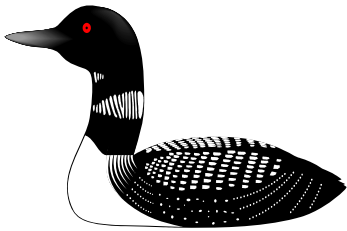

Taylor Pond Association News

*August,
2009*



TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, September 2, 2009, 7 p.m.

Taylor Pond Yacht Club

Guest speaker-Auburn Planner & Code Officer Eric Cousens

Returns and address corrections to:

Michael Dixon

126 Everett Road

Auburn, Maine 04210

**Please see
page 12 for
an important
notice
regarding
2009 dues
and your
membership
status**

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 2008 water quality report indicates that our water remains essentially 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. Larry Faiman's report on the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee for Auburn reveals how Taylor Pond plays an important role in our community. Susan Trask has nicely summarized our main activities this last year in her report. She continues to expertly manage the LakeSmart Grant Program which matches up to \$500 for home-owner projects that reduce phosphorous runoff from their property. 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 Wednesday, September 2 at 7 p.m. 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 2010.

The proposed slate is:

President Dana Little (784-1908)
Secretary Susan Trask (784-4606)
Treasurer Michael Dixon (783-7763)
Director Larry Faiman (782-4648)
Director Tim Priestly (784-8393)
Director T.L. Mikesell (783-0575)
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

Although no new initiatives were taken on in the past year, your Board of Directors has continued its mostly behind-the-scenes work to protect Taylor Pond's water quality. To that end, we have:

- Maintained the paperwork and filing necessary to remain a 501c3 organization
- Made decisions about the best way to manage the Association's money
- Monitored water quality through our own testing
- Observed construction projects in the Taylor Pond Watershed and maintained ongoing communication with the city of Auburn about these projects
- Steered lakeside property owners toward lake-friendly improvements through our LakeSmart Grant program
- Considered ways to alert boaters to the 200-ft no-wake regulations
- Advocated for lake issues with the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee
- Fielded concerns from members about beaver dams
- Attended workshops on water quality, invasive plants, and other topics
- Distributed a newsletter with informative articles and other items of interest

The TPA Board of Directors currently consists of: Dana Little, president; Michael Dixon, treasurer/membership; Susan Trask, secretary, and directors Larry Faiman, Dick Marston, T.L. Mikesell, Tim Priestly, and Marc Tardif. We are very much interested in seeing some new members to the Board. Meetings are minimal (3-4 per year), but the work is important! Please consider whether you might be interested in contributing to this very important cause!



Treasurer's Report on Finances and Membership

By Michael Dixon

We mailed out almost 250 copies of our 2008 newsletter. Our database is constantly updated in an effort to send the newsletter to all property owners in the TPA shoreland zone, whether they are TPA members or not. We also send the newsletter to many "honorary" members, such as City Councilors, members of the Planning Board, and so on.

In 2008, we had 107 dues-paying members, which is 17 fewer than we had the previous year. We had 76 basic memberships, plus 31 memberships at higher levels of giving, including 20 Supporters (\$50) and 11 Benefactors (\$100 or higher). The Association is very appreciative of all its members for their generosity.

The following is our 2008 end-of-year financial report:

Balance 12/31/2007					\$13,861.05
2008 Income					
	Dues & Contributions	\$4,592.00			
	Interest Income (CD and Checking)	<u>\$366.79</u>			
	Income Total	\$4,958.79			
2008 Expenses					
	State fees		\$35.00		
	C.O.L.A. dues		\$250.00		
	VLMP Contribution		\$100.00		
	Newsletter Mailing		\$691.40		
	Annual Meeting Notice Mailing		\$85.65		
	End of Year Dues Notice Mailing		\$55.56		
	Miscellaneous Printing & Mailing		\$17.56		
	LakeSmart grants		\$1,000.00		
	Water Monitoring supplies & testing		<u>\$159.60</u>		
	Expense Total		\$2,394.77		
Net Gain for 2008				\$2,564.02	
Balance 12/31/2008					\$16,425.07

As of 07/31/2009, the Taylor Pond Association checking account had a balance of \$6593.99. Our Certificate of Deposit is currently worth \$13337.54. 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.

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.

Bird Observations

By Dana Little

This year I observed a breeding Common Merganser for the first time on Taylor Pond. This merganser is a large bird typically over two feet in length with a wingspan of nearly three feet. The female, which I observed, has a brown head with a short crest behind. The bill is bright red and serrated to hang on to the fish for which it dives. The body is a light gray that blends into the background making the mother hard to observe. My son, Robbie, first saw her carrying three newly-hatched chicks on her back July 12th. When I saw her on the 13th and subsequent days, only one



chick remained. Both mother and chick could be observed swimming along with their head held at water level with the eyes below to spot fish. One can see this fish-searching behavior often in the Common Loon which is a regular visitor to Taylor Pond. Whenever the baby merganser startled, it quickly jumped onto its mother's back and rode away. The Common Merganser typically prefers deep, clear lakes and rivers and subsists mostly on small fish caught underwater while swimming. The adults usually nest in a tree cavity near water 15-20 feet above ground and lay 8-11 eggs. During the winter they can be spotted in the Androscoggin River just below the falls and anywhere along the southern Maine coast. When the ice melts in the spring this bird is one of the first to make an appearance along with the Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers in the open water near the shoreline of Taylor Pond.

Yellow-billed Cuckoos can be heard at this time of year commonly calling in the thickets surrounding Taylor Pond. This species has declined 42 percent since 1980 according to Breeding Bird Survey data. I have difficulty spotting the adult as they like dense vegetation but occasionally they can be seen flying around my yard. They typically lay 4 eggs in a nest found in low shrubs. The young develop rapidly and are out of the nest within 3 weeks. The adults love to eat tent caterpillars and cicadas and when large outbreaks of these insects occur, the adults will lay many more eggs than usual. Although you are unlikely to spot this bird soon, you can detect its presence by learning the song at www.allaboutbirds.com.



Taylor Pond Water Quality Little Changed in 2008

By Dana Little

Taylor Pond Association monitors and reports on the water quality of our pond on an annual basis. We have been doing all of the field work ourselves since 2004. Testing first began on our pond 35 years ago. We publish the annual reports as they become available on our website at www.taylorpondassociation.com. Our most recent report, for 2008, revealed that our phosphorous levels remained steady last year at 10 parts per billion which is identical to the average over the last 35 years. The average phosphorous level for all lakes in Maine was 12 parts per billion which indicates that Taylor Pond continues to have slightly 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 across the state 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 last summer continued 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. Taylor Pond continues to serve the Department of Marine Resources as a highly valued nursery for alewives. Again this year, 3500 adult alewives caught at the Brunswick fish ladder were trucked up and dumped into Taylor Pond. Scientists estimate that these 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 10, 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 contact us to obtain a LakeSmart evaluation. Remember that the TPA grant program offers assistance to members in making improvements that will protect our pond.



LakeSmart Grant Program Update

By Susan Trask

Three years ago the TPA Board made a decision that the best use of membership dues and contributions was to support the efforts of lakeside property owners to improve their land in lake-friendly ways. We availed ourselves of the expertise of the DEP's LakeSmart Award program in order to be sure interested parties got the most up-to-date information and advice.

As a result of our efforts, 10 properties have been evaluated by LakeSmart personnel. Of these, four received the program's *Outstanding Achievement Award* and required no further work. Other families were given recommendations that range from installing rip rap to fixing areas of rainwater run-off to planting more in the buffer strip. To date, three property owners have applied for and received their \$500 matching grant from TPA to help offset the cost of the improvements they made. Another round of evaluations will most likely take place before the end of August.

The idea of having someone come and "evaluate" one's property may sound intrusive or scary to some, but it's really quite painless and simple. The DEP's LakeSmart employee visits the property (only upon request), accompanied by a representative from the Androscoggin Valley Soil & Water Conservation District. They ask the property owner a series of questions, and then evaluate the land in five categories:

- Road, driveway, and parking areas
- Structures and septic system
- Lawn, recreation areas and footpaths
- Shorefront and beach areas
- Undeveloped land

They then convert the answers to the questionnaire and what they see into a formula, which determines whether the property qualifies for an award. The purpose of the awards is to heighten awareness of lake-friendly practices, and to get others interested in looking at their own properties in terms of what may be helping –or hurting – the lake.

For *our* purposes, the award itself is irrelevant, although we respect its value. We are more interested in the suggestions that the experts make, so that concerned owners can be sure they are doing the "right thing" for Taylor Pond when they improve their land.

Those who seek reimbursement from TPA do not need to have qualified for the LakeSmart award. They need only demonstrate that the work done was in line with LakeSmart recommendations.

More complete information about the LakeSmart program may be found at the DEP website at www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/doclake/lakesmart/index.htm. For more information about our LakeSmart matching grant program, please contact Susan Trask at susantrask@roadrunner.com or at 784-4606.



Maine Boating regulations state:

Speed Regulations

Watercraft may not be operated at a speed greater than headway speed while within the water safety zone or within a marina or an approved anchorage in coastal or inland waters except while actively fishing. "**Headway speed**" means the minimum speed necessary to maintain steerage and control of the watercraft while the watercraft is moving. The operator of any watercraft must operate at a reasonable and prudent speed for existing conditions and regulate the speed of a watercraft so as to avoid danger, injury or unnecessary inconvenience in any manner to other watercraft and their occupants, whether anchored or under way. The operator must consider the effect of the wash or wave created by their watercraft to waterfront piers, floats or other property or shorelines."

Water Safety Zone means the area of water within 200 feet of any shoreline, whether the shoreline of the mainland or of an island."

For the sake of all, please operate your watercraft responsibly.



Did you know that declining water quality and clarity are 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 article on page 8 for details.



Auburn's Comprehensive Plan Update Committee

By Larry Faiman

The City of Auburn, like many other cities and towns in the state, is presently undertaking a complete review of its Comprehensive Plan, the document which establishes the long term zoning and planning goals and priorities for the City. Ideally, the Plan is to be reviewed by the City every ten years. It has been a few more years than that since the last update of the Auburn Plan. Two members of the Board of Directors of the Taylor Pond Association, Michael Dixon and Larry Faiman, have served on the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee since it was established in July, 2008. The Committee has been meeting twice a month and has reviewed all manner of aspects of life in Auburn, including recreation, public safety, natural resources, transportation, future land use, and others.

One issue which received considerable attention is the protection of the city's wonderful water resources, its rivers and lakes. Taylor Pond was the subject of several meetings and received much favorable attention. The unanimous consensus of the Committee was that Taylor Pond and these other resources must receive the highest level of protection, including maintenance of buffers, shoreland zoning provisions, and improved water quality. It was agreed by all Committee members that these resources are of critical importance to the City, both as a source of recreation and



favorable community perception, but also as a source of significant tax revenue. The Committee specifically voted to maintain the restrictive zoning in many of those areas of the Pond watershed which have yet to be developed and which are critical to the Pond, although they did decide to expand residential development along both sides of Perkins Ridge, an area which drains into Lapham Brook, the Pond's main feed. The Committee also voted to recommend that the City enact an ordinance to prevent the application of phosphorus based fertilizers on lands adjacent to the Pond. The enforcement of this ordinance would significantly reduce phosphorus deposits in the Pond and decrease the likelihood of algae blooms.

We are hopeful that that the presence of Board members on the Committee has raised the level of awareness of the Pond and the need for its continued and enhanced protection. The Committee meets the first Tuesday and third Thursday each month, and members of the public are welcome.

TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 7 p.m. YACHT CLUB

A busy summer nears its end, but there is still time for the TPA Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will feature a question and answer session with City of Auburn Planner Eric Cousens regarding zoning regulations and Taylor Pond. Please attend our annual meeting on **Wednesday, September 2 at 7 p.m.** at the Taylor Pond Yacht Club. Light refreshments will be provided.



An Important Notice Regarding TPA Membership

If your mailing of the newsletter does not include a membership form, it means that you have paid your 2009 dues. If your copy of the newsletter does include a copy of the membership form, it means that you are not currently a dues-paying member of the Taylor Pond Association. Although we enjoy a healthy bank balance, an active membership remains essential to the overall well-being of our organization. If you have never been a member, but agree with our goals of maintaining the water quality of Taylor Pond in order to preserve the habitat and recreational opportunities and protect property values, please join us. If you are a former member who has not yet rejoined this year, please do so. If you are an active member, thank you for your ongoing support.

