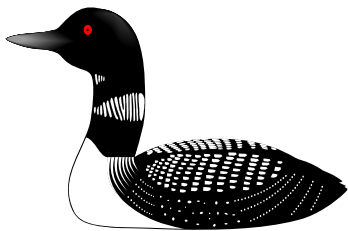

Taylor Pond Association News

*June,
2010*



***TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING***
Sunday, July 11, 2010, 7-9 p.m.
Taylor Pond Yacht Club
Guest speaker - Lake-friendly landscaping expert

Returns and address corrections to:

Michael Dixon
126 Everett Road
Auburn, Maine 04210

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



AN IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING TPA MEMBERSHIP

If your mailing of the newsletter does not include a membership form, it means that you have paid your 2010 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 mission of preserving the water quality of Taylor Pond and protecting 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.

Thanks to Marilyn Baker, Dom Casavant, Dana Little, Joel Olstein, Bill Phillips, Dyanne Smith, Tom Snowe, Paul Tardif, and Susan Trask for their photo contributions to the TPA

TAYLOR POND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING, SUNDAY, JULY 11, 7 P.M. TP YACHT CLUB

Please plan on attending the TPA Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will feature a question and answer session on LakeSmart and lake-friendly landscaping practices. Light refreshments will be provided.



CANDIDATES FOR THE 2010 TPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO BE VOTED ON AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

President	Dana Little (784-1908)
Secretary	Susan Trask (784-4606)
Treasurer	Michael Dixon (783-7763)
Board Member	Larry Faiman (782-4648)
Board Member	Dick Marston (784-1445)
Board Member	T.L. Mikesell (783-0575)
Board Member	Tim Priestly (784-8393)
Board Member	Marc Tardif (783-7395)
Board Member	Marc Tremblay (786-3035)

If you have internet access and are willing to volunteer to be an officer or director, please contact Dana Little to add your name to this list.

ICE-OUT: FUN, FACTS, AND REALITY

BY SUSAN TRASK

The first sign is usually a darkening of the thick dirty gray surface. Then you start to notice some small openings along the shoreline, and perhaps some wet-looking patches scattered here and there. Sometimes it will freeze back solid, but you know that the end of the long, still winter of ice on the lake is not far away.

It's never the same twice. Some years, you will awake to a suddenly-open expanse of water stretching nearly all the way across. Once you have large open patches, a good wind on a sunny day can do away with most of the

ice in short order. Other years that darkening effect continues, until the ice gradually disappears. (No, it doesn't actually *sink*, although many will insist that it does.) My favorite years are those where the deteriorating ice becomes honey-combed, with long shards that tinkle together like eerie, magical wind chimes when the wind blows.

It seems that each lake or pond has its own tradition of how one actually defines "ice-out." In an earlier, less eco-conscious time, some folks would drive a car out onto a certain spot on the lake and record when it fell through. Many lake watchers define ice-out less dramatically, say by when one can navigate from Point A to Point B, or merely when the ice is "virtually gone," as the Auburn Water District does. On Taylor Pond, a

number of lakeside enthusiasts held an ice-out pool for many years. Its winner was determined when Jan Marston and Pat Garcia certified that they couldn't see *any* ice in *any* cove. However the various locations define it, nearly everyone in the state noted their earliest-ever ice-out in 2010. This year Taylor Pond beat its previous record, set in 1981, by eight days, clocking out on March 20.

Those of us lucky enough to witness the yearly ice-out phenomenon count it as a real turning point, a sure sign that spring is coming soon, that crocuses will begin peeking through the remaining snow, and that muddy yards will be dry enough to pick up winter's debris. The earlier the better, right? The docks and boats in sooner, more days of boating, fishing and swimming. What's not to like?

Here's where a few facts of lake biology come in. Once the ice is gone, the sun warms the surface of the water and provides nutrients for algae and other plants to begin growing. The lower part of the lake remains relatively cold. Obviously,





the more sunny days we have, that upper warmed layer will be larger and the bottom colder layer will be smaller. Since the biological activity of the growing plants depletes oxygen, less of it will be available in the colder layers for fish. According to lake biologist Scott Williams, that warmer upper layer also creates a “more biologically productive environment for algae growth” and the possibility of increased proliferation of invasive plants. (So far, we don’t have any of these on Taylor Pond!)

Some will be quick to conclude that the state-wide record breaking of ice-out dates is because of global warming. Others will point out that one cannot pin down the data of a single year to a

single cause. Whatever the cause, we can certainly enjoy the benefits of our early spring. While we do, however, let’s also recommit to doing all we can to prevent our own actions from further jeopardizing our beautiful resource. Remember, the simple things really count: Keep a good buffer strip, refrain from using phosphorous-laden fertilizers, and control your boat wakes to prevent shoreline erosion. As we take full advantage of this beautiful season this year, let’s also be sure we do all we can to enjoy many spectacular ice-outs in the future!



For the record: Here are Taylor Pond's ice-out dates back through 1969, courtesy of Peg Wallingford and Jan Marston:

1969	Apr 21		1980	Apr 11		1991	Apr 8		2002	Apr 8
1970	Apr 27		1981	Mar 26		1992	Apr 15		2003	Apr 13
1971	May 1		1982	Apr 25		1993	Apr 21		2004	Apr 9
1972	Apr 30		1983	Apr 5		1994	Apr 19		2005	Apr 12
1973	Apr 17		1984	Apr 18		1995	Apr 13		2006	Apr 2
1974	Apr 16		1985	Apr 14		1996	Apr ?		2007	Apr 12
1975	Apr 25		1986	Apr 12		1997	Apr 23		2008	Apr 21
1976	Apr 14		1987	Apr 11		1998	Apr 8		2009	Apr 12
1977	Apr 14		1988	Apr 10		1999	Apr 8		2010	Mar 20
1978	Apr 28		1989	Apr 22		2000	Apr 6			
1979	Apr 21		1990	Apr 12		2001	Apr 10			



TPA MATCHING GRANT UPDATE

BY SUSAN TRASK

For the fourth straight year, the Taylor Pond Association is offering matching grants of up to \$500 for watershed residents to improve their property in lake-friendly ways. This year we've made it easier than ever to apply for and receive support. "Lake-friendly" improvements include (but are not limited to) creating or expanding a buffer strip, installing rip-rap, creating better walkways to the water, etc. So far we have awarded three grants, expending \$1500. Several more residents have used the grant program to have their properties evaluated and received expert advice on improvements, although they did not apply for matching grant funds.

Your Board of Directors still feels that your dues money is well spent in offering advice and monetary assistance to lakeside members who wish to enhance their property to improve the quality of living for both themselves and for the future. Grant monies are still available! For information or questions, please contact Susan Trask at susantrask@roadrunner.com or 784-4606.

INVASIVE PLANTS - TAYLOR POND'S BIGGEST THREAT

BY DANA LITTLE

What worries me the most when I think about water quality on Taylor Pond? Invasive plants have the ability to irreversibly change the nature of our pond. I grew up in Massachusetts where many of the lakes are now infested with invasive plants. I made summertime trips to cousins who lived on a lake in Wisconsin that now is congested with invasives. All of the lower 48 states except Maine have major problems and spend large sums on this problem. These plants can clog up the water, making swimming unpleasant. They tangle in boat motors and die off, at times in large numbers, using up all the oxygen needed by fish.

How easily can they enter the lake? Less than ½ an inch of a plant is all it takes to become established in a lake. People who move their boats from lake to lake are the most common source of transfer. Most invasives first appear near public boat ramps.

How likely are we to suffer an invasion? Consider the facts that invasives currently live in Lake Auburn, the Basin, the Little Androscoggin River, Range Pond, and Sebago and Thompson Lakes. The invasive plants have gradually progressed from southwestern Maine to the north and they ultimately threaten all lakes in Maine. We are in the direct path of this onslaught.

What can you do to prevent invasion of Taylor Pond? Never dump aquarium plants or bait fish into our pond. Inspect any boat placed in the water for attached plants especially small pieces that remain attached to the motor or trailer parts. Even small dried fragments have been known to come to life and spread an infestation.



TREASURER'S REPORT ON FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP

BY MICHAEL DIXON

We mailed out almost 250 copies of our 2009 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 2009, we had 122 dues-paying members, which is 15 more than we had the previous year. We had 76 basic memberships, plus 46 memberships at higher levels of giving, including 35 Supporters (\$50) and 11 Benefactors (\$100 or higher). The Association is very appreciative of the generosity of all its members.

The following is our 2009 end-of-year financial report:

Balance through 01/01/2009					\$16,425.07
2009 Income					
	Dues & Contributions	\$4,790.00			
	Interest Income (CD and Checking)	\$323.14			
	Income Total	\$5,113.14			
2009 Expenses					
	State fees		\$35.00		
	C.O.L.A. dues		\$250.00		
	VLMP Contribution		\$100.00		
	Web Hosting Fee		\$49.95		
	Dues Letter Printing & Mailing		\$113.10		
	Grant Announcement Printing & Mailing		\$182.38		
	Newsletter Printing & Mailing		\$761.88		
	Miscellaneous Printing & Mailing		\$15.17		
	Water Monitoring supplies & testing		\$176.23		
	LakeSmart grant		\$500.00		
	Expense Total		\$2,183.71		
Net Gain				\$2,929.43	
Balance through 12/31/2009					\$19,354.50

As of 06/21/2009, the Taylor Pond Association checking account had a balance of \$9109.03. Our savings account is currently at \$13497.33. 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.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

BY DANA LITTLE

On any sunny day from May to October, between the hours of 9 and 3 pm, you may see Ralph Gould or Woody Trask jump into their boat and head out to the deepest part of the lake. They are not looking for fish or a good swimming spot. Instead, they bring with them the tools needed for assessing the quality of the water in the pond that we love. Ralph wields the Secchi disk, a device that measures the transparency of the water. This last year's monitoring showed that the transparency averaged 4.7 meters which is slightly better than the 25 year average of 4.6 meters. Algae, dissolved organic material, and microscopic animals can all cloud the water and reduce the transparency. A reduced transparency may indicate an ailing pond that has too much algae. The average transparency for all lakes and ponds in Maine last year measured 4.81 meters, slightly better than Taylor Pond's. Shallow lakes like Taylor Pond tend to be warmer and have a higher biologic productivity than deeper lakes. The higher biologic productivity lowers the transparency of the water. If the transparency of the water falls too much, it may indicate a serious problem with the lake.

Woody has taken over my task this year of performing the more detailed testing of Taylor Pond's health. He uses various tools to measure the pond's color, acidity, alkalinity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, conductance, and phosphorous. Using this information, the likelihood of an algae bloom and the pond's biologic productivity can be measured. During 2009, I measured the phosphorous level at 10, which is identical to the 25 year average of 10 and lower than the average for all Maine lakes of 12. So long as our level remains below the level of 15, our lake is unlikely to suffer an algal bloom. Algae blooms color the water green, smell bad, and can cause the fish to die. Because we want to keep the pond healthy, Taylor Pond Association conducts an ongoing campaign to educate people on how to keep the phosphorous low in the pond to prevent the damaging effects of an algae bloom. Taylor Pond continues to remain on the state list as being at risk for problems. With your help, Taylor Pond will continue to be healthy. But just in case, Ralph and Woody will be out there monitoring.

To see the complete water quality report, check out our website at www.taylorpondassociation.org.



Turf Grass Experts' Top 10 on Lawn care

By Dana Little

What could be more beautiful than a healthy green lawn? Let me suggest some alternatives: a garden of flowers, a collection of attractive bushes, and a buffer strip of untouched land next to the lake for the wildlife. Why do we worry about lawns running right up to the lake? Because lawns are the major source of phosphorous run-off into the lake. In a buffer strip the rain water slowly percolates through the soil which naturally cleanses it of phosphorus. A lawn maintained right up to the pond's edge allows rain to wash phosphorous off the surface of the soil directly into the pond. Fertilizers applied to the lawn provide another source of phosphorous



run-off. Phosphorous in fertilizers is seldom needed, and yet is widely used. Maine Law now makes it illegal to sell phosphorous- containing fertilizers without notifying customers of the issue. Fertilizers with no phosphorous can be bought in all local stores and will not harm the lake.

So, if you must have a lawn, here are the experts' top 10 recommendations:

1. Fertilize only if necessary, once or twice, best in late August or September and then only on new or young lawns less than 10 years old. Only one-quarter to half the usual recommended amount is necessary. Pesticides and herbicides can run off into the pond hurting fish and water quality. Fertilizers that contain pesticides and herbicides increase the problem that can occur with "fertilizing" the lawn.
2. Perform a soil test to determine which nutrients are needed. Seldom in Maine do you need phosphorous or potassium. Nitrogen is the only common nutrient needed and then not on lawns over

10 years of age. Mulching the lawn clippings on the lawn and mixing clover into your lawn seed provide all the nitrogen most lawns need.

3. Mow high, at least 3 inches, for vigorous roots and to shade out weeds
4. Use a mulching mower that will leave the grass clippings on the lawn for a high-quality, phosphorous-free fertilizer
5. Plant the right species of grass. Avoid Kentucky Bluegrass which requires high levels of fertilizer and water and use turf-type tall and fine-leaf fescues. Grass seed mixtures ideally should include herbs such as chamomile, yarrow and clover. These “weeds”, often killed off with pesticide applications, take nitrogen from the atmosphere and make it available to the grass.
6. Keep the grass dense. Higher density means fewer weeds. At the first sign of thinning, loosen the soil with a rake and apply an appropriate grass mixture.
7. On older lawns that have been heavily fertilized, thatch can build up. If the thatch is thicker than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch it can be reduced by a core aerator that punches holes in the ground or by applying $\frac{1}{8}$ inch of compost over the entire lawn which will cause the thatch to decompose.
8. Water your lawn only if it has rained less than an inch in the last week. Watering daily encourages shallow roots and an unhealthy lawn. Water once a week to provide for one inch over the entire lawn using a rain gauge to measure your sprinkler’s output.
9. Keep fertilizers and clippings off sidewalks and driveways where rain can wash them into the pond.
10. Keep mower blades sharp to prevent tearing of the grass which promotes disease.



WHY I SUPPORT THE LAKESMART PROGRAM

BY MICHAEL DIXON

The Department of Environmental Protection set up the LakeSmart Program a few years ago to encourage property owners, particularly those abutting a great pond, to adopt practices that will help protect water quality in public water bodies. Since all such owners have a strong vested interest in maintaining the water quality as a way of protecting their own property values, the hope is that owners will be willing to forego manicured lawns, and maybe even unimpeded views, in order to preserve water quality, and will otherwise utilize practices that control erosion and runoff to keep phosphorous out of the lake. Indeed, when I circle the shoreline in a boat, it appears to me that the effort is paying off, since there appears to be more and more buffering as time passes, and our water quality measurements suggest that we are maintaining clarity and that phosphorous load is not increasing.

Your Association has lent its support to the effort by making high quality technical support available free-of-charge to individual members and road associations, and by offering matching grants of up to \$500.00 to help make improvements that will protect the Pond's water quality (please see Susan Trask's article for more details). I encourage others to use these TPA services/programs. If in the process, you receive recognition from the LakeSmart program, please proudly display the signage that comes with that recognition. Not for self-aggrandizement's sake, but rather to publicly proclaim your commitment to maintaining water quality in Taylor Pond, and to set an example to your neighbors, one that will hopefully increase their understanding of good stewardship practices and influence their behavior. If we have lots of those signs, it demonstrates our group commitment to protect and preserve Taylor Pond, which means that we can expect any and all support that DEP can give, in the event that we need it at some point in the future.



Phosphorous is not the only threat to Taylor Pond's water quality, and perhaps not even the biggest threat (please see Dana Little's article on invasives, for what I personally fear as a bigger threat to protecting property values). Still, any preserving actions we can take as individuals are cumulative, and will pay dividends in the long run for us and our offspring, whom I hope will be able to enjoy the Pond as we have.

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

Technical assistance and \$500 matching grants available to help members and road associations with the process of making their properties/roads lake-friendly. See related article on page 6 for details.