THE IPA NEWSLETTER

Mystic Lake, Middle Pond, and Hamblin Pond in Marstons Mills, MA

Spring 2011 A quarterly publication of the Indian Ponds Association, Inc. Vol.11 No. 2

IPA ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY, JULY 17

Thanks to the continued generosity of Jon and Debby Halpert and Janis and Michael Maloney, the IPA will again hold its annual meeting at 4 pm at their lovely waterfront home, overlooking both Middle Pond and Mystic Lake. President Holly Hobart will conduct a brief business meeting, in which we will award Edward Schwarm Scholarships to two deserving high school seniors and elect new Directors to the IPA Board. Following the business meeting, we will hear from our invited guest speaker, and then adjourn for wine and hors d'oeuvres under the trees and for conversation with our neighbors. It is a delightful social occasion in a beautiful place, hopefully to be graced with perfect summer weather.

Our guest speaker this year will be Dr Ken Wagner, the lake management expert who supervised last autumn's alum treatment of Mystic Lake. Dr Wagner has many years of experience working with Cape Cod kettle ponds. He directed the successful alum treatments of Ashumet Pond in 2001 and Long Pond in Brewster/Harwich in 2009. He is a dynamic and well-informed speaker.

The Halperts' home is at 470 Turtleback Road, Marstons Mills. Look for the "IPA" signs and balloons at the corner of Old Mill Road and Turtleback. Follow the signs to the parking area at the end of Turtleback. In case of rain, we will meet indoors at the home of IPA Director Lewis and Nancy Solomon at 28 Heath Row, Marstons Mills, off of Regency Drive.

All current members of the IPA are welcome to attend. If you have forgotten to renew your membership, you may do so at the registration desk before the meeting. We look forward to seeing you there!

Some of the boats in the 2010 July 4 boat parade on Mystic Lake and Middle Pond.

MYSTIC LAKE VERY CLEAR IN EARLY MAY

The water clarity of Mystic Lake improved dramatically in early May. A Secchi disk reading of 9.7 meters (31.8 ft.) was obtained on May 7, while a subsequent reading on May 15 was 7.4 meters (24.3 ft.). This extraordinary clarity is expected to diminish as the water warms and algal blooms develop, but it bodes well for improved water quality this summer. This early indicator of the success of the alum treatment will be more definitively confirmed by the next complete water chemistry testing in late June. *Bob Nichols*

MYSTIC LAKE UPDATE

The lake was stratified during the alum treatment in late September and early October, but only the southern deep hole had any remnant of thermal stratification at the late October sampling, and temperatures were close to uniform during the February sampling. There is a substantial oxygen demand from sediments that manifests itself as lowered dissolved oxygen, even in winter, but mainly in the south (and deepest) basin. Older data suggest that there has been anoxia going back to 1948 at >10 m or so, but that the expansion of anoxia to depths as shallow as 6 m has occurred over time.

Secchi transparency was on the order of 5 meters (m) prior to the 1980s, but declined into the 3–4 m range in most years since, with 2009 and 2010 representing the worst years with values between 0.9 and 2.5 m. One 2008 late summer value was 4.9 m, so variability is high. The 2009–2010 summer values represent a major decline from recent years, however, and algae are responsible. Values have increased somewhat since the treatment, but not to levels expected next summer. *(Continued on page 7)*

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DERELICT BOAT AND DEBRIS CLEANUP

The annual cleanup of derelict boats and other nautical debris in Mystic Lake and Middle Pond will be held on Saturday, June 18. To participate, meet at the north end of Mystic Lake at either Bob Kohl's or David Dawson's dock at 9:00 am. If you come by car, you can park at the nearby Town landing. If you come by boat, bring a coil of line for hauling debris. Wear old clothes and pond shoes or boots. If you don't have a boat, you can crew with someone who does. After coffee and donuts, each boat will patrol a section of coastline and remove any debris they find, towing it to the Town beaches for pickup by the DPW. **IF YOU HAVE LOST A BOAT OR RAFT**, please call Carl Thut at 508-420-0756 and give him the description. If we find it, we will return it to you.

In previous years, we have been unable to do a comparable cleanup of Hamblin Pond because of a lack of motorized boats. A survey of the shoreline of Hamblin Pond will be done prior to June 18. If sufficient debris is observed, it will be necessary for individuals living on or near Hamblin Pond to make their boats available to facilitate towing such debris to the Town beach for pickup by the DPW. Anyone willing to provide a boat for this activity should contact Holly Hobart at 508-428-0235.

WANTED: A BOAT ON HAMBLIN POND

The IPA would like to arrange for the use of an outboard-equipped boat to use for water testing on Hamblin Pond. Testing is conducted by a team of two people once a week and takes about an hour. We can operate your boat with your permission, or you can take us out. The water testing season begins the first week of June and continues through the end of September.

If you have a boat on Hamblin and are willing to contribute it to the IPA water testing effort, please contact Holly Hobart (508-428-0235 or hhobart@comcast.net). Your assistance would be greatly appreciated and would help us monitor the health of this beautiful pond.

CELEBRATE THE FOURTH OF JULY JOIN THE BOAT PARADE

The annual Fourth of July boat parade will be held again this year. We invite boats of all sizes and shapes to participate. Last year's parade was an excellent example of the diversity that can be expected. Decorate your boat with flags, bunting, ribbons, balloons. Wear an appropriate costume. Use your imagination. Have fun and celebrate the nation's birthday!

This year's boat parade will be organized by Grand Marshals Joe and Pam Arena. Participants should gather at the northwest corner of Mystic Lake at 3:00 pm on Monday, July 4. The parade will proceed counterclockwise around Mystic Lake, stopping at each beach to present flags, and then continue through the cut into Middle Pond to do the same.

This event is not sponsored by the IPA, nor can the IPA be responsible for any accidents. Individuals will be responsible for their own safety.

AQUATIC PLANT IDENTIFICATION COURSE

If you are interested in participating in a freshwater aquatic plant identification course this summer, please contact the IPA at info@indianponds.org.

SUPPORT THE IPA

Become a Member
Renew your Membership

If you haven't paid your dues yet, please send a check today!

2011 SCHWARM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Two graduating seniors from Barnstable High School have been selected by the IPA to receive Edward Schwarm Memorial Scholarships. The recipients are Jamie Neelon, son of Daniel and Cindy Neelon of 325 Cotuit Road, Marstons Mills and Sam Wollak, son of Gerard and Mary Wollak of 8 Roseland Terrace, Marstons Mills. Both young men will be presented with $1,000 checks at the IPA Annual Meeting on Sunday, July 17.

Jamie Neelon

The Schwarm Memorial Scholarship was established in 2005 in memory of Edward Schwarm, a former IPA Director and officer who died in May 2005. Thanks to the generosity of the IPA members contributing to the Scholarship Fund, the IPA Selection Committee was able to select two applicants deserving of scholarships.

These two recipients were selected to receive the Schwarm Scholarship based on their academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and community service related to the mission of the IPA.

Sam Wollak

Jamie will be enrolling at the University of Southern California this autumn and plans to become a physician. Sam will attend American University and is planning a career in government service. We wish both of them success in their educational and career pursuits.

Gay Rhue

IPA TO FUND MUSSEL SURVEYS OF MIDDLE AND HAMBLIN PONDS

Mystic Lake's alum treatment was conducted under the supervision of the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) because three of the seven species of freshwater mussels in the lake are listed by the State as "threatened" or "of concern". The Order of Conditions issued by NHESP governing the conduct of the treatment required a pre-treatment professional mussel survey in 2010, and a follow-up survey in 2011. These surveys will be paid by the Town of Barnstable. All seven mussel species in Mystic Lake were decimated as a result of cyanobacterial blooms in 2009 and 2010, prior to the alum treatment. The endangered mussels were hit hardest, which was confirmed by the 2010 survey.

Middle Pond, described as "one of the best mussel habitats of any pond on the Appalachian Slope", also suffered a lethal cyanobacterial bloom in 2010, but has not been surveyed since 2008[1]. In its stewardship role, the IPA would like to be able to track this mussel population over time: what species are still there, their numbers, and their health and reproductive success..

To accomplish this, the IPA has engaged Ethan Jay Nedeau of Biodrawversity, LLC of Amherst, MA, who has done all the previous surveys of Middle Pond and Mystic Lake and is very familiar with both ponds and their mussel populations. He will do a new mussel survey of Middle Pond this summer and will also explore Hamblin Pond for evidence of possible past mussel habitation. We will report the results of those surveys in a forthcoming issue of this newsletter. Nedeau, whose specialty is freshwater mussels of the Northeast, has published a book, *Freshwater Mussels and the Connecticut River Watershed*[2], describing in detail, with elegant photography, all the mussels in the Connecticut River watershed.

Hamblin Pond currently does not have any living mussels, but it is quite likely that the pond had mussels before its water quality was contaminated by a duck farm between the 1920s and 1950s. Hamblin was connected to the sea by Tracy's Brook, a herring run whose mouth was in Warren's Cove, before the brook was covered by the Town landfill, now the Barnstable Transfer Station. Hamblin is currently under consideration as a place to transplant mussels from Mystic and Middle to protect them from future catastrophes such as those in 2009 and 2010.

Holly Hobart

[1]Nedeau, E. J., Low, P., and Johnson, S. 2008. Status, Habitat, and Conservation of Freshwater Mussels in Nine Coastal Plain Ponds of Southeastern Massachusetts. Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, Westfield, MA.

[2]Nedeau, E.J., 2008. Freshwater Mussels and the Connecticut River Watershed. Connecticut River Watershed Council, Greenfield, Massachusetts. 132 pp.

MUSSELS IN MARSTONS MILLS RIVER

While walking on John Hamblin's cranberry bogs, I have occasionally seen empty mussel shells and assumed that they had been dropped by birds who had taken the mussels from the ponds. Recently, I decided to see if I could discover any live mussels in the Marstons Mills River, which winds through the full length of the bog area. I found what I was looking for at the place where the river exits the bogs: several mussels, very much alive, dug into the sandy bottom of the stream. Not wanting to disturb them, I found some empty shells nearby which I identified as Eastern floaters (*Pyganodon cataracta*). This is a species that also lives in Middle Pond and Mystic Lake.

It would be interesting to investigate the river further and see how far downstream mussels can be found, a good project for this summer.

Holly Hobart

TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES $5,000 FOR *HYDRILLA* CONTROL IN MYSTIC LAKE

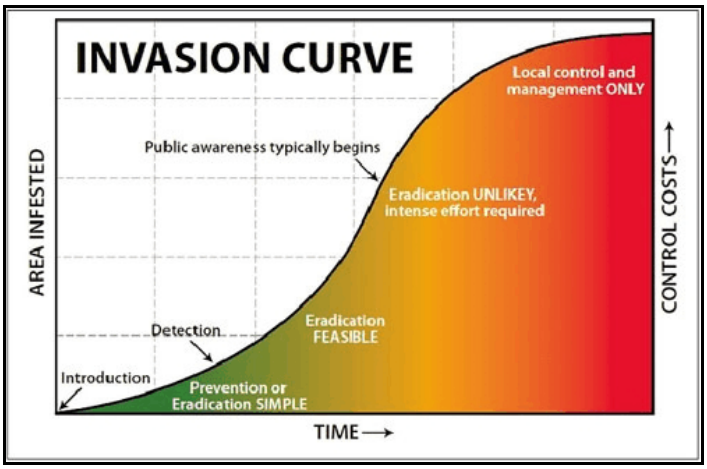
At the Barnstable Town Council meeting on Thursday, April 7, the Council gave its approval to a $25,000 capital budget item "for the purpose of funding the treatment of *Hydrilla* in Long Pond and Mystic Lake".

The highly invasive aquatic weed *Hydrilla* is a long-standing problem in Centerville's Long Pond, and the Town has spent approximately $20,000 per year since 2001 to combat it using professionally-applied chemical weed killers. The pond is currently reported to be about two-thirds weed free. Four-fifths, or $20,000 of the total amount appropriated will fund that continuing effort. The remaining $5,000 is earmarked for Mystic Lake.

The IPA is grateful to the Town for this funding, which will be used to fund a scuba survey of the entire pond to identify any patches of *Hydrilla* that may have been missed by last fall's volunteer searches by boat. It may also provide assistance with the cost of materials used in the benthic barriers that are placed over the roots to prevent regrowth.

Conservation Director Rob Gatewood and several other speakers praised the IPA's rapid response to the discovery of *Hydrilla* last year. IPA President Holly Hobart pointed out that the Town's investment in eradicating *Hydrilla* from Mystic would be highly leveraged by the continuing work of IPA volunteers, and that the Town would save the expense of chemical removal in Mystic if the IPA's manual approach can be made to work long-term.

IPA Vice President Bob Nichols discovered the *Hydrilla* infestation last August, designed and built the benthic barriers used to control it, and directed the eradication effort. Dr. Ken Wagner and Rob Gatewood developed the protocol for manual removal and assisted in obtaining permits and equipment. IPA volunteers Annette Nichols, Betsey Godley, Bob and Alex Frazee, Louis Solomon, Donald Houghton, John Kayajan, Robert Mesrop and others worked as a team to remove the plants and build and deploy the benthic barriers.



The biological invasion curve showing that detection and prevention make the most sense from monetary, environmental, and effectiveness perspectives. Courtesy of Robert Emanuel, Oregon Sea Grant Extension.

INVASIVE AQUATIC PLANTS – TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

Plant	Year found	Pond	Village	Treatment	Cost to Town	Result
Fanwort	2001	Bearse Pond	Centerville	Sonar (herbicide)	$40,000	
Fanwort	2006	Gooseberry Cove	Centerville	Sonar (herbicide)	$17,000	
Fanwort	2008	Lake Wequaquet	Centerville	Sonar (herbicide)	$17,000	
Hydrilla	2001	Long Pond	Centerville	Sonar (herbicide)	~$200,000	2/3 of pond now free of infestation
Hydrilla	2010	Mystic Lake	Marstons Mills	Manual removal	$5,000*	Too early to tell

** The IPA spent an additional $2,500 contributed by IPA members for materials to build the benthic barriers.*

HYDRILLA FLYER

The IPA has included a color flyer with this newsletter alerting all users of the Indian Ponds to be on the watch for *Hydrilla*, an invasive water weed, which was discovered in several locations around Mystic Lake last August. The flyer includes photographs of *Hydrilla* patches and a closeup of the plant itself to show what to be on the watch for in any of the Indian Ponds and who to contact if any suspicious plants are found. Additional copies of this flyer can be downloaded from the IPA website at www.indianponds.org.

To guard against the spread of invasive plants and animals, whenever boats are transported between bodies of water, they should be thoroughly checked and cleaned of any plant material and bilge water. Also, the contents of aquariums and ornamental ponds should never be dumped into water bodies.

MID-WINTER WATER SAMPLING OF MYSTIC LAKE

Dr Ken Wagner and Bob Nichols did the periodic water sampling and testing of Mystic Lake through the ice on February 16. This water quality monitoring is part of the alum treatment project, and the data are used to assess the effectiveness of the treatment. Sampling will be done on two more dates, one in May and one over the summer.

The following was done at each of three sampling locations (the deepest point at the southern end, the deep hole northwest of Ram Island, and ~250 yards south–southwest of the island):

- Collected water samples from surface to bottom at 2-meter depth intervals to be analyzed for total and dissolved phosphorus, alkalinity, and nitrogen series.
- A sample probe was lowered to record water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity, and turbidity at 1-meter depth intervals from surface to bottom.
- Collected phytoplankton and zooplankton (lots of zooplankton were evident now that the alewives have left; there were hardly any zooplankton evident in the autumn sampling).
- Secchi disk readings of water clarity (significant variation from 2.4 meters at the northern point to 3.6 meters at the southern point).

The results from this sampling show somewhat reduced phosphorus levels, but not yet at the desired level. This is reportedly similar to the pattern observed following the autumn 2007 alum treatment of Long Pond in Brewster and Harwich. If this pattern holds, we should see a further decline in phosphorus and improved clarity over the summer.

Bob Nichols

Dr Wagner lowering his test probe through a hole in the 6–8 inch thick ice on Mystic Lake on February 16. Photo by Bob Nichols.

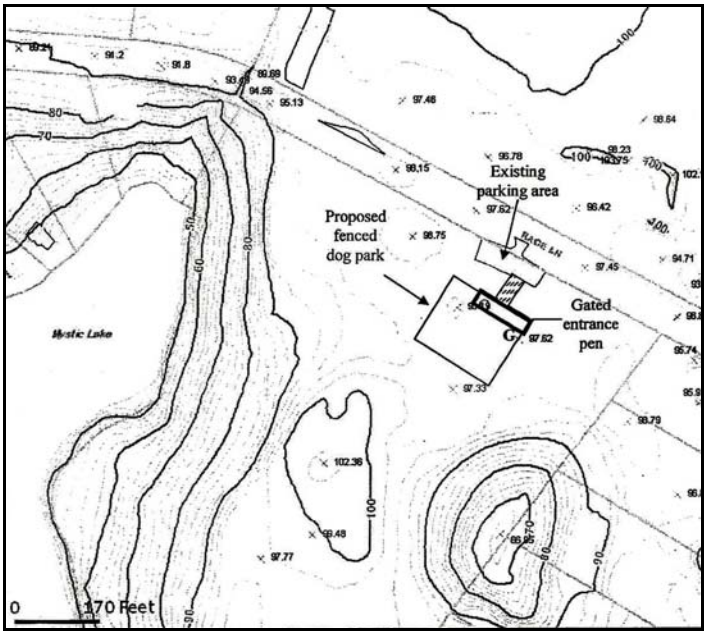
DOG PARK PLANS

At its April 5 meeting, the Marstons Mills Village Association hosted a presentation from the newly-formed Dog Park Committee (DPC), **a group of Barnstable residents interested in establishing a dog park in the Town of Barnstable, possibly in Marstons Mills.** The group is funded by contributions, and is in the process of applying to the IRS for 501(c)(3) tax status, which would make contributors tax-deductible.

The purpose of a dog park is to give dog owners a place to exercise their dogs in a fenced area where the dogs can be off-leash and play with other dogs. There are currently only three dog parks on the Cape, one in Provincetown, one in Dennis, and a recently opened one in Falmouth. The speakers explained that **there are 3,200 dogs in the Town of Barnstable, 550 of which reside in Marstons Mills,** and they believed there was widespread support in town for a public dog park. DPC members also mentioned that **a dog park could be an attraction for tourists looking for a place to exercise their dogs.**

Dog parks have become very popular in recent years across the country. The DPC stressed that a set of rules would be prominently posted and enforced by park users. Following is a partial list:

- No more than 3 dogs per owner.
- Dogs must be licensed, vaccinated, tagged, and spayed or neutered; not sick.



Sketch of proposed dog park off Race Lane in Marstons Mills.

- Dogs must be at least four months old.
- Dogs must be within view and voice control of owner at all times.
- Dogs must be leashed when outside the gated enclosure;
- Owners must immediately clean up after dogs.
- Owners must immediately remove problem dogs.
- Owners must provide supervision to children, keep gates closed, not smoke, etc.

The proposed dog park in Marstons Mills would be approximately 200 ft. by 200 ft. in size, fenced with a double-gated entry, have a separate enclosure for small dogs, and parking nearby. The total land needed would be about two acres.

The DPC provided a map of their proposed dog park, depicting it as sharing the parking lot across Race Lane from the airfield on the 23 acres of the former Danforth Property adjacent to Mystic Lake. The former Danforth Property is a 217-acre tract that was purchased by the Town of Barnstable for open space in 2004 at a cost of $11,275,290. **If located south of Race Lane as proposed, the dog park would be within several hundred feet of two residences and a short walk from Mystic Lake** via the new trail from the parking lot to the northeast cove of the lake.

Some IPA members have voiced concerns about creating a dog park in this location:

- Even if dog droppings were promptly removed, urine would accumulate in the soil over time, possibly causing odors and groundwater pollution.
- Neighbors may be disturbed by noise.
- **There is a future C-O-MM public water supply wellhead located west of the proposed site, which could be affected by urine entering the groundwater.**
- The site may be the habitat of one or more rare or threatened species.
- The DPC might ask to eventually expand the park's size, particularly if it became heavily used; which would only magnify any problems for neighbors and the environment.

It has been noted that the former Danforth Property and the adjacent West Barnstable Conservation Area (WBCA) offer other possible sites that would greatly reduce the impact of a dog park. One of these is north of the airfield, while another is on the WBCA, off the Service Road near Route 6.

The DPC has said it hopes to have the dog park in operation in 2012.

Holly Hobart

IPA MISSION: ". . . to preserve and protect the natural environment and ecological systems of the Indian Ponds and surrounding parcels of lands and watershed [and to] participate in studies and work with other agencies, individuals, and groups to educate the public, serve the community, and promote and preserve the Indian Ponds and surrounding areas."

MYSTIC LAKE UPDATE

(Cont'd from page 1)

Under the ice, Secchi transparency ranged from 2.3 to 3.4 m, a fairly wide range, with clarity increasing as one moves south. This is consistent with historical spatial patterns, with the north end having lower clarity.

Phosphorus (P) from the last decade has averaged around 15 parts per billion (ppb) in the upper waters, 30 ppb near the boundary between upper and lower water masses during summer stratification, and 400 ppb in the deepest waters. It would be preferable to have average P <10 ppb in the upper water layer, and it does appear that mixing from the lower water layer is what drives P up over the summer. This is why the P inactivation treatment with aluminum was done, but it does not address the watershed sources of P that allowed the situation to get so bad. **It is thought that considerable improvement will result for many years from the treatment, but assessment of current watershed sources remains important**.

P levels in response to aluminum treatment did decline in the lake, but only dramatically in deep water where concentrations were quite high. Values in the upper waters were still high enough to support substantial algae biomass. This is consistent with expectations; aluminum is more efficient at stripping P at high P levels, so the decline from larger P levels will be greater than that from lower P levels. While stripping the P from the water column is one desirable aspect of the treatment, the main target is the surficial sediment P. At the time of the treatment, much P had been released from the sediment, and incomplete stripping of P from the water column by the aluminum leaves substantial P to be processed by algae. Eventually most of this will wind up in the sediment. But, in summer 2011, when the next round of major release of P from the sediment would normally occur, that P should be bound by aluminum and not be released. So **the major benefit of the treatment can't be observed until this coming summer**.

Nitrogen (N) is not a focus of the current program, but in reviewing data, it is apparent that N **has been more elevated than in many lakes that suffer cyanobacterial blooms**. I took samples for multiple forms of N during the February sampling to provide a better picture in this regard. The plankton, other than during the serious cyano blooms of August 2009 and July 2010, are dominated by green algae during the warmer months, indicative of a high N:P ratio. This is not typical, and bears further scrutiny.

Aluminum was detected even before treatment, and was not appreciably higher during treatment. Aluminum was non-detectable in most samples after treatment. I opted to cease aluminum sampling to favor N sampling, which I think has much more value at this point.

pH is still somewhat elevated, with values as high as 7.8 observed under the ice. Background pH for this lake should be between 6.0 and 6.5, but these values are only achieved in deep water where acid buildup from decay occurs. **Alkalinity is also elevated for a Cape Cod lake**, at 15–20 mg/l, except in the deepest area of the south basin during stratification, when values can exceed 60 mg/l. The only available historic data, from 2004, suggest values no higher than 5 mg/l at that time, which is puzzling. What could have caused such an increase in alkalinity in under a decade is unknown.

Conductivity is slightly elevated for a Cape Cod lake, at 110–120 micromhos per centimeter (umhos/cm) except near the bottom, where values can approach 140 umhos/cm. This suggests somewhat elevated dissolved substances, which comes as no surprise.

The phytoplankton, as noted above, **was dominated by chlorococcalean green algae in late summer and autumn**, a situation indicative of high nutrient abundance by high N:P ratios. In lakes with cyano blooms, summer dissolved N is usually non-detectable, but that is not what the algal data suggest. Cyano blooms have indeed occurred, but the low clarity at the time of sampling was related to small green algae. Under the ice, some of those green algae persist (something I have observed in other lakes this winter), but the dominant algae are diatoms, as would be expected. Water clarity is not high, and algal abundance is substantial even in February, but most of the abundant algae will drop out of the water column over the spring, and those that are present are generally good sources of food for zooplankton. The abundance of the filamentous green alga *Spirogyra* on the bottom of the lake over summer is a common spring occurrence in many fertile lakes, but usually goes away over summer as N becomes scarce. This is not the case in Mystic Lake.

The zooplankton are nearly absent during summer, as expected as a function of young-of-the-year alewife presence. Young alewives strain the water of the lake and consume zooplankton larger than about 0.3 mm, which is most of them. However, with alewife emigration in autumn, predation pressure is reduced and zooplankton have shown a resurgence into winter. Abundance is higher than normal for many lakes, and with the high quality algal food present now, growth is as high as the temperature (which does slow it down at low values) will allow. The food web appears to be thriving under the ice.

There has been no further indication of any problems with any biological component of Mystic Lake following the treatment. No observed mortality or stress-induced behavioral observations have been offered. Ethan Nedeau's report on the mussel surveys is worth reading, and it may be desirable to do some follow-up assessment this coming summer. Likewise, keeping an eye on Mystic and Middle Pond for possible toxicity events will be important. We hope to have prevented this in Mystic, but Middle may remain at risk.

There are a number of puzzling aspects to the story of Mystic Lake — pH, alkalinity, conductivity, nitrogen, possible toxic algae, summer/autumn abundance of green algae, to name a few. We should see a major shift in phosphorus chemistry around June, but it is not clear that this will affect these other mysteries. Monitoring will continue and I will endeavor to sort this all out with the available data.

Ken Wagner, PhD

CREATE A BIRD-FRIENDLY YARD

With the understanding of a few basic rules, you, too, can create a bird-friendly yard. The best place to start bird watching is in your own backyard. Chances are, there will always be some birds present, but there is no reason to settle for the occasional robin that drops in.

Birds have four basic needs to survive, and by providing for those needs, you can attract birds to any yard. Those needs are even quite obvious. They need food, water, shelter, and a place to nest. On Cape Cod, all of these necessities are relatively easy to provide.

Food is the first need that will attract birds to your yard. Black oil sunflowers seeds are the most universally accepted feed, with thistle seed running a close second. The birds around here do not seem to appreciate the millet that is in so many commercial blends, so don't waste your time and money on them. Feeders vary, but regardless what they promise, no feeder is squirrel-proof. Some birds, like cardinals, are not perching birds and, therefore, cannot handle the little pegs that come out of the sides of tube feeders. To attract those types, you can set up a platform feeder that they can stand in, or sprinkle feed on the ground.

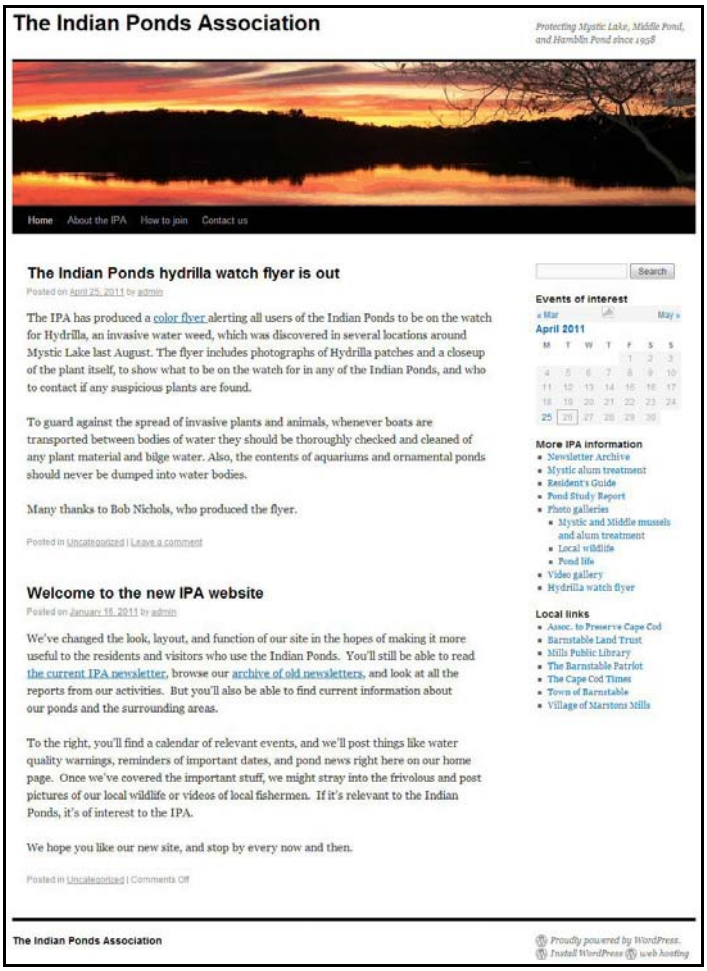
Water is an obvious need. Some people live on or near a pond and have a ready source of fresh water. If you want to put a bird bath in your yard, there are several things of which to be aware. The bowl should be relatively shallow or about 3 inches maximum depth to allow the birds to comfortably get right into it to bathe without feeling as though they are going to drown. The edges should be wide enough so that they can stand and drink without having to first dive in.

Shelter is relatively easy to provide. The next time you spruce up your yard, leave a brush pile in the area of your feeders. If all your chickadees and titmice are calmly feeding and the lookout lets out a screech that a hawk has come into the area, all the birds will disappear into your brush pile. Some birds, like the towhee, will search a brush pile for food and never come to your feeder. If they do not have ready shelter in your yard, they will not be frequent visitors. Don't trim your yards right down to the water's edge. You will be rewarded with waterfowl fishing, feeding, and hiding in the rushes and bushes that you leave.

Providing a place to nest, i.e. bird houses, can be fun, but on Cape Cod, there are enough woods around most yards that they can find their own preferred nesting sights without your having to do a whole lot.

Dave Reid

VISIT THE NEW IPA WEBSITE (www.indianponds.org)



The IPA has a new website and a new webmaster! Last autumn, the Board agreed on the need to revamp the old website so as to add additional features such as a calendar of relevant events; the posting of messages such as warnings about water quality, beach closures, and the like; reminders of important dates (e.g. annual meetings); and other pond-related news. The Board also felt that to implement such changes and facilitate the timely posting of messages, etc., a local person should be the webmaster. Board member Tamar Haspel agreed to take on the job. The new website, whose home page is pictured here, became operational on February 22.

The original IPA website was created and activated in summer 2001 by John Anderson, son of Emory and Geri Anderson. At the time, John and his wife Christie were living in Rochester, NY, where he worked for IBM as a computer administrator. He served as webmaster for 10 years, during which time, he and his family moved twice, first to Arlington, MA and then to South Grafton, MA, where they currently reside. Now, with two young children and added family responsibilities, it became more difficult for him to tend the website, particularly in light of the Board's wish that the website be expanded, as noted above. The IPA is extremely grateful for John's valuable contribution as webmaster.

The new website still retains all of the information and newsletter archives that were found on the old website, but has added photo galleries. So, please check out the new website (www.indianponds.org) to see all of the newsletter photos in color and to remain up to date on all Indian Ponds news.