

Flying Pond Improvement Association

VOL 1 NO 4

Celebrating Sixty Years of Protecting Our Lake

AUTUMN 2020

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'Island of Color' - Cover Photo Courtesy of Karen Kurkjian

Milfoil Detected In Our Watershed

30MRWA Initiates Rapid Response *by Lidie Robbins*

In early September, a volunteer “plant patroller” on Androscoggin Lake collected a suspicious aquatic plant about 400 yards from the public boat launch. It was sent out for testing and was determined to be variable milfoil, an invasive species.

Because invasive milfoil grows and spreads rapidly, identifying infested areas early and implementing aggressive, immediate control efforts are critical and provide our best hope. Upon learning the DNA results, the 30 Mile River Watershed Association immediately went to work with the Androscoggin Lake Improvement Corporation (ALIC), the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM) to organize a rapid response.

On October 3, a team of 17 trained plant patrollers – 15 volunteers and 2 staff from 30 Mile and Lake Stewards of Maine – was mobilized to survey key areas on Androscoggin Lake. Many of these volunteers were from different lakes, including Flying Pond. Towards the end of the day, surveyors found a patch about 12 feet in diameter, in water 3 feet deep, about 100 feet south from where the original plant was found.

On October 5, Lidie Robbins of 30 Mile returned to the cove with Maine Department of Environmental Protection staff, and removed all the invasive plants they could find by hand.



Invasive Milfoil

continued pg 2

Milfoil Detected In Our Watershed *cover story continued*

On October 15, a team from Lake Stewards of Maine, 30 Mile and DEP again returned to the cove and discovered four more clusters of plants. 30 Mile returned to the area a few days later with a specially trained SCUBA diver who removed the plants.

Beginning in the spring of 2021, Androscoggin Lake Improvement Corporation and 30 Mile will conduct repeated surveys of the cove and all littoral zones of the entire lake. They will hire divers to seek out and remove the invasive plants, about every two weeks throughout the growing season. Trained volunteers will be a key part of the survey effort.

What Is Invasive Milfoil & Why Is It So Bad?

This is the first time an invasive aquatic plant has been found anywhere in the 30 Mile River watershed and poses a serious threat to not only Androscoggin Lake, but to other lakes and ponds in the watershed and beyond. Invasive milfoil can devastate a lake. Once it takes hold, it can strangle portions of that lake, pushing out native plants and other organisms, changing natural habitat, and making it difficult or impossible in many places for swimming, boating, fishing and other recreational activities. This typically results in a drop in property values around that lake, which has a ripple effect on the economies and businesses of surrounding towns.

What is 30 Mile River Watershed Association?

30 Mile is a nonprofit coalition of eight lake associations,¹ seven municipalities² and two conservation organizations³ with a shared mission: To work as a community for clean and healthy lakes, ponds and streams in our watershed.

The combined forces of these entities made it possible for 30 Mile to launch a rapid and effective response to the invasive plant discovery on Androscoggin Lake. This lake could not have done it alone.



Androscoggin Milfoil



Androscoggin Milfoil (close-up)

What Can We Do To Keep Flying Pond Healthy?

- Inform family, guests and renters who may be using private boat launches boats about milfoil.
- Clean, drain and dry your boat and gear anytime you go to another lake to prevent the spread of invasives. Avoid bodies of water that are known to be infected with milfoil or other invasives.
- Join or donate to 30 Mile or Lake Stewards of Maine to support their efforts.
- Join the Invasive Plant Patrol team.
- Learn more about the plants that do and do not belong in Flying Pond and keep an eye on the water closest to your home.
- Volunteer as a courtesy boat inspector at the boat ramp.
- Pay attention to what happens to the soil on your property when it rains and take steps to prevent erosion.

¹Androscoggin Lake Improvement Corporation, Basin-David-Tilton Ponds Association, Flying Pond Improvement Association, Greater Minnehonk Lake Association, Kimball Pond Association, Lovejoy Pond Improvement Association, Parker Pond Association and Pocasset Lake Association

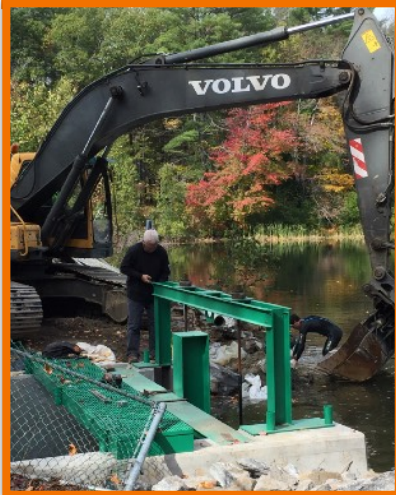
²Chesterville, Fayette, Leeds, Mt Vernon, Readfield, Vienna and Wayne

³7 Lakes Alliance and Kennebec Land Trust

A Message From FPIA

The Flying Pond Improvement Association is trying to live up to its name. The Board has been working hard this summer to improve communication, boost membership, and institute measures to make the organization's records more transparent and accessible.

Sept FPIA Meeting Around the Camp Fire



Construction at Torsy Pond



Construction at Long Pond

The Torsy Pond dam is currently under reconstruction. Torsy Pond Lake Association raised most of the funds for the \$75,000 project. The Long Pond dam is also under construction.

The Dam Update

Dean Sciaraffa, FPIA Board member and resident expert, says: "I checked the dam and am happy to report everything looks good. There isn't any evidence of leaks." Dean adds that if our dam develops problems, we will try to figure out how to solve them without building an entirely new dam. A new dam is extremely expensive.

Two of our lake neighbors have not been as fortunate. The Torsy Pond

dam is currently under reconstruction. Torsy Pond Lake Association raised most of the funds for the \$75,000 project. The Long Pond dam is also under construction.

Newsletters & Postcards

We have received terrific feedback regarding the newsletters and postcards! Thanks to all who have written articles, announcements and sent in photos. Some responses we have received:

"I love the newsletter and saving them is a great way to document topics like water quality, loon count, etc. I'm looking forward to the next edition!"

"The newsletter is terrific, it inspired me to create a binder for our lake guests to flip through. I sent a copy of the summer edition to our camp visitors. After their week-long visit to Flying Pond they enjoyed receiving it and could relate to the stories!"

"The postcard is lovely! We have it displayed on our fridge."

Do you have an announcement or a relevant story to tell? The upcoming winter newsletter is scheduled to come out near the end of February and we would love to have your contributions!

Will you have a Flying Pond winter tale to tell? Any notations/tips to be aware of prior to the spring season? Please send your interesting stories and announcements to nancy.h.hemphill@gmail.com and send photos to diane@artillusstudio.com.

Resources For Healthy Lands and Lakes

KENNEBEC LAND TRUST

Kennebec Land Trust works cooperatively with landowners and communities to conserve the forests, shore lands, fields, and wildlife that define central Maine. Of their 37 conservation areas, at least four are in Vienna and Mt. Vernon. For trail maps, visit tklt.org.

MAINE LAKES

Having just celebrated their 50th anniversary this year, they have been long known as the Maine Lakes Society. Under the new name, Maine Lakes is a non-profit, charitable membership organization, continuing to be the clear voice for protection of our most precious freshwater resources and wildlife habitat. They work to support everyone who values and benefits from clean water and healthy lakes in Maine. Visit lakes.me.

LAKE STEWARDS OF MAINE

Lake Stewards of Maine is a volunteer monitoring program keeping a watchful eye on the health of Maine lakes since 1971. They promote lake stewardship by elevating awareness between lakes and their watersheds. Visit lakestewardsofmaine.org.

30 MILE RIVER

Although Flying Pond already belongs to 30 Mile and utilizes its Courtesy Boat Inspection program, Invasive Plant Patrol program and Youth Conservation Corps, Flying Pond currently is not participating in the Lake Smart Program. LakeSmart trains volunteers to help homeowners identify areas on their property which could affect the quality of the lake, and help them develop remediation strategies. 30 Mile currently works with volunteer teams on Androscoggin Lake, David Pond, Lovejoy Pond and Parker Pond, but they hope to have teams cover every lake and pond in our watershed. Volunteers are needed to bring this program here to Flying Pond. To learn more, contact Executive Director, Lidie Robbins at 30mileriver.org.

7 LAKES ALLIANCE

7 Lakes Alliance is responsible for conserving the lands and waters of the Belgrade Lakes Region for all. The challenge is to meet the immediate threats to the watershed while balancing conservation, protection and the needs of all who live and work in the region. Visit 7lakesalliance.org.

What Happened To Flying Pond's Baby Loon?

The year 2020 has been a little tough on all with no exception to Flying Pond's little chick. From late June through early September many of us enjoyed observing, photographing and delighting in the adventures of the baby loon. After approximately 10 weeks of watching the feathered babe grow some may have heard the mournful wailing from the adult pair. We are very sad to report that the baby loon did not survive. It is uncertain what happened however we suspect our resident eagle had something to do with it. The last time a Flying Pond baby loon survived and migrated was in 2007.

We hope summer of 2021 will be a much better year for our feathered pair.



Mama with Baby' - Photo by Grant Regan-Loomis

It Was A Very Blustery Day!

A front swept through New England on Wednesday, September 30, bringing rain and winds gusting over 50 mph. Downed trees and branches caused over 114,000 Central Maine Power customers to lose power. Around Flying Pond, the power went out around 8 am, and it was not fully restored until the next day. Not only did this swift moving fall front bring down rain, wind, trees and power lines, it also successfully and sadly brought down the beautiful autumn foliage.



'Blustery Day' - Photo by Nancy Hemphill

Beaver Impoundment Removed It took five trucks, a backhoe, a chain saw, hand tools and about six personnel from Maine DOT and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department to break up the beaver dam which was clogging the culvert that drains the marsh across from Russ Point Road. There was concern that the wetland created by the beavers would potentially overflow Route 41 and cause damage. According to staff at Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the beavers were captured unharmed and were relocated to a more rural area.



Recently Cleared Beaver Dam September 14th



Beaver Dam 4 days later September 18th

Stay Up To Date On Local Happenings!

Vienna Record: Newsletter is available at viennamaine.org. If you would like to be added on the distribution email list write to viennanewsletter@fairpoint.net.

The Daily Bulldog: Franklin County's First News, check out what's happening in Farmington and surrounding area by visiting dailybulldog.com.

Weather and Words: Mt. Vernon resident Thomas Ward publishes a post twice a week that covers local weather in what he calls the "metroplex" of Mt. Vernon, Vienna and Fayette and a "word of the day." To be added to email list write to tward02118@icloud.com.

Town of Mt Vernon Community Newsletter: To view visit mtvernonme.org.

Seeking Elusive Aurora

The Search Continues... — by Diane Araps



Photo from Getty Images

There is a myriad of reasons to cherish everything about the Pine Tree State; a favorite being the ability to see the northern lights. The best place in Maine to view this amazing natural phenomenon is in Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge located near the Canadian border. What is the probability to catch a glimpse of the amazing light show from Flying Pond? After some rudimentary research it seems that prospects are slim compared to some 260 miles north of here, however I know firsthand it is not completely impossible.

The northern lights are unpredictable. That being said, to increase the odds of an encounter with this whimsical presence is on dark, crisp, clear evenings spanning from mid-August through March due to the shorter days and longer nights. These conditions accurately describe a moonless night in August of 1990 as I mellowed with friends around a perfect campfire. By unanimous decision, we emerged from under the tree canopy and moved to the water's edge for some stargazing. As we searched way beyond our atmosphere for a shooting star, our attention was brought to the horizon. Completely motionless and speechless, we observed magnificent lights dancing on the skyline.

This swift moment seemingly moved in slow motion. A green-yellow luminescent ray started low at the mountain ridge and radiated into a translucent tremendous arc. Simultaneously, a more energetic band of light dispersed across the sky like a tethered ribbon in a featherlike breeze. When it ceased, we glanced at each other completely mute as to inquire, *did anyone else see that?* We all confirmed that something extraordinary just happened in the night sky and there were several wild theories that bounced around our little circle. We inevitably concluded that we just witnessed the *Aurora Borealis*.

The manifestation of color named after the Roman goddess of dawn 'Aurora' and the Greek name for north wind 'borealis' was breathtaking. Even now, thirty years later, my quest continues to see the elusive Aurora again. So next time you are looking skyward, do not let our illuminated planets, Milky Way haze, meteor showers and brilliant stars distract you from a glance toward the northern sky where you might just catch a cameo appearance of the fabulous, awe-inspiring and unforgettable *Aurora Borealis*. — *The Magic of Flying Pond*



Photo from Getty Images

The Great Conjunction

Planet Crossed Lovers — by Alexandra Barteldt

Although this year has brought many earthly uncertainties, it has been mirrored by extraordinary astronomical phenomena which have momentarily distracted us from ourselves. Flying Pond was graced this summer by the bright glory of the Comet Neowise and Perseids meteor shower. Now, for the first time in close proximity since 1623, we will be able to witness the rare intimate mingling of our largest beloved planets, Jupiter and Saturn.

Over the past several months we have seen an extended flirtation of these celestial bodies as they approach one another. On December 21, turn your eyes toward the horizon at sunset for the atmospheric illusion catching these two stealing a momentous kiss, long anticipated for 397 years. This fateful smooch will be followed by sixty years of separation as the next episode from our solar system saga will not occur until 2080, long after our current concerns have withered away. Enjoy this brief cosmic reminder of how delightfully small our chaos stands in the shadow of these magnificent gaseous lovers slow-dancing in silent space.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AROUND THE POND

In Memoriam



George & Jane Thier with their dog Stormy

My parents, George and Jane Thier, bought their camp at 62 Vienna Shores Road in 1985. Their year round home was in Baltimore, Maryland. They loved spending summers on Flying Pond and were happy to find how easy it was to make friends in the area. They attended the Vienna Methodist Church and were active in the Vienna Grange. After my father died in 1995, my mother and the family continued to enjoy life on Flying Pond. My mother died on July 30, at the age of 94. Some might fondly remember my parents riding their red motorbike around Mt. Vernon and Vienna. — Ed Thier, Dresden, Maine

The Stork Lands On Flying Pond

Each summer we revel in celebrating one or two new loon chicks, however this year our lake community has a new human baby to celebrate. Chad and Katie Dwelley welcomed Kade Patrick Dwelley to the world on October one. Kade weighed in at 7 lbs - 5 ozs. All are very happy and doing well.



Kade with Siblings Reagan & Gavin

Did You Know?



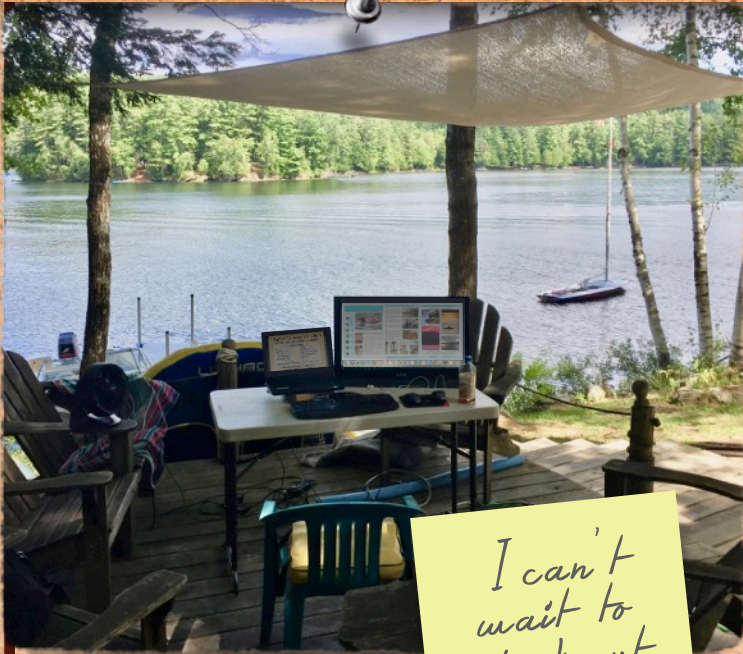
One Last Dip' - Photo by Diane Araps

The autumn red colors are caused by the amount of sugar in the leaf!

“The most brilliant leaf displays follow a period of warm days filled with sunshine and cool nights. During this weather cycle, leaves produce an abundance of sugars during the sunny days. The cooler nights and gradual narrowing of leaf veins in the fall, means that a majority of the sugars produced are trapped in the leaf. An abundance of sugar and light in the leaf lead to the production of vivid anthocyanin pigments, which produce red, purple and crimson colors.”

— canr.msu.edu/news/how_weather_affects_fall_colors

Be On The Lookout! Due to an overwhelming number of photo submissions, we are happy to report that this FPIA newsletter will be followed by a *2020 Autumn Gallery Special Edition!*



Welcome to the Office!
Working Remotely With A View
Maine may be called "Vacationland" but this year, with Covid-19, the lake became a workplace for many. Embrace your new office: the dock, deck, garage and even the campfire.

I can't wait to clock out for the day!

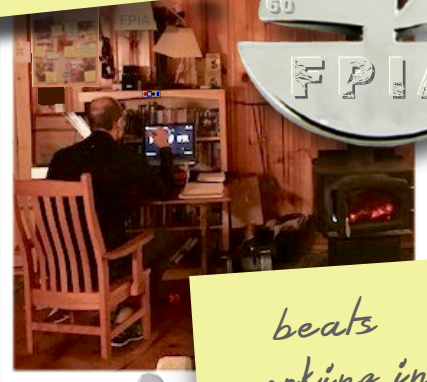
- ✓ pull boat and dock out, cover, winterize
- ✓ take things out
- ✓ deck furniture and umbrellas into garage
- ✓ gas grill, board windows turn



Zoom with a view



revise the spreadsheet then feed the dog

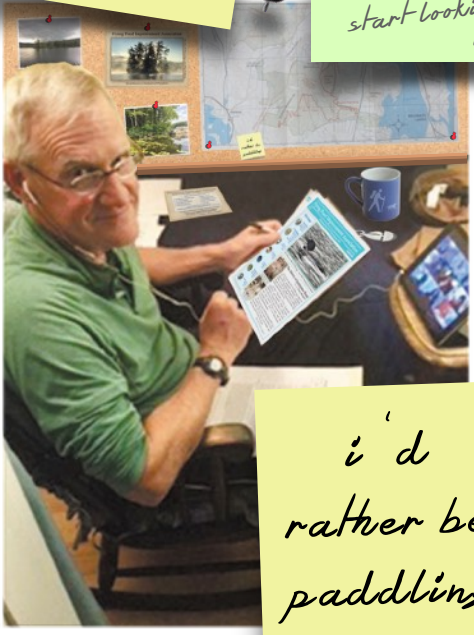


beats working in my NYC apartment

Reminder! kissing planets jupiter & saturn december 21 start looking for it now!

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box 143 mt. vernon, me 04352
invasive plant patrol team
call deb 908-910-3688



i'd rather be paddling



Looking forward to retirement