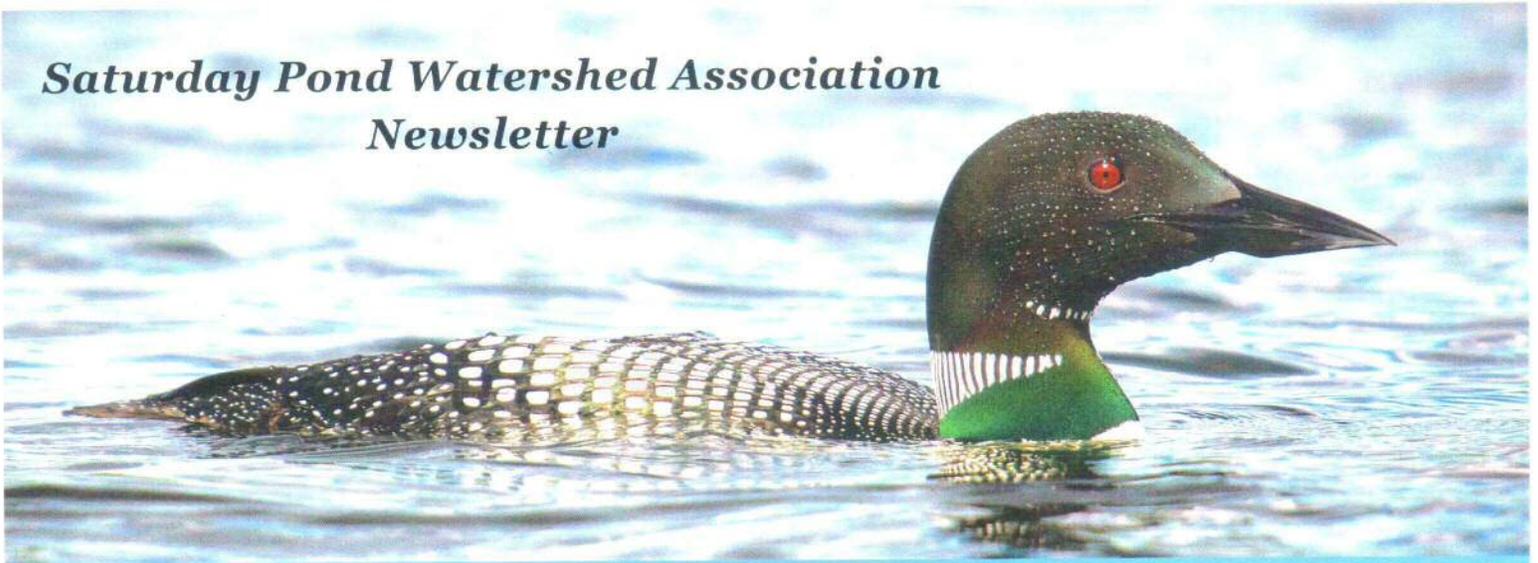


Saturday Pond Watershed Association Newsletter



Spring 2024

Otisfield, Maine

www.saturdaypond.org

Issue 36

OUR MISSION

**Preserve-Enhance
Educate-Protect**

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lourdes Engel, President
Steve Markarian, Vice-President
Amy Brown, Treasurer
Julie Ywoskus, Recording Sec.
Susan LaFleur, Corresponding Sec.

APPOINTMENTS

Amy Brown, Clerk
Eric Williams, Archives, Website
Steve Markarian, Water Monitor
Jerry Haber, Water Monitor
Julie Ywoskus, Loon Counter
Bill Bramswig, Newsletter

President's Message

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Hello! I'm pleased to join the Saturday Pond Watershed Association Board of Trustees as President. My husband, Tom, and I have had a home on Saturday Pond for the past 25 years! Now, joyfully, living here full time, I look forward to getting to meeting all of you and to continuing the efforts that have maintained Saturday Pond as the beautiful pond we all love.

This spring has brought many days of sunshine and the sounds of the loons returning to Saturday Pond! It is a wonderful start to the summer.

We will continue providing a habitat and loon nesting raft, with continued hope that this summer we will have a baby loon chick. Maine Audubon stays involved in this effort, providing support and education.

I'm happy to share that the wildlife reported along the pond is an indication of the excellent health of our watershed.

At our annual meeting, we will unveil a new SPWA sticker and have it for sale (\$2 each, cash).

On another note, we are looking to offer electronic communication while continuing to provide a USPS mailed newsletter to those who prefer. To do so, please include your email address when joining or renewing your membership. It will only be used by the Saturday Pond Watershed Association and not shared without your permission.

We also now have a private Facebook group – **Saturday Pond Loons**. Please join the group. Share those pictures and let us know what's new on the pond.

And you can contact us at: SaturdayPondLoons@gmail.com

The Saturday Pond Watershed Association annual meeting will be held on July 21st at 10:00 AM at the Pond View Beach on West Shore Drive. Please join us for breakfast treats, drinks, and good information.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we wish everyone a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Lourdes Engel

Saturday Pond Watershed Assoc
40 Ridgewood Terrace
Otisfield, Main 04270

Protecting the Pond's Water Supply

When Pond View Estates was established about 35 years ago on the Western shore of Saturday Pond, there were going to be a lot of trees cut down and roads put in, and that would alter the flow of rain water or snow melt to Saturday Pond. Erosion was also an issue. DEP required a plan to handle all this.

To solve the problems, culverts were placed under many driveways to allow water to run under and move on. There are larger culverts under the roads that do the same. A lot of that water is directed to the retention pond at the end of Ridgewood Terrace.

Pond View was required to build a levee in that pond to create two ponds. The first is a small pond where water sits and sediments drop out. In that pond are 3 large cement tubes with holes around and towards the top of them. Then at a certain height clear water flows into the cement tubes and down into 48" plastic culverts going under the levee and into the large retention pond. In the big pond water has more time to settle, and the way out of the retention pond is on the far side. There the water actually goes over a natural beaver dam built way back.

Last year we had to dig out and replace everything due to the culverts rusting out, and now use plastic and cement that lasts for ever.

We have an additional retention pond on W. Shore Rd. that operates the same way as the large retention pond.

Because of these changes, a large percentage of water that enters Saturday Pond goes through a filtering process, and this probably contributes to the ponds clarity.



Turtles of Saturday Pond

The most common types of turtles you will find in Saturday Pond are Painted turtles. They are the small turtles you'll find basking in the sun on partially submerged logs. Their shells are approximately 4.5 to 7 inches in length. You'll notice yellow or red markings along the bottom of their shells. They live in the permanent water of shallow ponds, marshes, bogs, or slow moving streams. Painted turtles are omnivorous. They eat aquatic insects, snails, vegetation, and carrion. They hibernate in the muddy bottom sediment.

Snapping turtles are the most common species in Maine. These turtles are also found in Saturday Pond. They are large and have a long neck. Snapping turtles are incredibly docile and will go out of their way to avoid people. They are only aggressive when they feel threatened which is usually when they are on land. They inhabit all bodies of water, with a preference for muddy bottoms where they can hibernate or hide. Snapping turtles are considered the best at cleaning the water, they remove dead and decaying bodies of fish, frogs, and other creatures from the lake. After emerging from hibernation turtles begin feeding and searching for a mate. Snappers usually reach maturity at 8 to 10 years and can live to more than 40 years. When they are young they are preyed upon by fox, skunks, minks, fishers, raccoons, crows, herons, owls, bullfrogs, fish, and snakes. Snapping turtles leave the water to lay their eggs in June, in sandy soil, including gravel road shoulders. If you see a turtle crossing a road and are inclined to help them, please do not lift them by the shell. Use your car mat and slide it under them from behind and help them across always in the direction they were headed. Snappers have long necks and a strong bite.

Our turtles work hard to keep the lake clean, let's work hard to keep our turtles safe!



Ice In and Ice Out

Ice In

December 7, 2021

December 21, 2022

December 7, 2023

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

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

Ice Out

April 4, 2022

April 12, 2023

March 16, 2024

Water Quality Testing

My name is Stephen Markarian. I have been the water quality tester for Saturday Pond for the last 15 years.

I test for water clarity with a secchi disk, which is an 8 inch metal disk painted with alternating black and white quadrants. I lower the disk into the water and observe it with a scope (a pvc pipe with an eye cup to block out ambient light) until I can no longer see the disk. I note the depth of the disk, wind direction, wind speed, and time of day. Secchi disk transparency is a quick, simple, and accurate method of determining lake water quality. Transparency is a measurement of how deep in a lake the sunlight can penetrate. Factors that interfere with light penetration are algae, zooplankton, water color, and silt. The deeper I observe the disk, the better the lake quality. Saturday Pond averages around 4.5 meters, or roughly 13.5 feet.

I also test for phosphorus by the surface grab method. The sample I take is sent to the Maine state lab for testing. The lower the phosphorus reading the better. Lower phosphorus is important because phosphorus feeds algae. The last few years our phosphorus readings have been excellent. Last year the reading was 4 micrograms per liter. We've been doing a good job maintaining the water quality for our beautiful Saturday Pond.

Loon Nesting Raft Update

Last year, with the help of Maine Audubon's Loon Restoration Project, we launched a loon nesting raft on Saturday Pond. Although our loon pair seemed interested in the raft, they failed to nest on the raft, or anywhere else on Saturday Pond and subsequently, they did not produce a chick.

This year, we have refurbished the raft, replacing dirt, moss and plants that had disappeared over the winter and once again our loon pair has continued to be interested in the raft. At the time of this writing, they have been spotted on the raft multiple times. We have our fingers crossed that this year, our loons will nest on the raft and we will have loon chicks on Saturday Pond!

Note: Although it is tempting to observe our loons close up, please observe Audubon's recommendation to stay at least 150 feet away from any loons or loon chicks. We would like to give our loons the best chance to have a successful nesting season.



Picnic table spotted on Saturday pond



Floating picnic table seats 6 and has an electric motor and battery.

Invasive Plant Patrollers

Invasive aquatic plants can have a negative impact on the health of Maine lakes. They hurt native plants and animals, damage fishing and recreational experiences, and can reduce property values. Once invasive plants are discovered, the process to eliminate them is difficult and costly.

Invasive plants can be introduced by boats and other equipment that have been used in infected lakes and not cleaned before entering another lake.

To prevent the spread of invasive plants, people are urged to clean, drain and dry their boats and equipment. Many lakes have volunteer boat inspectors at boat launches and certified Invasive Plant Patrollers (IPP'ers) also patrol lakes to search for invasive plants.

Every summer, a group of certified IPP'ers patrol Saturday Pond to identify native aquatic plants and search for any suspicious, non-native or invasive plants. They receive training from the Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM). We are happy to report that once again there are no invasive plants found on Saturday Pond!

Information about becoming an IPP'er can be found on the LSM website, www.lakestewardsofmaine.org and by contacting the SPWA at: SaturdayPondLoons@gmail.com



Native Pickerel plant



Native White Water Lily

Saturday Pond Watershed Assoc
40 Ridgewood Terrace
Ottisfield, Maine 04270



No Invasive Plants!

Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday July 21 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 indoor location for the meeting 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 Skis) are allowed on Saturday Pond. Questions or Comments? Email us at: SaturdayPondLoons@gmail.com



Membership Form 2024-2025

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, Snails and Mussels.

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____ St _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Send my newsletter by: email USPS

Checks payable to: SPWA
Mail to: Amy Brown
651 New Gloucester Rd
North Yarmouth, ME. 04097

Membership is \$20.00 per year

