

Waukewan and Winona Watershed Protective Association

P.O. Box 451, Meredith, NH 03253

Website: WWWPA.org

Email: info@wwwpa.org

An Environmental Organization Protecting the Waukewan and Winona Watershed

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Newsletter Editor : Jamie Heminway

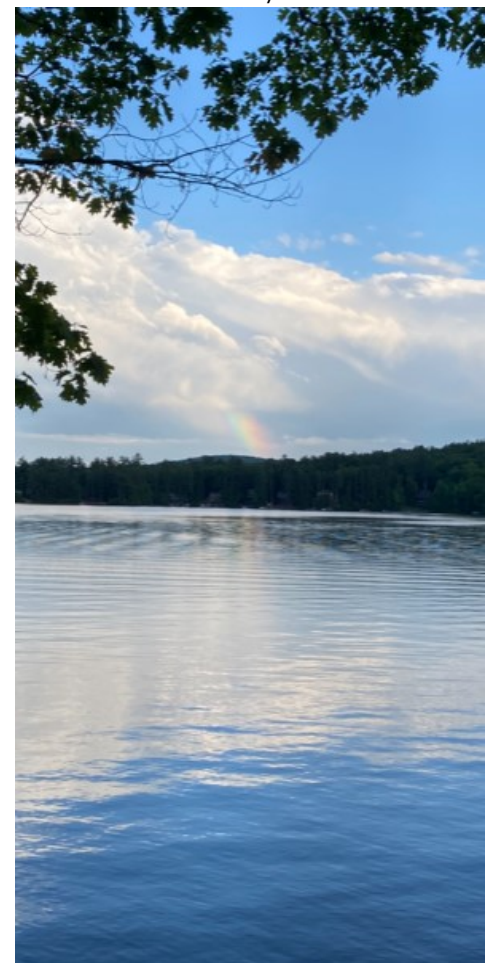


Photo by Linda Heminway

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Photo by Sharon O'Donnell



David Reilly Memorial Bridge

By Sharon O'Donnell

Last year, the Waukewan Winona Watershed Protective Association (WWWPA) worked with NH State Representative Tom Ploszaj and State Senator Bob Giuda to sponsor a legislative bill honoring David Reilly's work in our community. The bill passed in the NH House and Senate, and it was signed by Governor Chris Sununu in May 2022.

Dave passed away in June 2021 with a long legacy of helping the lakes, rivers, and ponds in our area. Not only did he give generously of his time, but he contributed financially to the environmental organizations in the Lakes Region. He was a founding member and Co-Chair of WWWPA, President of the Lake Winona Improvement Association, and a supporter of both the Loon Preservation Committee and the Lakes Region Conservation Trust. He was active in the Center Harbor Heritage Commission

and a member of the Center Harbor Planning Board. Dave will be missed by all of us who knew and worked with him throughout our community. WWWPA wanted to honor the work that he did. WWWPA is currently working with the NH Department of Transportation to design the signs to be placed on either side of the bridge on Winona Road. WWWPA will be responsible for paying for the signs as well as the installation costs.

We are a small NH State nonprofit group with limited resources, so we invite people in the community to donate to the funding of the project. Donations can be sent to WWWPA, PO Box 451, Meredith, NH 03253. Thank you for any donation that you may be able to give. Any funds received above the funding limit for the bridge signage costs will be applied toward the ongoing community/nonprofit projects that WWWPA sponsors.

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Plant Native to Protect the Watershed

By Catherine Greenleaf

When you walk into your local garden center, chances are good you will be greeted by cheerful displays of tables full of brightly colored flowers and shrubs. Unfortunately, most, if not all, of these plants are probably non-native.

Non-natives became all the rage starting back in the 1950s, when homeowners were looking for something new and unusual (like Japanese maples) to plant in their front yards. As the proliferation of garden centers and nurseries boomed, so did the selections of strange and exotic plants shipped from Japan, China, and Russia. Unfortunately, the United States has reached a tipping point, and many yards now contain more non-natives than natives, according to plant ecologists. This has had a profound negative impact on watersheds and, consequently, our lakes and wildlife.

Non-native plants and trees have very shallow root systems because they struggle to survive in horticultural zones they are not suited for. These shallow roots contribute to high levels of polluted stormwater runoff reaching our lakes as well as contributing to localized flooding. Native plants, accustomed to the soil and climate, grow robust root systems, many reaching 10 to 30 times deeper into the ground than non-native plants. The long root systems create an extensive spongy underground layer that holds and recharges thousands of



Photo by Sharon O'Donnell

gallons of rainwater. This spongy layer is vast enough to sustain trees and plants throughout dry periods and even droughts. The roots also slow down and trap polluted stormwater runoff that may contain pesticides, pet waste, oil, gasoline, bacteria and excess nutrients, preventing them from entering our lakes and ponds.

Non-native plants and trees are also problematic for wildlife. Non-natives are hybridized by growers to produce large blooms and bright colors and they offer little to nothing in the way of pollen and nectar for pollinators like bumblebees.

In addition, birds avoid shrubs and trees from foreign countries. Birds recognize and feed from native plants (seeds, nuts, fruits) they have co-evolved with in a mutual partnership that has developed over the course of thousands of years.

The deep roots of native plants and trees promote healthy soil

and hold it firmly in place, preventing erosion. In addition, trees prevent erosion with their leaves, causing rain to drip slowly and gently onto the forest floor, preventing flooding.

Native plants and trees create increased instances of transpiration. Water retained under the ground rises to the surface as vapor, which then travels up into the air, forming clouds that produce more rain. This is what is referred to as a small water system. The age-old maxim applies: The more water under the ground, the more water falls from the sky. This is why scientists recommend planting trees in drought-stricken areas.

Some native trees to consider: pine, hemlock, linden (basswood), red maple, black cherry, Eastern red cedar, black willow, sweet birch, sycamore, red oak and swamp white oak.

Good choices for native shrubs would include: spicebush, viburnum, serviceberry, spirea, flowering dogwood, and witch hazel.

There are hundreds of native plants to choose from, including: mountain mint, marsh marigold, aster, milkweed, monarda, goldenrod, wild geranium, Canada anemone, Jacob's Ladder, violet, and Solomon's Plume.

Be wary of nurseries that try to sell you natives or cultivars, which are not true natives and lack the benefits to wildlife.

Some reputable nurseries include the Wild Seed Project in Portland, Maine and Bagley Pond Perennials in Warner, New Hampshire.

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Get to know your watershed snakes!

By Linda Heminway

On Lake Winona this season, we have named it "The Year of the Snake." It all started at the boat launch when my husband and I were putting our boat in for the season. A snake came under the bridge from Snake River (how appropriately named?) and slithered by. Since then, we have seen a lot more snakes than in other years, and similar snakes have been spotted in our watershed this season.

After doing some research, I found out this particular snake was a Northern Black Racer (pictured below). It was approximately four feet in length and moved very fast. Northern Black Racers are great climbers and are



Photo by Linda Heminway

found in shrubs and trees, but are equally at ease in water, which provides them with more speed. They can grow up to 65" long. You might find one in your house or garage occasionally.

This snake is non-venomous and harmless in the sense that its bite will cause no long-term harm – but it will bite if provoked. Their primary diet consists of frogs, fish and rodents like mice and chipmunks. They enjoy large insects such as moths. They actually help our watershed by being an important food chain participant. They enjoy eating lots of the creatures we might consider pests.

Another snake found in our watershed is the Northern Water Snake (pictured right). Northern Water Snakes are often confused for the venomous Cottonmouth and are killed unnecessarily. The Cottonmouth is not native to New Hampshire. The particular snake in this photo had taken a catfish and was working to swallow it on the rocks by the water. The fish was too large for our friend Mr. Snake and the fish was abandoned, dead on the rocks. Presumably this fish was food for another creature as it disappeared pretty quickly. The Cottonmouth's striped pattern can appear similar, but be assured that no Cottonmouths live in our region.

The Northern Water Snake is generally harmless to humans, but they will bite if aggravated. Respect and watch from a distance if you happen to find one. A bite would require general first aid, like for a cut. The Northern Water Snake's diet is much like the



Photo by Linda Heminway

Northern Black Racer's, but they also enjoy salamanders as well as crayfish.

A very rarely seen NH snake is the Timber Rattlesnake. The State of NH reports that we do get sightings of them occasionally. This snake is a protected species as so many of them were killed by fearful people. It is highly unlikely we would see one in our area. Like other members of the pit viper family, the timber rattlesnake has a large, heavy-bodied appearance. It is venomous, with venom potent enough to kill a human. A timber rattlesnake bite is a medical emergency and you have roughly four to six hours to get medical assistance if someone is bitten.

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Photo by Linda Heminway

Loons in the Watershed

By Linda Heminway

It has been wonderful to see our loons reproduce and as of this writing, the loons on Winona have one chick. Two hatched but one was lost to what apparently was a predator.

According to our Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) Biologist, Waukewan has two pairs that have nested. One of the pairs has hatched two chicks. On Hawkins Pond, a pair of loons is present but no present evidence suggests they are nesting this year.

So far this season, there have been two major confrontations with rogue single loons trying to fight for territory on both Waukewan and Winona. One of these confrontations necessitated the LPC biologist relocating the "invader" loon to another local pond, where it remains. Territory is a big deal when you are a loon. Loons will fight to the death for territory and for a female who has proven to breed. While most loons mate for life, there are changes in mating pairs from time to time and an aggressive male may fight for a breeding female.

Our association is hosting Harry Vogel, Executive Director and Sr. Biologist of the Loon Preservation Committee on August 10th at 6:00 PM at The Meredith Community Center. This program is free to all who would like to attend. His lecture "The State of the Loon" will be accompanied by a slideshow with some incredible images of loons.

Efforts of the LPC monitor loons and help this threatened species. We love that loons in our watershed have successfully produced chicks over the years. Some years have been better than others. We are always grateful for the continued support of the loon center biologists.

Waukewan Lake Host Program

By Anne Sayers

The lake host program for Lake Waukewan is off to a good start with a training meeting that took place at Tim Whiting's house on June 25, 2022 at 9 AM. The Waukewan and Winona Watershed Protective Association (WWWPA) has six members who have volunteered to be Lake hosts this summer. They are as follows: Anne Sayers, Deborah Finch, Nancy Curran, Sharon O'Donnell, Deb Corr, and Dave Marsh (upcoming training scheduled). Thank you to our members for giving of their time to keep our lake clean and safe! Additional volunteers from the community will also be participating in the Lake Host program. The volunteers will cover two hour shifts every Monday and Thursday at the Meredith boat ramp. Coverage will begin on July 11, 2022 through Labor Day weekend in September. There were no invasive species caught by our paid or volunteer teams in the summer of 2021.

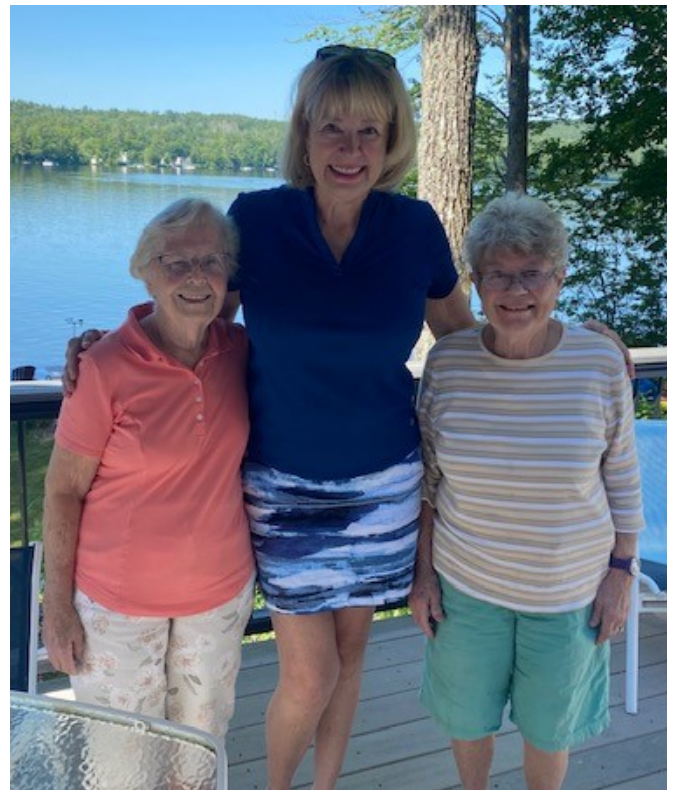


Photo provided by Sharon O'Donnell

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Update On Herbicide Applications by NHEC — Including New Opt-Out Process

By Catherine Greenleaf



Photo by Jamie Heminway

New Hampshire Electric Co-operative (NHEC) conducted a widespread tree-cutting campaign in the Lakes Region during the spring and summer of 2021.

NHEC announced it would hire a third-party company to spray and paint tree stumps with several herbicides to discourage regrowth. The application of herbicides will take place over the course of the next several years.

One of these herbicides may be Krenite S (Fosamine Ammonium), which, unfortunately, has been shown through scientific research to increase cyanobacteria blooms in lake water. In addition, Krenite S can be toxic to non-target species like birds, pollinators, fish, and humans, according to the National Pesticide Information Center. According to the Center, Krenite S has demonstrated long-term persistence in groundwater, which can compromise the safety of people's drinking water wells. Did you know you have a legal right to refuse herbicide application on your property? You can protect your property, the lake, and the watershed, by opting out of the process.

At this date, the streets in Center Harbor slated for herbicide application are Line Numbers 15, 20, 21,

22, 30, 117 and 140, which includes Winona Road, Hawkins Pond Road and Piper Hill Road, among others. Go to [this page](#) on Center Harbor's website for a complete list. The Center Harbor Conservation Commission recently announced a new opt-out process being offered by NHEC. To opt out of treatments for the calendar year, fill out and submit the form on [their website](#).

When filling out the form, you will want to have a recent statement handy so you can tell them your account number and meter number. Opt-out submissions are valid for the calendar year during which you submitted your request. If you opt out in July of 2022, you will need to resubmit your opt-out form in January 2023.

In addition, it is important to post a sign at both ends of your property delineating the areas you want left alone. Be sure to do your due diligence and stay in contact with your town offices and/or NHEC for updates.

Save a Loon—Turn in Lead Fishing Tackle!

From the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC)

Lead poisoning from the ingestion of lead fishing tackle is by far the largest known killer of adult loons in the state. Lead tackle has been responsible for over 40% of documented adult loon mortalities in New Hampshire since 1989. Lead sinkers and lead-headed jigs weighing one ounce or less (the sizes most often ingested by loons) have been illegal for sale and freshwater use in New Hampshire since 2016.

Help us protect the loons on Lakes Winona and Waukewan by participating in our lead tackle buyback program. You can turn in lead tackle at participating retail locations where you will receive a \$10 merchandise voucher to that location. LPC will award \$100 to the person who submits the largest amount of tackle at each participating shop and \$50 to the runner-up. Visit Loon.org/loonsafe for program details.

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Being a Good Water Quality Steward

by Linda Heminway

Just about every lake in New Hampshire has volunteers who draw water samples that are given to the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) for testing. You can find water quality analysis for each lake [on their website](#) as well as valuable fact sheets about water quality issues. Winona, Waukewan and Hawkins Pond all have volunteers who participate regularly, including myself.

I write this on a day where several beaches in NH are closed due to dangerous cyanobacteria blooms. We know several things may contribute to these blooms; however, the most common problem is high phosphorous levels. To help our watershed with regard to phosphorous, be careful with your septic system. Never use any fertilizers near the water, clean up storm run-off areas, and do not allow grass clippings and fall leaves to wash into the lake. Be especially careful with cleaning products as well as toiletries. There are safe environmentally friend-

Watershed Coordinator at NH Department of Environmental Services

Text Provided by NHDES

Nisa Marks has recently stepped into the Watershed Coordinator role at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). With the recent concerns expressed on topics such as cyanobacteria, road salt, stormwater, and recreation and their impacts on lakes, NHDES has re-oriented its Watershed Coordinator position to better support lake and watershed associations across the state on a variety of lake-related issues. Nisa is responsible for taking a "big picture" look at the health of lakes across the state, including in the context of broader watershed conditions. Her work will help partners by providing education and



ly ones available that work just as well.

What you put down your drain will eventually be in your lake, even if you have one of the best and newest leach fields. Products seep into ground water and towards our lakes and rivers. Pesticides are an issue, as well. Please make sure that if you use something, it is safe for our waters. Rather than spraying, why not try some [mosquito-repelling plants](#) to keep pests from your property?

Most of you reading this are more than likely doing the right thing. Putting word out to your lake neighbors and offering information are great ideas, especially if a lakeside home changes owners.

I was using a plant fertilizer while watering my outdoor plants at the lake. I decided to read what was in it and stopped using it immediately as it contained phosphorous. Always remember: phosphorous is our enemy, and even a simple plant fertilizer can wash into the lake. We remind our guests all the time about toiletries in particular and keep a non-toxic supply of items for them to use on hand.

outreach, technical assistance, and connecting lake associations to resources at NHDES, other state agencies, and outside organizations. Nisa will also be assisting lake associations with developing watershed management plans and using monitoring data to inform on-the-ground changes that protect water quality. The Watershed Coordinator also provides staff support to the statewide Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC).

Nisa says, "Success in this position depends on relationships with people around the state who are passionate about protecting our lakes. I would love to hear from YOU! What is working well at your lake and what is not? Where could you use additional support? Feel free to reach out to me at nisa.m.marks@des.nh.gov or (603) 271-8811."

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Loon Nest Rafts, Old and New

Photos and text by Linda Heminway

In April, my husband Mark and I attended a loon raft-building workshop at the Loon Preservation Center (LPC) in Moultonborough, NH. The LPC had all the necessary materials to build loon nest rafts but needed helping hands. We were pleased that there was no shortage of volunteers and that our crew was able to turn out many rafts. The dedication and love for loons was huge and gratifying.

Over a few weeks, LPC hosted three different workshops and successfully built 30 floating rafts. We were divided into groups and each team worked to take one raft from start to finish. Our team consisted of myself, Mark, and Winona residents Pam and Bob Hunt. We worked together and brought cut logs all the way to floating readiness. Below is a photo of Mark Heminway and Bob Hunt working hard to build a log nest raft.



Since the introduction of loon nest rafts, years ago, loons have become accepting of them. The odds of successful hatches are higher with a little help on heavily

populated lakes. Some lakes are not as developed and loons still nest in natural habitats, but with increased lake activity, these rafts truly provide the help Common Loons need to reproduce.

Exciting changes have occurred with the LPC success formula. The older tried and true loon nest raft is being changed. There are two new raft designs that are being used. One uses logs to produce a more natural-looking raft, which is pictured here.



It is well-secured, with foam installed alongside landscaping cloth on the underside to help it stay afloat. We wonder if the loons could tell us if these new rafts are fancier digs and highly desirable? I'm not sure if the loons care, as long as there is a place for them to be safe and away from predators. Most of the newly designed rafts have arched tops with camouflage to prevent predation. More is learned all the time about what works best.

While we crafted more traditional loon rafts, the LPC is also testing some exciting developments. One is the use of composite material where rotting wood won't be a problem. The average loon raft might last 20 years, but these new rafts will hopefully be longer-

lasting.

Another prototype introduced this year is the addition of experimental hydroponic gardens placed along the sides of some rafts. The floating gardens may serve to remove excess nutrients from our lakes and could help reduce dangerous cyanobacteria blooms, which are fed by excessive nutrients from storm runoff, fertilizers, etc. The hope is that these nutrients can be drawn from bodies of water. There are experimental hydroponic efforts being made by several universities in the US. Below, an LPC volunteer outfits one of the newly designed rafts.



The rafts made by LPC are ready to provide safe nesting spots for many of NH's loon pairs. If you spot any of the new raft designs in your travels, send a photo, please.

These rafts will help ensure endangered loons will be producing chicks in New Hampshire for many years to come. We are glad for the opportunity to help. Many thanks to the dedicated staff at The Loon Preservation Center for their hard work.

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Septic Improvement Campaign on Lake Winona

By Catherine Greenleaf

Six homes on Lake Winona have recently modernized or upgraded their septic systems, in part due to an extensive septic improvement campaign conducted by the Lake Winona Association's Septic Education Committee.

In 2020, committee members Althea Dunscombe, Charlie Goodwin, Don Thibodeau, Wendy Traynor, Marian Menkel, and Catherine Greenleaf distributed an anonymous survey to lakefront homeowners, asking questions related to septic systems and their functioning.

The survey results revealed that approximately 11% of respondents were unaware of what constituted a septic system emergency, especially one that could negatively impact the water quality of Lake Winona.

In 2021, committee members hand-delivered an information sheet to all lakefront homeowners listing the red flags to watch for when a septic system is malfunctioning. These sheets were delivered to both association members as well as non-members.

The warning signs include: 1) effluvia/odor of raw sewage near house, leach field or vent pipes; 2) very damp ground or wastewater pooling in the leach field or anywhere along the drainage pipes and especially running down to the lakeshore; and 3) effluvia backing up in the sink, shower or toilet (even temporarily) and then receding. All of these signal a true septic emergency that should be looked at by professionals immediately. Seasonal homes are especially prone to malfunctions due to temperature fluctuations inside the septic tank caused by non-use during winter months.

Sewage that drains into a lake from malfunctioning septic systems and cesspools contributes to the formation of cyanobacteria, a bacteria that is harmful to humans, pets, wildlife, and the overall health of a lake.



Photo by Sharon O'Donnell

Winona Lake Host Program

By Catherine Greenleaf

The Lake Winona Lake Host program has received enough funding in the form of grants and donations to hire a paid Lake Host to work at the boat launch three days a week over the summer. The paid Lake Host, along with volunteer Lake Hosts, will be conducting boat and trailer inspections for invasive plants and organisms on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from July 2 until Labor Day weekend.

The Lake Winona Lake Host program is run by co-coordinators Kay Anderson and Catherine Greenleaf, both of whom are residents of Lake Winona.

The Lake Host program, sponsored by the New Hampshire Lakes Association, seeks to rid the state's lakes of harmful non-native and invasive species, including the Chinese Mystery Snail, Eurasian milfoil, Variable Milfoil, Curly-Leaf Pondweed, European Naiad, Water Chestnut and Zebra mussels. These invasives clog waterways, preventing fishing and swimming, and deplete food resources needed by our native species.

Who are the members of our board?

Interested in writing an article for our newsletter? Contact Sharon O'Donnell at info@wwwpa.org.

Sharon O'Donnell, Chair
Lake Waukewan

Linda Heminway, Secretary
Lake Winona

Deb Finch, Director
Lake Waukewan

Jeff Moody, Director
Lake Waukewan

Bea Thibault, Vice Chair
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Lew Sayers, Treasurer
Lake Waukewan

Peter Tallman, Director
Lake Waukewan

Catherine Greenleaf, Director
Lake Winona

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