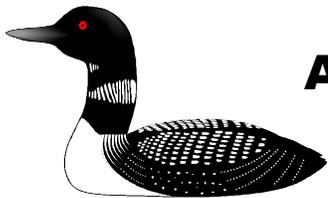

Taylor Pond Association News

*Summer
2003*



Annual Meeting Notice

Sunday June 1, 7:00 PM Taylor Pond Yacht Club

Returns and address corrections to:

Bettyann Sheats
104 Terrace Road
Auburn, Maine 04210

Volunteers

The Taylor Pond Association is recruiting the help of volunteers to help with the operation of the association. There are a lot of things happening and we would like your help. There are immediate needs for several positions. See details inside.

See more information about Taylor Pond
in the association's new website at
www.taylorpond.com

News from the Board

Submitted by Dana Little

TPA has been busy this last year. We had been quiet for several years with little sign of life. The "Taylor Ridge Development" on Garfield Road spurred us into action this last fall. This development's location in the Taylor Pond watershed threatened to add to the pond's phosphorous overload and promote a worsening in water quality. A TPA member first brought the problem to the attention of the board in September. Another TPA member reported problems to the EPA at the first house site. The EPA and the city fined the subcontractor in November for multiple violations including the lack of erosion control measures. TPA had multiple representatives at each of 3 Auburn Planning Board meetings for public input on the project during the fall and winter. We hired Scott Williams for expert advice and accomplished the following outcomes:

1. A delay in construction until an adequate phosphorous plan was developed that met Scott Williams' approval
2. Deed restrictions on the six lots that specify house, driveway, buffer zone and septic system location to minimize phosphorous runoff
3. More intense supervision of the site by the city of soil management practices and
4. A requirement that individual owners would need to contact Androscoggin Soil and Water Conservation to approve of cutting trees.

The Young's Corner Road improvement also threatened to increase phosphorous in Taylor Pond. An alert TPA member notified us that the construction crew was planning to pipe runoff from the road directly into Lapham Brook. A simple phone call to the city engineer in October corrected this problem. We have been working closely with Phoebe Hardesty of Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation to try and head off problems like Young's Corner. A board member and Phoebe recently toured the entire pond to identify areas with erosion problems. This summer we plan on doing one or two demonstration projects. Next year we will write a federal grant with Phoebe. We will apply for

EPA funds to do a formal survey of erosion problems in the entire watershed for Taylor Pond. We then intend the following year to apply for funds to solve the erosion problems found in the survey.

The Board for TPA has been meeting every 2 months this last year. Our primary goals include maintaining water quality, monitoring development within the watershed, educating residents in the watershed on best practices to preserve water quality, interfacing with government agencies and bringing people together with a common interest in the lake. We depend on your support through the payment of dues. This past year 90% of the dues was spent on purchasing water quality monitoring services and outside expert advice. The rest of the money was spent on postage and mailing. We hope to cut mailing costs this coming year through the use of our new website www.taylorpond.org. Board members volunteer their time to help Taylor Pond. Volunteers do Ninety percent of the work of TPA. Please consider joining or renewing your membership for 2003.

Would a Youth Conservation Corp program work on Taylor Pond?

Submitted by Michael Dixon

Recently, I saw a news item about Thompson Lake's Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) program. For each of the last two summers, Thompson Lake has had the benefit of a work crew of five 16 to 18 year olds working under a Crew Chief and a Coordinator, providing free labor to perform conservation and preservation projects, e.g., planting vegetative buffers, installing erosion controls on private roads (with the cost to landowners being only for materials). The crew and its overseers were paid from federal grant money, which the Thompson Lake Association had obtained with the help of Phoebe Hardesty of the Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District.

I was intrigued with this idea and contacted Phoebe. After several phone conversations, TPA president Dana Little and I met with Phoebe and our biologist Scott Williams to consider whether

TPA should apply for an EPA grant to undertake a project. We considered a grant to either do an immediate survey of the watershed to identify problem spots, or alternatively to develop a Watershed Management Plan. Either of these might have led to a follow-up grant to do a YCC program in order to address identified problem areas.

During the course of our discussions, Phoebe and I did a quick drive-by review of the pond one Friday morning. We drove Youngs Corner Road, West Shore Road, Dana Little's driveway, the newly developed road for a new house being built, Taywood-Simpson's Beach Road, Crescent Beach Road, Terrace Road, and the campground road. Phoebe noted lots of needs with regard to road maintenance and establishment of vegetative buffers.

Phoebe and I then talked some about where we are as an organization. She was impressed with our website and with the fact that our board is meeting regularly, but she also wondered whether we are ready to take on the responsibility of a grant. Each grant requires that the organization awarded the grant provide matching funds. This can be through in-kind donations, such as labor. For example, if we got a \$10,000 grant, say to develop a watershed management plan, then we would be talking about putting in the equivalent of 9 or 10 full work weeks, i.e., between 350-400 hours of labor to meet the in-kind requirement. Without an effective and active membership, meeting the

match through in-kind labor is a daunting obstacle.

Ultimately, the TPA Board of Directors decided that the time is not right to pursue a grant this year. Rather, it made sense to take a year to rebuild the TPA, by undertaking some low cost projects. In that regard, Phoebe offered some worthwhile suggestions. She thought it was important that TPA become more involved and visible with city government and staff, with regard to decisions being made that might affect the pond, i.e., by sending a representative to all the citizen board (council, planning, and zoning board) meetings, as a way of increasing our presence and ensuring that the well-being of the pond remained high on the radar. She also recommended that we plan some work days (e.g., clean up, planting), do some get-togethers (e.g., a barbecue for TPA members and potential members, and hold some fund raisers for the association, all of which would be aimed at energizing, rejuvenating, and raising the profile of the organization. Phoebe has agreed to stay involved as an informal consultant, and will be there when we are ready to go forward if we eventually decide to seek a grant in some future year.

The TPA is at a critical juncture and it is important that we become more active and reenergized. Please come to our annual meeting and get involved in addressing the issues facing the pond.

We are looking for additional volunteers. We need people for the following activities:

1. Attendance at city meetings such as the planning and zoning boards to advocate for Taylor Pond
2. Participation in demonstration projects for soil and water conservation
3. To assist next spring in a watershed survey to look for erosion problems (you will be trained this)
4. People interested in serving on the board.

The most important volunteer activity that I ask each of you is to look at your own property and ask what you can do to improve the pond. For most people, this would be to make sure your property has a natural buffer area between the pond and any lawn or structure.

Please feel free to contact me, at president@taylorpond.org or mail me at 585 Garfield Road, Auburn, ME 04210, with your interest in volunteering or any questions on how to create a buffer zone.

General Membership Meeting of Taylor Pond Association

Sunday June 1, 2003 at 7pm at Taylor Pond Yacht Club. **Anyone** interested in or living near Taylor Pond is welcome to attend. The tentative agenda for the meeting will be

1. Review of the last year's activities
2. Treasurer's report
3. Information on applying for federal money to help Taylor Pond
4. Review of the 2002 Water Quality Report
5. Election of Board Members
6. Vote to change current bylaws and dues
7. Open floor to general discussion on our goals for the next year
8. Any other business that may come to our attention before the meeting.

Nominees for Taylor Pond Association Board for 2003-2004

Officers:

President: Dana Little
Treasurer: Michael Dixon
Secretary: Susan Trask
Mailings: Bettyann Sheats

Board Members:

Dan Thayer
Tim Priestly
Mike Mikesell
Bud Large

**Bring a friend or neighbor to
the Annual Meeting
Sunday June 1, 2003 at 7pm
Taylor Pond Yacht Club**

2002 Taylor Pond Water Quality Report Summary – Scott Williams

Overall, 2002 was a good year for Taylor Pond. In fact, over a 33 year monitoring period, the lake was clearer only once, and that was in 2001! Based in data from other lakes in Maine, it is likely that the unusually dry weather during the past two summers played a role in the improved water clarity in Taylor Pond.

Despite the good news concerning water clarity Taylor Pond continued to experience a substantial loss of dissolved oxygen in the deepest area of the water during the course of the monitoring period. The loss was consistent with historical dissolved oxygen profiles for the lake during the past two decades. The extent to which this loss may be worsening is not clear at this time. However, the loss of oxygen in deep water should be taken seriously because of its negative effect on water quality and animal life.

Dissolved oxygen is an important chemical regulator in the lake ecosystem. When concentrations drop below a critical threshold (usually 1-2 parts per million), soluble

phosphorus from the bottom sediments may enter the overlying water, potentially acting as a powerful stimulant for additional algal growth. The result can be a vicious cycle, resulting in downward spiraling water quality. Total phosphorus samples taken near the bottom of the deepest area of the lake in July and August 2002 were substantially higher in concentration (19 and 43 ppb respectively) than surface concentrations (11 and 10 ppb) on the same days. The sampling results suggest that phosphorus was being released from the bottom sediments at that time.

During the past several years, many Taylor Pond shoreline residents have observed a short-term, but intense algal bloom that has taken place, usually during the month of September. This occurrence has been the result of the natural early fall "turnover", during which the water throughout the lake mixes. The bloom occurs when the phosphorus-rich water near the lake bottom is swept to the surface, where it is rapidly metabolized by the algae. There is a potential for this phenomenon to occur earlier in the season (August), to be more intense, and to last longer if the oxygen loss in the pond worsens over time.

The conditions documented in 2002 provide a potentially confusing mixed message to the public. On the one hand, the lake was clear, relative to historical conditions. But the persistent oxygen loss tells us that Taylor Pond is still very stressed, and that we must continue to be vigilant about protecting water quality from the effects of watershed development. It has been encouraging to observe the improvement in water clarity during the past two years. The positive changes over a short period of time serve to demonstrate to landowners that reduced polluted runoff to the lake can result in rapid improvements in water quality. But we cannot rely on drought to protect Taylor Pond. Landowners must implement conservation practices in such a manner that during normal weather conditions runoff to the Pond contains less phosphorus, sediment and other pollutants. For complete report go to www.taylorpond.org .

Wildlife

The most numerous species of animals around the pond by far are the insects. Midges like to swarm around landmarks such as a certain bush, post or even a person. Canoeing along the ponds edge one occasionally looks up to see a swarm of a hundreds of small flies following your head. While sailing last Labor Day weekend we noticed the pond surface covered with what looked like winged ants. Calculating from the density on the surface and the area of the pond I calculated over twenty-seven million flies on the pond. The perch and sunfish for days could be seen jumping above the surface and sucking these morsels down.

Just before removing our dock this year we noticed a family of 3 otters hanging out around the end. They often can be seen in the evenings diving around the end of the dock, which is in about 5 feet of water. When I pulled in the dock for the winter I found a huge pile of mussel

Emergency Vehicles

When parking your vehicle, please leave enough space for emergency vehicles to pass, not just other cars. Our narrow roads get crowded with summer visitors and toys (trailers...). Also keep roadside and overhead branches clear for these vehicles. Service vehicles often block the roads as necessary but the driver should remain in sight of the vehicle and usually with the vehicle running.

shells that they had left. I am sure they laid up some good winter fat with those; my son can collect a bucketful of large mussels within minutes along our shoreline.

December first our cove froze in and by the sixth the entire lake was frozen. December 14th we had a heavy rain that ended our skating. On the 15th 3 juvenile Bald Eagles collected on the ice and fed on a fish frozen into the surface. After the snow fell we had 3 months of tremendous cross-country skiing on the lake. An occasional coyote could be spotted loping across the ice. Taylor Brook outlet remained open water all winter and hosted a flock of over 60 Mallards all winter along with a smaller number of Black Ducks. March 28th an adult otter was spotted running and sliding on its belly across the pond for at least a mile before disappearing. By April 14th open water appeared along the edges of the pond and the Tree Swallows returned. Swallows feed only on flying insects and are a harbinger of the oncoming black flies, mosquitoes, horseflies and deerflies that we come to the lake to escape from in the warm weather.

Yesterday, as I sat outside enjoying the spring sunshine, two loons came up and started feeding on small fish near the shore. We had heard them calling for days now and here they were in spectacular breeding plumage. Two beavers that were feeding on water plant roots out in the cove came in to inspect the loons and appeared to be chasing them. The beaver are slow swimmers, they would come within inches of the loons whereupon the loon would dive or paddle off with no apparent effort, leaving the beaver to search for them again. The swamp waters are now well warmed and as I write today the high pitched calls of peepers at night is deafening, the wood frogs quacking call occurs in lesser numbers and the leopard frog's growling call can be heard only if listening carefully. Dana Little

We Now Have A Taylor Pond Web Site

We have created a web site that any one in the world can look at to find out more about Taylor Pond and our organization www.taylorpond.org. You can ask questions, apply for membership, send in your favorite photograph or contact the current president president@taylorpond.org. We have a number of links to help you with your watershed living and answer many common questions on the site. David Little is our current volunteer webmaster and can be contacted about technical problems with the site webmaster@taylorpond.org.

Invasive Species

Currently we have no aquatic invasive plant species in Taylor Pond. Milfoil has been discovered in Lake Auburn and many lakes and ponds in Maine now contain invasive species. It only takes one careless person to introduce one fragment into the pond to create a tremendous problem. Minute fragments of invasive plants are capable of reproducing and overrunning the entire pond. Activities by which ponds have been contaminated include introducing a boat or trailer into the pond that has attached plant particles from a contaminated pond, jet skis that have sucked in plant particles from another pond, fishing tackle with attached plant particles and dumping aquaria plants into the pond.

This last summer we conducted a survey of aquatic plant species. Surveyors included Mike Auger from the Nature Conservancy and Androscoggin Land Trust, Yolande Gay, my son Robbie and myself. We will be doing this survey again this summer looking for invasive species.

The worst invasive animal we currently may have is the Northern Pike. An ice fisherman informed me this winter that pike have been introduced (illegally) and caught in Taylor Pond. I have no independent confirmation of this but if it is true it could be a problem. Pike are an aggressive species and will destroy hopes of ever having cold-water fish (trout and salmon) that were once established in the pond. Furthermore, pike may eat all the fish that eat the zooplankton (small animals that float in the water) that eat the phytoplankton (small plants that float in the water, that is: algae). Sabattus Pond had pike introduced and it is believed made the algae problem that already existed worse.

The illegal introduction of any fish into Maine waters is a Class E crime, punishable by fines up to \$10,000. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is offering a minimum reward of \$2,000 for information leading to the apprehension of people illegally introducing fish. Dana Little

Annual Dues

Taylor Pond Association membership is open to anyone who supports the goals of the organization and pays their annual dues. Your dues of \$25 for the year 2003 are now due. When paying dues this year please consider paying up for any dues missed in past years and a voluntary contribution to the organization. Although we are non-profit you currently cannot take a tax deduction for any contributions.

Please return this notice with you dues of \$25.00 for the period June 1, 2003 to June 1, 2004.

Mail to:

Michael Dixon, Treasurer
126 Everett Road
Auburn, Maine 04210

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| <p>Your Dues Keep Our Pond Association Strong And Viable.</p> |
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Your Name _____

Address _____

Thank You