

Published by the
Lakes Committee
for the Town of
Plum Lake
715-542-3108

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The Town of Plum Lake
Plum Lake Riparians
Plum Lake Library
Sayner/Star Lake Lions and Lionesses
BIWBLA
Star Lake/Little Star Lakes Association
Vilas County Lakes Association
Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department

Eurasian Water Milfoil Fragments Found Floating at East Star Lake Boat Landing

Since the town-wide Lakeshore Monitoring Day on July 5th, 2009, people have continued their lakeshore monitoring efforts. This has resulted in a couple of important findings. Shortly after July 5th, we received a report that the invasive, Eurasian Water Milfoil, was found in Plum Lake. A sample was collected and forwarded to the DNR in Rhinelander and then to the herbarium at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. It was determined to be the native northern water milfoil, and **not** Eurasian Water Milfoil.

Later in the summer, Bill Sloey, our Town of Plum Lake Lakes Committee's Lake Monitoring Coordinator, **did find** Eurasian Water Milfoil (ERM) fragments along the shoreline of the East Star Lake public landing. After this, Bill and Jim and Vicki Haberle did a lake wide search of Star Lake's shoreline and found only native milfoil. Also, Ted Ritter, Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator, along with Bill, did an extensive search of the boat launch basin. No ERM was found during that search.

These incidents point up the importance of our lake monitoring efforts, and thanks are due to everyone who did lake monitoring this summer. Next summer we need even more people to be Lakeshore Monitors. Also,

increased *Clean Boats/Clean Waters* boat inspections at the boat landings are needed to keep invasive weeds and animals out of our lakes.

Remember, it is easier and a lot less expensive to keep invasives out of our lakes than it is to get them out once they are in. **Please check the volunteer form in this newsletter. We need your help!**

LIFE HISTORY AND EFFECTS OF INVASION BY EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL



Unlike many other plants, Eurasian water milfoil does not rely on seed for reproduction. Its seeds germinate poorly under natural conditions. It reproduces vegetatively by fragmentation, allowing it to disperse over long distances. The plant produces fragments which can be inadvertently picked up by boaters and readily dispersed by boats, motors, trailers, bilges, live wells, or bait buckets, and can stay alive for weeks if kept moist.

Once established in an aquatic community, milfoil reproduces from shoot fragments and stolons (runners that creep along the lake bed). As an opportunistic species, Eurasian water milfoil is adapted for rapid growth early in spring

(continued on next page)

This past July the children in the Story Hour program at the Plum Lake Public Library learned about Aquatic Invasive Species through a program given by Judy Ruch. It was a huge success.

Watch for information on next summer's library programming.

LIFE HISTORY AND EFFECTS OF INVASION OF EURASIAN WATER MILFOIL, continued:

when it will photosynthesize, divide, and form a dense leaf canopy that shades out native aquatic plants. Its ability to spread rapidly by fragmentation and effectively block out sunlight needed for native plant growth often results in monotypic stands. Monotypic stands of Eurasian milfoil threaten the integrity of aquatic communities in a number of ways; for example, dense stands disrupt predator-prey relationships by fencing out larger fish, and reducing the number of nutrient-rich native plants available for waterfowl.

Dense stands of Eurasian water milfoil also inhibit recreational uses like swimming, boating, and fishing. The visual impact that greets the lake user on milfoil-dominated lakes is the flat yellow-green of matted vegetation, often prompting the perception that the lake is "infested" or "dead". Cycling of nutrients from sediments to the water column by Eurasian water milfoil may lead to deteriorating water quality and algae blooms of infested lakes.

(adapted from Wisconsin DNR website www.dnr.state.wi.us/invasives/fact/milfoil)



Parasite Found in Plum Lake

This article is based on phone and email exchanges by Chris Wise and Bill Sloey of the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake, and Craig Roesler from the DNR Hayward Office.

The Lakes Committee has been informed that a parasite that affects the liver of rusty crayfish has been found in rusty crayfish taken from Plum Lake. This parasite was first found in Wisconsin in the Eau Claire Chain of Lakes in Bayfield County. Craig Roesler of the DNR stated that there is a good correlation between where the parasite is found and where rusties are declining. The parasite, of the genus *Microphallus*, no species name has yet been assigned, is present in most lakes where the populations of rusties have declined or where rusties are present but have never become abundant. It is not present in most lakes with high-density rusty populations. It is fairly certain that the parasite affects native crayfish, but the evidence is good that rusties are more prone to it than are the native species.

Craig tells us that *Microphallus* is usually a three-stage parasite. It starts in snails, moves to crayfish and ends up in the final host that feeds on crayfish. In the southern United States, birds and mammals commonly host many *Microphallus* species. Fish and turtles have also been identified as hosts. Some species of *Microphallus* infect a wide range of final hosts, others may infect only one. Fish may be the final host of our species.

Craig plans to examine fish samples to see what specie(s) are final hosts. We will keep in touch with Craig to learn about what he finds.

Special Thanks

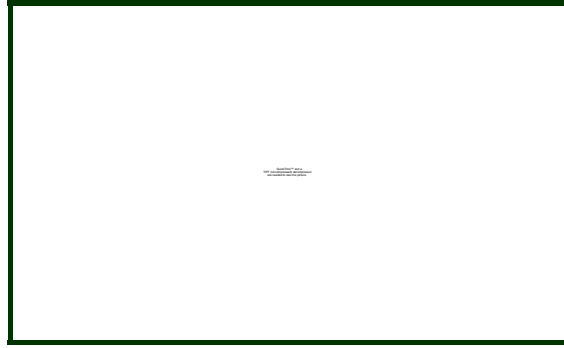
to our many volunteers, including those who helped with this summer's *Clean Boats/Clean Waters* program, everyone who participated in Lakeshore Monitoring and to all of the local businesses who helped in getting our message out.

Lakeshore Monitoring Day

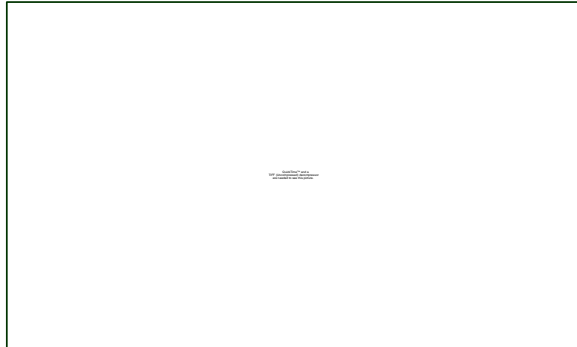
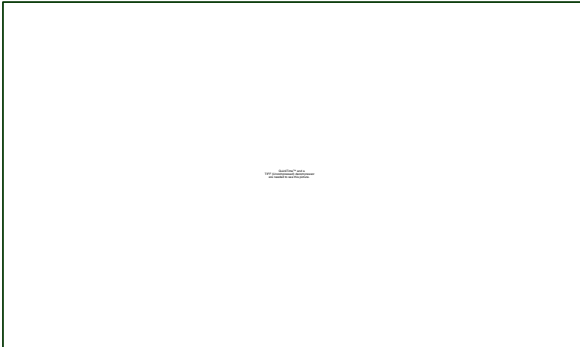
"Adopt a Shoreline" Project: A Big Success!

On July 5th, as part of it's work under the grant received from the DNR, the Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake sponsored a town wide Lakeshore Monitoring Day. The event started with a training session at the Plum Lake Golf Club.

Fifty-four people were present at the session. They received instruction in aquatic invasive species identification from Ted Ritter, Vilas County Invasive Species Coordinator. Then Bill Sloey, Professor Emeritus from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh and Lakes Committee Lake Monitoring Coordinator, instructed the attendees on sampling and specimen collection techniques. A number of people who were unable to attend on July 5th received training from Bill later on in the summer.



The Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake, the Ballard-Irving-White Birch Lakes Association, the Star/Little Star Lakes Association and the Plum Lake Riparian Property Owners Association coordinated the event.



Following this session, the volunteers went to various lakes in the Town to collect samples. All of our high usage lakes were sampled by volunteers. Some of the volunteers are lake property owners and other volunteers are people who do not live on the lakes, but who realize the importance of our lakes to all of us. After completing their sampling they returned to the Golf Club where Sandy Wickman of the DNR's Rhinelander Office and Bill Sloey helped them identify what they had collected. No new invasives were found that day.

That evening all the volunteers were invited to a reception at the Golf Club, hosted by the Plum Lake Riparian Property Owners' Association. There, Sheehan Donoghue received the Lakes Committee's Volunteer of the Year award.

We are grateful to everyone who had a part in making the day a big success. Thanks to all.



Sheehan Donoghue, the Lakes Committee's Volunteer of the Year

**LAKES COMMITTEE
FOR THE TOWN OF
PLUM LAKE**

3185 Hanson Road
Sayner, WI 54560

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the Town of Plum Lake**

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About Our Organization...

The Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake is composed of volunteers committed to protecting our lakes from aquatic invasive species through public awareness education and monitoring.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: NEW LAW HELPS STRENGTHEN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE SPREAD OF AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Since September 1, 2009, the transportation of any vehicle, including boats and trailers, on a public highway with aquatic plants or aquatic animals attached is prohibited. Under this new law, people are required to remove aquatic plants and animals and drain all water from boats and trailers before leaving the boat launch or parking area. It also prohibits launching any watercraft with aquatic plants or animal attached. It is important to note that none of this supercedes the current rules regarding transporting minnows.

Currently DNR law enforcement wardens have authority to enforce this law. As of this writing, legislation authorizing ANY law enforcement officer in the state to enforce this law has passed both houses of the State Legislature and has been sent to Governor Doyle, who is expected to sign it.

For more information on activities related to Aquatic Invasive Species Control in Vilas County and/or future updates on AIS issues in the Town of Plum Lake, visit www.vilaslandandwater.org -> water resources -> AIS Partnership ->Town Lakes Comm -> Plum Lake. Lake Monitoring reports can be found there also, as well as at the Plum Lake Public Library.

VOLUNTEER FORM

We need your help. Please return this form to: **Chris Wise, 3185 Hanson Road, Sayner, WI 54560**
or call **715-542-3108**

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Summer mailing address: _____ Email Address: _____

I can help with:

- Clean Boats/Clean Waters boat landing activities
- Annual "Adopt a Shoreline" project
- Other Shoreline Monitoring—individual trainings available
- Other lake monitoring
- Serving on Lakes Committee for the Town of Plum Lake
- Scheduling/Coordinating volunteers
- Other: _____

