



THE ALIC NEWS

Join or Renew Today

Summer 2015

Executive Director's Message

by Debbie Hite, ALIC Executive Director

Spring is finally here! The chorus of bullfrogs and peepers herald the onset of evening; the loons' calls resound in the night; the blue heron and osprey wing their way from feeding area to nesting spot. Like the wildlife, we return to the lake to rest, recreate, and be restored after a brutal winter and the demands of "the real world."

At the same time, the lake is looking to us to care for it and its in-dwellers. This is the mission of the lake association ALIC - to preserve and protect Androscoggin Lake. As members, you have an opportunity to engage in this eco-stewardship by becoming informed on important issues and involved in ALIC activities. Your participation and ongoing support are vital to our mission and very much appreciated! Here's what's on the docket for this program year:

- Potential remediation of Lakeshore Drive in Leeds – Debbie and Lidie (30 MRWA) have been working with town officials and consultants to leverage a plan which addresses erosion and run-off issues along this road. Implementation depends on voter support at the Leeds town meeting June 6.
- Expansion of the Eyes on the Water program – Our goal is to have a volunteer or two in each quadrant of the lake to keep an eye out for aquatic plants that are suspicious. See the article on page 2 for more information.
- Lead tackle exchange – Ingestion of lead sinkers is a leading contributor to loon mortality. In collaboration with Maine Audubon, ALIC is hosting a slide program and tackle exchange on Friday, June 19. More information can be found in the article on page 3.
- Ongoing water quality monitoring - Our data has supported what many of you have observed in recent years: greater clarity and fewer widespread occurrences of algae mid to late summer. However, many factors contribute to the lake's fragile ecosystem. See the water quality summary on page 6.

ALIC continues its alliance with Maine Audubon, Maine Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program, Maine Lakes Society, and the 30 Mile River Watershed Association in order to best tackle the challenges facing our lakes here in Maine. You are invited to support these like-minded organizations.

(Continued on page 6)

www.androscogginlake.org

Inside this issue:

Eyes on the Water	2
VLMP Conference	2
Contact ALIC	2
Tackle Exchange	3
Maine Lakes Conference	3
In Memorium	3
Events Calendar	3
Lake Levels	4
Facebook	4
Water Quality	6
Bass Tournaments	7
Renew Your Membership	7

Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 8th
Yacht Club

8:30 am potluck
9:00 am business

Everyone is encouraged to attend. Mark your calendars!

Eyes on the Water Program

by Buddy Cummings



The *Androscoggin Lake Eyes on the Water* program was successfully launched last summer at the *ALIC Annual Meeting*. Each program participant agrees to keep an eye on the aquatic plant population over a small section of shoreline. Over time, participants become familiar with the natives in their adopted zones. And, whenever an unfamiliar plant, or possible invasive, is found, VLMP certified members of the team are readily available to assist in further identification and possible reporting.

Most of the time, folks are able to adopt shoreline zones right in front of their own camps. And, continuous monitoring is not a requirement; so, even if you are only up at camp for just a couple of weeks, you can still contribute. In fact, we do not expect that most of our monitors will spend more than two or three hours a year on this very valuable effort. No previous training or experience is required. We'll go out with you the first few times to provide you with some personalized hands-on plant identification skills and materials.

Sign up to join us in this important program by contacting Buddy Cummings at 207-320-5720. And, for all existing participants, I'll be contacting you soon!

Can you identify the plant pictured above? We'll ask about it at the *ALIC Annual Meeting*. (*hint ... as far as we know, this plant is **not** found in Androscoggin Lake, but is found in some Maine lakes*)

Annual Conference of the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program

The *Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program* (VLMP) will be holding its Annual Conference this year on July 25th at the *Great Outdoors* in Turner. This is always a fun and informative event with interactive displays, presentations by Maine lake scientists, re-certification workshops for water quality monitors, a plant paddle on Pleasant Pond, and lunch. The conference is free for VLMP-certified monitors. Others typically pay \$35; but, this year, ALIC is sponsoring a limited number of scholarships to the event. Contact Buddy Cummings at 207-320-5720, if you are interested in a scholarship.

Visit www.mainevlmp.org for more information and to register.

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Board of Directors

George Bardaglio
Tom Barden, Treasurer
Jim Breazeale, Vice President
Buddy Cummings, Secretary
Chris Cushman

Lincoln Hayes, President
Martha Hodinott
Joan Sandidge

Status of Loons and Lead Tackle

On June 19th, ALIC will host a slide program on loons from the Maine Audubon Society and a lead tackle exchange. Ingestion of small lead fishing tackle is a leading cause of loon mortalities. Since 2013, lead sinkers 1 oz. and less have been banned in Maine. Starting in 2016, the sale of bare lead-headed jigs less than 2 1/2" long will be banned, followed by a ban on their use starting in 2017. Help us "get the lead out" by bringing in these items and exchanging them for lead-free tackle.

Light refreshments will be served at 6:15, before the 45 minute presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. Visit www.fishleadfree.org/maine for more information on the effects of lead poisoning in loons.

Maine Lakes Conference and Family Celebration



The *Maine Lakes Society* will be holding its Annual Conference this year on August 22nd. The conference will be held on Sebago Lake and will include a host of family-friendly events like paddleboard yoga, kayaking for kids, tours on their 30 foot floating classroom, and a Maine Art Show and Sale. We can also look forward to a talk by a nationally known expert on *Conserving Lakes in a time of Global Change*, plus *Predicting Your Lake's Tipping Point*, *Next Gen Monitoring with 2nd Grade Science*, a preview of the new Maine Lakes Science Center, and ... *much, much more!*

Visit www.mainelakessociety.org for more information and to register.

In Memoriam of Jack Mahoney

ALIC appreciates the donations received in memory of Jack Mahoney from Vin and Vinnie Burns, Charlie King, and Dave and Bev Petell.

Calendar of Events



- June 19, 6:30pm** **Status of Loons**, Ladd Center, Wayne
This *Maine Audubon* slide program, hosted by ALIC, also provides an opportunity to exchange any old fishing tackle for lead-free. Visit www.fishleadfree.org/maine
- July 25, 9am-1pm** **VLMP Annual Conference**, The Great Outdoors, Turner
Visit www.mainevlmp.org
- August 1** **Annual 30 Mile River Watershed Association Paddle Trek**
Visit www.30mileriver.org
- August 8, 8:30am** **ALIC Annual Meeting**, the Androscoggin Yacht Club, Wayne
The potluck breakfast begins at 8:30am, followed by the business meeting at 9:00am.
- August 22** **Maine Lakes Conference**, Sebago Lake
Visit www.mainelakessociety.org

Visit www.androscogginlake.org for more information regarding summer events

Effects of Weather on Lake Levels

by *Debbie Hite*

When you live in Maine, you wait a long time for Spring. When you live on Androscoggin Lake, you can also wait a long time for a beach. You may recall that last year's newsletter included some comments on this subject. Everyone has a reference point (on this lake most of them are rocks!) from which they can readily judge whether the lake is high or low. But how does that correlate to actual recorded lake levels and the historically-accepted normal of 269 ft. above sea level? This question provided the impetus for an unofficial but informative study last year of the lake levels throughout the summer season and into the fall.

Three ALIC members - Buddy Cummings at Lincoln Point, Tom Barden at Beaver Brook Cove, and Debbie Hite at Frenchman's Cove in Leeds - recorded observations of their own shorefronts as well as the USGS gauge readings from the Dead River station and any significant weather incidents. For his convenience, Tom established on his property a bench mark that is the Wayne high water elevation of 277.7 ft. above the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 and used a pop level to determine lake elevation. You might be aware of the Wayne high water mark indication near the launch at the Yacht Club. Debbie, on the other hand, took advantage of the Dead River gauge readings available on our website and also followed the Rumford gauge which records the discharge amounts from the New Page mill into the Androscoggin River. Experience tells us this can impact the lake 2-3 days after the water is released. To the extent he was available, Buddy kept a log of his

observations from his camp and also from his visits to the Dead River dam.

June of 2014 was predominantly a sunny, dry, warm month. The lake level at Beaver Brook Cove hovered between 271.1 and 269.6. Debbie recorded 272.26 on May 30 which fell to 270.18 by June 29; her beach went from 8" to 20' in that time. Buddy's first reading was June 20 at 270.52 and on June 25 he had 1.5' of beach at a reading of 269.96. Debbie indicated rain all night in Leeds on the 25th but Tom and Buddy didn't have any in their area. On June 29 Buddy's beach was negligible and the gauge read 270.18. Reference rocks at all three sites were still inaccessible.

July opened sunny and warm, but rain came on the night of July 3, a prelude to Hurricane Arthur on the 4th and subsequent rain events every several days right to the end of the month. The lake elevation mid month varied between 270.1 and 270.75. The last entry of the month was by Tom on July 26: 269.8. The rocks were emerging.

The first days of August brought rain each afternoon and a night thunderstorm on the 5th Debbie had 25' of beach at 269.8. On the 13th Tom recorded 269.0 but heavy rain that night produced a reading of 269.6 the next day. His swimming rock was about 6" out of the water, but by the 20th it was just breaking the surface. Ten days later, it was visible again by 6".

September started the warm, dry spell and by the end of the month the lake had dropped to 267.7. Buddy's observation, along with his neighbor's,

(Continued on page 5)



The ALIC Facebook page is an open forum. We encourage everyone with an interest in Androscoggin Lake to participate by posting their thoughts and photos on our new page.

Find us by clicking on the Facebook icon at www.androscogginlake.org.

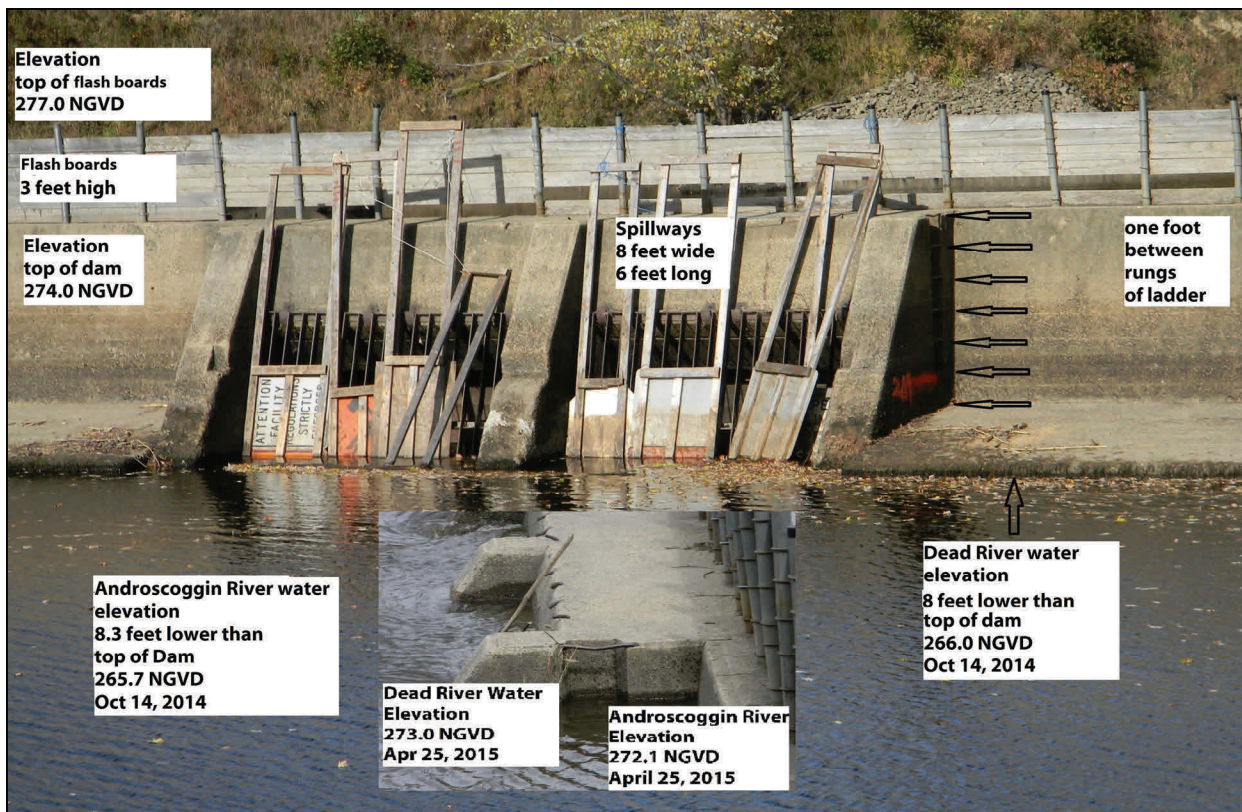
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was that this lake level seemed normal, given their shorefront and exposed rocks. Tom's swimming rock was 16" out of the water on the 18th and he had one foot of beach showing. In Frenchman's Cove, however, Debbie could walk 35' from the berm of what had been shorefront earlier in the summer to the current water's edge. Many rocks which hadn't been seen in decades were exposed around Stinchfield Point in Leeds. In fact, the lake was the lowest since July 1998 and this September was the driest on record in Maine.

In mid October, Debbie took advantage of the low water to mark the 269' elevation on the dam, a suggestion which came from the dam maintenance team. Many years – usually mid-summer - the team will insert panels over the spillway gates to help preserve that elevation, the optimum level for the health of the lake. On Oct. 14, Tom reported that the Androscoggin River was

0.3 ft. lower than the Dead River and the lake was at 267.6'. Normally, the Dead River would reverse flow at the difference, but, with the lake so very low, the water only trickled through the gates towards the Androscoggin. The only positive to come out of this situation would be reduced spring flooding, which turned out to be fortunate, given the large amount of snow brought by this past winter.

Three factors generally contribute to the varying lake levels of Androscoggin Lake: 1.) spillover at the dam from the Androscoggin River, happening now only 2-3 times per season, 2.) amount of water entering from Pocasset Lake and its tributaries, and 3.) length of time that the level of the Androscoggin River is equal to or higher than the level of the lake, limiting any outflow from the lake. Our informal study, however, demonstrates that a fourth factor – the variable weather - is also a major player on this lake and something which no one can control.



Executive Director's Message *(Continued from page 1)*

Finally, I need to announce that after a decade of service to ALIC, I am stepping away from the spotlight in anticipation of the approaching retirement of my husband and our eventual relocation to a warmer climate. I came on the ALIC Board in 2004, becoming Secretary “pro tem” alongside Peter Ault soon after, then President in 2007 and Executive Director in 2011. I have learned so much about Maine lakes, have met many dedicated people, and have appreciated the opportunity to further the mission of ALIC. I want to thank you for your support and encourage you to get involved – be it as a Board member, a plant patroller, a Courtesy Boat Inspector, a loon counter, a newsletter contributor, a Facebook friend, or a helper at an event. And please, mark your calendars for the ALIC annual meeting on Saturday morning, August 8. Here's to another great summer on Androscoggin Lake!

Water Quality Report

by *Debbie Hite*



As many of you have observed, the water quality of Androscoggin Lake has substantially improved in the last several years. This is highly attributable to the improvements at the Dead River dam, most notably the 3' flash boards installed in 2005. However, the lake remains a fragile resource, susceptible to damaging conditions which can cause sudden and dramatic negative changes. Our water quality monitoring is done by Bill Messer; George Bardaglio has also been certified in Secchi and Dissolved Oxygen testing in order to assist as needed. Testing is done about every two weeks June to October at three separate stations on the lake. Thank you guys!

The Secchi test is the standard method to determine the clarity of lakes and represents the depth in meters to where one can see down into the water column from the surface, using a black and white disc. Androscoggin Lake averages 4.7 meters; the state average is 4.83.

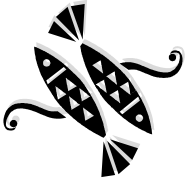
Dissolved Oxygen is evaluated by taking tests starting from the surface and then down at each meter increment. Generally, our lake has shown satisfactory levels of DO to support marine life from surface to near bottom. However, during mid-summer, the lake experiences about a 50% reduction in DO from 6 m. down to the bottom. Temperature and winds are contributing factors, as our shallow lake easily “turns over” (becomes homogenous from top to bottom) during windy conditions.

Total Phosphorus is measured from surface grab water samples taken at three stations throughout the summer and reported in parts per billion. Our lake's average is 12 ppb, with some samples last year coming in at 10 ppb. The lower the concentration, the better, as phosphorus promotes algae growth which will reduce dissolved oxygen and be harmful to marine life.

In 2014 we initiated eColi testing at 12 sites around the lake. These tests showed good results within the Maine CDC allowable standard of 235 colonies of bacteria per 100mL. We now have a baseline for future comparison. Ongoing testing will occur at sites with the highest concentrations.

In addition to our own water quality testing, the DEP takes samples for additional factors every five years for comparative evaluation. All of this data is compiled for the annual Maine Lakes Report, published by the Maine VLMP. To see the full 2013 report (2014 not yet available) including explanations, graphs, and comparisons among lakes, go to www.mainevlmp.org.

2015 Bass Tournaments on Androscoggin Lake



06/21	open	<i>American Bassmasters</i>
08/01	club	<i>Bronzeback Maniacs</i>
08/22	club	<i>Mainely Bass</i>
08/30	open	<i>Yankee Bassers</i>
09/05	club	<i>Southern Maine Anglers</i>

Club tourney usually involves fewer than 20 boats. Open can involve as many as 100.

ALIC continues its protocol of telephoning the clubs in advance of tournament day to encourage good lake stewardship, attentive boat inspections, and respect of shorefront properties.

Time to Renew Your Membership



Summer is upon us. It is the long-awaited time for all of us to enjoy our lake during what is probably its finest season.

ALIC's primary purpose is to maintain and improve the quality of the water in Androscoggin Lake. And, ALIC is working very hard to safeguard the lake from threats posed by both pollutants and invasive plants. But, the ability of ALIC to continue its good work relies on support from all of its members.

Renew your membership **today!** ALIC depends upon your annual renewal. And, remember to check if your employer offers matching grants to enhance your contribution.

To renew, use the form enclosed in this newsletter, or click the Join option at www.androscogginlake.org. Send your completed membership form, along with your check, to the following address:

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