



Newsletter

Spring 2017

From your President: The Megunticook Watershed gives many people great joy, entertainment, and peace. With increasing pressures all around us, please do your part to help us keep the Megunticook Watershed the special place it has been for generations!

I would like to send out a special thank you to all our volunteers that protect our Watershed and help our organization function. To all our Partners in Monitoring samplers, who test our waters every week to monitor for potentially harmful bacteria levels...Thank you. To our LakeSmart evaluators, who run our free, voluntary, conservation program which informs camp owners about ways we can help keep our waters clear and clean by preventing runoff from flowing into the lake, ponds, and river...Thank you. To our Courtesy Boat Inspectors, our first line of defense against the scourge of aquatic invasive plants like variable milfoil...Thank you. And finally, to our volunteer Board for all your energy and help running the MWA...Thank you!

Maureen Flanagan, President Tel.-207-785-2153 Email- maureen@vikinglumber.com

Exec. Director Report: Welcome to spring I guess! The woodstove has been working overtime this spring, eating into next winter's woodpile. We've had a couple of hot days sandwiched between cold, rainy March like weather. The rainfall has kept the water levels high, with water going over the spillways at the dams for much of May.

We will soon be launching our new website! The new look will make it easier to communicate our mission and what we do to protect this vital resource. It will be much easier to navigate (to find what you're looking for) and, hopefully, a clean, beautiful site to share news and pictures from around the Watershed. The beta site (as they say) will be up soon and I will be sending out an announcement via email and Facebook. We look forward to your comments and suggestions.

If you're planning for a new float, or fixing up the old one, please consider using encapsulated floats (polystyrene inside hard plastic). Many of us who have docks with "styrofoam" floats (polystyrene) have often seen the little blue styrofoam pieces along the shoreline. Muskrats love to burrow into the floats to make a nice nest; chewing the stuff into little pieces. The stuff doesn't biodegrade, is unsightly, and is an environmental problem. Do the Watershed a favor and use encapsulated floats.

We're gearing up for our third year of **LakeSmart** and are urging folks to sign up to have their properties evaluated. It's free and voluntary; and it's a great way to learn simple, natural, landscaping strategies to protect the health of our waters. Remember, all stormwater that gets into a lake carries nutrients. Over time, the cumulative impact can be thousands of pounds of pollutants. The result, can mean algae blooms, fish kills, the loss of water clarity, and smelly, pea green mess. Call or email me about

LakeSmart today! *Exec. Dir. Paul Leeper Tel. 207-592-8540 Email: paul@megunticook.org*

A LakeSmart Message from Senator Susan Collins:

"My husband and I love spending time at Cold Stream Pond and enjoy kayaking, swimming, and relaxing at our seasonal camp. Our Maine lakes are very special to many people, and it is important that we protect these treasures for future generations. LakeSmart is a free, voluntary conservation program of the Maine Lakes Society designed to inform camp owners about ways we can help keep our lakes clear and clean by preventing runoff from flowing into the water. I learned about LakeSmart from one of my neighbors and invited a LakeSmart coordinator to our camp. Continued on Pg3. Sen. Collins

Upcoming Events-

Megunticook Watershed Assoc. Annual Meeting: July 11th 2016 at 7:00 PM

Bishopswood Camp (off of Rt. 105 Hope/Camden Road). The featured Speaker will be Annie Kassler of Maine Bat Education. She will offer a presentation on the surprising world of bats. The public is invited, not just members. Hope to see you all there!

Aquatic Bug Hunt: July 29th 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Rt. 105, Bog Bridge Boat Ramp

Great for kids, bring waders or wading sneakers and swimsuits! A great opportunity for children and adults to learn how to find and identify aquatic bugs and how they fit into the larger lake ecosystem.

COASTAL MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST Programs www.coastalmountains.org

Butterflies and Dragonflies of Ragged Mountain July 1, 2017 10:00am-12:00pm

Camden Snow Bowl- Join Roger Rittmaster, author of *Butterflies Up Close: a Guide to Butterfly Photography*, in an exploration of early summer “charismatic” insects inhabiting the wetlands and fields of the Camden Snow Bowl.

MERRYSRING NATURE CENTERS Programs <http://www.merryspring.org>

Summer Fern ID Walk with Hildy Ellis – June 23 Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Hildy Ellis leads this workshop on identifying native fern species.

BAY CHAMBERS CONCERTS PRESENTS: Music on the Lake, August 5th 6:00PM

Brooklyn based Brown Rice Family is today's freshest world roots band jamming towards global solidarity and organic happiness. The band will perform a **free** musical happening on Megunticook Lake off of Beaucaire Ave. ALL ARE WELCOME! Come by boat! Don't miss it! <http://www.baychamberconcerts.org/> (207) 236-2823

Interested in Volunteering? Your MWA has plenty of opportunities including:

Courtesy Boat Inspectors– Inspect boats and trailers for invasive plants.

LakeSmart Screeners– Learn how to assess properties to reduce run-off and erosion. Learn which native plants to use in landscaping, how to make a rain garden, and how to divert driveway water to keep the gravel on the road and not in the lake, to name a few.

Partners-in-Monitoring- Volunteer to take water samples to test for bacteria levels.

For more information contact Paul Leeper 207-592-8540 Email: paul@megunticook.org

MWA Officers

President - Maureen Flanagan

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1st Vice President - Dody Urquia

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Secretary - Wendy Wickenden

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Treasurer– Sarah Marriner

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MWA Staff

Exec. Director - Paul Leeper

207-592-8540; paul@megunticook.org

Lake Warden –Dale Dougherty 207-390-0030;

lakewarden@megunticook.org

Asst. Lake Warden– Justin Twitchell

207-975-1721; jtwitchell@knoxcountymaine.gov

Interested in serving on the MWA Board of Directors, or helping out on a committee?

please contact Paul Leeper or one of the Board officers. paul@megunticook.org

*Check us out at
www.megunticook.org and on Facebook*

Please don't forget your dues!

There is a **yellow dues card** and **envelope** included with this newsletter, for your 2017-2018 dues. Please send in your membership check today. If you are not a member please consider joining and/or making a donation at this time.

We need everyone's continued support!

Treasurer's Report: Happy Spring! We are happy to report we ended the year with 308 members and added 7 new Business memberships for a total of 315 members. An increase of approximately 5% from the previous year. We would like to welcome the new members and businesses and encourage others to join.

This year we were fortunate to have no major repairs to the Lake Boat or snowmobile and ended the year within the budget and a profit of approximately \$6,400. The final budget for this year has been approved and we are expecting overall operating expenses to stay about the same. We have launched the new website as one of this year's major tasks and expenses. Please take a moment to visit and explore the new site and check out our donate page.

We ask everyone to help spread the word about Megunticook Watershed Association and all the services that we provide as we will need everyone's support to help us meet this year's budget. Membership dues and contributions are what sustain the watershed, without everyone's support we would be unable to do the testing, education, patrol and various other activities that protect this resource for generations to come. I hope everyone has a great summer and thank you for their continued support of Megunticook Watershed Association. *Sarah Marriner Treasurer smarriner80@gmail.com*

Lake Warden's Spring 2017 Report : May 30th the water temperature was 59 degrees

Hello from the Megunticook Watershed. The cool and wet weather of May continued through Memorial Day Weekend and kept the activity on the lake down. A few folks were out boating, and some even braved the cold water to swim and tube. Lands End was busy with a family having a picnic. Overall the weekend was very slow on the watershed but let's hope the warm weather gets here soon.

INVASIVE PLANTS like variable milfoil are a big issue around the state. We on the Megunticook Watershed have had no reports of invasive aquatic plants to date. Let's keep it that way! The inspections of watercraft and trailers by our MWA Watershed Stewards has begun. The Stewards, students from the area, have been trained and will be on duty to check for any plant materials on boats and trailers. They checked over 1300 vessels last year at the 3 launching ramps on the watershed. As an owner, always inspect your boat and trailer when entering or leaving the water. Our Stewards can't be at the ramps 24/7 so everyone has to pitch in and inspect for plant material. If you find any plant material please put it in the trash, don't leave it on the ground at the ramp.

To be safe, and comply with boating laws, make sure you have life jackets for your crew and a current registration and milfoil sticker which is BLUE this year. Don't forget your gas and dock lines!

Parking at the launching ramps, especially the Rt. 52 ramp, is limited for vehicle and trailer rigs. Please don't park in trailer spots unless you have a trailer. Parking at the Bog Bridge ramp is across the road. Prepping your boat for launch on the ramp side is fine but when done please move your rig to the parking lot. Strive to be quick and efficient at the launch site.

Mayfly hatches have been big this year with most having chocolate brown bodies; others have been yellowish or golden. The caddis are also hatching in huge numbers but thru all this I'm seeing very little fish action. The surface of water is covered with bugs but no sign of any fish rising to them. However, the blackfly bite is going along well.

There are loons nesting on the lake and the river. With the high water both nests are very close to the water surface. Lets all hope for better weather days ahead. See you on the water

Lake Warden Dale Dougherty, Tel. 207-390-0030 E-mail: lakewarden@megunticook.org

Sen. Collins Continued: *I was delighted with the information I received on the relatively simple steps that we can take to help maintain the crystal-clear waters of Cold Stream Pond. I am also pleased that our camp qualified to receive the LakeSmart designation with the LoonSmart decal. LakeSmart's recommendations to property owners will help ensure that all those who live and vacation on the lake will enjoy its beauty for years to come.* – Senator Susan Collins
For more info on LakeSmart or to schedule a visit please call or email Paul Leeper 207-592-8540 paul@megunticook.org

The Unsinkable Water Strider

Summer is fast approaching and soon they will be zipping at a great rates of speed across the water. No, I am not thinking of motor boats. I am thinking of a creature that seemingly walks on water. Better than that, they glide, like skaters, on a calm surface with confidence and determination, at speeds above three feet a second. Water striders, otherwise known as pond skaters or even Jesus bugs, number about 1,700 species world-wide. They are common insects in the watershed representing the ‘true bug’ division, the Hemipterans, whose defining characteristic is a beak-like mouth with piercing and sucking mouthparts, but truly the unique feature of water striders is their way of motorvating on water. How do they do that?

The answer has a few parts. The first concerns the physical nature of water. Water has a characteristic surface tension that relates to the positive and negative charges on each water molecule and they way they attract each other. This leads to some of water’s properties, such as the way raindrops bead up on leaves and even why water can just drip from a leaky faucet. For the water strider, the surface of water is elastic, and the insect can scoot around only causing slight dimples where its legs touch the surface. This would not be possible without the cohesiveness of the water molecules on the surface. But the insect also has two amazing adaptations for its life on the water.

One involves its set of legs. The water strider has six legs but each pair is shaped differently and has different functions. The short front pair are involved only with catching prey. In the middle are the ‘oars’, two long thin legs that provide the propulsion for the insect’s movement, sweeping backward along the surface. The hind legs are the longest and not only help steer and brake but along with the second pair aid in distributing the weight of the insect so it can best use the surface tension of the water and stay afloat.

The second feature is invisible to our eyes but as seen with a microscope, thousands of tiny hairs cover every part of the water strider’s body. These so-called hydrofuge hairpiles, their technical term, are waterproof, trapping tiny air bubbles in a groove along their length. The insect is thus totally protected from being splashed and sunk by a wave. However, they can go underwater under their own power to escape from a would-be predator. They just then bob up to the surface again, totally dry.

Thanks to Wikipedia, National Geographic, and <https://blog.nature.org/science/2017/04/10/7-cool-facts-water-stridersskippers-pond-skaters-weird-nature/>, Kaufman’s Field Guide to Insects of North America, and Steven Marshall’s Insects: Their Natural History and Diversity, Photo by cory

Amy Campbell



IMPORTANT!!!

**Do we have your current e-mail address,
mailing address and phone number?**

of having them current crucial. MWA does not sell or share its e-mail or mailing lists. **Forward all information to Paul Leeper: paul@megunticook.org or 207-592-8540.**