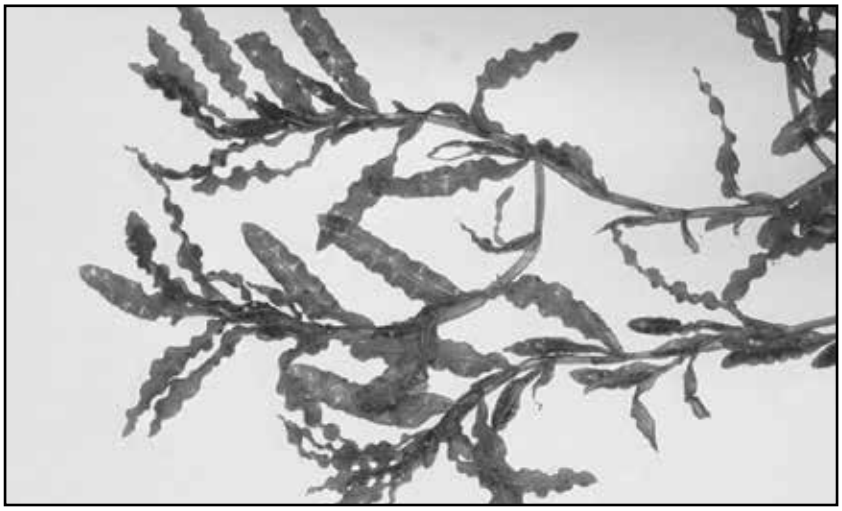
Our association members can help all these folks in their work by sharing news and observations, whether it's a loon nest or a campsite that needs attention. We can also provide a warm welcome and thank you to these summer folks who put in time and energy helping keep the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake healthy!

Invasive Species Report – Let's Volunteer!

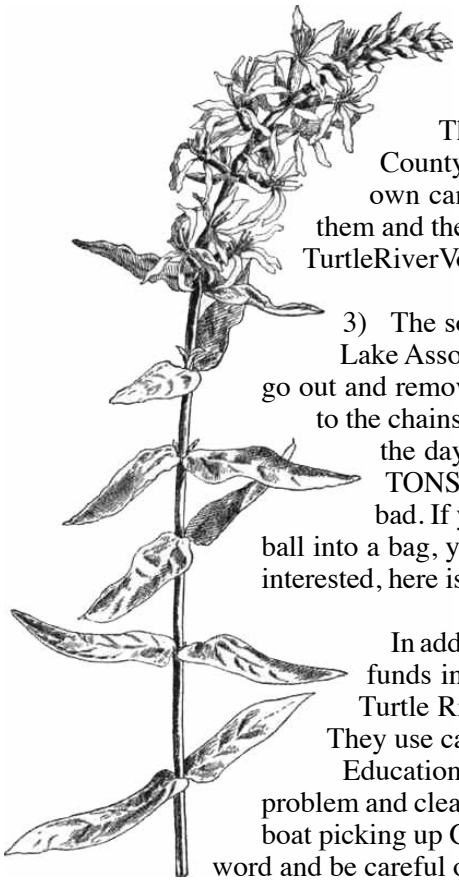
By Randy Payne

This year's invasive species theme is about volunteering for Curly Leaf Pondweed (CLP) removal. CLP is an aquatic invasive that is in the Turtle River watershed, and is propagating downstream from Rice Lake, which has a huge, dense infestation. Downstream, CLP is not nearly as dense, but is spreading, and has now been found in the Turtle River upstream of Lake of the Falls. There are many sparse infestations. If it gets in Lake of the Falls, the TFF is next in line. CLP can be quite aggressive, and where it finds optimum habitat, it can overtake native plants and even be thick enough to impede boat travel. There are three ways to volunteer:

1) **Turtle River and Pike Lake events, organized and supported by Zach Wilson and Iron County. Zach provides the equipment (canoes, paddles, life preservers), and the canoe drop off and pickup. Volunteers need to bring lunch, wear water shoes or bring waders, and prepare for a day on the water. Polarized sunglasses help spotting the CLP underwater. The work involves spotting the plants and raking up from the canoe, or getting out in waders or water shoes and raking up the plants. Dates are from June 12-15, and Aug. 7-10. Contact Zach via email at: zach@ironcountywi.org**



Curly leaf pond weed.



2) **Lake of the Falls - Click this link and scroll to the middle of the page for more information: https://lakeofthefalls.org/protect-our-lake**

These events occur throughout the summer and into fall, and are similar to the Iron County activity and areas, but dates are not set in stone, and you may need to bring your own canoe or kayak. In that link you will find this email address for volunteering. Email them and they will send you information on event times, locations, and equipment requirements: TurtleRiverVolunteers@gmail.com

3) The southeast bay of Rice Lake has numerous, extremely thick patches of CLP. The Rice Lake Association is again holding their "Great Pondweed Pull". They are seeking volunteers to go out and remove CLP by dragging chains with pairs of small motorboats, removing the CLP stuck to the chains by hand, and filling mesh bags. The bags you collect are picked up multiple times in the day by a pontoon boat. They provide the boats and equipment, and free lunch. Tens of TONS are removed every year. This event is the most strenuous of the three, but it's not that bad. If you can pilot a boat, pull up a chain with a big bunch of weeds on it, and put the weed ball into a bag, you'll be fine. The dates are from May 31 to June 11. They need help, and if you are interested, here is the link: https://www.ricelakeassociation.org

In addition to the volunteer opportunities above, our board is currently considering investing funds in this project, again hiring a Discovery Center crew to do "surgical" removal in the Turtle River. Last year the crew used snorkels to locate CLP just downstream of Rice Lake. They use canoes to carefully look for small patches of CLP that are removed by rake.

Education is a big part of stopping or slowing down invasives. Boaters should be aware of the problem and clean their boats before moving to different waters. All our work could be undone by one boat picking up CLP at Rice Lake, not cleaning it, and then launching it on the TFF. Please spread the word and be careful out there. Thank you.

The Association will continue its work on Purple Loostrife. Stay tuned for emails regarding our work days on its location and removal.

Camp Mercer Trail

By Jim Bokern

Looking for a new hiking opportunity featuring local history? Look no further than the new Camp Mercer trail found along the bike trail south of Mercer on Highway 51. The following article by Jim Bokern highlights the trail and historical features.

Manitowish Waters Historical Society spearheaded a multi-stake holder project resulting in an interpretive trail spanning the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp Mercer footprint. Visitors will be able to walk the same routes as CCC enrollees, view the ruins of the camps, and read the 23 interpretive signs. Using maps, stories, photos and the campers' own words, we hope to capture CCC life in the Northwoods. Tourists and locals alike will appreciate the opportunity to visit and learn about local history in a natural setting.

Trail maps show the location of interpretive signs. This will be useful for your hike, as the signs correspond to features on the landscape, CCC buildings and archaeological features. The trailhead is marked on Google Map as "Camp Mercer Trailhead" and can be easily located with a simple search. At the trailhead, be sure to pick-up a trail map that provides a 1934 sketch map and birds eye view photograph of the camp. This will be useful to reference as you are touring the grounds, helping you picture what it would have looked like at the time. The other side of the map has dates and statistics to get your mind moving.

I think that one of the keys to enjoying an interpretive trail and living history site like Camp Mercer comes with having an understanding of what the camp may have meant to those men who braved the harsh conditions, the cold winter, and the hard work, rather than stay home with nothing to do, little to eat, and no hope for better prospects. Everyone knows that the establishment of the CCC and other New Deal work programs, such as the WPA, was a response to hard times brought about by the Great Depression. Unemployment had reached a quarter of the working age population by 1933, and over 50% of the 18-25 demographic was unemployed or under employed.

Camp Mercer was a larger CCC camp and operated from 1933 until WWII closed all CCC camps in 1942. We are pleased to share our research and passion for preserving history along the Camp Mercer Interpretive trail. The trail also has two river drive logging camps and two mystery features that scholars are still debating. So, if you notice signs 23, 25 and 26 marked on the trail maps, but are not on the trail, please understand we are still in the process of active research. We hope to have these signs added to the trail by 2024.

For those who wish to learn more about Camp Mercer Interpretive trail access, history, and what to bring, please explore the web links at https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/StateForests/nhal/history

Photo courtesy of Mercer Historial Society.

Milkweed: A Monarch Magnet

By Mary Nelson

Photo courtesy of Mary Nelson.

As most people know, milkweed *(genus Asclepias)* is the host plant of the monarch butterfly *(Danaus plexipus)*. A host plant is one upon which the monarchs lay their eggs, and upon hatching, the caterpillars eat only milkweed leaves until they are ready to go off and form their chrysalides. Common milkweed *(Asclepias syriaca)* is the plant most people associate with the word "milkweed". Let me begin by saying I am not a huge fan of common milkweed. When it occurs in my "groomed" pollinator gardens, I remove it because it grows readily from seed and spreads rapidly by rhizomes, frequently forming a large colony that can overwhelm a small landscape. While I don't allow common milkweed to grow in my smaller gardens, I do welcome it when it grows in my tallgrass prairie. It is one of the easiest and fastest milkweeds to establish and, according to research conducted by the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), one of the most popular milkweeds for monarch egg laying.

There are twelve species of milkweed that are native to Wisconsin. (For a printer friendly handout of Wisconsin's milkweed species, go to https://wiatri.net/Projects/Monarchs/resources.cfm). When choosing milkweeds, note the height and spread of the species to ensure that they are appropriate for your landscape. Also, pay attention to how the plant spreads. Remember, plants that spread by rhizomes can overwhelm small landscapes.

The milkweed species that is most popular with gardeners is butterflyweed *(A. tuberosa)*. Known for its bright orange flowers and relatively compact growth habit, its flowers are rich in both pollen and nectar, making it an exceptional plant for bees and butterflies. When grown in the proper environment, butterfly weed will grow to about two feet tall and sport multiple flowering stems. Mature plants will have deep tap roots, making them difficult to move. They can be transplanted if dug carefully during dormancy in early spring. While "traditional" butterfly weed does not do well in clay soil, a natural "variation" that originated on a clay prairie is available through a few online native plant sellers.

Another popular Wisconsin milkweed, swamp milkweed *(A. incarnata)* prefers moist to wet soils in full sun but will also thrive in average garden soil. Since it gets considerably large some gardeners may not consider it appropriate for small landscapes. In my opinion, it is worth considering as a specimen plant even in small gardens for its sheer beauty and its appeal to butterflies.

All parts of milkweed plants contain toxic cardiac glycosides, with the highest concentrations occurring in the plant's sap followed by the stems, leaves, and roots. The sap of milkweed plants can also cause skin and eye irritation. While some farmers choose to remove milkweed from their pastures, studies have shown that, due to the unpalatable taste of milkweed, field animals will not eat it unless they are very hungry. The good thing about the toxicity of milkweed is that when monarch caterpillars eat it, they become unpalatable to predators and have a better chance of survival.

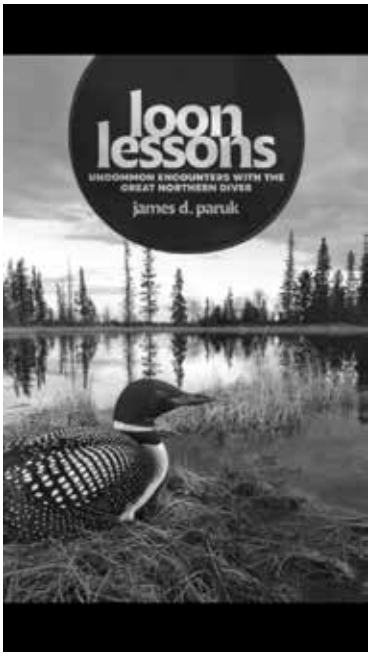
Milkweed plants are very hardy, but they are not without their problems. The oleander aphid *(Aphis nerii)*, an invasive aphid introduced to the US on the non-native oleander shrub, are tiny yellow aphids that congregate along the stems of a plant in such high numbers that the stem appears yellow. Although the aphids can look alarming, in most cases they do little damage to the plant and have minimal direct impact on monarch eggs or caterpillars. Treatment is not necessary and runs the risk of harming beneficial insects. If populations become too dense, the best method of attack is to remove them with your fingers.

There are also three species of milkweed bugs that will feed on plants in Wisconsin. While they all eat parts of the plant, only one of these species, the small milkweed bug *(Lygaeus kalmia)*, has been shown to prey on monarch eggs and caterpillars.

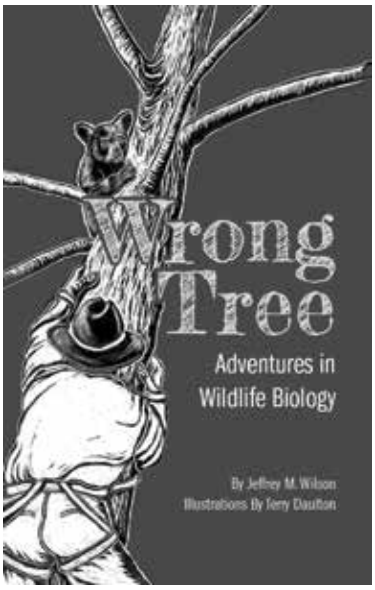
The best method to remove the bugs without doing damage to monarch eggs or caterpillars is to manually remove them and throw them into a bucket of soapy water.

Summer Reading Recommendations

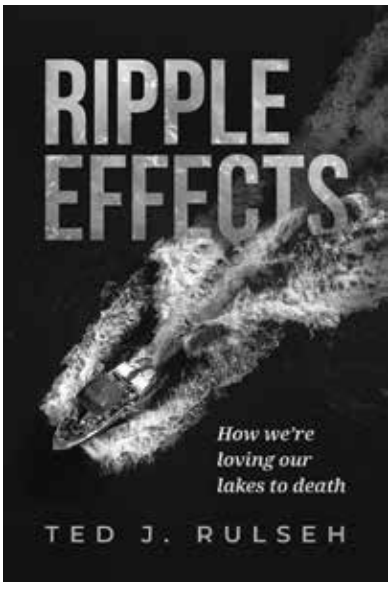
Driftwood **editors would like to make a few suggestions for your summer reading pleasure! When you tire of romance novels, detective adventures or dragon and damsel filled fantasy, why not sprinkle in a bit of non-fiction that will enhance your time on the flowage and nearby environs. Here are a few ideas for your consideration.**



Loon Lessons: Uncommon Encounters with the Great Northern Diver, dust jacket description describes it as "a compendium of knowledge about the common loon and an engaging record of scientific sleuthing, documenting more than 25 years of research into the great northern diver". Written by Dr. Jim Paruk and published by University of Minnesota Press, this entertaining and informative book draws on research Paruk conducted on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage, other research in our area, as well as work in Michigan and Minnesota. A must read for loon lovers! His book can be found at the University of Minnesota Press or www.jamesparuk.com



Wrong Tree – Adventures in Wildlife Biology by Jeff Wilson (an excerpt is featured here in Driftwood) follows the adventures (or misadventures) of Jeff's 25+ year career in wildlife biology much of which is set on the TFF. One reviewer described the book as "incredibly informative, entertaining, occasionally hilarious, and passionate in the concern for the wildlife of the Midwest, North America, and the future." Another said "I wouldn't have believed half of the stories in this book if I hadn't been there myself!" Jeff's book can be found at the Springstead Trading Post, Loony Beans Coffee in Mercer, Deer Lodge, County FF or Manitowish River Studio as well as through his website www.wrongtreebook.com or through Cornerstone Press.



Ripple Effects: How We're Loving our Lakes To Death, by Ted Rulseh was published by University of Wisconsin – Madison Press in 2022. The book explores stressors on our lakes – from invasive species, nutrient pollution, unwise development, defective septic systems, climate change, and more. Ripple Effects looks in depth at these threats to lakes in the glaciated region of the Upper Midwest and outlines potential remedies for them. Based on extensive research and more than 70 interviews with lake scientists, lake association leaders, and other experts, it sounds an alarm about the future of the lakes, while offering affirmative steps all of us can take to help safeguard the lakes for today and generations to come.

For those looking for a more lyrical read, ***Beneath the Eagle Tree***, by photographer and writer Bob Kovar (Manitowish Waters) is 120 pages of full color photographs and journal writings by Kovar. His musings on wildlife, natural beauty and our role in the natural world give inspiration and encourage us all to get out and watch the sunrise. His book can be found in area galleries (Moondeer Gallery, Boulder Junction), Manitowish River Studio, and at his own studio/store in Manitowish Waters or at www.bobkovar.com

A Closer Look at Wake Boats and Their Impact on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage

By Joanna Vodicka

Wake boats have become increasingly popular among water sports enthusiasts, offering thrilling experiences for wakeboarding, wake-surfing, and other towed water sports. However, concerns have been raised about their potential impact on Wisconsin lakes and their delicate ecosystems. A few association members had raised concerns regarding wake boats in our survey last year, and so we wanted to share some facts and research on the topic.

In general, wake boats differ from more traditional waterski boats or jet skis by utilizing a system of hull technology, engine placement and ballast water to create surfable waves. Some models have a wedge or hydrofoil that can be lowered to increase steer force for wakeboarding. Of course, these boats can also be driven in a traditional manner, not creating large wakes.

The University of Minnesota has conducted extensive research on the effects of wake boats on lakes, focusing on water quality, shoreline erosion, and aquatic ecosystems. According to their fact sheet, wake boats produce large wakes that can contribute to increased shoreline erosion. The intense waves generated by wake boats dislodge sediment and disturb aquatic plants, potentially disrupting the habitat of fish and other aquatic organisms. Furthermore, the churning wakes can lead to increased sedimentation, which can negatively impact water clarity and quality. Since the Turtle Flambeau Flowage has many shallow areas, this churning could greatly impact the habitat. The flowage also has a significant number of highly erosional shoreline stretches which could be further degraded by increased wave action.

The university's research also highlights the potential for increased nutrient loading. Wake boat wakes can disturb lake sediments, releasing phosphorus and nitrogen into the water column. These nutrients can contribute to harmful algal blooms, deplete oxygen levels, and disrupt the natural balance of the lake ecosystem. The long-term consequences of nutrient loading can be detrimental to fish populations and overall lake health.

Other experts have weighed in on the issue of wake boat impact:

1. Dr. Emily Johnson, a freshwater ecologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, emphasizes the need for responsible boating practices in her research. She stated that while wake boats provide recreational enjoyment, it is crucial that users understand and minimize their potential environmental impact. By adopting practices that reduce shoreline erosion and nutrient loading, all boaters can ensure the long-term health of Wisconsin lakes.

2. John Peterson, a fisheries biologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, underscores the importance of considering the cumulative effects of wake boat usage which can lead to substantial shoreline erosion and sedimentation.

Wake boat enthusiasts, and anyone operating a boat that creates a wake should be aware of existing boating and wake regulations that apply to Wisconsin lakes. A December 18, 2022 article by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel synthesizes them as proceeding at No Wake speed when within 100 feet of any shoreline, dock or pier and also being mindful of other boats and not approaching or passing in such a manner that creates a wake or wash. Finally, always drain all water from your ballast tanks or bilges when pulling your boat from any lake. This helps prevent the spread of invasive species. Don't forget that the Turtle Flambeau Flowage has "quiet hours" which prohibit any person from operating a personal watercraft at speeds greater than slow no wake except between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. These are town ordinances passed by Mercer, Sherman and Butternut and were supported by our association in the past.

Wake boats offer exhilarating experiences for water sports enthusiasts, but it is vital to consider their potential impact on the Turtle Flambeau Flowage, Trude Lake and other waterbodies. Striking a balance between enjoying water sports and preserving the natural beauty and health of these waters is important for future generations.

Northwoods LIGHTS OUT!

Provided by Zach Wilson, Iron County LWCD

Looking for another way to enjoy the wonders of the Northwoods? Exploring the night skies, watching fireflies and stargazing are but a few ways to appreciate the darkness. In recognition of International Dark Skies Week, April 15-22, Oneida, Vilas and Iron County Land & Water Conservation Departments are promoting two summer weekends to enjoy the night. We encourage you to turn off your lights for a few hours, go outside, and look up and around you! Listening in the darkness can also lead to exciting discoveries!

June 17-18 - *Firefly Watch!*

August 12-13 - *Milky Way & Perseid Meteor Watch!*

We hope that by setting dates, residents and visitors alike will coordinate for a broader appreciation of nighttime wonders. Unnecessary lighting with improper placement and design interferes with visibility and robs us all of quality night skies. Other impacts include human health affects/sleep disruption, confusion for migratory birds and other wildlife, and wasting energy. You can help by only using lighting you really need, choosing energy-efficient bulbs, and directing lights downward. By working together we can protect the night for everyone!

Please check out the Oneida Land & Water Conservation website (https://www.oclw.org/special-projects.html) or call 715-369-7835 for more information.

Wisconsin Lakes Convention Available Online

The Wisconsin Lakes 2023 Conference had record attendance this year with 645 registrations (60 of which were virtual attendees). We had over 164 presenters who brought us 67 concurrent sessions, 18 workshops, and one field trip. For those who missed the conference, the presentations and materials are now available online as PDF's and video recordings. Topics included climate change, Public Trust Doctrine, zooplankton, wild rice, culturally important resources for tribes in Wisconsin, wetland forest trees, and trout fisheries to name a few.

Convention Presentations

UW-Extension will continue to populate the website which will house all of the presentation materials as PDFs as well as video recordings from the sessions that were recorded. Please feel free to check out this resource at https://www3.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/programs/convention/2023/default.aspx

Driftwood

The newsletter of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage and Trude Lake Property Owners' Association, Inc.

— Mission Statement —

The purpose of the association is to maintain, protect and enhance the quality of the lake and its surroundings for the collective interest of members and the general public.

Published Twice Annually

If you would like to contact the association electronically, please visit our website www.tfftl.org and search under "CONTACT US"