

# Weeds: What to Do About Them

## *Information for Hitchcock Lake Residents*

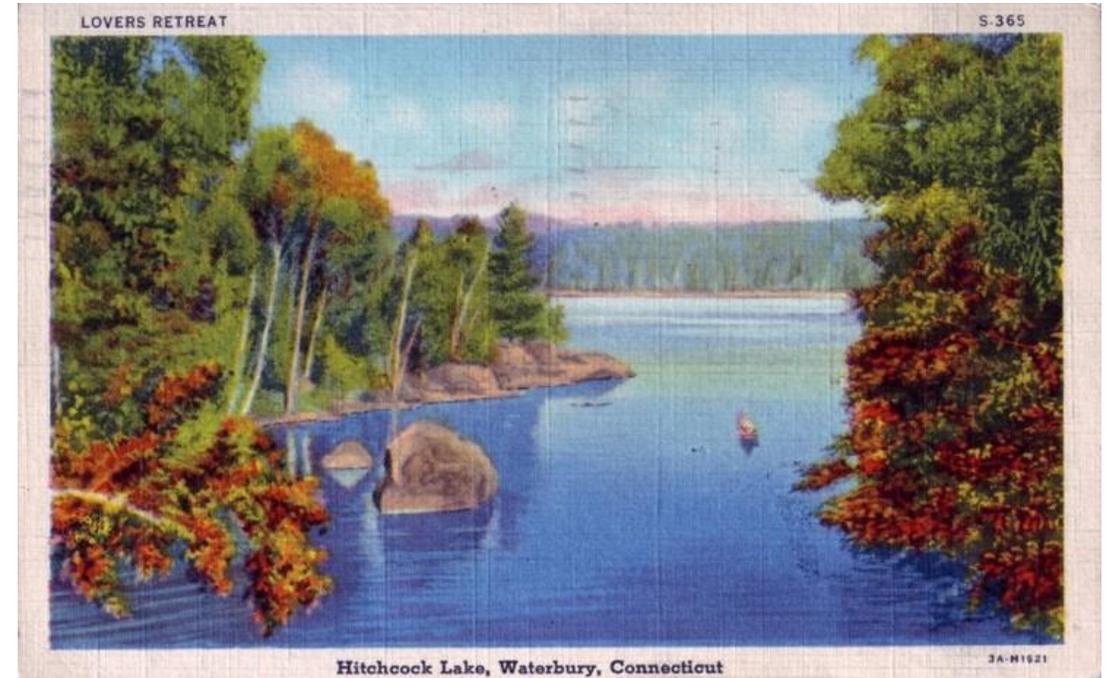
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# Overview

*By working together, we can help protect our valuable lake resources from invasive and nuisance native plants.*

- Weeds at Hitchcock Lake can interfere with boating, swimming and other activities at certain times of the year.
- The HLIA has a 1-year contract with Solitude to treat the weeds & a 3-year CT Department of Environmental Protection (DEEP) permit.
- There are ways residents can help with weed prevention (see p. 6).



# About Invasive & Nuisance Native Weeds

- The main invasive weed in Hitchcock Lake is curly-leaf pondweed, a perennial.
- Pondweed seeds drop into the lakebed, only to return the following year, despite removal of weeds themselves.
- Other weeds include large- and thin-leaf pondweed; spiny naiad; tape-grass; and filamentous algae.



*Curly-leaf pondweed*

--Photo by Leslie Mehrhoff, UConn

# Weed Removal Methods:

## Dredging, Harvesting, Herbicides

1. **Dredging** is expensive – millions of dollars. Permitting is required from local, state and federal agencies. Removal of all muck, weeds and sediment will eliminate weed growth, but weeds will eventually grow back when sediment accumulates again.
  - A full draining of the lake to completely dredge will kill entire habitat, and will hinder lake activities for potentially a few years.
2. **Harvesting:** Mechanical harvesting uses a device like a giant rake. It can cost up to \$100,000 for a lake the size of Hitchcock, and it may take 25 - 50 days to remove weeds. Suction harvesting or hand harvesting pulls weeds at the roots. Benthic barriers are mats that cover an area early in the season to stop growth for the season.
  - All of these options are available to individual homeowners.
  - Permits are needed for some of these methods.
  - Weeds can grow back.

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# Weed Removal Methods:

## Herbicide/Algaecide Use



**3. Herbicide/Algaecide use** is effective but must be consistently applied. For the last two years, HLIA has averaged spending of \$18,375 for inspections, water testing and treatments. The town of Wolcott contributes \$4,500 annually, as Mattatuck Beach is a town property.

- Pesticides help control weeds. They can prevent weeds if used early in the season. They cannot eradicate curly-leaf pondweed. Curly-leaf is targeted in 1<sup>st</sup> treatment; 2<sup>nd</sup> treatment targets other nuisance plants, as needed.
- HLIA works with Solitude, a BBB-accredited business, for weed treatment with herbicides/algaecides. The contract includes permitting, six inspections, algae/bacteria testing and typically two treatments.
- Connecticut's DEEP reviews treatment methods and grants permits.



# What You Can Do to Prevent Weeds

1. Eliminate lawn fertilizer use, or use only natural products. Nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizers promote weed growth.
2. Wash vehicles at a car wash. Driveway washing allows detergents and road salt to enter storm basins that drain into the lake.
3. Keep leaves, grass clippings, animal droppings and other yard waste out of the lake.
4. Rake washed-up weeds out of the lake, drain them, and bag them for trash pick-up.

# We need your help!

Volunteer to assist with lake weed control:

- ✓ Conduct regular lake inspections.
- ✓ Research best practices at other private lakes.
- ✓ Report problem areas promptly.
- ✓ Offer to help the HLIA Board with needed studies or other assistance.
- ✓ Pay annual dues, and consider donating to bolster annual weed-treatment funding.



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# A Message from the HLIA President



*“We truly need the financial support of all lakefront residents and those with deeded rights.*

*Our yearly dues are extremely reasonable, and go primarily to weed treatment.*

*We are grateful to those who make additional donations to the Renew the Lake fund.”*

**--Kathy Mrazik**

Contact HLIA at [Hitchcock.lake@gmail.com](mailto:Hitchcock.lake@gmail.com) or call Kathy at 203-788-7354.

