Over a twenty-year span, Bunny Wescott, Sibyl French, and Lisa Hall have conducted surveys of Panther and Crescent Lakes to detect any non-native aquatic plant species that, if left unchecked, can monopolize and degrade our lakes’ quality.

IPPers are Invasive Plant Patrollers who use their eyes and knowledge to discern any problematic species in Raymond’s water bodies. Each lake has a team of volunteer patrollers whose efforts are coordinated by Bunny and Sibyl for Panther and Lisa for Crescent. Sibyl is also the regional coordinator, gathering and reviewing each fall all data from PPippers (about 23 on Panther), CLippers (about 14 on Crescent), Tippers (2 on Thomas), Rippers (3 on Raymond), and Nippers on Notched.

How is IPPing Done?
IPPers are voyeurs peeping below the surface in a methodical manner. On a sunny, calm day during the growing season we drift over the surface in a kayak, canoe, inflatable, or rowboat, scanning to depths where we can no longer see the bottom or anything growing up from the bottom. Snorkeling is the most thorough and effective way. Bunny, Lisa, and Sibyl use a variety of tools to help in their efforts (see picture above): Bunny uses a paddle to propel her kayak into all areas of the littoral zone; Lisa holds a rake with which to snatch a sample of any deeper-rooted plants, and Sibyl holds a kayak view scope designed by Ross Wescott to eliminate ripples.

What Made Us IPPers?
SIBYL: When I learned that our area is surrounded by lakes with invasive plants, I wanted to find ways to keep them out and since I enjoy being outside and had majored in biology, it seemed a perfect fit.

BUNNY: Fear. Twenty years ago, I was introduced to variable leaf milfoil in a jar at a RWPA meeting at which then director Noralee Raymond described the horrors of this invasive plant. I had nightmares imagining an aquatic “Day of the Triffids” 1962 sci fi horror movie scenario.

LISA: As I stood in shock, on a marina dock at Lake Winnipesaukee I had my “ah-ha” moment! I only could see green invasives that had taken over the entire cove. I vowed to do what I could to prevent invasive plants from taking over “my” lake.

How We Became One?
BUNNY AND SIBYL: In 2002 we started a paranoid patrol of our shore and joined Ben Severn in the Jordan River pulling up milfoil by the roots. In 2005 we took the new 6-hour course offered by Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM). In 2008 we signed on with LSM to assist professionals on Moosehead Lake. By shadowing knowledgeable professionals for close to a week for more than 6 years we gained a thousand-fold.

LISA: I had participated in an LSM “Plant Paddle”, a relaxed on-the-water plant identification training, so, when Crescent Lake Watershed Assn. formed a Plant Patrol, I volunteered to help.

Our Role as Captains
We are a conduit of information relating to invasive species and a resource for identifying specimens. We ensure that the littoral area of our lake (i.e., where sunlight reaches the lake bottom) is monitored annually. We recruit, encourage, and mentor. We cover any unadopted sectors. We hold fun gatherings that include food, plant ID, self-testing, information (continued on page 4)
Celebrating the DASH Crew!

BY NEIL JENSEN

As the 2021 milfoil season comes to a close, we say goodbye, good luck, and a huge THANK YOU to our current DASH crew, some of whom have been with the RWPA for nine years. (Has it really been that long?) These hard-working, persistent and creative folks have nearly cleaned out all of the invasive milfoil on the Raymond shore of Sebago Lake, Dingley Brook, and the upper Jordan River. They’ve done a dirty, nasty job and done it well, with good humor and a shoestring budget. We owe them our thanks, and much more besides, and we wish them the very best as they move on to the next phase of their lives.

The DASH crew from left to right: DASH boat captain and chief troubleshooter Cody Dahms, lead diver/manager Joe Marshall, and diver Branden Skilling.

Lake of the Quarter – Crescent Lake

Crescent Lake is a large, narrow lake consisting of 703 acres located mostly in Raymond but has its northern tip located in Casco. Also known as Rattlesnake Pond, Crescent Lake is 703 acres in size, has a maximum depth of 54 feet, an average depth of 17 feet, and a water quality rating of “above average” as determined by the Maine Department of Environmental protection.

Crescent Lake consists of mostly a gravel shoreline with some areas of rock piles and weed beds. Home to many various activities and watersports, Crescent Lake is known for its year-round fishing, sporting one of the most notable bass fishing spots in Maine.

Crescent Lake is a relatively calm body of water for its size, with minimal boat traffic and lack of wind, due to the amount of trees surrounding the lake. Fishermen will find brook trout, salmon, pickerel, large and smallmouth bass, white and yellow perch, and sunfish here. A bonus for boaters is found at Crescent Lake’s outlet - the navigable Tenny River that flows into 1,400-acre Panther Pond.
Featured Interview Part II – Scott Williams

Scott Williams is Executive Director of Lake Stewards of Maine. He has more than four decades of experience working on the assessment and protection of lakes and ponds throughout Maine. He has advised numerous local and regional lake associations, community watershed planning groups, conservation commissions, town planning boards, land trusts and other entities focused on the protection of Maine’s aquatic resources.

In part I of our interview, we discussed eutrophic or “dead” lakes and what causes them and why Maine lakes, in general, have much better water quality than lakes elsewhere in the country.

QUESTION: What Maine lakes have gone eutrophic?
We have a bunch of lakes that are chronic bloomers in the past few years, for instance Sabbatus Lake, which is really a pond not more than 18 feet deep. Ponds are shallow bodies where light reaches the bottom and supports plant life. Interestingly, lakes we expected to bloom in 2020, such as Long Pond in Parsonfield, did not because of the extreme drought.

Damariscotta Lake is a complex lake with three distinct arms, each separated by a shallow narrow area. It’s basically three interconnected lakes with their own watershed and flushing rates. I spent many years researching the lake. One part is very deep and the water is much clearer.

But the southern arm is shallow and has higher phosphorous levels and lower oxygen levels, making it susceptible to algae growth and poor water clarity.

QUESTION: What trends in water quality are you seeing?
In recent years, we have seen lakes experience algae blooms that we would not have expected to. The poster child is Lake Auburn. It’s deep – 135 feet at its maximum depth with historically clear water and low levels of phosphorous. But in June, 2012, the lake experienced a severe algae bloom with multiple types of cyanobacteria and water clarity below 1.5 meters. Dissolved oxygen was at zero at the bottom, which caused lake trout to rise to surface and die.

QUESTION: What caused the unexpected algae bloom?
Historically, Lake Auburn had lots of dissolved oxygen. But in 2012, there was a perfect storm. We had 80-degree ambient temps in mid-March so winter came to abrupt end and caused the water to warm up quickly. Then, on June 5, we had a storm that dropped 6 inches of rain in a 24-hour period which created a lot of soil erosion. In fact, we found erosion channels that you could drop a school bus in. So, there was a huge influx of nutrients coming into the lake combined with rapid warmup of the water from early ice-out and unusually warm weather. So, a lake with good water quality changed dramatically.

QUESTION: Did Lake Auburn rebound?
Up to a point, but it took a few years, and it has never returned to where it was. Since it is a public water supply, the water district had to decide whether to shut down the lake as a water supply. It just barely slipped by in 2012 and 2013. They spent a lot of money on a restoration effort and the district is buying land along the shoreline to prevent development.

QUESTION: What can be done to prevent lakes from reaching this point?
Prevention is cheapest way to go. Once a lake reaches the tipping point, change accelerates, making it hard to control. Low oxygen levels from warming or algae blooms release phosphorous from bottom sediment, speeding the process of eutrophication. It’s important to address issues in the watershed before this cycle takes effect, because afterwards it’s very difficult and expensive to fix.

QUESTION: Once a lake goes eutrophic, is there any way to resuscitate it?
Restoration efforts are always a last resort because they are expensive and not guaranteed to work. One way to restore a lake is to inject aluminum sulfate into the lake through sophisticated instruments. If the aluminum sulfate settles onto the bottom, it captures phosphorous and creates a seal on the surface of lake

(continued on page 4)
A Tale of Three IPPers  (continued from page 1)

exchanges and updates. We review and submit all paperwork.

How to Get Trained
Lake Stewards of Maine (lakestewardsME.org) has a wealth of information on its website, plus it offers free introductory and advanced courses online in which you can study at your own speed. Bunny, Sibyl, and Lisa offer mentoring to individuals or small groups, which involves traveling in boats and examining plants in situ.

What Have We Gained Personally?
ALL: We have experienced deeper knowledge, serenity, a sense of purpose, adventure, camaraderie, and abiding friendships as well as splendid scenery of flora and fauna.

We sleep soundly knowing that when we do find an unwelcome species, it won’t gain a large foothold and will be efficiently eradicated.

Years ago, we were often greeted by suspicion when we inspected people’s waterfronts, but now we are greeted by appreciation.

If you would like to learn how to identify and eradicate invasive species or want to identify a suspicious plant on your shoreline, contact Sibyl, Lisa, or Bunny. Being an Ipper is an Upper!!!

Featured Interview Part II – Scott Williams  (continued from page 3)

sediments. The process takes several weeks and the weather has to be just right, and it doesn’t always work. The state won’t grant a permit for such treatment unless it determines that all sources of eutrophication have been addressed. This is what was done on Lake Auburn.

QUESTION: Are any Raymond lakes in danger?
An algae bloom doesn’t just occur; you can see it coming for years. But climate change has accelerated the eutrophication process. Temperature is a big issue. There is an inverse relationship between temperature and dissolved oxygen. Warm water can’t hold as much oxygen. Land-locked salmon and other fish that live in the cold water at the bottom of lakes are especially vulnerable. Without enough oxygen, they can’t get the nutrition they need to reproduce and live. They are the canaries in the coal mine.

RWPA Officers Elected

The RWPA board of directors met in August and re-elected the serving officers for the coming year. They are Peggy Jensen of Panther Pond, President, Locke Macdonald of Crescent Lake, Vice President, Marie Connolly of Panther Pond, Treasurer, and Lisa Hall of Crescent Lake, Secretary. We thank them for contributing their time and talents.

Time to Donate?!

To keep our lakes pristine and free from invasive plants, please consider making an annual donation to RWPA.

We are a 501(c)(3) corporation so your gift may be tax deductible.

Milfoil doesn’t take a year off, why should you? CONTRIBUTE HERE!

Or send your donation to RWPA, PO Box 1243, Raymond, ME 04071.
Ice-Out Visualization

The Lake Stewards of Maine have compiled a fascinating chart of ice-out dates submitted by volunteers from Maine lakes. Purple stars have the earliest ice-out dates, followed by blue, then green, then yellow. You can see that our Raymond lakes are just on the warmer side of a dividing line in ice-out dates. If you would like to submit ice-out dates, contact Lake Stewards of Maine to become a volunteer.
RWPA Board of Directors and Members

- Peggy Jensen – President (Panther Pond)
- Locke Macdonald – Vice President (Crescent Lake)
- Marie Connolly – Treasurer (Panther Pond)
- Lisa Hall – Secretary (Crescent Lake)
- Neil Jensen – Member (Panther Pond)
- Wayne Eckerson – Member (Panther Pond)
- Elwood Beach – Member (Raymond Pond)
- Holly Hoglund – Member (Thomas Pond)

If interested in serving, let us know! To be removed from our mailing list, contact us at info@raymondwaterways.org.

About RWPA

Founded more than 50 years ago, the Raymond Waterways Protective Association is dedicated to protecting and improving the water quality of Raymond’s lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams and fostering watershed stewardship.

Our web site: raymondwaterways.org
Contact us: info@raymondwaterways.org
Our mailing address: PO Box 1243, Raymond, ME 04071

Raymond Pond (lower left), Crescent Lake (middle right), Panther Pond (middle-left), Thomas Pond (middle top- barely visible), aand Sebago lake (top).