

# THE IPA NEWSLETTER

Mystic Lake, Middle Pond, and Hamblin Pond

Winter 2009

A quarterly publication of the Indian Ponds Association, Inc.

Vol. 9 No. 1



## WINTER FUN: ICE FISHING

If you consider fishing to be just a summer sport, think again! Fishing through the ice has long been a popular winter activity in areas of the United States and other countries that have lakes and long, cold winters. Fishing practices differ throughout the country, but the goal is the same everywhere: get outside, enjoy the winter, and catch some tasty fish.

The usual practice on Cape ponds is to bore one or many 6–8-inch holes in the ice with an auger or heavy chisel, clear new ice and slush from the hole with a skimmer, and then fish using either a short, hand-held fishing rod or tip-ups that have a line attached to a flag that “tips up” when a fish strikes, either of which can be equipped with lures, jigs, or live bait (worms or minnows). Virtually all species caught during warm weather are also taken by ice fishing. On the Cape, yellow perch, largemouth and smallmouth bass, pickerel, and trout are the favorites.



*A lone fisherman trying his luck through the ice on Mystic Lake on a cold day in January. Photo by John Godley.*

A word of caution for those contemplating ice fishing. Don't venture out there unless there are at least 4 inches of solid ice. Also, you may want to release instead of eating any bass or other large fish because of mercury contamination of their flesh.

## ALUM TREATMENT STILL IN DOUBT

The proposed alum treatment to reduce regenerated phosphorus in Mystic Lake was stopped in its tracks by the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), which refused to issue a favorable finding that would have allowed the project to proceed and be approved by the Town Conservation Commission. In November, 2008, NHESP wrote a letter giving their opinion that the proposed alum application would result in short and long term adverse effects to the three species of rare mussels living in the pond, particularly that the reduction in phosphorus would reduce the food supply available to the mussels.

ENSR, the environmental consulting firm that has designed the alum treatment project, has sent a response letter in which they defend the project and provide scientific opinion and evidence to support our case. They have also proposed a research project whose objective would be to shed some experimental light on the subject of mussel nutrition, which is not well understood at present.

The Conservation Commission, at its meeting of January 20, 2009, postponed further consideration of the alum treatment until its March 31, 2009 meeting.

Some readers have inquired whether the Town and/or ENSR have considered alternative measures such as aeration for deactivating the phosphorus in Mystic Lake. Aeration is the introduction of air into the bottom water to inject oxygen and provide mixing to keep the pond oxygenated from top to bottom. The large volume of water that would have to be aerated would require a large number of powerful aerator units. In addition to the considerable ongoing expense for operation and maintenance of these units, there would be no permanent benefit to the lake if the aeration were to cease. Aeration of the bottom water would also disrupt the lake's natural thermal stratification and run the risk of causing permanent damage to the lake's ecological well-being.

### – IN THIS ISSUE –

- WINTER FUN: ICE FISHING
- ALUM TREATMENT STILL IN DOUBT
- GRAY WILLOW ERADICATION PROJECT UPDATE
- ANIMAL TRACKS IN THE SNOW
- IN MEMORIAM: GLENNA KOHL
- WOODPECKERS ON CAPE COD

## IPA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS: 2008–2009

### Officers

Holly Hobart  
President

Carl Thut  
Vice President

Jane Smith  
Clerk

Nancy Wong  
Treasurer

### Directors

Robert Derderian  
Jon Halpert

Robert Kohl  
James McGuire  
Gay Rhue

Lewis Solomon  
Richard Wheeler

**Newsletter Editor**  
Geri Anderson

IPA, Inc., P.O. Box 383  
Marstons Mills, MA 02648

E-mail: [info@indianponds.org](mailto:info@indianponds.org)

<http://www.indianponds.org>  
**Webmaster**  
John Anderson

The IPA is a 501(c)(3) organization and a registered public charity. All dues and contributions are tax deductible.

*This newsletter, with a circulation of over 650, is a forum for the exchange of ideas on matters germane to the IPA mission and, as such, the views expressed by authors of articles do not necessarily represent official IPA policy.*

## GRAY WILLOW ERADICATION PROJECT UPDATE

Last year, Bartlett Tree Experts Co. removed invasive European gray willow trees from 62 parcels around all three of the Indian Ponds. This year, the eradication project will continue. Beginning early in March, Bartlett will send letters to all waterfront property owners, inviting those who did not sign up last year to consider signing up for gray willow removal this year. Soon after the trees leaf out in the spring, Steve Heywood of Bartlett and his crew will inspect all of the sites where they cut down and treated willows last year. They will be looking for re-sprouting, which they will immediately remove and treat at no extra charge.

In June, Bartlett will begin removing trees from the properties of owners who sign up this year. They will also remove the largest gray willows from the 23 acres owned by the Town of Barnstable along the northeast shore of Mystic Lake (the cove area). As reported in the Fall 2008 issue of this newsletter, the Town's Conservation Division has received a grant of \$7,500 from the Barnstable County Land Management Grant Program to help cover the cost of this work; the Division will provide an additional \$2,500 from its own budget for this purpose.

The property owners we talked to last year expressed satisfaction with both the work done by Bartlett and also the cost. The IPA urges all waterfront property owners who did not have their gray willows removed last year to sign up with Bartlett this year and get these invaders removed. Doing so may improve your view, and it will certainly help preserve the biodiversity of the Indian Ponds. **It should be pointed out that any gray willows not removed have the potential to serve as "brood stock" for new growth around the ponds as a result of seeds transported by birds, wind, and water, and also floating bits of broken branches sprouting roots and starting new trees elsewhere. As good stewards of our environment, we should all pitch in and help eradicate this unwelcome invasive tree.**

To sign up for gray willow removal, contact Steve Heywood at Bartlett Tree Experts, P.O. Box 177, Osterville, MA 02655 (phone: 508-428-2397, fax: 508-428-2398, e-mail: [sheywood@bartlett.com](mailto:sheywood@bartlett.com)).

## ANIMAL TRACKS IN THE SNOW













All this snow getting you down? At least it makes for spectacular pictures of the ponds. Take a few minutes to look around, but don't forget to look down. Early mornings after

a fresh snow may offer a rare glimpse into the going-ons and going-tos of the IPA's secretive animal chapter. My purposely meandering walks to fetch the paper on such mornings had revealed tracks posing questions and telling stories. Did the neighbor's cat pass by? Was he stalking that mouse? So, it was a skunk and not a raccoon that tipped the trash can. The tracks shown here are just a sampling of the many we've seen this year. These images come courtesy of Kim Cabrera at

[www.bear-tracker.com](http://www.bear-tracker.com)

where you can find everything you are likely to encounter in this area. No truly surprising finds in this bunch; just a good bracer against a snowy day and a great chance to remember how fortunate we are to live here.

Betsey Godley

Paw	Gray Squirrel	Mouse	Coyote	Domestic cat	Striped skunk	Raccoon
Front						
Hind						

## IN MEMORIAM: GLENNA KOHL

On Thursday, November 20th, the Town of Barnstable lost one of our most well known and beloved lifeguards. Glenna Kohl passed away after her three year battle with Melanoma skin cancer.

I had the privilege of lifeguarding with Glenna at Dowses Beach in Osterville for two years. Glenna was a lifeguard for the Town of Barnstable for five years, earning positions as head guard and head swim instructor while at Dowses Beach. She was adored by the children she taught and the patrons she protected.

Glenna was known as the beautiful blonde lifeguard who was always smiling and giggling that contagious little laugh she had. Each day she toted around her Nalgene water bottle, chapstick, and a plethora of fruits and vegetables. Her favorite morning "duty" at the beach was going around picking up trash so she could collect forgotten treasures. From action figures to Popsicle stick jokes, Glenna's locker was her shrine to goodies found buried beneath the sand.

There was an aura about Glenna that was so warm and friendly. She had this ability to make anyone who talked to her feel special and loved. This could be seen particularly through her care and devotion towards the children at the beach. Every year Dowses Beach holds a carnival to reward the children involved with the swim lesson program for all of their hard work. I remember one summer we had a "Country Ho-Down" theme. Glenna spent hours upon hours cutting out little red and white-checkered bandanas for all 200 children in the program to wear. Her devotion to the children, her co-workers, and Dowses Beach was obvious and well recognized. As a result, in 2005 she was presented with the Guard of the Year award.

Those who knew Glenna truly understand just how amazing she was. It is extremely hard to form together the words and phrases to explain Glenna. She was so many things. Simply put, Glenna was a genuinely happy and beautiful person inside and out. She loved to help others. Even when she was sick, she tried her hardest to spread the word about the dangers of overexposure to sunlight and tanning beds. One of the things I admired most about Glenna was her continuing devotion towards her fight. Even when she was uncertain if her treatments would help her, she knew that participating in medical trials, she was helping to find a cure that could one day save others.

Despite her grueling battle with treatments and on going attempts to fight this disease Glenna never forgot about others. I remember when I was a sophomore in college, extremely stressed out from schoolwork; Glenna sent me a little care package. It contained organic teas, granola bars, and colorings of Disney Princesses and vegetables



*Glenna Oline Kohl  
October 2, 1982 – November 20, 2008*

(a very Glenna thing to do, she loved her veggies!). She always knew how to make you smile and get over those little bumps in the road while she herself was trying to make it over this mountain.

It is safe to say that all who knew Glenna Kohl now have a guardian angel well certified in CPR and First Aid watching over them. As our hearts begin to heal, we must remember Glenna for all of her many attributes she contributed to this world and touched our lives with. Rest easy, Glenna... *"you're in the arms of the angel, may you find comfort there."* I love you, Glenna.

*Jillian Blumberg*

**Editor's Note.** This article, which was initially published on page 6 of the January 2009 issue of *The Barnstable Bulletin*, is reprinted here with the permission of Glenna's parents, Bob and Colleen Kohl, the author, Jillian Blumberg, and the Town of Barnstable. Bob Kohl is a member of the IPA's Board of Directors.

## WOODPECKERS ON CAPE COD

Do you wonder if a woodpecker ever gets a headache? Banging his head against a tree up to 12,000 times a day surely must be conducive to causing that kind of problem. Well, Ivan Schwab of the University of California, Davis wondered about that question and set out to research it. His research won him an "Ig Nobel Prize", an alternative to the real Nobel Prize. It turns out that woodpeckers have a fluid surrounding their brains and other types of shock absorbers in both their skulls and their beaks.



*Hairy woodpecker*

Of the twenty-three species of woodpeckers in the United States, there are six whose range covers Cape Cod. Since at least four of them come readily to feeders, you have probably seen most that come here. The potential pool includes the hairy, downy, Northern flicker, red-bellied, pileated woodpecker and the yellow-bellied sapsucker.

The **hairy** is the most widespread woodpecker in North America. There are seventeen recognized subspecies of this

bird, so if you're visiting in California or down south, you might get into an argument with your host about whether or not that is really a hairy.

The **downy**, which looks like a miniature version of the hairy, is the smallest and most common American woodpecker. It



*Downy woodpecker*

is found from Alaska east to the Atlantic coast and south to Texas and Florida and varies in size from north to south, but is still recognizable in any location.

The hairy is distinguishable from the downy primarily by the size of its bill. The downy has a short, stubby little bill, while the hairy has a larger, more pointed bill. If you see one soon after the other, you will immediately recognize the difference. There are also some minor color differences, but size is the main

indicator around here. The male of both species has a bright red spot on the back of his head.

Several weeks ago, a friend of mine absolutely assured me that they have a red-headed woodpecker in their yard; no argument of mine could convince them otherwise. What they most likely have is a **red-bellied woodpecker**. The red-headed woodpecker is a really nice little bird with a dark, red head whose range in the east cuts off like a knife edge along the New York/New England border. What we do have around here, in quantity this year, is the red-bellied woodpecker. The male has a bright red cap extending from his forehead back to the nape of his neck, while the female has red only on the nape. While all woodpeckers eat insects, fruit, and nuts, the red-bellied is not above an occasional lizard, small fish, or even a nestling or other small bird. It is called red-bellied because of the wash of red over the feathers on the abdomen.



*Red-bellied woodpecker*

The other common woodpecker around here is the **Northern flicker**. It is our only woodpecker that is migratory. On Cape Cod, we have the yellow-shafted variety, the male of which has a black mustache. When you get out west, you will find the red-shafted, the male of which has a red mustache. In spite of those differences, they are the same species and are called Northern flicker everywhere.



*Yellow-shafted Northern flicker*

The last two, the yellow-bellied sapsucker and the pileated woodpecker, are rarely seen on Cape Cod, although their ranges do include the Cape. I have seen a pileated on our land in central Maine, but never on Cape Cod.

*Dave Reid*

**SIGHTINGS AND OBSERVATIONS WANTED:** We'd like to hear from our readers about any interesting sightings or observations of birds, fish, other animals, plants, and other components of the environment in the Indian Ponds vicinity. If you see a bald eagle, a visitor to the ponds during the winter in recent years, take a photo and send it to us. Send your information by mail to the IPA, P.O. Box 383, Marstons Mills, MA 02648 or by e-mail to [info@indianponds.org](mailto:info@indianponds.org).