



Newsletter

Fall 2018

HPWA is a 501(c)3 Charitable Organization

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Martha Sheldon, Membership Committee
Geri Williams, Newsletter Editor
Lee Pulis, Education and Outreach Committee
Don Williams and Jack Kedian, Water Quality Committee Co-Chairs
Jerry Levine, Invasive Species Committee Chair
Ramona Krogman, Member-at-Large

Website

www.TheHerringPondsWatershed.org

Upcoming Events

October 9, 7pm HPWA General Meeting
Wildlands Trust. Dr. Nate Horwitz-Willis, Plymouth Director of Public Health will speak on keeping our water safe and healthy.



April 2019 8:00 - 4:00
CEDARVILLE FIRE STATION

Donate to Recycle your used gear:

Fishing, Boating
Birding, Hiking
Biking, Camping
Gardening
Area history
Outdoor games
Nature education

email leepulis@gmail.com to
Donate now

President's Message

Don Williams, President

I have served as your president for a little over a month. I have already discovered that there are many new aspects of this job, both anticipated and unanticipated. I knew in advance that following Brian Harrington would be a daunting task. He oversaw a remarkable period of HPWA growth, of land acquisition to protect our watershed and of Board solidarity. It will be a major challenge to maintain and (hopefully) improve upon the achievements of his six years as president. We are all fortunate that he has agreed to stay on as an *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors.

It was easy to predict that setting up and running meetings, organizing agendas, writing thank-you notes to donors, networking with other organizations and learning more about the workings of each HPWA committee would require an additional investment of time.

I was not prepared for the overwhelming feeling of responsibility – to the watershed itself, to its residents and to the generations that will inherit this beautiful place that we share. It is said that it is lonely at the top. At HPWA, that is not true. Our Board shares ideas, tasks and problems equitably. Our Committees work hard and are effective. We have forged partnerships with several of the departments in the Town of Plymouth and are actively working to increase awareness of water quality issues among state legislators. We have networked with other watershed associations and with like-minded environmental groups. These are excellent reasons for being optimistic for the watershed's future.

Our residents are provided with information on safe swimming and boating practices. HPWA monitors the major swimming sites on Great and Little Herring Ponds during the summer months for E. coli. This year, we have collected weekly water samples to look for toxic cyanobacteria.

Water quality has held steady over the last several years. We are, however, still classified as “impaired,” nowhere near eutrophic, but not good enough. We must have water quality *improvement* as our goal. Great Herring pond was amazingly pristine – clear, clean and having an unprecedented (“unimpaired!”) low phosphorus level through the middle of August. It was exciting to see the pond in this condition and encouraging to see positive quality change is possible. My goals are to find an assignable cause for this windfall (runoff remediations?) and work with Plymouth to fix GHP's 4 major remaining runoff sites.

Although it is still unofficial, a recent GHP and LHP survey by the Invasives Committee revealed no invasive water plant species.

Effective partnerships are necessary for raising money for studies (Watershed Management Plan) and runoff remediation projects. Interaction with other watershed groups is useful for sharing ideas and for influencing water quality policies at the state level. HPWA will be actively expanding networking in these areas.

My personal belief at this time is that providing information to our watershed residents should be our top priority. While the information is available to all on our excellent website, we would like to see more hits by our constituency. Your Board of Directors has had two meetings to address the issue of how to “get the word out” in order to develop a strategy to reach more people.

Come join us – bring your ideas and your energy!

Education Committee News

by Lee Pulis, Education Committee Chair

Education priorities for the coming year were discussed at a committee meeting at Hedges Pond Park in mid-July. To advance the goal of promoting youth involvement, it was decided to hold a “Shed Faire” fundraising event in Spring 2019 to underwrite several one-week day camperships at camps Bournedale, Clark, and/or Hedges Pond. Encouraging active outdoor involvement and environmental learning in the ACEC at an early age is considered crucial for developing future stewardship.

Shed Faire - April 2019 - Rather than being a typical multi-family garage/yard sale, this event is about freeing up your storage space by donating specific types of items for other watershed and area residents to **Recycle, Reuse, or Repurpose**. Categories of items for donation and sale include, but are not limited to:

- **Fishing rods, reels, nets, tackle boxes, lures, gear**
- **Boats, kayaks, canoes, and accessories**
- **Gardening, native plants, composting, rain barrels, lawn/yard care and ornamentation, water features, tools**
- **Bird/bee/bat/butterfly/squirrel feeding, housing, and watching equipment**
- **Biking, riding, hiking (bikes, trail maps, walking sticks, canteens, etc)**
- **Natural history books, magazines, field guides, nature-related puzzles, games, art, toys**
- **Area history books, maps, photos, post cards**
- **Other related items we haven't even thought of...**

You can free your space ahead of the sale by donating items now. They will be stored and transported to the event (tentatively in April) by HPWA organizers. Email lee@theherringpondswatershed.org with questions about items or to arrange for dropoff.

16 Monarch butterflies are heading to Mexico from one certified [Monarch Waystation](#). Milkweed plants are fewer in number, and natural predation on Monarch caterpillars in the wild is estimated at about 95%. The number of caterpillars making it to butterfly stage can be increased by protecting and letting vulnerable caterpillars feed, molt, and pupate inside, away from predators such as spiders, earwigs, wasps and ants. A simple tabletop Predation Protection can be set up based on a small patch of milkweed. Contact lee@theherringpondswatershed.org for assistance planning your own efforts to help Monarchs for next year.



Venezuelan river explorer Ivan Mikolji has been uploading selected gallery quality photos of our watershed plants, fish and scenery for future HPWA use in our social media, calendars, and education. Several thumbnails of his high resolution underwater images are included here to give a sense of this welcome resource. Visit his website at <https://mikolji.com/>.



Juvenile River Herring Outmigration - Carter Beale



Bayonet Rush - Little Herring Pond



American Yellow Perch - *Perca flavescens*

Do you want to learn what **You can do to keep your drinking water safe?**

On Tuesday, **October 9, 2018 at 7:00 PM**, HPWA will be having our final meeting for 2018. Join The Town of Plymouth's Director of Public Health Dr. Nate Horwitz-Willis for a presentation brought to you by HPWA and Wildlands Trust. Dr. Nate earned his Doctorate in Public Health from Harvard and joined the Plymouth community in 2017. The presentation will be at the Wildlands Trust's Community Conservation Barn, 675 Long Pond Road.

The program will provide information on what the Public Health Department is doing to keep our aquifer, wells and ponds healthy and what we as watershed residents can do in our homes and property to maintain safe water in our wells and manage our septic systems. He will also answer questions about health and safety concerns you may have. This program is free, but preregistration is requested at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/healthy-safe-water-in-plymouth-tickets-50448183876>

Mass Boat Laws and Responsibilities

by Paula Kuketz, Chair Water Safety Committee

Why do we have laws? Laws keep our families and friends safe from harm. Boats and jet skis must stay 150 feet from shore.

Life Jackets are a must while jet skiing, tubing or paddling boats.

Night time boating – be on the lookout for the lights of other boats and after dusk proceed at only headway speed.

Jet Skis/PWC may be operated only from sunrise to sunset. No towing and no jumping the wake of another boat. It is especially important to wear a life jacket whenever you are on the water in the fall and winter months to prevent cold shock and drowning.

Safety - it's the law!

Water Quality Testing Program

by Don Williams, Water Quality Committee Co-Chair

August samples at the major swimming areas of Little and Great Herring Ponds showed very low e. coli levels; all tested areas are safe for swimming.

Up until the middle of August, Great Herring Pond had less silt and algae than in past years. Lab testing showed phosphorus to be at 0.007 milligrams/liter, lower than we have ever seen and below the impairment level. While this was good news, an algae bloom occurred in late August perhaps as a result of runoff from a major rainstorm on August 19. While the clarity and the late algae bloom are puzzling, it is encouraging that improved pond water quality may be in our reach. Jim Smith's August sampling of Little Herring Pond shows the underlying aquifer to be healthy and e.coli levels to be low. We now have results for 9 months; nitrate levels (indicative of negative human impact) resemble town well levels that are in the less densely populated areas of Plymouth.

I have started meeting with our Rising Tide Charter School intern, Zach Tympanick, who will be helping us to arrange and interpret pond water quality data for easy understanding. We will be plotting charts that will compare results of the same month in different years or results from different months in the same year, for example. We will be looking for trends and using the data to plan future testing.

I arranged a meeting between State Senator Vinnie deMacedo and myself and representatives from two Plymouth Departments, Public Works and Marine and Environmental Sciences. When I talked with the senator in June, he expressed an interest in seeing what Plymouth had done in the 3 sites where runoff remediation had been done. I had explained to him that each time a remediation had been done, a lowering of the phosphorus level had occurred. It would be important to know that pond water quality could be improved by the

less expensive expedient of controlling runoff rather than by costly measures such as sewerage or sediment phosphorus control. The senator was impressed and suggested that

Departments of Public Works join together to request more state budget money for runoff projects.

If you'd like to get involved in the Water Quality Committee, please consider joining us. Call Don at 508 833-4355.

Simple steps you can take to reduce the chance of tick-borne illnesses

by Martha Sheldon

These notes were taken at a HPWA-sponsored talk given by Blake Dinius, the first-ever Entomologist Educator for Plymouth County. The Blacklegged Tick, also called Deer Tick, is abundant throughout Massachusetts, especially here in Plymouth. They can carry the organisms that cause Lyme disease, babesiosis, anaplasmosis, and relapsing fever. While tick-borne illnesses can be very serious, they are **preventable**.

Perimeter Yard Spray - Bifenthrin – use the synthetic, it is very effective
Cover your skin - Sneakers and socks, pants, gloves, tuck your pants into your socks

Use permethrin on your clothes - super effective to repel and is cost effective. Have to apply in advance and allow to dry – only for clothing and shoes, once every 2 months

Protect exposed skin - DEET or Picardin cream

Do a tick check every time you come in from outside

After you remove tick, bag it, date it and get a tick report from Tick Check.com

<https://www.tickcheck.com/>. Test the tick: you want to know what the tick carried (one tick can carry 2 diseases!) and how to treat for it
Apply antiseptic - then take a selfie to document the location

Ticks are active all year long, even in winter when temperatures are above freezing.

Treating Woody Invasive Species

by Suzanne Mahler, GCFM Horticulture Chair

Norway maples, buckthorn, bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, barberries, multiflora rose bushes, and burning bushes are just a few of the pervasive intruders that are taking over our wild spaces, creating mono-cultures that crowd out our native plants which in turn has a negative impact on wildlife and pollinators. Tangles of oriental bittersweet vines send suckering roots across the terrain smothering all forms of plant life while climbing, strangling and often toppling majestic trees weakened by droughts or infestations of winter moths, gypsy moths, or diseases. Fall is the best time to wage war on invasive plants, especially woody shrubs and vines, when plants are transferring and storing nutrients from their leaves into their root systems to make it through the winter months. For woody invasive plant species, vines such as bittersweet, poison ivy, and brambles, or other woody seedlings like tap-rooted oaks planted by squirrels, cut the stems or trunks down to 1-2 inches. Within a few minutes, apply **concentrated**, not ready-to-use formulations of Roundup or Kleenup, which contain glyphosate to the fresh cut with a foam paint brush. Always be sure to wear gloves when applying any pesticides or herbicides which are potentially carcinogenic. This procedure is less effective in spring since plants are sending nutrients from their roots upward to generate new growth. Additional treatments may be required for very aggressive, persistent plants. (This information came from the Garden Club Federation of MA)

What Can I Do To RECYCLE Better?

Keep plastic bags out of household recycling. However, plastic bags and wrap are collected at many grocery stores. Next time you head to the supermarket, bring along your plastic bags and put them in the labeled recycling bin!

Two related issues are having a major effect on recycling in Massachusetts. The first and most significant issue is that too many of us are putting things in our recycling bins that cause problems at recycling facilities. Things like plastic bags, diapers, trash, food waste, garden hoses, bowling balls, clothing, and the list goes on. Because our recyclables aren't clean enough, countries such as China are refusing to import our recyclables to make new products and packaging.

What belongs in your recycle bin and what doesn't? As a rule of thumb, remember: bottles, cans, jars, jugs (empty and rinse), and paper.

Not in the bin: plastic bags and plastic wrap, no food or liquids (empty all containers), no clothing or linens, no tangles – no hoses, wires, chains or electronics. To insure our recyclables find a second life, we all need to make a better effort to Recycle Smart and stick to the list of approved recycling items.

RecycleSmartMA.org



**No Plastic Bags
or Plastic Wrap**
Return to retail store

Invasive Committee

by Jerry Levine

The Invasive Species Committee has copies of the following DCR State of MA. publications.

"Guide to Invasive Non-Native Aquatic Species in Massachusetts" and "A Guide to Aquatic Plants in Massachusetts"

If you would like a copy of either guide please contact Jerry at jersail123@gmail.com

Membership Appeal

by Martha Sheldon, Membership Chair

Not sure you paid your membership dues this year? If you're like me it might have slipped your mind. I hope you will be a HPWA supporter for 2018-19. Our Membership year runs from June 1 – May 31. Questions? Contact Martha Sheldon, Membership chair at martha.sheldon205@gmail.com.

Join over 200 current members and learn more about preserving our precious watershed. Thanks!

Yes! I want to help the HPWA monitor and improve the health of our ponds, rivers and wildlife by supporting water quality sampling, good stewardship practices, and education.

Our membership year is June 1- May 31

HPWA Membership Form 2017-2018

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

___ \$15 Individual Membership

___ \$25 Family Membership

___ \$55 Contributing Membership

___ \$100 Sustaining Membership

Make checks payable to **HPWA**

And mail to: HPWA

P O Box 522

Sagamore Beach, MA 02562



HPWA wants You!
Largemouth Bass - (Mikolji)