

Spring 2023

Otisfield, Maine

www.saturdaypond.org

Issue 35

OUR MISSION

**Preserve-Enhance
Educate-Protect**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Susan Haber, President

Steve Markarian, Vice-President

Amy Brown, Treasurer

Julie Ywoskus, Recording Sec.

Susan LaFleur, Corresponding Sec.

APPOINTMENTS

Clerk, Amy Brown

Eric Williams, Archives, Website

Steve Markarian, Water Monitor

Jerry Haber, Water Monitor

Julie Ywoskus, Loon Counter

Bill Bramswig, Newsletter

Saturday Pond Watershed Assoc
40 Ridgewood Terrace
Otisfield, Main 04270

President's Message

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

It's the start of summer and the loons are calling from the Pond. Their cry is haunting. For several years we've been fortunate to have a pair take residence on Saturday Pond, however, they have not been successful in producing a chick. The Trustees of the Saturday Pond Watershed Association have spent time learning about loon behavior, how to recognize whether they are relaxed or concerned and ways in which we can safely observe them in the water without causing distress. Much of this newsletter will focus on these magnificent birds.

We've received assistance from The Maine Audubon Society for construction of a raft to encourage nesting behavior and guidance from Maine Lakes with their Look Out for Loons project.

Articles in this issue will describe loon nesting habits and the conditions which encourage chick production. There is a piece on the complex behaviors that they exhibit and the activities which can threaten their survival.

Loons are diving birds and need clear water in order to see their prey. The Watershed Association continues to monitor the water quality of the Pond and the results are posted in this newsletter and on our website. Invasive plants can reduce underwater visibility, and over the years volunteers have trained as Certified Plant Patrollers and regularly survey the Pond in kayaks, identifying native plants and looking for (but not finding) any invasive non native ones.

Loons are stressed by close encounters with power boats and, in particular by wake boats, that generate enormous wakes and can disrupt their nests. There is an article that describes wake boats and the problems that they create on small shallow ponds, not only for loons but for other watercraft on the Pond, docks and shoreline.

The Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday July 16 at 10:00 AM at the Pond View Beach on West Shore Drive. Please join us for snacks and coffee beforehand. A representative from Maine's Audubon Loon Restoration Project will attend and describe the program.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we wish you a happy and healthy summer.

Sincerely,

Susan Haber, President

Invasive Plant Patrollers

Invasive aquatic plants can negatively impact the health of Maine lakes, hurting native animals and plants, and preventing people from enjoying the water. Invasive plants are often introduced by boats and other equipment that have been used in infected lakes and not cleaned before being launched in another lake. Once introduced, they are very difficult and expensive to eradicate.

To prevent the spread of invasive plants, people are encouraged to clean, drain, and dry their boats and equipment. Also, volunteers inspect boats at launches and Invasive Plant Patrollers (IPP'ers) patrol lakes to search for any invasive plants.

Each summer, IPP'ers patrol Saturday Pond frequently to identify native aquatic plants and look for any suspicious non-native or invasive plants. The IPP'ers receive training from Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM). We are pleased to report that we do not have any invasive plants on Saturday Pond today!

For more information about becoming an IPP'er contact the SPWA at ewilliams@saturdaypond.org



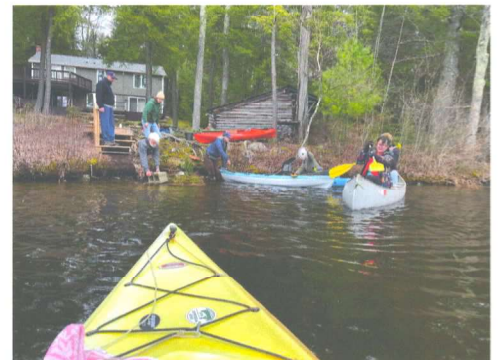
Wake Boats

A "wake boat" is any powerboat, which has been designed to generate an enormous wake, using ballast tanks and specific hull designs. They are generally 20-22 feet long and are powered by 360-600 HP engines. The oversized wake is larger than any storm generated wake and is used for wake boarding or wake surfing, whereby one surfs the wave without being attached to the boat by a tow rope.

While appropriate for use on larger lakes, the wakes and propellor thrusts from these powerful boats are detrimental to smaller, shallow lakes or ponds. Studies have documented the damaging effects of these large wakes. The turbulence from wake boats causes shore erosion, destroys fish and wildlife habitat, including loon nests, and can damage docks, rafts and moored boats. The downward directed propellor thrust from these powerful boats can disturb lake bottom sediment to a depth of 30 feet, impacting lake biota and contribute to algal blooms. These large wakes pose an injury hazard to other boaters, swimmers and those on floating docks and rafts, and preclude the safe use of other watercraft while they are operating. Furthermore, ballast tanks, which had been filled at another lake, may harbor invasive species and cannot be inspected.

Saturday Pond is a shallow, 179 acre pond, the center portion measuring approximately 2000 long and 3000 feet wide. The average depth is approximately 8 feet, and greatest depth, 25 feet.

Studies have shown that the deleterious effects of wake boats can be mitigated by restricting their use to waters >20 feet deep and >500 feet from shore. This information supports the opinion that wake boats should not be allowed on a body of water as small and shallow as Saturday Pond.



Ice In and Ice Out

Ice In	Ice Out
December 8, 2020	Apr 1, 2021
December 7, 2021	April 4, 2022
December 21, 2022	April 12, 2023

Ice In: At least 80% of the pond is ice.

Ice Out: At least 80% of the pond is water

Water Testing Saturday Pond

Date	Depth in meters
03-Jun	5.17
25-Jun	5.75
03-Jul	5.54
16-Jul	4.19
24-Jul	4.55
08-Aug	4.00
29-Aug	3.67
04-Sep	4.00
09-Sep	5.25

phosphorus reading

8/8/2022 7 parts per billion (ug/L)

Loon Monitoring on Saturday Pond

Loons are monitored in two ways on Saturday Pond :

Maine Audubon Loon Restoration Project Surveys

Volunteers survey our pond weekly between May and August to determine whether and where our loons are nesting, whether they have produced chicks, and how they are behaving. This information is submitted to the Loon Restoration Project to determine if nesting rafts and other efforts are improving loon restoration.

Maine Lakes Annual Loon Count

On the 3rd Saturday of July from 7 to 7:30am, our Official Loon Counter surveys Saturday Pond to count the loons. At the same time, over 1500 other volunteers on over 350 other Maine lakes perform the same count. This information gives Maine Audubon a snapshot of Maine's loon population. In 2022, adult loon populations decreased slightly, but number of chicks increased, leading to an overall increase. Boat strikes and large wakes too close to shore continue to be the greatest threat to loons.

Loon Nesting Raft

Saturday Pond Watershed Association, in collaboration with Audubon's Maine Loon Restoration Project, met on April 19th this year to build an artificial loon nest raft for Saturday Pond. Our lake was chosen because we have not had a chick since 2014. The aim is that our loon pair will be drawn to a nest off shore to cut down the chances of land predators, flooding, abandonment, and other causes that have happened previously. SPWA will be monitoring the loons and their nest to reduce disturbances and increase nesting success.

This project is funded with grants from a 2003 oil spill in Buzzards Bay, MA that killed an estimated 500 loons, many of whom summer on Maine Lakes. This is the 2nd year of the 5 year project. Last year (the 1st year) they put in 27 rafts on lakes whose loons had not had a successful chick for at least 3 years. From those 27 rafts, 9 chicks were born and lived. This was higher than they expected for the first year.

Remembering Robin Nureck-Bramswig



We would like to remember Robin who was our original Official Loon Counter and did so much for loons on Saturday Pond and for the Saturday Pond Watershed Association. Thank you,



Saturday Pond Watershed Assoc
40 Ridgewood Terrace
Otisfield, Maine 04270



No Invasive Plants!

Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday July 16 at 10 AM at the Pond View Beach on West Shore Drive. Please join us for a mini-breakfast and the meeting.

If it rains, the meeting will be held by Zoom. The Zoom link will be posted at: saturdaypond.org

Remember: Register your boat and get a Milfoil Sticker. Follow all Maine's boating laws, and no personal watercraft (Jet Skies) are allowed on Saturday Pond.



Membership Form for 2023-2024

Joining SPWA is an investment in the future health of our watershed and the beauty of Saturday Pond.
Today Saturday Pond is free of Invasive Plants.
Becoming a member will help keep it that way.

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ St _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Checks payable to: SPWA

Mail to: Amy Brown

651 New Gloucester Rd

North Yarmouth, ME. 04097

Membership is \$20.00 per year

