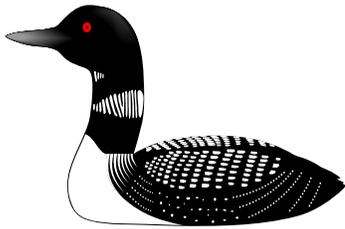

Taylor Pond Association News

*June,
2008*



*TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING*

Sunday, July 27, 2008, 7-9 p.m.

Taylor Pond Yacht Club

Guest Speaker to be announced/Light refreshments provided

Returns and address corrections to:

Michael Dixon

126 Everett Road

Auburn, Maine 04210

**2008 dues
are now
due**

Interested in
volunteering to
help with TPA
programs?

Please call Dana
Little at 784-1908
or Michael Dixon
at 783-7763.

Please visit the TPA website:

www.taylorpondassociation.org

President's Column

By Dana Little

Taylor Pond Association continues to be a healthy and active organization concerned with the quality of our pond. The summary of the 2007 water quality report indicates that our water remains unchanged from historical standards. A brief exam of this year's financial report from Michael Dixon shows that we can adequately meet current demands for our resources. Susan Trask reports in this issue about the success of two grants we expect to award this year for conservation efforts to improve water quality. We hope to have increased participation in grant activity from more of you this year. My article on Breeding Aquatic Birds reminds me of one of my favorite reasons why I love Taylor Pond. Please join us in helping to keep Taylor Pond healthy by joining our board or volunteering in other ways. Just contact me or one of our current board members.

Please attend our annual meeting, scheduled for 7 p.m. Sunday evening on July 27 at the Taylor Pond Yacht Club. In addition to discussing member concerns and future directions for the association, we will have a guest speaker and elect a slate of officers and directors for 2009. Here is the current slate, along with contact information:

President	Dana Little (784-1908)
Secretary	Susan Trask (784-4606)
Treasurer	Michael Dixon (783-7763)
Director	Larry Faiman (782-4648)
Director	Tim Priestly
Director	T.L. Mikesell
Director	Marc Tardif (783-7395)

If you are willing to volunteer to be an officer or director, please contact me to add your name to this list.

Secretary's Report

By Susan Trask

Last year, the TPA Board decided to put your membership dues and contributions to work by directly supporting the efforts of watershed landowners to improve their properties in lake-friendly ways. After researching various similar programs around the state, we devised the LakeSmart Grant Program. The Maine Department of Environmental Protection runs the federally-funded LakeSmart program, whereby experts evaluate the "lake-friendliness" of a property, suggest improvements, and then award the *LakeSmart Award* once certain criteria have been met. We decided to tie our own grant awards to the LakeSmart program in order to tap into their expertise on lake-friendly criteria and practices. With our own program, if landowners made the suggested improvements, they could apply to TPA for matching funds up to \$500.



Several property owners expressed interest, and we set up a number of LakeSmart evaluations last summer. Of those, two were already eligible for the LakeSmart award, while several others received recommendations for property improvements. We are happy to report that two TPA members are expected to be awarded the matching funds for the work done on their properties this spring. Merry Shore and Jim Whipple share a shoreline retaining wall which protects their little beach area on the East Shore. The wall was deteriorating badly, and they were at a loss as to how best to deal with the situation. After a

LakeSmart evaluation, it was decided that the best option was to install rip-rap right on top of the wall rather than try to remove it. Most of the work was completed last fall, with just a little left to go. Once the LakeSmart evaluator inspects the work this spring, we expect that Merry and Jim will receive their reimbursements from TPA.

We plan to offer the LakeSmart Grant program once again this year. The TPA Board continues to believe that the best way we can support excellent water quality on Taylor Pond is by helping individuals who want to implement lake-friendly practices on their properties. We are hopeful that this year more folks will avail themselves of the expert advice and financial assistance the LakeSmart Grant program provides. The evaluation itself is free, painless, and takes about 15 minutes. TPA board members are ready to help potential applicants find the appropriate local landscapers, contractors, or other experts who might complete the suggested improvements. In short, we want to make it as easy as possible for *you* to make your property more lake-friendly!

Congratulations to Merry Shore and Jim Whipple! Check out the LakeSmart Grant announcement elsewhere in the newsletter for specific information about this year's grant opportunity.

Treasurer’s Report on Finances and Membership

By Michael Dixon

In 2007, we had 124 dues-paying members, which is one fewer than we had the previous year. Most members rejoined, plus we added 6 new members. We had 84 basic memberships, plus 38 memberships at higher levels of giving, including 26 Supporters (\$50) and 10 Benefactors (\$100 or higher). The Association is very appreciative of all its members for their generosity.

The following is our 2007 end-of-year financial report.

Balance as of 12/31/2006		\$10,507.65
2007 Income		\$5,047.41
	Dues & Contributions	\$4,615.00
	Interest Income (CD and Checking)	\$432.41
2007 Expenses		\$1,694.01
	State fees	\$35.00
	C.O.L.A. dues	\$250.00
	Newsletter Printing & Mailing	\$663.14
	Annual Meeting Notice Printing & Mailing	\$130.07
	Water Monitoring supplies & testing	\$615.80
Net Gain for 2007		\$3,353.40
Balance through 12/31/2007		\$13,861.05

The Taylor Pond Association maintains a checking account at Androscoggin Bank, which had a balance of \$4830.21 as of 04/30/2008. We also own a Mechanics Savings Bank Certificate of Deposit worth \$8765.76 as of that date. As can be seen, we continue to build a balance that can be used to carry out the work of the Association, such as supporting projects that will decrease the amount of phosphorous entering the pond.

Our biggest expenses in 2007 were our water monitoring costs and our newsletter. The water monitoring findings are described in Dana Little’s article on water quality. As for the newsletter, in 2007 we mailed out over 240 copies. Because of its educational and public relations value, we always send the newsletter to all shorefront owners, whether they are TPA members or not, as well as to many “honorary” members, such as City Councilors.

This year and in the future, I expect that our biggest expense will become money spent funding projects designed to decrease the amount of phosphorous entering the pond, as described in Susan Trask’s articles regarding TPA Grants. In order to support this activity, Marc Tardif’s article makes the case for higher levels of giving to TPA.



The Breeding Aquatic Birds of Taylor Pond

By Dana Little

Taylor Pond provides essential habitat to a variety of aquatic birds that depend upon its clean and productive waters. Standing by the lake one can count dozens of bird species flying over, diving into or swimming in the pond. A short hike in any direction away from the pond demonstrates a rapid decline in the numbers and variety of birds. Fifteen species depend on the pond to raise their young. They typically arrive as soon as open water appears around the edges and stay until the pond surface freezes solid.



A pair of Canada Geese in recent years has been nesting on the pond. The male and female will form a pair that lasts for years. They lay 4-7 eggs and then share in raising the young. They often will climb onto lawns that reach all the way to the water. They will forage on sprouting vegetation and insects found on lawns leaving large fecal messes that can be hazardous to people walking on the lawn. Large flocks stop off to rest on the pond during migration north in the spring and south in the fall.

Four ducks commonly breed on the pond: Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, and Hooded Merganser. The Black Duck and Mallard stay year round. During the winter they swim in openings of

the ice on the pond until they close up and then they move to the Androscoggin River or down to the coast. The Wood Duck and Hooded Merganser slip down to the southern United States for the winter. But as soon as open water occurs, they reappear. The Wood Ducks can be found in the spring sitting in pairs in large trees around the pond. They like nesting in hollow cavities in old trees, but love it if you provide a nesting box for them. Nests will often contain 15-20 eggs, sometimes from multiple females. The adults and young commonly forage for small invertebrates in the marshes and swamps around Taylor Pond. The secretive Wood Duck, although common, takes an alert observer to spot them before they rapidly fly away when approached. The Hooded Merganser also nests typically in hollow trees or nesting boxes. Up to 35 eggs, which may be laid by several females, have been found in their nests. Hooded Mergansers have been known to lay their eggs in Wood Duck nests. Hooded Mergansers have narrow serrated bills to capture the small fish, frogs and crayfish that form the bulk of their diet. They are secretive birds that are best seen early in the morning or late in the evening diving for their prey in open water. The Black Duck and Mallard will typically lay 8-10 eggs in a grass lined nest usually found in a remote marshy area. Once the young hatch they are commonly seen throughout the day on open water of the pond, the female leading and a long line of young following behind.

Common Loon eggs have been found around the pond in the last two years. No chicks have been seen on the pond since at least 1983 when Audubon volunteers began monitoring the pond. I suspect that the lack of breeding success has to do with too many houses along the shore, too much boat traffic, and in the last few years, jet skis that regularly buzz the entire shore line. During the summer a careful search of the pond will usually find 4-6 Common Loons foraging for their favorite food of small fish. They appear tame and are easily approached in a canoe or may suddenly appear close to you while you are swimming.

Great Blue Herons nest in colonies, the closest one being on an island in the Androscoggin River. At daybreak the Herons leave their nesting and roosting sites to feed in places like Taylor Pond. During the daytime, Great Blue Herons can often be found standing in shallow water along the shoreline looking for their favorite foods; fish, frogs and crayfish. One day I watched a Great Blue Heron at the end of my dock work for over one-half hour swallowing a foot long prickly perch. The much smaller Green Heron typically nests in thickets in marshy areas. Difficult to find, one usually spots them feeding along natural shorelines, climbing up on overhanging shrub branches, waiting to spear any fish that swim below.

American Bitterns breed in the marshy areas on the side of the pond. Almost never seen, their presence is most commonly noted by their deep booming calls that have an other-worldly nature to them. They feed on small fish, frogs and crustaceans found in the marsh or along the sides of the pond. The Virginia Rail is one of the most difficult-to-spot birds of the pond. They spend all their time in thickets in the middle of the marsh. Their unusual call is commonly heard and once you recognize it you may see them walking about low in the bushes. They are not shy and will parade out in front of you with no apparent fear if you remain still. When we moved into our home here on the pond, one adult led and one adult followed with 10 young in between parading around the moving vans. The young look like black, fluffy ping-pong balls on stilts. Once fully grown they fly off to winter along the southern and gulf coast of the US.

It takes an alert observer to see the common Spotted Sandpipers which are usually seen feeding along the shoreline. Their constant bobbing and black spots on a white belly identify them. They breed in the woods and fields around the pond. They win the prize for aquatic birds flying the furthest as they commonly winter in Chile and Argentina.



Ospreys typically build large stick nests near the water. I have seen no nests near the pond but they can be seen daily catching fish. They hover over the water 30-100 feet and then dive feet first to come up with wriggling perch and bass. The Osprey population plummeted in the 1950's due to DDT but now they are abundant in Maine. During the winter, they travel down to the coast and as far south as South America. The largest bird found on Taylor Pond, the Bald Eagle, has a wingspan typically over six feet. Their nests can be found on the Androscoggin River, but they are regularly seen hunting over the pond. They feed on fish sometimes stolen from Osprey or snatched from the water. They also love to feed on gulls, ducks, and small mammals.



The Beauty of a Natural Buffer

By Susan Trask

We know that *the* major source of phosphorous loading to our lake is by means of dozens, even hundreds, of entry points, called non-point source pollution. All of those streams and rivulets that flow into the lake, especially during storms and spring runoff, contain phosphorous-laden particles that feed the algae in the lake. However, the more we can filter that water before it reaches the lake, the least amount of phosphorous it will contain. One of the simplest actions that lakeside residents can take to accomplish this filtering is allowing a buffer strip to grow up on your lakefront.



It does take a certain adjustment of attitude, a different mindset, to allow nature to take over the space between our lawn and our lake. At least a generation of conditioning has set us up to appreciate the more cultivated beauty of a formal lawn, and we're perhaps used to an unobstructed view of the water. I know that when we first lived at our Taywood Road property, except for a stand of day lilies, the lawn grew right down to the rocky ledge that defines water's edge. Learning of the benefits of providing more plant material for filtration near the water, we began letting more and more of the edge grow on its own, without mowing.

It's been fascinating watching the changing variety of plants that come up each year! Two kinds of rockwort attached themselves to our ledge early on, one white and one yellow. They have overspread the whole ledge, and have trapped soil in their roots, which in turn has provided a place for other "volunteers" to take hold. A lovely clump of purple Veronica planted itself at the edge of the rockwort, and a cute little patch of hens 'n' chicks washed down from an earlier rock garden and attached itself to the face of the ledge. One year I planted

a few lupine between the grass and the buffer. They have continued to be a presence, some years doing very well, other years with just a few stalks. (I almost lost them completely the year the groundhog decided he liked the taste of young lupine shoots!)

The day lilies have been joined by some lemon lilies, without any help from me! Since the yellows come a little earlier than the oranges, we have a nice progression of lilies from mid-June through late July. Further down the bank, we've had quite a variety as well. For a while wild daisies and Indian paintbrush did well. Last year we had a riot of pink and purple as the clover took over. Wild strawberries have appeared under the flowering crab as well. A few newcomers arrive each year, some of which I haven't been able to identify as yet.

By allowing a natural buffer to take hold, we know that we are doing what we can to reduce the amount of phosphorous-laden soil particles entering the lake from our property. But beyond that, we are thoroughly enjoying the truly beautiful array of flowers that nature is providing for us – completely free of charge!



Taylor Pond Water Quality Little Changed in 2007

By Dana Little

The water quality assessment program for Taylor Pond continues to find no significant changes. In 2007, we measured phosphorous at 11, identical to the prior year. Measurement of phosphorous provides the most accurate indication of water quality. The lower the level of phosphorous in the water, the better the quality of the water. The average for all lakes measured in Maine in 2007 was 12, indicating that Taylor Pond continues to have a better than average water quality.



We continue to work with the Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program which certifies our methods and reports our data to the state. Volunteers annually collect data on more than 350 lakes in Maine each year. This data allows the Department of Environmental Protection to compare Taylor Pond to other lakes and to understand its vulnerability to pollution and algae blooms.

Taylor Pond continues to fail to meet the standards for the highest water quality due to a lack of oxygen found at depths below 15 feet during warm weather. This lack of oxygen occurs when high levels of phosphorous produce more algae, which in turn consume more oxygen. Trout and salmon cannot survive in Taylor Pond because they primarily stay in the cool water only found below 15 feet, but at that depth our pond does not contain the oxygen they need to live. However, warm-water fish such as small-mouth bass, northern pike and pickerel thrive in the shallow waters of our pond. Furthermore, Taylor Pond serves the Department of Marine Resources as a highly valued nursery for alewives. Every year 3500 adult alewives are caught at the Brunswick fish ladder and trucked to Taylor Pond. The alewives lay over 100 million eggs in our pond. The juvenile alewives feed in the warm shallow waters of Taylor Pond all summer before traveling down Taylor Brook and the Androscoggin River to the Atlantic Ocean.

We need to continue to be careful about controlling phosphorous entrance into Taylor Pond. Although we measured our level at 11, it only takes a level of 15 to create an algae bloom. Algae blooms kill fish in the lake, create unpleasant odors, keep people from wanting to swim, and drastically lower property values. To keep our lake as healthy as possible, individuals can prevent erosion of dirt from their property into the lake by taking a few simple precautions:

- Leave at least a 20 foot natural buffer strip between the lake and your lawn
- Use only phosphorous-free fertilizers
- Never add sand to your shore front
- Stop any runoff of water, e.g., from rooftops and driveways from entering the lake.

For more information on how you can do your part to protect the water quality of our pond, please obtain a LakeSmart evaluation. Remember that the TPA grant program offers assistance to members in making improvements that will protect our pond.



Did you know that declining water quality and clarity is directly correlated with decreases in property values? Take the following steps to protect Taylor Pond and your property's value:

- Establish an unmowed vegetation buffer on the shoreline
- Use phosphorous free fertilizers on lawns and phosphate-free detergents
- Control runoff and erosion on your property

\$500 grants available to help members with the process of making their properties LakeSmart. See related articles for details.

Taylor Pond Association LakeSmart Grants

By Susan Trask

The Taylor Pond Association endeavors to support the health and beauty of our precious resource through a variety of means. To that end, in the spring of 2005 we conducted a thorough survey of the entire watershed through a federal grant and with the assistance of the Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District. The final report of the survey, which was distributed in the fall of 2006, identified many properties that could be improved so as to be in line with established "best practices" of watershed property maintenance.

Many of the identified properties -- and others -- can be improved with modest investments of time and money. The TPA intends to encourage local property owners by offering matching grants to be used for the purpose of implementing recommended best practices. Qualified owners will work in conjunction with the Maine DEP's *LakeSmart* program to identify problems and solutions.

AVAILABILITY

1. Grant applications of up to \$500 will be considered.
2. If awarded, TPA funds must be matched by the applicant.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Applicants must be current members of the Taylor Pond Association.
2. The proposed site must be within the Taylor Pond watershed.
3. Applicants must undertake a LakeSmart evaluation of their property. LakeSmart is a grant-funded lake improvement program administered by the State of Maine's Department of Environmental Protection. For information about this program, go to <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/doclake/lakesmart/index.htm>.
4. Changes to be implemented must conform to LakeSmart recommendations.
5. Any vegetation planted during the project must be considered *noninvasive*. For more information about invasive plant species, visit the website of the New England Wildflower Society: <http://www.newfs.org/FAQ/FAQ8INV.htm>.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

1. Alert the TPA Board of your interest in applying for a grant. (See contact information below.) A board member will coordinate LakeSmart evaluations for interested applicants, help you with the application process, and assist you in finding appropriate local contractors to consider your work.
2. Submit a one- to two-paragraph description of your proposed project. Include a breakdown of projected expenses, delineating both (a) materials to be used, and (b) estimated labor. (Personal labor may be included, at the rate of \$12 per hour.)
3. Submit application to: Taylor Pond Association, c/o Susan Trask, 75 Taywood Rd., Auburn, ME 04210 or via email at susantrask@roadrunner.com.

GRANT AVAILABILITY: Spring – Fall, 2008

1. Applications will be evaluated as they are submitted.

PROJECT COMPLETION:

1. Upon completion of the project, notify TPA so that a LakeSmart review can be scheduled.
2. Submit receipted bills, records of personal labor (if a part of original accepted grant), and documentation of the completed project to TPA.
3. TPA will reimburse the matching funds to the applicant upon review.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Susan Trask
75 Taywood Rd.
Auburn, Maine 04210 susantrask@roadrunner.com

TPA T-Shirts & Caps

We continue to have a limited supply of TPA t-shirts and caps for sale. These are very attractive, high quality items, and make great gifts. Your purchase helps support the work of the TPA. T-shirts are \$10 (\$12 for XXL) and caps are \$15. Please contact Michael Dixon at 783-7763 or msdixon@roadrunner.com to purchase yours.



Why TPA Needs a Growing Bank Balance

By Marc Tardif

I would like to encourage members to continue to give generously to the Taylor Pond Association. It is important that we continue to grow our bank balance, so that we can accumulate funds that can be used to conduct remedial work associated with problem sites identified in the 2006 watershed survey. It is anticipated that in approximately three years, the capital fund will have accumulated enough money to tackle several larger projects. The board will work diligently to determine the highest and best use of funds with regard to potential water quality improvement, relative to the costs associated with specific projects. The additional capital may also improve our chances for obtaining matching grant money.

The basic TPA dues are low in comparison to other Maine lake associations. The board is grateful to those members who voluntarily pay more than the minimum, and we respectfully request that members capable of contributing more continue to do so.

2008 Membership Renewal Form

Please send your tax-deductible dues contribution (payable to TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION) and completed membership form to:

Michael Dixon, Treasurer
Taylor Pond Association
126 Everett Road
Auburn, ME 04210

If you fold this sheet along the dotted lines on the other side, insert a check, and tape the ends and flap, you can use this sheet as a mailer. If you have questions about whether you have already paid your dues, please call Michael Dixon at 783-7763 or email msdixon@roadrunner.com, or you can check your mailing label. If you've already paid your 2008 dues, it will have "2008 dues paid" printed on it.

2008 MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TAYLOR POND ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (CIRCLE ONE)

BASIC	SUPPORT	BENEFACTOR	OTHER
\$25.00	\$50.00	\$100.00	_____

ALL DUES & CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE

First Class
Stamp
Required

Michael Dixon, Treasurer
Taylor Pond Association
126 Everett Rd
Auburn, ME 04210
