



# Newsletter

Spring 2018

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**From your President:** Spring has sprung! Summer is sure to follow. It's great to see the loons, eagles and other wildlife come alive around our Watershed as well as boaters. Over the last few weeks I have seen kayakers and fisherman out enjoying our beautiful Watershed. Cottage owners have been busy peeling away the winter layers as the grass is getting greener. I, for one, am ready to get planting, boating, and enjoying the warm summer nights.

To keep our Watershed healthy we need your help— please join us on July 31<sup>st</sup> at Flatbread for a evening of fun and laughter with the Watershed community. We are pleased to say we have an Old Town Kayak to raffle off, generously donated by Maine Sport Outfitters.

Chance tickets will be on sale from board members as well in various locations around town and at our Annual Meeting, July 10<sup>th</sup> at Bishopswood at 7 pm .

In other news we are so pleased to announce that the Camden Rotary has granted us a \$5000.00 dollar scholarship for the Student Watershed Stewardship program. We are so grateful for this scholarship, thank you Camden Rotary!!

To keep our Watershed healthy for future generations to enjoy, please be mindful that anything used around the lakes, pond, and river can affect our waters with run off. This is especially true of fertilizers and pesticides.

Checkout our website [www.megunticook.org](http://www.megunticook.org) for up to date information. Enjoy the season, stay safe and be considerate of your fellow Watershedders

*Dody Urquia Tel. 207-829-8302 Email: [urquiad@aol.com](mailto:urquiad@aol.com)*

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**Treasurer's Report:** Spring has sprung on the watershed with the fiddleheads popping and the birds chirping.

We ended this year within our predicted budget, however the year ended with deficit of approximately \$3,900. With our membership holding steady at just over 300 members for the past few years, this deficit is largely a result of a drop in our contributions from the previous year and slight increase in our payroll expenses. Although we remained within budget for the year we did not have enough contributions to offset the full deficit that we had predicted with the 2017/2018 budget.

Looking forward to the new fiscal year, the board has approved the new budget for the 2018/2019 year. This budget has an added expense for a new laptop to replace our current outdated one. The new computer will be better able to support QuickBooks accounting software. Also within this budget we have increased our payroll expenses to add additional warden coverage within the watershed. With these additional expenses we are looking for the continued support of our current and future members to help us meet this year's budget.

Membership dues and contributions are what sustain your Watershed Association, 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](mailto:smarriner80@gmail.com)*

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## ***Upcoming Events-***

### ***Megunticook Watershed Assoc. Annual Meeting: July 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 at 7:00 PM***

***Bishopwood Camp*** (off of Rt. 105 Hope/Camden Road). Dave Bolstridge, Camden's Dam Agent will discuss plans to repair the dams and the Montgomery Dam feasibility project. Paul Leeper, Exec. Dir., will present a brief history of the Watershed, starting 300 million years ago. The public is invited, not just members. Hope to see you all there!

### ***COASTAL MOUNTAIN LAND TRUST Programs [www.coastalmountains.org](http://www.coastalmountains.org)***

Wildflowers and Other Plants of the Ragged Mountain Preserve June 30, 10:00am-12:00pm  
Camden Snow Bowl- Eric Doucette, Past-President of Maine's Josselyn Botanical Society, and one of our favorite walk leaders returns to show us the diverse flora of the Ragged Mountain Preserve.

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

Free Family Friday: Guided Nature Walk – July 6. A free guided nature walk around Merryspring. Open to all ages, free of charge. 10:00 am.

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### ***BAY CHAMBERS CONCERTS PRESENTS: Music on the Lake, Aug 4, 2018, 6:00pm***

Yasser Tejeda & Palotr , the leading quartet on the Afro-Dominican jazz scene fusing Dominican roots music with jazz, blues, funk and rock. 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

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### ***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](mailto:paul@megunticook.org)*

#### **MWA Officers**

**President - Dody Urquia**

207-829-8302; [urquiad@aol.com](mailto:urquiad@aol.com)

**Vice President - Hillary Jackson**

207-236-2234; [hillaryhope1@yahoo.com](mailto:hillaryhope1@yahoo.com)

**Secretary - Wendy Wickenden**

207-236-3745; [wendyllynnwick@gmail.com](mailto:wendyllynnwick@gmail.com)

**Treasurer– Sarah Marriner**

207-596-9008; [smarriner80@gmail.com](mailto:smarriner80@gmail.com)

#### **MWA Staff**

**Exec. Director - Paul Leeper**

207-592-8540; [paul@megunticook.org](mailto:paul@megunticook.org)

**Lake Warden –Dale Dougherty** 207-390-0030;

[lakewarden@megunticook.org](mailto:lakewarden@megunticook.org)

**Asst. Lake Warden– Justin Twitchell**

207-975-1721; [jtwitchell@knoxcountymaine.gov](mailto: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](mailto:paul@megunticook.org)

#### ***Check us out at***

***[www.megunticook.org](http://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 2018-2019 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!**

**Lake Warden's Spring 2017 Report :** Early spring on the Megunticook Watershed dragged on for many weeks. Warm temperatures in early March got folks excited about the ice out contest. Lots of folks put in guesses for mid march thinking ice was going out early. The lower lake from Lands End over to Turnpike Drive on Route 52 iced out during this warm period and never refroze. But winter was not done. The ice on the upper lake hung in until April 13 at 08:25 when ice out was called on a windy morning. The lucky winner was Brian Wickenden of Camden. A few day after ice out the Watershed had some large rain systems roll through the mid coast dropping 1-2 inches of rain . The lake level shot up to 10 inches over spillway flooding the parking lot at Bog Bridge. Within a week the lake was back to the spillway level

On Saturday April 29th your MWA assisted the Ashwood Waldorf School students and parents in a Megunticook Lake Shoreline Clean-up. The day broke cold and foggy, but we headed out anyway. Three boats were loaded up with kids, parents, and lots of garbage bags. The day was a huge success with truck loads of trash including lots of old float Styrofoam headed to the dump. Great job guys, and thanks to board member Jess Wheeler for organizing.

Thanks also go out to MARK, CHARLIE, MATT, AND WAYNE for their help this spring. They all helped taking time from their busy days and by letting me use their private property aka canoes, The local knowledge and keen observations of them saved the watershed many hours. Thanks guys.

The water levels are where they should be, the mayflies are hatching, and the fishing is good. The water temp last check was already up to the mid 50s, a good fishing temp but still very dangerous if you fall in. PLEASE PUT YOUR LIFEJACKET ON BEFORE HEADING OUT.

The fire danger is very high now with Red Flag Warnings being issued. We need to green up a little or get some rain to help this problem. If you are going to burn you should get a fire permit. In Lincolnville you can get one at Drake's Store, in Camden at the fire station. This permit will protect you if the fire gets out of control. Without a permit you are responsible for all damage and will be billed for firefighting, SO get the permit.



Be safe when heading out on the waters of the watershed. *Lake Warden Dale Dougherty, Tel. 207-390-0030*  
*E-mail: lakewarden@megunticook.org*

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**Exec. Director Report:** As our President remarked on page one we are honored to receive a \$5000.00 grant from the Camden Rotary Club for Our Student Watershed Stewards Program. This grant, as well as a \$2700.00 grant from Maine DEP, will allow us to fully staff the program this summer. The program educates young people in the community about the threats to area waters and gives them the tools to protect these waters. Watershed Stewards are trained to conduct the following: Courtesy Boat Inspections to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic plants like milfoil; Invasive Aquatic Plant Surveys- searching for invasive plants in the lake, pond; and river, and, Water Quality Monitoring- testing bacteria levels in area waters and measuring water clarity and dissolved oxygen levels. Do you know of an interested high school or college student that wants to work and learn around the beautiful Megunticook Watershed this summer? Please have them contact me (see email below).

I have attended a number of meetings this winter and spring concerning the dams in the Watershed. Repair work on the Breezemere Dam is currently slated for this year. In addition, the Montgomery Dam by the Smiling Cow downtown needs either repair, replacement, or removal. As part of the Town investigations they are currently conducting a feasibility study to create fish passage up the river to the lake for sea-run fish such as Alewives. Last but not least, the East and West dams at the outlet of the lake will need repair soon. The Town is considering a bond package to finance those repairs.

Finally, we are gearing up for another LakeSmart program this summer. This program evaluates your property giving you simple, low tech, ways to prevent harmful runoff from entering the water. This protects the water quality and prevents ugly algae blooms. Please call or email me to get your property on the list for this summer! See you on the water! *Exec. Dir. Paul Leper Tel. 207-592-8540 Email: paul@megunticook.org*

**Freshwater Mussels– Not Muscles, Not Clams** Behold the lowly fresh water mussel. I have not



even held a live one, only empty shells of what I thought were clams. Not a clam. The difference is that clams have a protruding siphon or “neck” and mussels do not.

The bivalves that are found in our watershed in truth are two species of freshwater mussels. The Eastern Floater and Eastern Elliptio, both of which have stable populations in the state, are found in the lake and the Eastern Elliptio in Norton Pond. No one has surveyed the river, and there might be other species that were not found in the few sites that were examined in the lake and pond. From 1992 to 1997, a survey of over 1600 bodies of water in the state found just ten species of freshwater mussels (New England with the exception of Vermont is not rich in species). The survey provided in-

formation useful to implement plans for conservation and habitat protection, especially for two species that are deemed threatened.

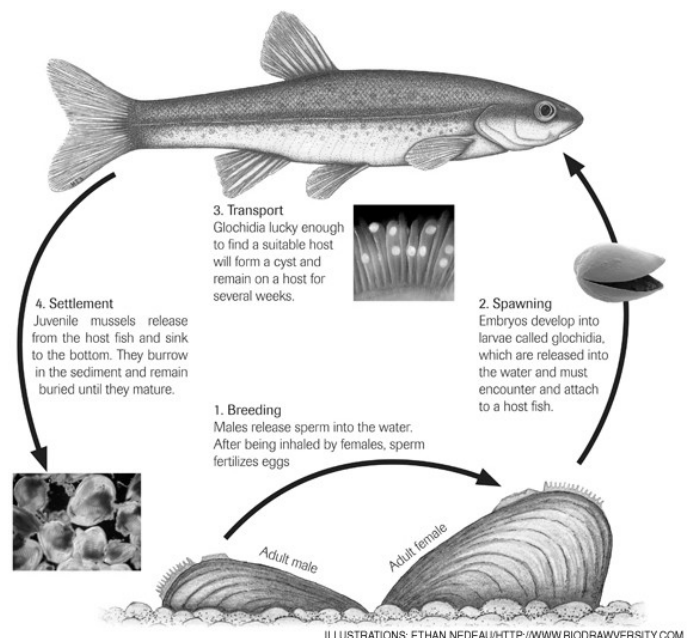
Our two species are the most common found in Maine. The second most common species in Maine, the Eastern Floater, has a thin and fragile shell which helps it ‘float’ on thick silt found in deeper parts of lakes and ponds where it can live, unlike other mussel species. On the other hand, the most common species in Maine, the Eastern Elliptio, has a much thicker shell. This species quite tolerant of polluted or degraded habitats.

But far from being lowly and unimportant, mussels contribute in different ways to our watery realms. As filter feeders, they collectively remove particles such as algae from the water that influence water quality. Their metabolism adds dissolved substances such as ammonia that is available for uptake and use by aquatic plants and other small organisms. They themselves are food for any number of predators: fish and invertebrates such as worms and crayfish eat small mussels whereas mammals such as mink and especially muskrats eat larger ones.

Their reproductive process requires a fish host, the species of fish depends on the kind of mussel. The fish act as a moveable nursery, distributing the baby mussels, glochidia, in different habitats or move them upstream, not otherwise possible for the mussels that have no way to swim. And the fish also become an incubator for the glochidia, which are microscopic, resembling “pacman”, the munching computer game tokens. They snap onto the fish gills and extract nutrients for a number of days, weeks or months before they metamorphose and fall off the fish, now a tiny mussel that burrows into the bottom of the body of water. The fish is not harmed at all. The fish hosts for ‘our’ mussels possibly include yellow perch, large- and smallmouth bass, and banded killifish for the Eastern Elliptio and pumpkinseed sunfish and white sucker for the Eastern Floater.

In an example of truth being stranger than fiction, some species of mussels “fish” for their babies’ hosts. After fashioning tissue that resembles a prey item of the host fish, the mussel waves this ‘lure’ from its shell exterior. When one of the host species comes in to eat what it thinks is a fish, this tissue that contains all the glochidia explodes in the fish’s face, and it inhales the resulting cloud of larvae. You can watch this and be amazed on Youtube, search for “Lampsillus & Bass Host”. What is truly incredible is that the mussel has no idea what the fish prey looks like. For further information about the Eastern Elliptio, search for “Life Cycle of a Freshwater Mussel!”.

*Amy Campbell*



ILLUSTRATIONS: ETHAN NEDEAU/HTTP://WWW.BIODRAWIVERSITY.COM

Life cycle of a typical freshwater mussel.