

Lake News

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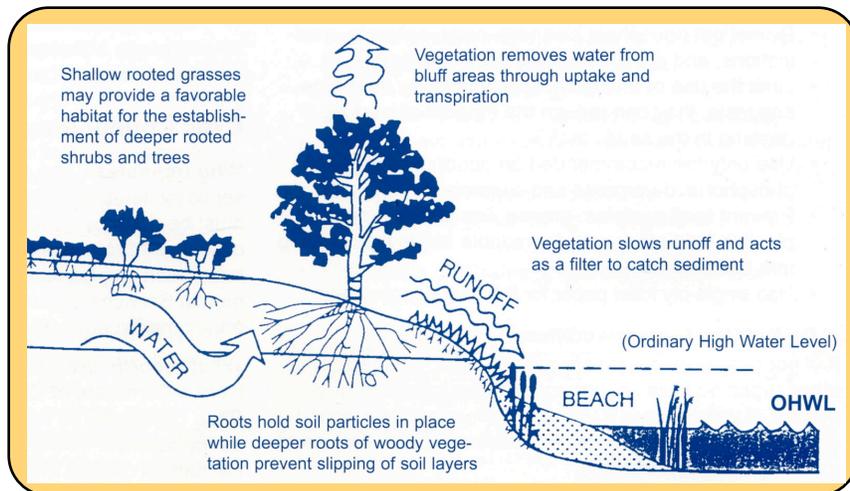
Shoreland landscaping workshop set for Aug 1

One of the easiest and best ways to improve the health and diversity of your shoreline, improve habitat for birds, wildlife and aquatic plants, and improve the quality of our lake water is to develop a natural shoreline.

As discussed in past issues of *Lake News*, a natural shoreline is a bridge, or buffer, between two worlds—the land and water. It helps prevent erosion by reducing runoff and sedimentation in the lake, and it intercepts nutrients that can degrade water quality by increasing algae and aquatic plant growth.

Have you considered implementing a natural shoreline but didn't quite know how to go about it? Or do you simply need more information? Help is on the way!

The Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation, Cass County Environmental Services, Cass County Izaak Walton League Chapter, and University of Minnesota Extension will team up to sponsor a shoreland landscaping workshop on Saturday, August 1, at Deep



Portage Nature Preserve from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. In the afternoon, from 1 - 4 p.m., the workshop will take you on a tour of several shoreland plantings in the area so you can actually see what some of your neighbors have been doing to naturalize their shorelines.

Exhibitors and providers of native shoreland planting design and landscaping services and/or sale of native plants will be available.

Workshop details

Two concurrent sessions will be offered in the morning. Eleanor Burkett, University of Minnesota Extension Specialist, will share the basics of shoreland landscaping, including the

beneficial functions of natural shorelines, applicable shoreland regulations, and planting design basics. Kelly Condiff, Cass County Shoreland Specialist, will offer a workshop on "Keeping Your Shoreline Natural and Maintaining Natural Shoreland Plantings." The afternoon tour will provide an opportunity to see plantings in various stages, learn more about specific plants, and talk with property owners to learn more about their experiences.

Pre-registration required

The cost for the morning workshop and afternoon tour is \$15 per person, which includes a morning refreshment break, lunch, workshop materials, and bus tour. The cost for the afternoon tour alone is \$10. Contact Paula West at the Leech Lake Watershed Foundation to register. Call 218-675-5773 or e-mail info@leechlakewatershed.org.

The workshop cost is so low because it has been partially funded by a grant from the Minnesota DNR's Shoreland Program.

"Water quality is primarily dependent on what happens on the land around the lake, along the river, or within the watershed. It's the runoff from the land, and the pollution that is carried with it, that can determine the quality of the water. While the land activity in the watershed—the land area that drains to a lake or stream—contributes pollution to the lake, the shoreland zone is the lake's first line of defense. What you and your neighbors do—or don't do—on your shoreland property can have a significant impact on the quality of the lake. Managing water quality means appropriately managing the land use around the lake to reduce the amount of pollution that enters the lake."

--Shoreland Homeowner's Guide to Lake Stewardship

Krusin' with Don



Lantern Bay was the topic of our newsletter last fall. I want to thank all who rose to the challenge and either gave money or made pledges

to help preserve Lantern Bay. I knew the challenge of completing this adventure over the winter was a great dream—but you have to start somewhere.

Enclosed in this newsletter you will find an update on this challenge. We

still have a long ways to go but we will reach it with your help. Take a boat trip to Lantern Bay this summer and envision that this could be saved for generations to come.

The eight-year walleye study is in its second year. At our annual meeting last August Dale Logsdon, DNR researcher, presented details on the study and explained what the DNR expects to accomplish.

As it has agreed to do each spring, the DNR will meet with our board at its next meeting, June 10th, Woodrow Town Hall, 5:00 p.m. to present what they've done and explain their future plans for our Woman Lake chain.

The DNR has completed a Sensitive Shoreline Study on Woman Lake and

Ten Mile Lake. The entire study can be found on the web site:

www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/sli/index.html. I think you will find some very interesting facts about our lake.

Also, remember to check out our web site: www.womanlakechain.org. And, I personally invite you to attend our annual meeting on August 15. We are planning what we think will be an interesting program. Have a great summer and enjoy the lakes. Be safe and remember to wear your life jacket!

Don Kruse, President

From the editor

Memories of fishing days gone by

One of the warm memories that linger from days when my two sons were barely out of diapers was sitting out in the boat fishing as the sun sank slowly into the treetops in the west.

We didn't have any hi-tech fishing equipment in those days, no fish-finders or fancy lures other than a red and white daredevil for catching Northerns, or a pack of snelled #3 hooks and a styrofoam pack of night crawlers purchased at the local bait store. We fished as a family—all four us—and when someone in the boat had a strike, we passed the net to whomever was in the best seat to help land the prize. Most often we caught a few sunnies or crappies—enough to make a delicious fish fillet sandwich for everyone.

But I think the part of fishing my boys enjoyed most was the trip up to the fish house to filet our catch. The

session in the fish house also became an anatomy lesson: no lungs, just gills that do the same thing, an air sac, a liver, a heart—and of course the stomach where we could sometimes see what the fish had eaten for its last meal. They were enthralled!

Those hours in the boat were priceless. They gave us a chance to be together as a family, to share our thoughts and ideas, and to appreciate the sights and sounds of nature all around us. It was as though we were at one with the loons and ducks, and herons that fished in their own way along the shoreline.

Not surprisingly, I felt a twinge of sadness when I read a report from the DNR the other day saying that fewer and fewer kids were fishing anymore. Why, I wondered. Are children today more intrigued with video games or texting friends on their cell phones? Are their parents too busy or distracted

to take them out fishing? I don't have the answer and perhaps the DNR doesn't either.

The ice is now off our lakes and a new season begins! We hope you and your children or grandchildren will take this new opportunity to get out in your boat together and experience some of what our beautiful Woman Lake Chain has to offer!

John Gundale, Editor



New book provides fascinating details about Woman Lake chain

Review by Jim Limburg

Do you know what species of rare turtle is crawling or swimming near the shores of Woman Lake, even as you read these lines? Do you know what bird species is most common in the Woman Lake area? Can you name Minnesota's smallest fish species? (answers below)

These are a few of the interesting facts you can learn by reading through *Final Report: Sensitive Lakeshore Survey for Woman Lake (11-0201)*. Cass County MN, a 71-page book about Woman Lake and the Woman Lake Chain, now available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The purpose of this scientifically grounded book, however, is beyond simply providing Fascinating Facts about our lakes. Woman Lake is one of the first two lakes in Minnesota to be surveyed as part of *Minnesota's Sensitive Lakeshore Identification Manual* now being produced by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The website explains:

The goal of the project is to identify areas along lakeshores that provide unique or critical ecological habitat. Once those areas are identified, local and state resource managers will use the information to help ensure that sen-

**Final Report
Sensitive Lakeshore Survey
Woman Lake (11-0201)
Cass County, MN**

July 2008



STATE OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

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sitive habitats are receiving sufficient protection.

I talked to Paul Radomski, Project Manager, and asked how it happened that Woman Lake was chosen as one of the first to be studied. "Our group decided to start this state-wide project with two lakes in the heart of Minnesota, in Cass County," he said, "and Woman and Ten Mile lakes seemed the best places to begin." Another fourteen

such studies are currently in production.

The book includes a variety of color and aerial maps and excellent color photographs. One learns, for example, that "a total of 41 native aquatic plant taxa were recorded, making Woman Lake among the richest lake plant communities in the state." (p. 4). Other facts: There are now 39 documented fish species in Woman Lake and 62 bird species including eleven of greatest conservation need (SGCN). The most abundant game fish is (no surprise!) the yellow perch. Two of the three fish species on the SGCN list have been recorded at Woman Lake: the *longear sunfish* and the *pugnose shiner* (the third species is the tiny *least darter*).

The book is available online at paul.radomski.state.mn.us, or in limited number in hard copy by writing to Paul Radomski, DNR, 1601 Minnesota Drive, Brainerd, MN 56401. This fine piece of work was designed for all who love our lakes, especially for groups interested in conserving and preserving them, such as our Child, Girl and Woman Lake Association.

Oh yes, the quiz answers: Blanding's turtle, the red-eyed vireo, and the least darter.

Roadside cleanup volunteers needed

The Child, Girl and Woman Lake Property Owners Association is responsible for cleaning up 8.1 miles of roads which are divided into 16 sections ranging from .3 to .6 miles each. Most of these sections are on the north side of Woman Lake, some are west and others are south of the in-

tersection of County Roads 5 and 11. All volunteers walk their assigned section between early spring and late fall to pick up unsightly litter. If you'd like to volunteer please call Tom Vind at 682-2572 so he can put your name on the waiting list.

DNR says natural walleye fry survival rate in WL chain higher than expected

The DNR's eight-year walleye fry stocking study on the Woman Lake chain, now in its second year, was established to determine the most effective stocking rates that will help improve walleye fishing. The study has already discovered that the survival rate of the walleye population's natural fry production in the WL chain is considerably higher than expected.



The estimated hatch rate for Woman Lake in 2008 turned out to be 1.4%, similar to the 2007 estimate of 1.2%—both about six times higher than anticipated based on recent estimates from Leech and Red Lakes.

As mentioned in *Lake News* last fall, Minnesota DNR researchers are attempting to determine **total** fry densities in the lake ranging from 250 to 2,000 fry per littoral acre (includes both natural and stocked fry). The two are differentiated by a harmless chemical marker in the stocked fry. The littoral zone is the area near shore where water depth is 15 feet or less.

How fry density is determined

How is fry density determined? First, by applying a computer model to the previous fall's gill net catches, researchers estimate the number of natural fry produced based upon the abun-

dance and size of female spawners. Then, based on natural egg production and hatch rate estimates in the lake, the DNR determines how many fry it must add to achieve the **targeted** total fry density. After determining total fry densities in terms of their survival, the best possible total fry density becomes evident.

A key question: how many fry to stock?

Historically, a 10% fry put-back rate was applied to egg-take lakes based on wild hatch rates estimated in the 1950s. The recent and much lower hatch rate estimates raised concerns that the 10% rate was too high.

But, one could ask, how could **too many** walleyes be added to the lake? Isn't it a good thing to have **more** walleye fry rather than fewer? Intuitively, doesn't it seem logical that stocking

more walleye fry should result in **better** walleye fishing down the road?

DNR officials say, however, that adding more fry to the lake than its food supply and habitat can support usually results in poor growth and lower survival rates—and fewer fish actually attaining a size and weight that most anglers prize.

Rich Hess, a lake association board member and former

fisheries biologist with the Illinois DNR says that as the DNR gains a better understanding of natural walleye production in Woman Lake they can supplement the naturally-produced fry more accurately to optimize the number and size of walleyes available to anglers in our chain of lakes.

Stocking plans for 2009

Thus, in combination with the projected 1.5 million natural fry (776 per littoral acre), a total of 1.4 million marked fry (710 per littoral acre) will be stocked to attain a total fry density of 1,500 per littoral acre.

This fall, the DNR will again assess Woman Lake's natural fry production by capturing and tabulating young-of-the-year fish—now possible because we can distinguish marked fry from naturally-produced fry at the young-of-the-year stage and beyond.

Water Patrol: Keep your boat lights turned on at night!

DNR tagging walleyes to estimate spawning numbers and movement in WL chain

In conjunction with the fry stocking study discussed previously, the DNR is conducting a walleye tagging study in the Woman Lake chain. The tags help to provide an independent estimate of the number of walleyes that spawned in the chain in 2009 and provide a means to collect information on their movements. All walleyes collected at the Boy River trap this Spring were marked with numbered, yellow, plastic tags attached at the base of the rear dorsal fin. DNR researchers will recapture many of these fish later this spring along with others that were tagged in the Woman Lake chain.

Anglers who catch a tagged walleye may either keep it as part of their legal limit or release it. If the fish is released, the tag(s) should be left in the fish. In either case, anglers are asked to report the tag number(s) and recovery information to the DNR on their website

(www.dnr.state.mn.us/fisheries/tagged-fish) or they may contact the Walker Fisheries Office at 218-547-1683, or send the information to 7316 State Highway 371 NW, Walker, MN 56484.



The device in the biologist's hand is a tagging gun which has a supply of plastic tags, a needle and a trigger. The tagged fish were measured, sexed and scale samples were taken to determine each fish's age.

Zebra Mussels threaten Minnesota lakes

Zebra mussels have invaded several Minnesota lakes in recent years. And now, this past April, the mussels were found in Prior Lake, a popular recreational fishing lake near the Twin Cities where an alert lake-



shore owner spotted suspicious shells, confirmed by the DNR to be

Zebra Mussels. The DNR discovered that the infestation was widespread, indicating the mussels had been in the lake for at least a year or two. The incident was also a reminder that lakeshore owners play an important role in being lookouts for Zebra Mussels and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

The nearest contaminated lake to our WL chain is Mille Lacs.

The DNR recommends that boaters:

- remove all visible aquatic plants, animals and mud from boats, trailers, docks, lifts, rafts and anchors,

- drain all water from live wells, bilges and bait buckets before pulling away from a lake,

- spray or rinse boats with high pressure and/or hot water, or let them dry thoroughly for five days before transporting to another body of water.

If you have guests this summer who trailer their boat from another lake, please remind them of these common sense practices. Let's all work together to keep our beautiful Woman Lake chain free from this destructive invader!

Beware of deer ticks this summer!

Arlan Schires, home owner on Child Lake, remembers the first time he contracted Lyme Disease. "The tick bite was on my lower back," said Arlan. "I'd already been vaccinated for Lyme Disease so I waited, thinking I should be OK. But when I got the classic "bullseye" rash along with a fever, aching joints, and fatigue I knew I'd better get to the doctor – fast," Arlan said.

Fortunately, antibiotics cleared up the problem quickly, but a year later he got another deer tick bite on the back of a knee and then last summer he got another on his arm. That one became deeply embedded and he didn't get it all out. Once again he paid his doctor a visit.

Arlan's advice? Check yourself nightly for ticks, especially if you've been outside working. Don't invite deer into your yard by offering them food, get your pets tick-proofed, and see a doctor promptly if you have a deer tick bite that looks at all suspicious.

What is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease is caused by a bacterium called a spirochete. The particular species of spirochete that is responsible for Lyme disease is spread by infected ticks.

The tick that carries Lyme disease is commonly known as the deer tick, because in its adult form it usually lives on deer. In its immature larval form, it lives primarily on the white-footed mouse. About half of adult deer ticks are infected with the Lyme bacteria.

The average deer carries 200 or more deer ticks at any one time. The life cycle of the tick can be interrupted by removing deer from the pool of host animals. In most

parts of the U.S. the deer is the only large mammal capable of providing a blood meal to the adult female tick to enable her to lay eggs. These deer carry the ticks into areas where people live, work, and play.

Ticks become infected with the Lyme disease spirochete by feeding on the blood of animals that have the disease. The tick usually bites people when it is in the **nymph** stage, between larval and adult. At this point in its life cycle it is very small—about the size of a poppy seed—and difficult to see. Three-quarters of the people who contract Lyme disease don't even remember being bitten. When an infected tick bites a person, the spirochetes can enter the skin. This doesn't usually happen until after the tick has been attached for between 36 and 48 hours.

Additional tips to prevent tick bites:

- Walk down the center of a trail to avoid rubbing against bushes and picking up waiting ticks.
- Wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to spot a tick. Wear shirts and sweatshirts with snug-fitting collars and cuffs.
- Use a good insect repellent, especially one containing 100% DEET. Apply liberally before dressing and reapply after exposure to water.
- Trim the yard. Trim back large bushes near homes, which are popular areas for all types of ticks between Spring and Autumn.

How to remove a tick

The goal of tick removal is to get rid of the live insect in one piece. While the squeamish at heart may be tempted to give the little bugger a quick yank and be done with it, leaving parts of the tick embedded in your flesh will most likely cause an infection. With patience in mind, follow these simple steps:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Sterilize a pair of tweezers. This can be done with rubbing alcohol and a cotton swab or by running a lit match beneath them.
3. Grab the tick as close to your skin's surface as possible and pull slowly. Do not jerk! You want the tick to help you, by backing out as you're pulling. If the tick does not back out on its own, stop pulling, and add a few drops of rubbing alcohol, cooking oil, or petroleum jelly to the surface of the skin. The added moisture will begin to drown the tick, causing him to back out.
4. Wait. Within five to ten minutes, the tick should begin to loosen its hold.
5. Pull again. Using the tweezers again, gently pull the tick from your skin.
6. Examine the tick. Make sure you remove the body **and head** of the tick.
7. Clean area. Once the tick is out, wash the skin area with antibacterial soap, or swab the affected area with an antiseptic. Treat any itching, rash or irritation with hydrocortisone or antiseptic creams.

(Source: DNR and eHealthMD)

Spring Creature Feature

Meet our Otter neighbors



The river otter is a long, sleek, dark brown to black aquatic carnivore that lives in most northern Minnesota lakes, ponds, and streams. After an absence of more than a century, its range is again extending into southern Minnesota.

General description: The river otter is Minnesota's largest aquatic carnivore. It can swim and maneuver better than many fish, and swims with only the top of its head out of the water.

Length: Adult river otters are about four feet long, including its 18-inch tail.

Weight: Most adult otters weigh 20 to 30 pounds.

Color: The back and sides are glossy dark brown to black, and the underside, throat, and cheeks are gray-white.

How they reproduce

As is common with members of the family *Mustelidae*, otters have a long period of "delayed implantation." Shortly after adult females have a litter of two to four young, they are bred and become "pregnant" for nearly a full year. The embryos do not begin development until about eight months later, and 50 days after that, the young are born.

What they eat

Otters eat a variety of small aquatic organisms such as fish, clams, muskrats, and turtles. They can also catch terrestrial mammals such as chipmunks, mice, and young rabbits.

Predators

Very few predators can catch an otter when it is in the water. However, otters on land can be killed by bobcats, coyotes, and wolves.

Where they live

Early in the Twentieth Century, otter range was greatly reduced in Minnesota as a result of wetland drainage and pol-

lution which destroyed habitat. Today, otters are common in all of northern Minnesota, and thanks to wetland restoration, are becoming more common again in southern parts of the state.

Population

Because the river otter has valuable fur and is relatively easy to trap, it is classed as a registered furbearer in Minnesota. This means that its trapping season is carefully controlled, and that each pelt must be registered with the Department of Natural Resources. About 2,000 otters are trapped each year out of a total population of 12,000.

Fun facts

Otters are one of the few animals that play much like children, and appear to have fun. They swim with grace, and slide down mud and snow covered streamside embankments in both summer and winter. They also play by nudging sticks across the water, and by dropping pebbles to the bottom and retrieving them. Likely, all of this "play" helps the otter to hone its skills as a skilled predator.

(Information from DNR)

Catch and Release helps preserve good walleye fishing on WL chain

Our lake association policy is to promote the voluntary release of walleyes **18 inches and up** in our lakes. This is done primarily thru the Longville Area Lakes Catch and Release (C&R) Contest which runs from May 9th thru October 31st.

Here's how it works: Each angler releasing an 18-inch or larger fish will receive a free C&R cap. All anglers registering released fish will be eligible for several gift certificates awarded in a drawing at the end of the contest. Anglers can register fish at area resorts, Mule Lake Store or One Stop.



C&R is catching on! Last year, the number of released walleyes registered through the C&R Contest increased by **10 percent!** Another good way to look at it: based only on contest registrations, approximately 8 million eggs were re-

turned to our lakes. But, because most walleye releases are never entered in the contest, the actual number of walleyes released and eggs saved was actually **much** greater than eight million eggs!

Our area lakes are some of the most productive lakes in Minnesota. Our website refers to the Woman Lake Chain as "The Jewel Among 10,000." To maintain the quality of fishing we enjoy in our WL chain we must continue to practice "catch and release" and selective harvesting. Doing so will go a long way to ensure a healthy and plentiful fishery for future generations.



Child, Girl and Woman Lake
 Property Owner's Association
 PO 335, Longville, MN 56655

Website addresses:

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Zone 3	Bernie Huenecke	363-2701	Zone 8	Arlan Schires	682-3307
Zone 4	Dave Brown	682-2309	Zone 8	Bob & Diana Och	682-3810
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			Zone 10	Don David	363-3014