

the Water Column



A Publication of Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program

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Celebrating 40 Years

America's first citizen lake monitoring program

Maine VLMP Turns 40

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President's Message

Tamara Lee Pinard
VLMP President

On behalf of the VLMP Board of Directors and Staff, I would like to express our deep appreciation to all of our volunteer lake monitors - for the good work that you have done, and continue to do, on behalf of Maine's clear, clean lakes.

We enjoyed seeing those who were able to attend our recent 40th Anniversary Lake Monitoring Conference. It was a wonderful celebration of both the volunteers who have donated countless hours and the staff who have provided the critical training and coordination to make the program such a success.

VLMP's founding father, Matt Scott, presented a historical retrospective about the program. Videographer Steve Underwood treated us to his beautiful recent film about volunteer lake monitor Ken Bailey on Megunticook Lake. Volunteers shared heartfelt stories about why they became monitors; how they are sharing their volunteer work with their grandchildren; what made them realize Maine lakes are special; commitment of spouses to searching for aquatic invasives; and even failed secchi disk improvement efforts. "Life-Long Volunteers" were recognized for their extraordinary commitments, as were those who have recently been involved in particularly effective and critical monitoring efforts on the lakes that they monitor.

Other highlights of the 40th Conference included drawings for special prizes that ranged from buffer plants, to portable depth finders, to a beautiful Old Town kayak, all thanks to our many sponsors, who helped make the event memorable. And speaking of memorable, locally grown food, along with a beautiful 40th anniversary cake made by George Cross's friend, Carolyn Los, kept everyone well fed throughout the day - and beyond!

For those of you who were unable to attend the event, photos, presentations and more can be found on the VLMP website at:

www.mainevlmp.org/wp/?page_id=150

Our volunteer lake monitors do great work! That is why we are here, forty years after the concept of a citizen lake monitoring program for Maine lakes was conceived. Maine's VLMP has served as a model for other states, and the Ministry of the Environment of the Province of Quebec has recently established a collaboration in which they have modeled their invasive aquatic species program after ours.

Those of us who are fortunate to spend all, or part of our time in, on, or near a beautiful Maine lake are indebted to those of you who have played such a vital role in helping to protect them. I, personally, celebrate and thank you!



By Scott Williams
VLMP Executive Director

Lakeside Notes

As many of you know, 2011 marks the 40th year of the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, which we believe to be the oldest – the first – state citizen lake monitoring program in America! Maine’s citizens, Legislature and state agencies had the vision and foresight to establish the VLMP in the interest of monitoring and learning more about Maine’s lakes and ponds at a time when the public was becoming aware that our clear, clean lakes were vulnerable to a number of existing and imminent threats. The VLMP was formed in the era of the passage of the Federal Clean Water Act, which was crafted by Maine Senator Edmund Muskie. The CWA was intended to ensure that waters throughout the country would be safe and suitable for fishing, swimming and other purposes.

A four decade milestone is an impressive accomplishment for any volunteer-based organization. But what is truly remarkable about Maine’s VLMP is the number of volunteer monitors who have been with the program – continuously – through much of the past four decades (see “Volunteer Milestones” on pages 12 and 13).

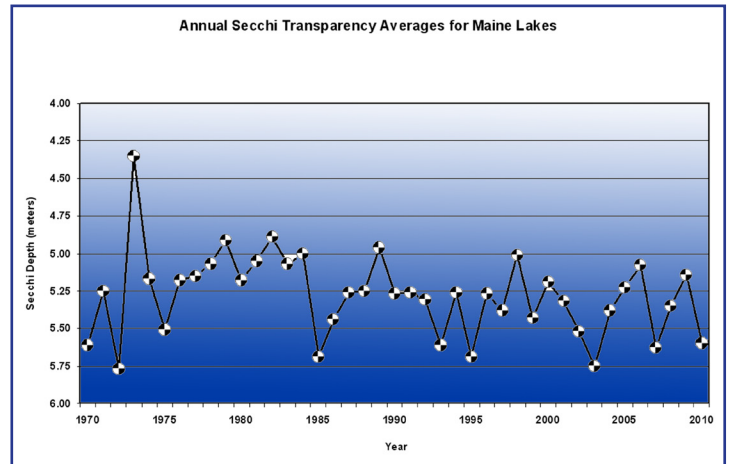
Many attempts have been made to estimate the average amount of time that a “typical volunteer” is willing to commit to a cause. Coming up with that number is a challenge, but from what we have been able to determine, we know that Maine’s lake monitors are extraordinary in their commitment of time. A growing number of monitors have been monitoring the health of Maine’s lakes and ponds for 10, 15, 20,

25, and even 30 years. Several have now reached the 35 year milestone, and a few are closing in on 40! Hundreds more are moving steadily toward their five and ten year anniversaries.

Last year, VLMP lake monitors gathered water quality data for, and conducted screening surveys for more than 500 lakes throughout Maine. In addition to being the first, and oldest, we also monitor more lakes than nearly any other citizen lake monitoring program in the country. What does this translate to, in terms of information gathered? For starters, Maine’s volunteer water quality monitors took 3,765 Secchi disk (water clarity) readings in 2010, and our Invasive Plant Patrollers conducted 476 screening surveys on Maine lakes! And as the graph below shows, they accomplished much more.

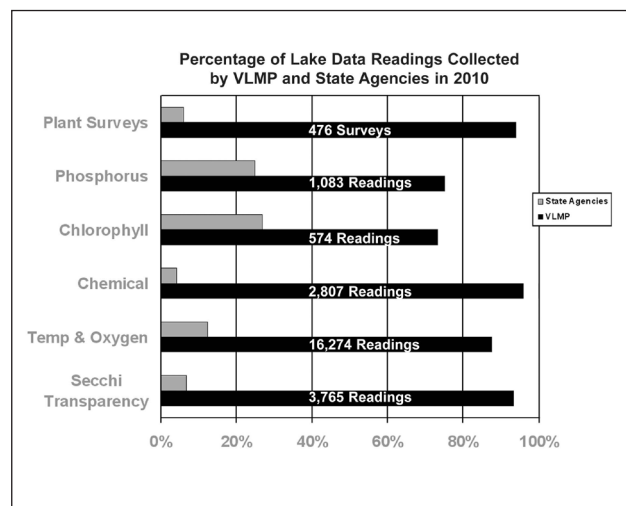
What do we learn about Maine lakes from our remarkable volunteer monitors? In

2010, we learned that following a two year decline, the average water clarity for Maine lakes improved measurably (see graphic). From that information, we gained additional insight about



how our lakes are influenced by rain and stormwater runoff from developed lake watersheds. We also learned from several hundred invasive plant screening surveys that most of those lakes are NOT infested with an aquatic invader.

The benefits to Maine lakes from data gathered by certified volunteer lake monitors are numerous, and the value is so great as to be virtually incalculable. Our lakes are clear and clean because of your efforts during the past four decades. Thank you all so very much for your commitment, your passion and your vision for Maine’s lakes. All of us here wish all of you ever-deepening Secchi disk readings, and as you carefully search for aquatic invaders, may you never find what you are looking for!



Thank You! Fall Appeal Donors

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Lincolnvillle Lakes & Ponds Committee
Little Wilson Pond Improvement Association
Mirror Lake Association
Muscongus Pond Association
Parker Pond Association, Inc.
Portage Lake Association
West Harbor Pond Watershed Association

~VLMP STAFF CHANGES~

This year has been one of change at the VLMP. Jim Entwood, former Program Coordinator, and his family made the tough decision to relocate to New York to be closer to family. This was a challenge for the VLMP, as it came at a very busy time of year. The VLMP put out the word to recruit a new Program Coordinator, and after interviewing many qualified candidates, chose Jonnie Maloney to fill the position. The VLMP would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding during this transition, and we hope you'll join us in welcoming Jonnie to the VLMP family!



Jim Entwood

After nearly eight years I am leaving the VLMP to move to western New York with my wife and two boys to be closer to our extended families. We proposed having the 25 of them move to Maine, but that did not fly. It has not been an easy decision as I feel like we will be leaving behind the community and places in Maine that we have come to love. And for me it means leaving behind my dream job and the people at VLMP are like family.

I am grateful for being part of the VLMP family—the diverse group of volunteers and staff, working in concert to protect Maine's lakes on a foundation of understanding and commitment to science has really connected with me. Like a family, the VLMP has been supportive in challenging times and challenging me to grow and excel at all times. The extraordinary commitment of volunteers to lake monitoring and their input to the program has provided great satisfaction and meaning to my work. Their service, like the scenic waters they monitor, are inspiring.

Over my time at VLMP I have gone full circle from focusing on data and procedures to focusing on people, their stories and motivations, to eventually realizing the inter-connectedness of all the pieces and total awe at what has been accomplished. I look forward to watching the program continue to evolve and to stay involved to help out with projects like developing the website, including our new LakesofMaine.org site.

I will miss working at the Brackett Center and falling in love with the lakes I visit. Mostly I will miss the day-to-day connections with volunteers and staff. I wish all of you the very best.

Very truly yours,

Jim Entwood

I grew up in New Hampshire, and have always had a love for the great outdoors. It all started with my parents taking my sister and me on numerous camping and hiking expeditions, and it spilled over into my daily life as well, since our back yard was a wonderland of outdoor adventures.

My love of nature followed me to college in upstate New York, and when I moved 'out west' to Colorado; but something was always missing. That something was the character and beauty of New England. So when a path 'back east' presented itself, I took that chance to start over, and I am thrilled with the results!

I am very happy to be a part of the VLMP. It feels good to be involved with such a great community of like-minded, environmentally-conscious people, and know that I am doing my part to support the volunteers, VLMP staff, and Maine DEP. I am glad my career path has taken this turn, for it has given me the opportunity to leave the corporate rat race behind, and do something more meaningful for the greater good.



Jonnie Maloney, with her dog Charlie

Littorally Speaking

by Roberta Hill
Program
Director
VLMP's Center
for Invasive
Aquatic Plants



When it Comes to Invasive Aquatic Plants, Time is of the Essence
Enter . . . VLMP's Invasive Plant Patrol First Responders

What did YOU do over the Fourth-of-July weekend? Could be you headed for your favorite lake, launched your boat, and dangled your hook (or toes) in the water? You weren't the only one heading for a lake, but for a dozen of your fellow Maine lake lovers, the mission to be accomplished over the holiday was a bit more serious. For these VLMP "Invasive Plant Patrol First Responders," the job at hand is to scour the entire shoreline and shallows of Tripp Lake in Poland, looking carefully, methodically, with trained eyes, for something they hoped they would not find.

On June 14th a Courtesy Boat Inspector (CBI) on Kezar Lake in Lovell removed a plant fragment from a boat preparing to launch. The suspicious plant specimen was subsequently submitted to VLMP for identification. Though the condition of the fragment was such that species ID could not immediately be confirmed, photos of the fragment were quickly disseminated to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection's on-call expert "peer group." Within a day, consensus was reached, qualifying this CBI intervention as one more official CBI "save." Since the CBI program began, hundreds of invasive plant fragments have been removed from boats and boating gear here in Maine, greatly reducing the potential for spread of these destructive organisms.

But the story does not end there. According to the records of the CBI in Lovell, the boat that carried the Eurasian water-milfoil had last been in Tripp Lake in Poland. Tripp



IPP First Responders assemble to formulate their plan of action.

Lake is not currently known to be infested with any aquatic invader. The situation begged a host of questions. What was Eurasian milfoil doing in Tripp Lake? Was it quietly gaining ground there in some back cove, as yet unnoticed? Could the Eurasian milfoil fragment have been deposited in the area of the public boat landing by yet another boat, one that had just recently come from an infested lake? Lacking the full registration identification number needed to find the Kezar Lake boater, and information that might help trace the plant's origin, there was only one course of action to be taken: All of the shallow areas in Tripp Lake capable of supporting rooted plants had to be immediately screened, in order to rule out the presence of Eurasian water milfoil.

The VLMP put out an urgent call to its Invasive Plant Patrol First Responders, a team of highly trained and experienced volunteer lake monitors that have signed up for special duty: responding to newly identified (or suspected) infestations by conducting a comprehensive invasive aquatic plant survey on the waterbody of concern, as rapidly as possible. When it comes to effectively controlling invasive aquatic plants, early detection and rapid response are critical.

Within two days of the Eurasian water-milfoil confirmation, a strategic meeting was held at VLMP headquarters. Members of the Tripp Lake Improvement Association were present to lend their intimate knowledge of the lake and possible points of private access for efficient deployment of the team. "I am so impressed," commented former Tripp Lake Improvement Association president Barbara Shapiro at the meeting. "You all have dropped what you are doing and come from all over Maine to help us here on Tripp Lake. Thank you from the bottom of our collective hearts for moving so quickly."

And quickly the team did move. Within two weeks, the IPP First Responder's Level 3 survey on Tripp Lake was complete. No Eurasian water milfoil was detected, nor was any of the other invasive aquatic plants on Maine's prohibited list; the team screened for all eleven. They also collected native plant data during the survey; a full



IPP First Responders, Sibyl French (L) and Jackey Bailey (R) scour the littoral zone in search of aquatic invaders.

With the help of the Tripp Lake Improvement Association, the volunteer monitoring effort on Tripp Lake will continue. Plans are already underway for an Invasive Plant Patrol workshop in that area next summer, and we look forward to providing the training and technical support needed to help our friends on Tripp Lake launch an effective, locally sustainable IPP team on their lake.

Many capable hands (and eyes!) came together during this incident; some working behind the scenes, others on the front lines. Each acted swiftly, skillfully, and cohesively—playing their role in Maine’s ever growing, largely volunteer-powered system; working together to protect Maine’s lakes, ponds, rivers and streams from the treat of invasive aquatic species. All of us here at the VLMP are very proud to be part of such an impressive endeavor.

For more information on VLMP’s IPP First Responders and/or to learn how you can get involved, please contact Roberta Hill at Roberta@mainevlmp.org or 207-783-7733.

The IPP First Responders was first activated in 2009 when hydrilla was found in a small cove on Damariscotta Lake. Team members include: Jackey Bailey, Bob and Sibyl French, Marsha Letourneau, Elin Haugen, Dennis Roberge, Bev Smith, Ross and Bunny Wescott, Keith Williams and Pixie Williams. This year the team had special assistance from David Coyne, Roger Lariviere, Gordon Smith, and VLMP staff.

inventory of native plants observed will be available as soon as all the paperwork is in, and posted later in the season on the VLMP’s Tripp Lake webpage. A small population of Chinese mystery snails was observed in area of the public boat landing. It is possible that this is a relatively new introduction to Tripp Lake. One small floating fragment of milfoil was spotted and collected by team Member Marsha Letourneau (great eye, Marsha!); it was sent to a lab for DNA species confirmation, and proved to be a native milfoil species.



Friends of the VLMP (right to left) Meg Nelson, Board of Directors, with husband Gerry Nelson, and Volunteers Bob and Peg Susbury

Friends of the VLMP

Would you like to be a Friend of the VLMP?

Join the VLMP’s small (friendly!) staff at the Brackett Environmental Center on the shore of beautiful Lake Auburn, and help support the important work of Maine’s 900 + volunteer lake monitors. Possible work tasks include:

1. Assist with workshop preparation
2. Review and enter volunteer lake data into database
3. Respond to volunteer requests for materials
4. Help coordinate volunteer re-certification workshops
5. Edit the VLMP’s newsletter and other publications
6. Help with building cleaning, maintenance, yard work, etc.

Other tasks are possible, and can be adapted to accommodate your skills and interests. Please contact us to find out more.

MAINE VOLUNTEER LAKE MONITORING PROGRAM

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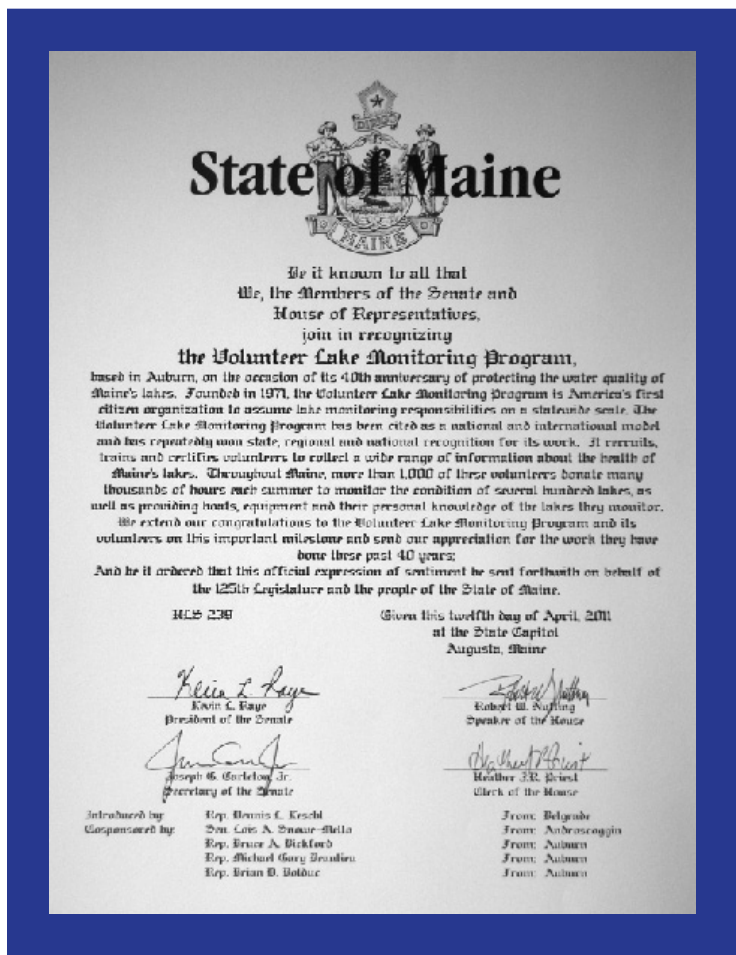
VLMP RECEIVES AWARD FROM MAINE LEGISLATURE

On the occasion of the celebration of the our 40th Anniversary, the Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program was recognized and honored with an award from the members of the Maine Senate and House of Representatives. Representative Dennis Keschl of Belgrade presented the “Official expression of sentiment on behalf of the 125th Legislature and the people of the State of Maine.”

In presenting this award to the VLMP, Representative Keschl made reference to the appreciation of the State of Maine for more than 1,000 VLMP volunteer monitors, who donate thousands of hours of their time every year to monitor the health of several hundred lakes throughout Maine. He cited Maine’s VLMP as a national and international model that has repeatedly been recognized for excellence.



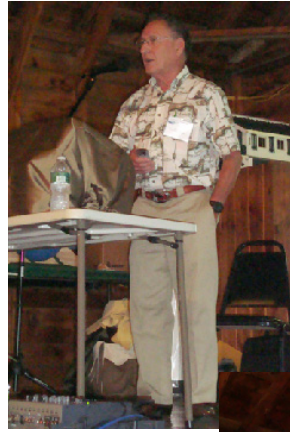
(left to right) Rep. Dennis Keschl, VLMP's Scott Williams, Rep. Terry Hayes



Representative Keschl was joined by Maine Representative Terry Hayes, who stated that she was there to show her support for the outstanding work of Maine’s volunteer lake monitors.

The VLMP’s 40th Anniversary Conference, held at Pleasant Pond in Turner, Maine, was attended by approximately 100 individuals, most of whom were volunteer lake monitors who have been certified through Maine’s VLMP to gather information pertaining to the health of Maine’s lakes and ponds, ranging from the clarity of the water in several hundred lakes to screening surveys for invasive aquatic plants. The VLMP is the longest standing, as well as one of the largest statewide citizen lake monitoring programs in the country.

VLMP'S 40TH CELEBRATION



& ANNUAL CONFERENCE



"Scott and Staff,

We are thanking you and all of the staff for the program presented at the 40th anniversary program presented today in Turner. The State of Maine is so fortunate to have the dedication you folks have toward the protection of water quality here in the State. You would soon realize how important the work you do is, if you were to visit some of the lakes, rivers and streams in the State of Virginia where our daughter lives. We are receiving the benefit of some of your work by being able to live here at the lake, with good water quality, for six months of each year.

For this we cannot Thank You enough,"

Bob and Peg Susbury Howard Pond, Hanover, Maine



Volunteer

Certified Water Quality Monitors

38 Years

Joe Emerson, Upper Narrows Pond

37 Years

Robert Susbury, Howard Pond

36 Years

David Hodsdon, Clary Lake

*35 Years **

Ralph Johnston, Highland Lake
Charles Turner, Panther Pond



35-Year Award Recipients Ralph Johnston (left) and Charlie Turner (right) pictured with VLMP's Roberta Hill

34 Years

Charles McClead, Phillips Lake
Richard Offinger, Cathance Lake

33 Years

Thomas Dionis, Balch & Stump Ponds
Kenneth Holt, Bear Pond

31 Years

John Wasileski, Kennebunk Pond
Stan Wood, Swan Lake

*30 Years **

Kenneth Forde, Stearns Pond

29 Years

Bill Mann, Round Pond
William Reid, Wesserunsett Lake

28 Years

John Laskey, Tripp Pond

27 Years

Ken Bailey, Megunticook Lake
& Norton Pond
Peter Devine, Garland Pond
Chuck Strandberg, Barker Pond

*25 Years **

Mary Ryan, Wilson Pond
Edward Ketchen, Meddybemps Lake

*20 Years **

Pat Dolbec, Turner Pond
Denise Joy, Cox Pond
Anita Weidknecht, Knight Pond
Steve O'Bryan, Paradise & Biscay Ponds
Susie Wilding-Hartford, Woodbury Pond
Keith Williams, Highland Lake



20-Year Award Recipients (right to left) Susie Wilding-Hartford, Keith Williams, Steve O'Bryan, and Denise Joy, pictured with Scott Williams and Roberta Hill



15-Year Award Recipients Steve Lewis (left) and Terri Marin (right). Russ Perham is pictured far right.



*15 Years **

Jessica Ahern, Patten Pond
Noreen Blaiklock, Sewall Pond
William C. Blaiklock, Sewall Pond
Art Bubar, Long Pond
Andy Buck, Cold Rain Pond
Deb Cayer, Parker Pond
David Cloutier, Pushaw Lake
Dick Cook, Green Lake
Janet Coulter, Ingalls Pond
Ernest Desrosiers, Pleasant Lake
Andrew Desrosiers, Pleasant Lake
Steve Dionne, Oaks Pond
Bob Dunlap, Green Lake
Anne Gagne, Range Pond
Clayton Harvey, Cold Stream Pond
Jeff Hayward, Pushaw Lake
Barb Hildreth, Pushaw Lake
Steve Lewis, Horseshoe Pond
Terri Marin, Mud & Green Ponds
Reynold Martin, Cross Lake
Tom Mower, Crystal Pond
Russ Perham, Whitney Pond
Bob Simmons, Granger Pond
Paula Wheeler, Songo Pond

* Recognized at the VLMP's 40th Anniversary Conference

Milestones

Certified Invasive Plant Patrol Monitors



10-Year Award Recipients
Mary Jane Dillingham (left) and
James Stewart (right)

*10 Years **

Charles Andrews, East Pond
Mike Becker, Annabessacook Lake
Roger Champagne, Sand Pond
Bob Crawford, Wassookeag Lake
Mary Jane Dillingham, Auburn Lake
Edward Dodge, Maranacook Lake
Thomas Finlay, Gardner Lake
Dan Fortin, Auburn Lake
Tom Hansen, Beddington Lake
Bob Heyner, Forest Lake
Jack Holland, Clary Lake
Edgar Johnson, Gardner Lake
John 'Ed' Knapp, McCurdy Pond
Robert Lemelin, Granny Kent Pond
Thomas Mansfield, Adams &
Knickerbocker Ponds
Roberta Manter, Hales Pond
Kirsten Ness, Sebago Lake
Tom Ray, Thompson Lake
Adrienne Rollo, Toothaker Pond
Marshall Sonksen, Lermond Pond
James Stewart, Webb Lake
Rob Taylor, Moose Hill & Parker Ponds
Peter Thoits, Crystal Lake
Lewis Williams, Halls Pond
Richard Young, Second & Gardner Lakes

*5 Years **

Ken Alboum, Lawry Pond
Bill 'Skip' Bartosch, Mousam Lake
Bill Blaine, Long, Fulton & Bog Lakes
Martin Blaney, Horseshoe Pond
Susan Eland, Moose, Lovewell & Burnt
Meadow Ponds
Wayne Gautreau, Ossipee Lake
Milt Gilmore, Green lake
Stephen Hansen, Square Lake
Brie Holme, Sebago Lake
Jennifer Jespersen, Minnehonk Lake &
Hopkins Pond
John Kistner, Cross Pond
Ed Lajoie, Cross Pond
Angela Micucci, Sebago Lake
Thomas O'Neil Jr., Prong Pond
Lori Oransky, Colcord Pond
John Plummer, Moose Pond
Mark Rix, Loon Pond
Karen Robbins, Sewall Pond
Bethany Stetkis, Sibley Pond
Chad Thompson, Sebago Lake
Kris Thompson, Pond in the River

*5 Years **

Ewald Bender - Thompson Lake
Kerry Black - Saint George Lake
Virginia Bourne - Branch Lake
Linda Breslin - Saint George Lake
Jim Caldwell - Saint George Lake
Toni Clark - Saint George Lake
Janie Crowell - Craig Pond
Peggy Hallee - Cathance Lake
Richard Hargreaves - Porter Lake
Don Hayes - Branch Lake
Elaine Holcombe - Mooselookmeguntic Lake
Charlie Hudson - Stevens Pond
Jane Ice - Branch Lake
George Lewis - Branch Lake
Jeff Melanson - Saint George Lake
Carole Merrifield - Cargill Pond
Doug Phillips - Echo Lake (Crotched Pond)
Rosemary Robbins - Branch Lake
Susan Rylander - Branch Lake
Kim Skaves - Branch Lake
Ken Stabinski - Echo Lake (Crotched Pond)
Lea Stabinski - Echo Lake (Crotched Pond)
James Stewart - Webb Lake
Norman Stiles - Echo Lake (Crotched Pond)
Jackie Tanner - Great Pond
Elizabeth Trouant - Meddybemps Lake
Pete Trouant - Meddybemps Lake
Suzanne Uhl-Melanson - Saint George Lake
Suzanne Waterman - Androscoggin Lake
Ellie White - Big Kennebago Lake
Willis White - Big Kennebago Lake
Candace Wight - Thompson Lake



In addition to receiving his
35-Year Volunteer Award,
Ralph Johnston (right)
received VLMP's first-ever
"Longevity Award." Ralph
turned 90 this year, and we
wish him all the best!

Invasive Plant Patrol Leaders

INVASIVE PLANT PATROL LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Are you looking for opportunities to expand your horizons as a Plant Patroller? Hone your survey techniques and plant identification skills while exploring new regions of the State with other lake-minded volunteers? Be part of Maine's growing IPP Rapid Response Survey Team? Expand volunteer participation in your own local early detection effort? If so, please read on and consider becoming involved in one or more of these exciting new leadership opportunities:

IPP First Responders are trained IPP volunteers who are willing to be on call should a new infestation be identified anywhere in the State of Maine (limits on distances one is willing to travel may be specified of course). This mobile, ready-to-go team is able to move confidently and swiftly when the need arises. With the VLMP coordinating with the local lake community, trained Plant Patrollers may be paired up with members of the local community who may have great familiarity with the lake of concern, but limited knowledge of invasive plants, thus enhancing not only the quality of the survey, but the quality of the survey experience for everyone involved.

The First Responder concept was successfully tested on Damariscotta Lake in 2009 when twenty-seven trained invasive plant patrollers (many traveling from distant corners of the state) participated in the intense search that followed the discovery of hydrilla in a small cove along the western shore of Damariscotta Lake. To date, no additional hydrilla has been detected in the lake.

The purpose of **IPP Jump-Start** is to conserve native ecosystems now threatened by a wide array of invasive aquatic organisms, by "jump-starting" locally-sustainable citizen-based invasive aquatic species monitoring in areas of the state where such activities are currently lacking. At the core of this program is the IPP Jump Start team: comprised of trained IPP volunteers, state agency personnel, VLMP staff and other professionals working alongside of—and mentoring—novice plant patrollers and other members of the target community.

Engaging and leading by example, the IPP Jump-Start team conducts an invasive aquatic plant screening survey and baseline native aquatic plant inventory on the waters of the target region while providing one-on-one outreach to the community. IPP Jump-Start got its start in the Moosehead Lake Region in 2008.

Invasive Plant Patrol Leaders - When the VLMP achieves its *ultimate* goal as an organization, virtually every lake in the State of Maine will have one or more water quality monitors and an active team of trained Invasive Plant Patrollers routinely monitoring the health of the waterbody. This statewide cadre of dedicated volunteers, trained and certified by the VLMP, will be supported and sustained by a well-organized, integrated, collaborative system involving the VLMP, local, county and State agencies, trained volunteer coordinators, local lake associations, and regional lake conservation groups.

The VLMP has had such a structure in place on for its water quality monitoring program for decades. It is now working to put the necessary elements in place for its Invasive Plant Patrol as well. The emerging structure provides opportunities for volunteer leadership at every level: trained Invasive Plant Patrollers, IPP Lake Team Leaders, IPP Regional Coordinators, etc. As is the case with the water quality system, the benefits include: technical assistance and quality assurance checks at each level; enhanced volunteer involvement and contribution; improved program efficiency and sustainability.

Much progress is being made, including, to our great delight, the activation (or active formation) of many



IPP First Responder Dennis Roberge surveys the shallows of Damariscotta Lake from dockside, while taking a well deserved break from the numbing fall water temperatures

new IPP Teams across the State of Maine. (An IPP Team is defined as “four or more trained Invasive Plant Patrollers working in concert to conduct an invasive aquatic plant screening survey.”) The number of waterbodies being surveyed by an active (or actively forming) team jumped from a small handful in 2009 to over 60 waterbodies in 2011. In addition, a roundtable meeting of current IPP Leaders was held in the fall for the purpose of refining and enhancing IPP program goals and objectives; more clearly defining volunteer leadership roles; identifying needs; and brainstorming next steps. Two train-the-trainer workshops

(*How to Lead an IPP Plant Paddle* and the *View Scope Clinic*) have now been added to the list of VLMP training opportunities. A host of new resources for IPP Leaders, including the *Invasive Plant Patrol Leaders Handbook*, will soon be available on the *Invasive Plant Patrol Leaders Resource Page* on the VLMP website.

To learn more about any of the VLMP’s volunteer leadership opportunities, please contact us at vlmp@mainevlmp.org or 207-783-7733.

Does Your Lake Have an IPP Team?

When it comes to monitoring aquatic invaders, the more eyes on the water, the better. The creation of strong, active *Invasive Plant Patrol Lake Teams* is seen as essential, not only to ensuring the quality of invasive aquatic plant surveys, but also to the long term sustainability of Maine’s early detection effort. As part of a larger team, each patroller can focus more comprehensively on a smaller survey area; no one’s survey area is too onerous. Teams are formed by dividing the shoreline of a waterbody into appropriately scaled sectors (e.g. 500-1,000 foot sections), and recruiting and training volunteers to conduct a survey in each sector.

The *Lake Team Leader* plays a key role in energizing, organizing and providing local technical support to members of the Lake Team. *Lake Associations* also play an important role in sustaining the team: helping to recruit team members, raising funds for supplies and equipment, providing recognition of the team’s work, etc.

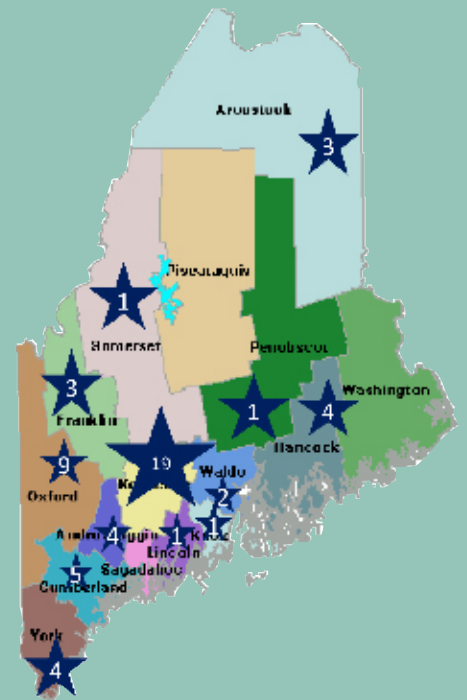
An active, well trained, fully equipped survey team benefits your lake community in many ways. The team can rule out presence of invasive aquatic

plants annually, help educate and engage the lake community (friendly face-to-face encounters, dockside, are commonplace during plant surveys) and provide a better understanding of your lake’s unique native plant communities.

Maine now has several successful *Regional* IPP Teams. In this situation, one or more trained Plant Patrollers from each waterbody in the local system (e.g., Five Kezars, Tacoma Lakes, Belgrade Lakes) form a composite team and work together to collectively monitor each lake in the system. Possible strategies for accomplishing goals include: monitoring all high risk areas on every waterbody in the region, annually, over the course of several days; conducting a complete (Level 3) survey on each lake in the system in rotation, with the goal of monitoring each lake once every two or three years; or some combination of the above. This is a great way to stretch the effectiveness of an IPP effort in water rich areas where there are currently only one or two trained patrollers on each waterbody.

Whatever the size and scope of your team...working as part of a team is,

safer, more effective, more efficient, more engaging, and *more fun!* For more information on IPP Lake Teams, please contact us at 207-783-7733 or vlmp@mainevlmp.org.



The History of VLMP Fundraising Appeals

Several years ago with some trepidation, we first embarked upon our first end of year fundraising appeal. Our concern was that we were asking our very generous volunteers—dedicated water quality monitors and invasive plant patrollers, who put in many hours each summer gathering data on the health of Maine’s lakes—to support us financially as well. This didn’t seem entirely fair. However, after discussing the concept with our lake monitors, consulting with program development experts on giving, and much discussion among the staff, we decided to try it. Much to our surprise and delight, the response from our constituents was overwhelmingly strong: Those who are willing to donate their time are highly invested in our organization, and are thus willing to help ensure that the program has the resources needed to support their work.

Since that time, we’ve expanded our appeals to include an annual spring appeal and an annual appeal to lake and watershed associations. The money generated from these fundraising appeals is extremely important to us because the funds are largely “unrestricted,” meaning that we can use the money where and when it is needed most throughout the year. Whether it is used for training new volunteers

Elizabeth Payne, Chair
VLMP Program and
Development Committee



and providing them with essential equipment, providing technical support and outreach to our large family of existing volunteer monitors, managing the large volume of volunteer data generated each year, producing newsletters, or maintaining our comprehensive website, having funds available that can be judiciously used to meet the immediate needs of the organization is vital to the VLMP. In contrast, most of the funding we receive from the federal government and the state is “restricted;” in other words, we must use it in very specific ways for specific projects. Both types of funding, of course, are crucial to our organization, but unrestricted funding allows us to make decisions about program needs based on the often challenging economic realities that nonprofit organizations are increasingly faced with.

So, thank you, our very generous volunteers and supporters for believing in our organization and the important work we all do to protect our beautiful Maine Lakes.

LANDSAT

The efforts of volunteers to collect Secchi data matching flyover dates of the Landsat 5 satellite is paying off, according to DEP Biologist Linda Bacon. DEP is currently funding a graduate student position at the University of Maine to compare Secchi data to satellite images, and hopes to have a completed model in 2-3 years. This technology has the potential to be able to identify algae blooms from space! Bacon says that, "volunteer data will be more valuable than ever to help calibrate the satellite."

As the Landsat 7 satellite orbits the earth it takes photos of Maine lakes and ponds (as well as other features of the earth's surface). The satellite images could be used to help characterize the transparency for many Maine lakes (thousands!) for which we do not have current water quality data. Volunteer lake monitors can play an important role in helping to "ground truth", or calibrate the satellite images by taking Secchi disk transparency readings on the days when the satellite passes over Maine.

2011 Landsat 5 Overpass Dates

May 4, 20
June 5, 21
July 7, 16
Aug 8*, 24*
Sept 9*, 25
Oct 11, 27

* high priority,
if clear skies

VLMP Collaborates with Dartmouth and Bates Colleges in Gloeotrichia Research

Gloeotrichia echinulata is a cyanobacteria (aka: bluegreen algae) that forms colonies visible to the naked eye in lake water. Viewed from the water surface, or using some form of viewing scope, “Gleo” has the appearance of fuzzy off-white to yellowish-green specs that some have likened to the appearance of tapioca grains. Relative to most other planktonic algae that can be seen without magnification in lake water, Gleo generally stands out as the most visible.

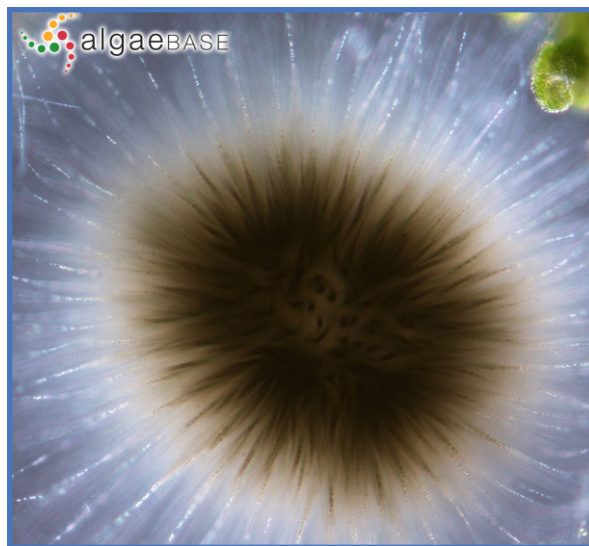
There is nothing new about the presence of Gloeotrichia in Maine lakes. However, until relatively recently, the density of Gleo populations in lakes throughout the state has been such that in most cases, one would have to actively search for evidence of its presence.

Gleo has been observed for decades in lakes with a wide range of water clarity/Secchi transparency. However, during the past decade Gleo levels in some lakes have increased substantially, even though other indicators of lake water quality have remained relatively stable.

Gleo’s life cycle is complex, compared to most forms of algae that are common to our

lakes, in that it spends part of the annual cycle on the lake bottom, where it accumulates phosphorus. It then floats up into the region of the water column near the surface (epilimnion), where colonies grow and expand. Gleo appears to concentrate in a relatively narrow layer of water near the surface. The colonies can be blown into downwind shorelines and coves, resulting in the perception that there is a great deal more of it in the lake than is actually the case.

Gloeotrichia’s interesting (and somewhat perplexing) life cycle has caught the attention of both lake users and researchers. While a fair amount of research has been done on this organism, many questions remain unanswered about both the ecology and the impact of Gleo on lakes.



This summer, the VLMP is collaborating with Dartmouth and Bates colleges in a joint research project to learn more about Gloeotrichia. VLMP volunteers are working with researchers from both institutions in the gathering of samples from a select group of lakes throughout Maine. The project started earlier this summer, and will continue until at least the end of 2011.

BRACKETT CENTER HAPPENINGS



As usual, Lew Wetzel is once again hard at work, this time mowing the grounds at the Brackett Center. Thanks for keeping us looking so good, Lew!



Volunteer lake monitors Don Richardson (left) and Lew Wetzel (right) have recently devoted many hours to installing new bathroom sinks and tracking down some pesky plumbing leaks at the Brackett Center. Thanks, Don and Lew, for keeping our water usage levels in check!



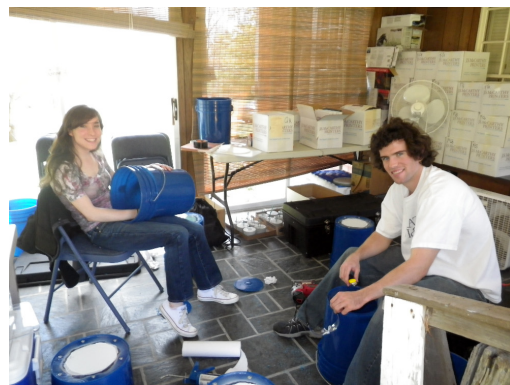
When Bob French isn't busy repairing the kitchen ceiling at the Brackett Center, he can be found searching for invasive plants, or being towed back to shore, as seen here. Thanks for your hard work, Bob!



Here's one gal who isn't afraid to volunteer her time. In addition to serving on the Board of Directors and looking for invasive plants, Sibyl French can be found pitching in at the Brackett Center, with administrative tasks. Thanks for your dedication, Sibyl!



Summer interns Charlotte Oswald (left) and Garrison Beck (right) recently gave the Brackett Center garage a thorough and much-needed cleaning. Now we can park the VLMP vehicles *in* the garage!!



Spring interns from Bates College, Caroline Watson (left) and Reed Brown (right), worked hard making bucket scopes for the IPP workshop season.

Meet the 2011 Summer Interns~

I am a graduate of Monmouth Academy, and am now entering my third year at Colby College as an Environmental Studies major with a Policy concentration. I enjoy many outdoor activities, including hunting and ice fishing, and I have recently become certified for open water diving. I also enjoy woodworking and I would like to eventually get my private pilot's license. As a life-long native of Monmouth, I grew up surrounded by lakes, and I have come to understand how important they are to the environment, economy, and the Maine way of life.

Aside from my personal enjoyment of the outdoors, I began working in the lakes-related field as a Courtesy Boat Inspector for the Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed in 2009. Since I began my CBI work on the weekends, I discovered that I wanted to learn more about our lakes and become more involved with trying to improve lake quality. This position with the VLMP is the perfect way to accomplish both of these goals at the same time. The people I work with here at the VLMP and also at the Maine DEP are all outstanding, and I am glad to be here.



Garrison Beck

When I first moved to the Lake Auburn neighborhood from downtown Auburn, I thought it was the worst thing that had ever happened to me. I cried and cried. But since six-year-olds don't get much of a vote on such matters, I just had to hope that there would be something to do out here in the woods. Fifteen years later, I now consider that move to be one of the best things that has ever happened to me. Being homeschooled until high school, I had plenty of time to go exploring in the nearby woods and ponds. I climbed trees, ran barefoot through the woods, and caught frogs and dragonflies with my bare hands. It didn't take long for me to fall in love with nature and all it has to offer.

When I was still little, I joined Junior Naturalists (run by the Stanton Bird Club), learned to sail and swim on Taylor Pond, and rode in the American Lung Association's Bike Trek Across Maine every year. In high school, I joined the Edward Little Canon Envirothon Team, which represented Maine in at the international competition in Flagstaff, AZ my senior year. Continuing to follow my love for the environment, I was a Courtesy Boat Inspector at the Rte. 4 public boat launch on Lake Auburn in 2009, and I spent last summer on the shores of Lake Cobbosseecontee serving as the Nature Education Director for the summer camp Pilgrim Lodge.

I am very excited to work for the VLMP and help keep Maine's aquatic ecosystems healthy. I have particularly enjoyed working with volunteers during training and helping the workshops run smoothly for everyone. In December, I will be graduating from Brandeis University with a major in environmental studies and a minor in theater. I'm hoping to eventually attend graduate school for ecology, but first I am planning to spend a few years in nature education, which is my particular passion. When I'm not adventuring outside, I also greatly enjoy acting, dancing, singing, reading, and playing the piano.



Charlotte Oswald



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Y'all come back and see us again, next year!