

BONE LAKE
NEEDS YOU TO
REDUCE RUNOFF
FROM YOUR
PROPERTY
NOW.

BONE LAKE HAS TOO MUCH PHOSPHORUS, that's what's making the lake turn green. If we don't reduce the amount of phosphorus in the lake now, algae blooms will start earlier, last longer, and become impossible to reverse.

The water that runs off your property to the lake contains a lot of phosphorus, especially if you've done nothing so far to stop it. It's clear, controlling runoff from shoreline properties is one thing we *can* do to reduce the amount of phosphorus in the lake—but, it takes *you*.

ACT NOW. Do your part to control runoff from your property. Yes, all properties contribute phosphorus to the lake, even if you don't fertilize your lawn, even if your lot is flat. Every property owner can help.

A 10x35 native planting at your shore will help stop runoff into the lake. Think about it. If every property installs a 10x35 planting, nearly one-third of our lake shore will be controlling runoff instead of contributing phosphorus!

PLEDGE TO INSTALL A 10x35 NATIVE PLANTING AT YOUR LAKESHORE IN 2016. It will cost you about \$300. Seventy-five percent of the cost will be paid by our Wisconsin DNR Healthy Lakes Initiative grant dollars.

See page 5 of this newsletter to learn more, then sign and return the postcard on the back before Dec. 1, 2015.

Is there anything else you can do to reduce phosphorus in the lake? Yes!

Stop mowing along the shore, especially if you have lawn all the way to the water. Leave 5 to 10 feet unmown. Try it.

Plant native trees and shrubs to provide wildlife habitat and help disperse rainfall which can reduce runoff during storm events.

Keep grass clippings and yard waste out of the water. They add phosphorus.

Prevent fire pit ashes from getting to the lake. Fire ashes are full of phosphorus.

Remove harvested weeds from the water, they're nutrient-rich. Use them to fertilize your gardens.

Upgrade a non-conforming septic system. Bone Lake Management District has five \$1000 incentives available every year.

THIS IS EASY.

PLEDGE TO ADD A 10X35 NATIVE PLANTING AT YOUR PROPERTY IN 2016.

IT'S 75% FREE.

Remove the postcard along the dotted line. Be sure to sign and mail before December 1, 2015. Your property will be included in the District's Healthy Lakes Initiative grant application. You will receive notice of funding approval in May, 2016, including details about completing your planting.

YES! I want to plant a 10X35, 350 square ft. native planting on my Bone Lake property.

I understand the Bone Lake Management District is seeking state grant money to support native plantings. These plantings will be 350 square feet (10X35) and located along the shoreline. Native plantings help to slow runoff water, provide habitat for wildlife, and can stabilize eroding shorelines.

Name(s) _____

Bone Lake address _____

Home address _____

Lake phone _____ Mobile/home phone _____

Email _____

I pledge to participate in the 10X35 native planting program on Bone Lake in 2016. I understand that when installation is grant-funded, native plantings must remain in place at least ten years.

Signature _____ Date _____

Sign and mail this card before December 1, 2015 to participate in the 2016 planting program.

Call or email Mary Chorewycz if you have questions or need more information:
715-857-6733 lake home, 651-454-9456 mobile, email amchorewycz@yahoo.com.
Also, visit our website, bonelakewi.com, and review our Water Quality page.

Remove postcard along the dotted line.

FROM:

Place
first class
stamp
here

**BONE LAKE WATERFRONT RUNOFF COMMITTEE
MARY CHOREWYCZ
2086A BONE LAKE DR W
MILLTOWN WI 54858-2300**



Bone Lake Newsletter

Bone Lake — Once called Onondogacona which means lake of small pines

FALL 2015

STATE OF THE LAKE

Are we too late in trying to improve Bone Lake?

by Phil Foster

Three recent events could cause you to ask the above question.

First, an August 7, 2015 Minneapolis Tribune editorial, *From runoff to ruin: The undoing of Minnesota's lakes*, describes the harmful effects our suburban-style lake living has on our waters. The author indicates that lakes in southern Minnesota are already beyond restoring and lakes in central Minnesota and our area of Wisconsin are mostly unrealistic to restore. The culprit on the lakes' demise is the unfiltered runoff from lakeshore properties which increases phosphorus levels—the nutrient for algae.

Second, in our recent core sample report, Jeremy Williamson, water quality biologist, states, "Right now Bone Lake is walking on the edge of a cliff. Continued management and monitoring will ensure it does not fall off the cliff. However, without management activities, additional nutrient loading could send Bone Lake spiraling into a blue-green algae dominated state which is very difficult to manage, if even possible".

Third, this year the Wisconsin DNR has added Bone Lake to the state's Impaired Waters List due to our high phosphorus levels.

While these are alarming events, we have a Lake Management Plan that provides tactics and funding to improve Bone Lake and keep it from going beyond restoration. To do this, we need all property owners—one hundred percent—taking action to reduce runoff from our properties. Bone Lake's restoration cannot be achieved by only a few.

We have made some progress over the past fifteen years. The recent core sample study indicates our runoff reduction practices are working. To continue this progress **we all need to take action.** These actions can take many different forms:

- 10X35 native plantings
- Rain gardens
- Buffer areas
- Holding ponds on streams crossing your property
- Water diversion projects

MOST PROJECTS ARE 75 PERCENT FREE!
See page 5 to learn more.

In addition to implementing the above practices, we can all help by not mowing near the shore, keeping leaves and grass clippings out of the water, clearing dead vegetation from the water, and upgrading non-conforming septic systems.

Are we too late? Not if we act. This newsletter contains information to guide you on how to help. You have access to free technical assistance from our consultant Cheryl Clemens and financial support from our DNR grants and District funds. So, you have the needed guidance and the funding support to take action. Now we need all properties doing something, if you have not already. Please contact Mary Chorewycz to understand your next step. Call 715-857-6733 or email amchorewycz@yahoo.com.

I would like to thank those property owners who have already installed practices, and those who work to protect our water clarity. Your efforts are essential to restoring Bone Lake and enhancing its natural beauty. ■



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www.bonelakewi.com

FIVE \$1000 SEPTIC INCENTIVES REMAIN FOR 2015

Contact Richard Mackie by November 1 for assistance with updating a non-conforming system. Call 715-857-5205 or email seesallyrun@lakeland.ws

The editorial from the StarTribune is here: www.startribune.com/from-runoff-to-ruin-the-undoing-of-minnesota-s-lakes/32109907/

Hello Bone Lakers,

We have enjoyed a great summer and fall this year. As I write, we have another great weekend to enjoy. Abundant rains have kept the lake level well supplied and crops are the best I have ever seen. The trees have a lush green leaf color unusual for late September.

The annual meeting on August 8 had 85 people signed in, about the usual attendance. Attendees heard the committee reports and approved the 2015-2016 budget. Phil Foster and Bob Murphy were each re-elected for a three year term.

Bone Lake has a large dedicated group of volunteers who work diligently to improve our lake quality. See page 10 for a listing of this year's volunteers and those honored at the annual meeting.

We have received grants from the DNR enabling the District to implement our Comprehensive Lake Management Plan.

A new grant called the Healthy Lakes Initiative will pay 75 percent of the cost, up to \$1000, for a 10 ft. x 35 ft. native planting along the lakeshore for people who indicate they want to participate by December 1. The grant application is due February 1. Healthy Lakes Initiative grants are in addition to our lake protection grant which is limited to ten plantings over a three-year period. Details are available from Mary Chorewycz. This is an important program to improve our water clarity and enhance our natural beauty, so please consider participating.

Best wishes and Happy Holidays.
—Bob Murphy, Chair

Bone Lake Management District Officers and Commissioners

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Clean Boats Clean Waters
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Social

Sherri Singer

Boating Safety & Buoys

Mike Musial

Audit

Frank Schlick

GREAT GIFT IDEA...

Non-toxic lead free tackle and ammunition!

At least 75 wild bird species in the United States are poisoned by lead fishing sinkers lost in lakes and rivers. Bald eagles, cranes, ducks, swans, loons, geese and other waterfowl ingest lost sinkers and spent lead shot each year, often with deadly consequences. It costs more to buy non-toxic tackle and ammunition, and you may have to find alternative sources. Don't you think our birds are worth it? Please help get the lead out.

Extra Bone Lake Wildlife and Habitat maps are available for a limited time. Order at bonelakewi.com. Maps are free with a small shipping charge.

Is it too noisy out there?

There have been many complaints about noise from boats with music on the water and noisy folks on land. Please be considerate of your fellow Bone Lakers and let your visitors know about being "Bone Lake Nice." Remember, noise carries louder and farther on and around the lake, and everyone deserves an opportunity for quiet. Before 9 a.m. and around sunset would be good times to observe quiet hours.

Keep in touch

Subscribe to Bone Lake eNews! Go to bonelakewi.com and click "Join Our Mailing" on the front page. Once you've entered your information you'll get an email confirmation message. *Be sure to reply to the confirmation to complete your subscription, and add enews@bonelake.com to your address book.* Signed up but not getting emails? Contact karen@kje.com.

The Bone Lakers Facebook Group has over 200 members sharing photos, events and information about life around the lake. To join, go to facebook.com/groups/BoneLakers. ■

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ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

This position is open. Please consider volunteering to fill it! Contact the editor.

IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE TO OWN A HOME ON THE LAKE, AND PRIDE IN OWNERSHIP IS WELL UNDERSTOOD.

What is the desired appearance of a well-managed property with which we can take pride? In the city or suburbs it might mean a well-manicured lawn with neatly laid-out landscaping, paved pathways and driveways. But is that the best approach for a clean lake that we can all enjoy?

Please take a few moments to consider that what works in the city doesn't necessarily translate well at the lake. The lake living approach described here emphasizes activities that promote clean water and the opportunity to view wildlife—aspects which are very important to our lake enjoyment!



New England aster and little bluestem show their fall colors in this rain garden.



A city or suburban-style landscape like the one shown at the left isn't good for clean water in Bone Lake. The other landscape illustrates changes made to be lake-friendly.

City/Suburban Living	Lake Living
A well-manicured, green lawn is best to fit in with the neighbors.	I minimize the area where I maintain a lawn and I don't fertilize it. If I fertilize flowers or plantings I use fertilizer without phosphorus (middle number is 0 on the package).
Pavement creates clean lines and stable surfaces.	Less hard surface means more water will soak into the ground. I avoid installing hard surfaces which allow runoff to carry pollutants to the lake.
My TV, computer and devices provide all variety of images, sounds and entertainment I need.	From my dock I hear the call of the loon and see her diving in deep waters. Eagles soar overhead screeching with a successful catch. Frogs leap and call at the lakeshore.
My kids get their homework done, then can unwind with a movie.	The kids are excited to get out in the boat to fish. They can learn about the birds, butterflies, fish and turtles that live at the lake.
My home is my castle. The grounds are not connected with my neighbors.	We are a lake community and we all share in the advantages and responsibility for a clean lake.
I am on my own in managing my property.	While we all own individually, together we take action for a clean lake.
Bright landscape lighting is expected in cities and suburbs. Most believe it's a deterrent to crime.	Shielded lighting directs light downward where it's needed, not up into the sky. This reduces glare while improving visibility and my view of the stars.
Everyone's making noise in my neighborhood—lawn mowing, traffic, kids playing, parties.	Noise travels farther and louder around the lake and often times trumps my enjoyment of a quiet hour around sunset.
I like my home to stand out from the others on my block.	My lake home blends into the landscape and from the lake it's hardly visible behind the trees and native plants I've added. I enjoy the peace and privacy.

Positive Change for Bone Lake

More vegetation close to the water means that habitat is improved and runoff water slows, allowing infiltration.

- Let vegetation grow or plant a 10X35 native planting at the shore.
- Plant a buffer of native plants.

Runoff water from hard surfaces soaks into and is purified by the soil.

- Create a rain garden.
- Divert water to where it can soak into the ground.

Understanding phosphorus loading

by Cheryl Clemens

Phosphorus is the nutrient that leads to algae blooms in Bone Lake. Less phosphorus means cleaner water to enjoy swimming, boating, and viewing wildlife.

Phosphorus comes from both outside (external) and within the lake (internal). The pie chart shows how much each source contributes over a year.

EXTERNAL SOURCES

- Waterfront properties and watershed
- Lake surface precipitation
- Tributary streams: NW Tributary and Prokop Creek

INTERNAL SOURCES

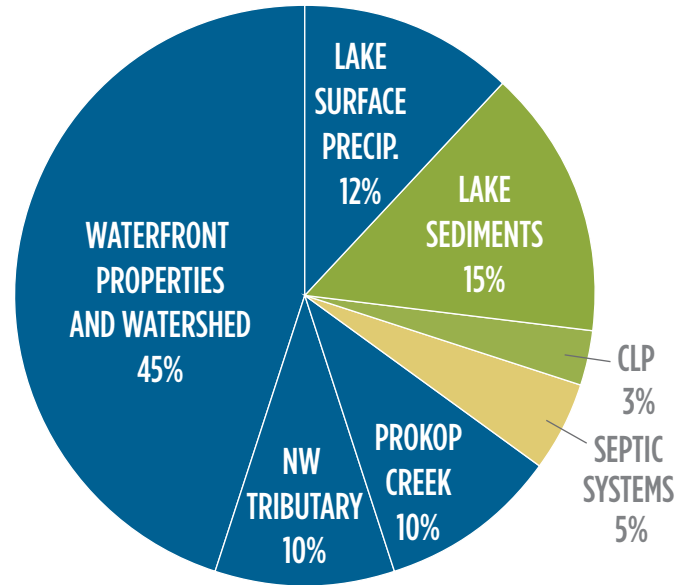
- Curly leaf pondweed (CLP) dieback
- Lake sediments

Lake sediment phosphorus loading

In-lake sediment loading of phosphorus varies from year to year in Bone Lake. Release of phosphorus occurs when there is no oxygen at the bottom of the lake. Released phosphorus can stay near the bottom during the summer or be mixed into upper layers. In upper water layers algae will use this phosphorus to grow.

You have likely experienced temperature layers when you felt much colder water as your toes reached the bottom. During some summers, released phosphorus stays at the lake bottom because the layer of cold water forms and stays separate from top waters. In other years, phosphorus is brought to the surface when the lake mixes. Bone Lake may be more likely to mix during the summer because of its long, narrow shape and orientation in line with prevailing winds.

The Lake District is studying sediment phosphorus release by measuring oxygen, temperature, and phosphorus at many depths and in many locations around the lake. The lake turned green with an algae



Sources of phosphorus in Bone Lake

- External sources
- Internal sources

bloom recently, and our measurements confirmed it resulted from the lake mixing.

The study will run from 2015-2017. The sediment phosphorus study will also investigate potential methods to reduce phosphorus from this source.

Targeting phosphorus reduction

Lake District plans focus on reducing phosphorus and algae growth in Bone Lake where sources of phosphorus can be controlled. The sources include:

- Runoff from the streams and other flow coming from a large watershed area around the lake
- Runoff from waterfront properties
- Curly leaf pondweed growth and dieback
- Septic systems that can be upgraded

Slow down close to shore!!!

Boating too fast, too close to the shoreline can also stir up the bottom and release phosphorus to the surface. To prevent dirty water, observe slow no wake zones within 100 feet of the shoreline (200 feet for PWCs). No wake means traveling as slowly as possible without losing your ability to steer. For clean water, boat with speed only far from shore! ■

Bone Lake water data

Follow this link for water quality information on Bone Lake and other Wisconsin lakes. Water clarity and water temperature profiles are just a couple of items that you can find. There is historical data going back forty-two years! Also included are charts showing water clarity trends and other studies. Check it out!

dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/

Find Wisconsin boating regulations here:
dnr.wi.gov/topic/boat/

Here's a 10X35 planting that is 75 percent free

The 10X35 Native Planting Program provides Bone Lake property owners support to establish small zones of native plants on their waterfront. Native plants stabilize shorelines, provide a home for birds and butterflies, and add natural beauty to your waterfront property!

Who can use this? All of us! All property owners who install a 10X35 planting will benefit the lake and enhance their property's natural beauty. Over the past five years, nearly fifteen properties have added these beautiful plantings to their shore. Kathy and Tim Killeen shared these comments about their 2014 planting:

"We initially decided to do this because we wanted to do our small part to protect water quality and wildlife. Now we have this lovely garden full of butterflies, bees, and frogs. It was surprising that in just one year, the planting could be this beautiful with practically no maintenance. It was very affordable with the subsidy from the District."



Tim and Kathy Killeen's 10x35 native planting at their lakeshore.

What will it cost? Your out-of-pocket costs will probably be \$100 to \$300. Typically the total costs are about \$600 if you install it yourself, and \$1200 if you hire someone to install it for you. The grant pays 75 percent of this cost. You get a beautiful, low maintenance lakeshore garden that helps improve Bone Lake's water clarity at **75 percent free!**

What do you need to do? Respond by December 1, 2015!

Simply return the postcard on the back of this newsletter including your pledge to install a 10X35 planting in 2016. The DNR's new Healthy Lakes Initiative will fund these projects. Our application must be submitted by February 1 for 2016 projects.

Questions? Need more information?

Contact Mary Chorewycz at 715-857-6733 lake home, or 651-454-9456 mobile, or email amchorewycz@yahoo.com. Also check our website, bonelakewi.com, and go to the Water Quality page to review plant lists, planting diagrams and more. ■

Also consider these practices to reduce runoff at your property

Each practice listed below is 75 percent to fully funded by our grant dollars and includes free consultation and design services, plus assistance with installation.

Rain gardens are an attractive addition to the lakeshore landscape. The garden is a shallow depression planted with native grasses, flowers and shrubs. Runoff from your rooftops is directed to the garden where it can soak into the soil rather than run across your lawn to the lake.

Driveway diversion.

Water that flows down driveways or sidewalks can be diverted to a rock trench or rain garden where it can soak into the soil rather than running into the lake.

Rock trench. A long, shallow excavated area lined with filter fabric then filled with rock, to capture runoff from buildings, or driveways.

Infiltration pond. Capture and slow a stream flowing across your property by directing it to a pond where the water can pool and slowly infiltrate the soil.

Call Mary Chorewycz!



A summary of fisheries actions and activities

by Bob Boyd

Smallmouth bass population

Members of the fishery committee have interviewed bass tournament anglers this summer as they exited the lake for weigh-ins. Interviewers asked how many smallmouth bass of any length they caught during the tournament hours (see box). This information is being shared with Wisconsin DNR in an attempt to measure the success of our three-year smallmouth stocking program.

2015 Bass Tournament Smallmouth Caught

Tournament 1: June 26th
34 boats caught 21 smallmouth bass 10-16 inches in length

Tournament 2: July 25th
22 boats caught 9 smallmouth bass 10-15 inches in length

Tournament 3: September 20th
24 boats caught 24 smallmouth bass 10-16 in length

The anglers were targeting largemouth bass.

Additional information will be gathered when the DNR conducts their next boom shocking study.

Black crappie sarcoma

Members of the fishery committee have been gathering information from crappie fishermen about the percentage of crappies caught that have been infected with this sarcoma. This information was shared with the DNR. Last winter members of the fishery committee assisted the DNR in gathering crappies with this disease. Samples of these crappies were sent to various laboratories around the country for analysis. ***A tissue analysis report is now posted on the Bone Lake website.***

Muskies

One of the fishery committee's goals is to have the winter tribal harvest of muskies be included in the open water safe harvest level. In the past, tribal representatives and DNR have met with this issue as one of the agenda items. So far we've had no success toward this goal.

The DNR continues to stock 2,500 twelve-inch muskies every other year in Bone Lake.

The latest musky population study (2011, 2012) is available on the Bone Lake website, bonelakewi.com.

The next two year study of the Bone Lake musky population should occur in 2017 and 2018.

Half log cribs and fallen trees

The fishery committee continues to make plans to install more half log cribs to provide additional underwater structure for fish.

If residents have shoreline trees that have fallen into the water, unless there is a safety or navigation issue, we encourage you to leave them in place to provide structure for fish and other wildlife. ■



Trees overhanging the water's edge provide shade for fish, and when they fall into the water they provide underwater structure for fish and a resting place for turtles and ducks.



This August, Bob Boyd finally connected with the Bone Lake musky he has been trying to catch for a very long time. His wife Lorraine commented, "Now you can take that off your bucket list." The musky was 50.5 inches long and weighed approximately 35 pounds. Bob credits his son Dave with skillfully netting the hard-fighting fish. The musky was released alive and well to grow even larger. Bob's tip for catching a big musky? "Keep your bait in the water."

Social events 2015-16

by Sherri Singer

Bone Lakers were busy with many social events through spring and fall. I hope you were able to enjoy a few or all of them and had a chance to get to know more people around the lake. Highlights:

The 2015 Spring Social was held May 2nd at Wilkins with a Kentucky Derby theme. It was well-attended by over 100 people and gave everyone a chance to meet new Bone Lakers and catch up with old friends. Dave and Lisa Smith did a wonderful job coordinating and hosting this event. ***Next year's Spring Social will be May 7th, so save the date.***

The 4th of July boat parade was co-sponsored by Wilkins and the social committee. Many thanks to Roses and Mike Grey who hosted this event along with many volunteers. Parade participants were treated to a walking taco lunch, beverages and door prizes. It was a perfect 4th of July day! A few boats are pictured below, many more photos are posted on Wilkins' facebook page.

On July 18th a new social event was held—the Sunken Island Party. It was conceived and hosted by Linette and Paul Werner and held on the sandbar north of the little island. There were games, prizes and of course, food. It was well attended on another beautiful summer day.

The final event of the year, a Potluck Oktoberfest was held on October 3rd at Bob and Sherri Singer's at the north end of the lake.

If you are interested in joining the social committee or need more information on upcoming events, please email sherrisinger@hotmail.com. Be sure you're signed up for Bone Lake eNews to get social committee notices by email. Sign up at bonelakewi.com. ■



Otter social

Early on a September Sunday, a “romp” of otter gathered on Marti & Paul Stellwagen's dock, just north of Sandy Hook on the northwest side of the lake. Marti writes,

“They caught fish on their way in, ate the fish, sunbathed, pooped and left. Kind of a tiny holiday. It was adorable! We watched with delight as they swam away in a group, swirling up and down like dolphins!”

Thanks, Marti, for sending your photos and comments on this entertaining wildlife sighting.

You “otter” be careful

Several groups of otter have been seen on Bone Lake this year. They are another wonderful and wild creature that inhabits Bone Lake and its watershed.

Otter seem playful and curious as they glide through the water. Sometimes they climb out on our docks and take a rest and that's a great opportunity to take some photos like the Stellwagens did, but keep your distance.

Otter may look friendly, but they're not. They are wild animals with sharp teeth and claws and they need to be treated with respect, much like the black bears that we have in the area. Do not approach otter on land or in the water, and be especially cautious of otter with young.

Be careful, and enjoy the opportunity to observe the varied wildlife around Bone Lake!

To learn more about otter, go to dnr.wi.gov/eek/critter/mammal/riverotter.htm



A summary of this year's AIS prevention action at Bone Lake

by Bob Boyd and Richard Mackie

Purple loosestrife found on Bone Lake

On August 20, 2015, Cheryl Clemens found a growth of purple loosestrife growing near the public landing on the north end of Bone Lake. The next day Phil Foster and Bob Boyd cut and destroyed the stems and applied a herbicide to the rest of the plant. The size of the growth area was approximately six feet square.

Purple loosestrife is an invasive species and should be destroyed if discovered. This was the first purple loosestrife we know of found on Bone Lake.

If you discover what you think might be purple loosestrife, call Phil Foster, 715-857-5304, Bob Boyd, 715-553-0629, or one of the District commissioners.

Boat launch cameras

Located at the north and south landings on Bone Lake are two video cameras recording boat launches. Their function is to observe and record boats and or trailers that might have aquatic vegetation attached as they are being put into the water, a violation of a Polk County ordinance.

All the launches are reviewed and any suspect videos are forwarded to the Polk County Sheriff.

To date the cameras have recorded 1625 launches at the landings. All videos were reviewed and at least one citation was written. Warning letters were sent to boaters who had vegetation attached to their trailers.

Clean Boats, Clean Waters Keeping our lake healthy

As another boating season comes to a close, we extend our thanks to Josh, Olivia, Ben, Kayla, Connor, Ali and Blake, the young people who worked at the boat landings for CBCW this summer. They put in hundreds of hours greeting boaters, offering information on aquatic invasive species and collecting statistics and info for the Wisconsin DNR.

Their dedicated presence at our landings demonstrates our own dedication to the cause of keeping this lake free of biological pests.

Any high school age youth with ties to Bone Lake who would like to join the CBCW team next season should contact Bob Boyd, boydsnest@lakeland.ws, or Richard Mackie, seesallyrun@lakeland.ws. ■



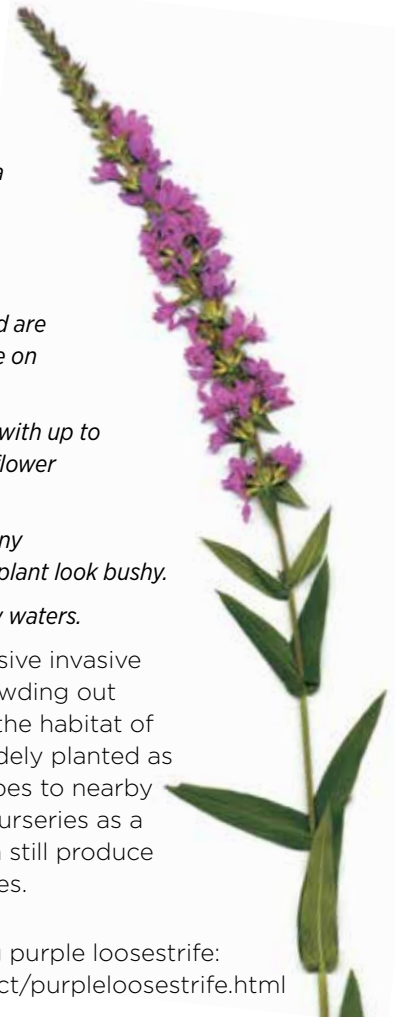
Purple loosestrife near the Bone Lake north landing.

Purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria* & *Lythrum virgatum*

- Flowers are purple to magenta and numerous on long spikes.
- Stems are square, 5-sided or 6-sided, and woody.
- Leaves have smooth edges and are lance-shaped, usually opposite on the stem without petioles.
- Wetland perennial, 3-7 ft. tall, with up to 50 stems topped with purple flower spikes.
- One main leader stem, but many side branches often make the plant look bushy.
- Prefers moist soils and shallow waters.

Purple loosestrife is an aggressive invasive that takes over wetlands, crowding out native plants and disturbing the habitat of many species. It has been widely planted as an ornamental where it escapes to nearby water ways. It is still sold in nurseries as a sterile variety, however, it can still produce viable seeds with wild varieties.

Learn more about identifying purple loosestrife: dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/fact/purpleloosestrife.html



TALKING TRASH. When you're out and about on the lake, please stop to pick up floating trash and debris from the water. Help keep Bone Lake safe and beautiful.

Birds around Bone Lake

by Cris Dueholm

And the quiet begins! It seems only like yesterday that the male birds were singing territory songs at sunrise, letting all know that “this is my area—stay out!”

As I reminisce and write about the birds here this summer, I’m making plans for next spring. The one bird that would be fun and most beneficial to have nearby is the purple martin.

Imagine sitting outside on a nearly bug-free evening watching our largest swallows perform aerial acrobatics to snap up flying insects, and skimming the surface of the lake to scoop up water with their lower bill.

I have read that Native Americans hung gourds for the purple martin before Europeans arrived in North America to help with the reduction of insects. It’s interesting that purple martins in eastern North America nest almost exclusively in birdhouses now! But as the placing of martin houses has declined, so has the purple martin population, and now we don’t see this bird as often.

About the purple martin

The purple martin is the largest of all of the swallow family measuring about 7.5 inches long with a wingspan of almost 15 inches, a little smaller than a robin. Adult males are an iridescent dark purple on their backs with black wings and tails, while females and immatures are duller in color with variable amounts of gray on the head and chest. The sun really makes this iridescence color truly dazzling! They have a forked tail. The female chooses the male with the best nesting site and together they make a nest of leaves, grass, twigs, debris and mud.

She will lay 4-5 white eggs, will sit for 15-18 days, and then both parents tend to the babies for 26-36 days before they fledge, and for a time afterwards. They can have two broods per year. Think of all of the bugs they can get rid of!

You’ll notice the start of migration in August as they begin to flock in huge groups. Some will fly over the Gulf of Mexico while others will fly through Mexico with both groups ending up in mid-South America. As a kid growing up in eastern Wisconsin our martins were always gone on August 18. Martin watchers around Bone Lake report their groups leave mid-August, too.

Put up a martin house

Putting up a purple martin house is like installing a miniature neighborhood in your yard. Dark, glossy-blue



The female and male purple martin.

Photo: Cameron Rognan

males and brown females will peer from the entrances and chirp from the rooftops all summer.

Purplemartin.org and Allaboutbirds.org are great websites to help you decide what type of house to put up. Remember that location is key to having a great colony. Also, discontinue your use of pesticides and make sure the houses are ready by April 1 when the first birds arrive. The biggest enemies of purple martins are starlings and sparrows so you will have to be diligent and chase them off.

As you start to put away all of your water toys from the summer and glance skyward to see the larger birds migrate, stop to consider attracting purple martins to your area of the lake for next year. Just imagine, no bugs!

ARE YOU MAINTAINING A PURPLE MARTIN COLONY?
If so, please take part in a regional survey of purple martin populations. To participate, download the purple martin survey form at bonelakewi.com to record data from your colony, then mail it in. Only takes a few minutes and can make a big difference in protecting the purple martin population of the Bone Lake area!

PLANTING TREES BEAUTIFIES BONE LAKE AND RESTORES HABITAT.

When lake lots are developed, the first things to go are the trees and shrubby understory. Let’s put some of that back!

The Polk County Tree Program offers a variety of pines, hardwoods and shrubs at minimal cost with customer pickup Friday, April 29, 2016 at the Government Center in Balsam Lake (first-come, first-served basis). You must order in advance; order forms are available at the end of December and due with payment in January.

Call 715-485-8699 or email pattijoa@co.polk.wi.us to get on the list. For more details, go to the Polk County website, co.polk.wi.us, and search “tree program”.

There are two great times to plant trees: the first was twenty years ago, the other is right now.

A big thank you to all 2015 Bone Lake volunteers

by Phil Foster

We continue to be blessed with an outstanding group of volunteers helping to improve Bone Lake for yours and future generation's enjoyment. At our annual meeting in August, we recognized six volunteers for their dedication to our lake. Each received a ceramic serving platter handcrafted by a local artist with an outline of Bone Lake.

Ann Miller has been the Watershed committee chair the past five years. This committee works to reduce phosphorus loading to the lake from the watershed beyond lakeshore properties. Ann and her husband Russ also organized the Bone Lake Fun Run for several years.

Wayne Wolsey has served the past five years on the Wildlife and Natural Beauty committee which provides education and tactics to protect and enhance the lake's natural beauty, wildlife populations and habitat.

Kirk Larsen is a member of the Bone Lake Fishery committee. He has participated with the installation of half log cribs and fish sticks, the winter crappie sarcoma study and smallmouth bass stocking.

Gale Heller and Tony Mann have been members of the Lake Monitoring Team for eight years. They check for new invasive species in a designated part of lake.

Dave Smith has been active on the Waterfront Runoff committee the past three years and has also joined the Bone Lake Social committee. The Waterfront Runoff committee provides education and ways to help improve the lake's water clarity by reducing lake property runoff.

While we need new volunteers in all these committees, we have an urgent need in our Communications committee for someone to help coordinate the newsletter ads. For more information, see the list of volunteer opportunities at our website.

Thank you, 2015 volunteers

Jan and Mike Belich
Sis and Steve Bols
Bob and Lorraine Boyd
Dan Boyd
Dave Boyd
Noah Boyd
Andy Brown
Duane Butler
Alex and Mary Chorewycz
Joe Cunningham
Cris and Lyn Dueholm
Karen Engelbretson
Sue and Phil Foster
Cindy and Dale Gardner
Roses and Mike Gray
Gail Heller
George Hess
Kathleen and Tim Killeen
Patti Kittilstved
Jack Lachenmayer
Mary and Ron Lachenmayer
Tom Lachenmayer
Jack and Norma Lanners
Kirk Larson
Lorraine Lunzer
John McCall
Andy McNattin
Richard Mackie
Tony Manns
Ann Miller
Bob Murphy
Mike Musial
Dave and Pat Mueller
Ron Ogren
Frank Schlick
Pat Schmidt
Bob and Sherri Singer
Dave and Lisa Smith
Martha Solfest
Joel Starky
Todd Sturgeon
Glen Wahman
Lynette and Paul Werner
Kathie and Jim Widen
Wayne Wolsey



The Bone Lake Management District honored these volunteers at the annual meeting held in August: Ann Miller, Dave Smith, Kirk Larsen, Gale Heller and Tony Mann, and Wayne Wolsey.

Before you burn, check fire conditions and burning restrictions.

Check this website for up-to-date, daily fire conditions, burning guidelines, and the burning permit process:
dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestFire/restrictions.asp

To check for daily fire restrictions by phone, call 1-888-WIS-BURN (1-888-947-2876) and enter Polk County code 49.

Find a fire warden: dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestfire/emergFireWardens.asp

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