

KENNEBEC LAKE ASSOCIATION

Summer Newsletter

August 2008

A Word from the President....

With the return of seasonal residents, our lake is alive with families and friends enjoying cottage life once again. More and more of us are sharing the lake and its environment, and that is often exhibited in heightened noise levels. Finding the right balance between the happy sounds of people enjoying themselves and intrusive, excess noise can present a problem for us all. Recently I received several phone calls from people upset with late-night partying and fire-works. In our wilderness setting, silence and the sounds of nature are some of the very reasons we all choose to be here.

For the Kennebec Lake community to provide the treasured lifestyle that we all value so highly, it is increasingly necessary for everyone to remember that others are trying to enjoy themselves at the same time in the same limited space. We need to respect our neighbours and demonstrate a reciprocal tolerance for those who have just escaped from the city and are enjoying good times with friends.

Also, please plan to attend the AGM; we welcome the OPP as one of our exhibitors this year and hope you will bring questions for them. We have several important business items to discuss, including potential changes to the constitution and the election of next year's executive. I look forward to meeting as many of you as can make it.

Terry Kennedy

You were asking...

what is causing so many oak twigs to fall?

This summer we are seeing heavy pruning of oak twigs. If you look at a cut end, you will see a small opening, often plugged with "frass." Look farther in, and you will probably see an elongate, creamy white larva. (Thanks to Karen Brown for bringing one in.) The following is based on information in *Common Pests of Trees in Ontario*.

Twig Pruner (*Anelaphus villosus*)

Adult: 12 - 18mm Larva: 14 - 22mm

The twig pruner breeds in the small branches of oaks and several other deciduous trees. The adult is a slender, elongate, greyish brown "longhorned" beetle. It is in flight in late spring about the time the oak leaves begin to form. Eggs are laid singly near the tip of the twigs in the axil of a leaf or in slits in the bark.

The young larva mines beneath the bark but later enters the wood and tunnels downward through the centre of the twig. In late summer the mature larva severs the branch, all but the bark, by making several concentric cuts from the centre outward. The larva then retreats up the twig stem, sealing the end of the tunnel with a plug of fibrous frass.

With the first high wind, the thin bark breaks, and the twig falls to the ground with the larva in it, where it is protected under the snow over winter. Pupation generally takes place the following spring.

There is one generation per year. Mature trees are not usually seriously damaged. There are no satisfactory insecticide control measures for this pest.

by Aileen Merriam

KLA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

KENNEBEC COMMUNITY HALL ARDEN



SATURDAY AUGUST 16 2008

10 a.m. Exhibits and coffee

Talk to Committee Members

See informative displays

Share YOUR ideas

Children welcome

11 a.m. Business Meeting

12:15 until 1:15 p.m. Lunch

(corn, hotdogs, sausages)

Adults \$4 Children \$2

Come early and bring your photos, drawings and paintings of our lake and its watershed — landscape, nature, wildlife, recreation, etc. — to display at the AGM.

Pampered Predators

by Charlotte DuChene

That purring curled-up feline lolling comfortably on your couch becomes a serial killer when you let it outside. Domestic cats kill hundreds of millions of birds and billions of small mammals every year; as well, the outdoors holds many dangers to cats.

Felis catus is not a natural predator in North America but an invasive species. A descendant of wild cats still found but rarely seen in Africa and Europe, it was domesticated in Egypt about 4,000 years ago and made its way over here with Europeans a few hundred years ago. Our wildlife, such as birds, squirrels, chipmunks, moles, bats, shrews, field mice, frogs and snakes, didn't evolve to develop natural defences against our pet cats or the abandoned or lost and feral cats that breed prolifically. And natural predators like owls, hawks and foxes now have to compete for prey.

Keeping your cat well fed will not deter it from killing; it'll just become a healthier, stronger hunter, because its hunting instinct is quite separate from its urge to eat. Attaching a bell

to the cat's collar won't work either. Not only will Sylvester learn to stalk silently, but by the time the bell rings, it could be too late for the unsuspecting prey, which, in any case, won't necessarily link the ringing with danger.

Indoor cats live longer than ones that are allowed to roam free. Outside, they are vulnerable to cars; animal attacks that can cause injuries and diseases; human cruelty; exposure to fatal diseases such as rabies, feline leukaemia, distemper and feline immunodeficiency virus (for which there is no vaccine); parasites such as worms, ticks, mites and fleas, some of which can be transmitted to humans; and pesticides, rodenticides and traps meant for fur-bearing animals.

For the safety of your cat and to be environmentally responsible, keep it inside. The American Bird Conservancy, which is promoting the Cats Indoors! Campaign for Safer Birds and Cats, also provides much more information on the topic: www.abcbirds.org/cats. The website for the Cats in Kennels Program, a Canadian source, is www3.sympatico.ca/samgreen/webcats.html.

The 100-Mile Diet -- Shop locally!

For those of us who live on or near Kennebec Lake, Andy Halladay's store is an important resource. If you don't see what you need, Andy or Marlene will try to get it for you. If you haven't discovered the Thursday seafood deliveries or Andy's great meat, look closer.

Verona is also a good source of farm produce and baking. A number of growers have opened 'Local Family Farms' where Pam's Bulk Food used to be. The Frontenac Farmers Market at the Lion's Club Hall is also open every Saturday morning from February to December. Two professional pastry chefs run The Bakery in Tamworth; it's a wonderful bakery and closes only for a few months in the winter.

For the second year in a row, the Fall River Restaurant Pub & Grill has been voted one of the best places to eat in Canada. In Sharbot Lake, we have the Sharbot Lake Country Inn and Katie's Pub (the Doctor's House), The Maples Pizza & Subs, The Junction and the Rising Bun Bakery, all ready for your business.

Please support these folks, especially when few tourists or cottagers are here, so that we can enjoy their presence for years to come.

No Light Trespassing by Judy Kennedy

Night skies are one of the treasures of living in the country. Stars and moon offer natural light and an opportunity to expand your knowledge of the universe.

Are you guilty of light trespass? People install outdoor lighting for three reasons: beautification (to make a property more attractive at night); safety (getting from point A to point B without tripping on a rock); and security (protecting your property from break-ins).

You can attain all of these goals without lighting up your property like a baseball diamond at a night game. If you or your neighbours cannot see those beautiful starry night skies above, then you are guilty of light trespass.

So please check your lighting. Turn off outdoor electric lights and spots that are not necessary, and lower the wattage on outdoor electric lights. Use solar lighting (the minimum needed) as often as possible. Use light fixtures that direct light towards the ground, not upwards to the sky or out to your neighbours.

Increase your night vision, enjoy the beautiful night sky, and save money on electricity. Don't be a light trespasser.

(Ref. *Cottage Life* magazine, October 2001 and 2002 and June 2003)

KLA Welcome Packages

Do you have a new resident near you? Please introduce yourself and your lake association. Ask if they have received a welcome package.

If not, please call Judy Kennedy at 613-335-3606 with details (name, telephone number, civic address); the package containing useful information about our lake and area will be delivered.

www.kennebeclake.ca

Largemouth Bass: (*Micropterus salmoides*)

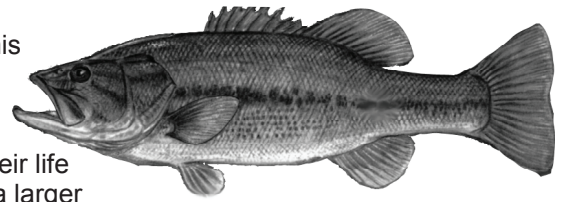
The largemouth bass is nicknamed “bucket-mouth” for obvious reasons. This species of bass prefers warmer water than smallmouth; therefore, its range is limited to southern Ontario. Because of this preference, it will usually be found in quiet back bays with plenty of vegetation.

Males reach sexual maturity at age 3 to 4, and females at age 4 to 5. Their life span is 15 years. This species usually has a faster growth rate and attains a larger size than smallmouth bass. They commonly grow to 5 pounds in Ontario but can grow to 8 to 10 pounds.

Peak spawning usually occurs in mid-June. Males will build the nest when the water reaches 15 ½ degrees C, and spawning will then occur when the temperature rises another 1 to 3 degrees. The male will choose either a sandy/gravel bottom or a sandy/muddy bottom in a metre or less of water, usually near a weedy area in order to provide a rearing area for the fry. The actual spawning activity is the same as that of the smallmouth bass, and the male is just as conscientious as the smallmouth male. The fry are even more susceptible to predators, and the survival rate is much lower. As adults, they feed on frogs, fish, and crayfish and in fact will consume anything their large mouth will accommodate, including mice, snakes and even ducklings. They will also cannibalize their own young.

Because of their penchant for warm water, they will be found in shallow water all summer, sometimes in depths of a few inches. They love to hide amongst lily pads and weeds, under fallen timber and docks or any other cover. In later fall and winter, they move to deep water, remaining more active than their smallmouth cousins.

*see Greg’s article on Smallmouth Bass in the Spring 2008 Newsletter



The Walleye Fishery in Kennebec Lake

The Lake Stewardship Committee has been looking at why our lake has a relatively poor walleye fishery and how to improve it. Possible spawning areas have been checked.

Last June 7, Cam McCauley, MNR biologist, presented data that give a better understanding of the Kennebec Lake fishery. Gill net catches for 1971 (13 nets) and 2001 (14 nets) show, respectively, 35 and 25 walleye, 22 and 64 smallmouth bass, 146 and 145 lake herring (cisco), and 8 and 26 perch. If these catches accurately reflect numbers of fish in the lake, walleye declined by roughly a third, smallmouth bass and perch tripled and lake herring remained stable. Only Sharbot Lake had fewer walleye than Kennebec Lake; Big Clear Lake had twice as many, near the average for area lakes.

An age analysis of the netted walleye showed numbers declined drastically after age 3; lack of older age classes seriously reduces reproduction. However, walleye here grow some 25% faster than those of other area lakes.

Cam also discussed the pros and cons of restocking which has worked in some lakes but not in others. Cannibalism and food competition are key problems with restocking. Natural population growth through improved spawning is preferred. In either case, MNR will help, but it is up to lake residents to do the necessary preparatory work.

Our questionnaires from 2007 (only 5 returned) reported 3 walleye compared with 261 bass (large- and smallmouth) and over 500 panfish. No perch were reported.

Where do we go from here? We need to find out why individual walleye grow rapidly but the

by Bernie Dertinger, Stewardship Committee

walleye population does not. The low number of perch reported in the gill nets and the questionnaires may be a clue. Research suggests that abundant perch usually mean abundant walleye. Could lack of perch cause cannibalism, causing low numbers of older walleye? Why are there so few perch in the lake?

Perch thrive on crayfish. We have no data on crayfish populations here. I have never seen a crayfish in Kennebec Lake, whereas I found them quite easily under rocks or debris at other lakes. To pursue this question, I modified a minnow trap, baited it and set it out in four different locations at the eastern end of the lake following a trapping protocol from the literature. Not a single crayfish was trapped in my four attempts.

We also need to find out whether rusty crayfish, an invasive species, have reached our lake. Rusty crayfish, native to the Ohio River, have spread, mainly through discarded bait, to the Ottawa area, the Kawarthas and other Ontario lakes. They reduce native crayfish populations by competition. Rusty crayfish are not easily eaten by fish and destroy aquatic vegetation needed by fish. They cannot be eradicated so must not be allowed to enter as bait.

Please report any crayfish sightings to: webmaster@www.kennebeclake.ca (location, date/time of day, size/coloration). Send a picture, especially if it is a rusty brown colour. It might help us determine what type of crayfish we have in Kennebec Lake. Please share relevant information about crayfish, perch or walleye with Stewardship Committee members at the AGM in August.

NATURE NOTES

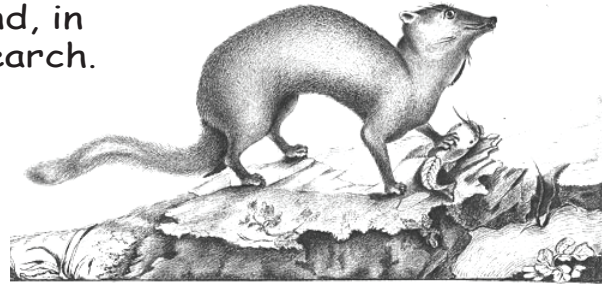
The Fisher Martes pennanti

Many myths about fishers abound, in spite of years of study and research.

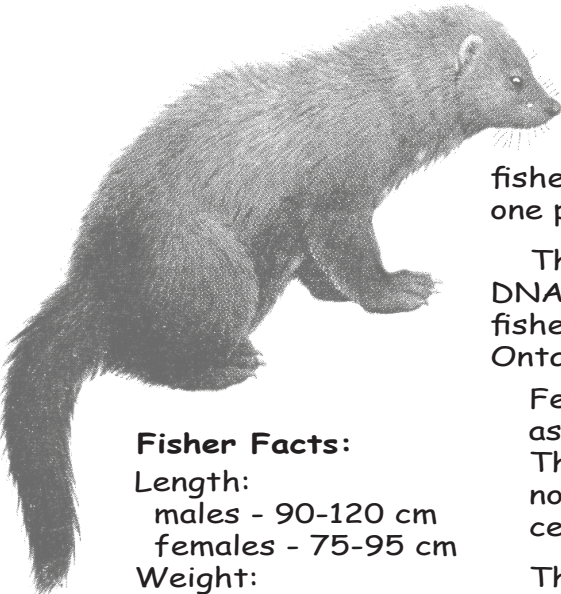
Last February, Dr. Jeff Bowman of MNR (Peterborough) gave a fact-filled talk about fishers, hosted by the Friends of the Salmon River and the Frontenac Stewardship Council, to over 100 people in Verona.

MNR has done extensive studies of radio-marked fishers and of fishers taken by trappers. Much of this work was done in eastern Ontario.

Fishers are small. As members of the mustelid family, they are smaller than otters and slightly larger than martens. They have long bodies and short legs, which give them problems in deep snow. Although they are excellent climbers, they spend most of their time on the ground. Most of their food is snowshoe hares and deer carrion, but they do ambush porcupines and eat some vegetation and small mammals. Cats were not found in stomach contents.



Early Europeans in North America held strange ideas about fishers!



Fisher Facts:

Length:

males - 90-120 cm

females - 75-95 cm

Weight:

males - 3.5-5.5 Kg

(max 9 Kg)

females - 2.0-2.5 Kg

Fishers prefer landscapes with 40 percent or more forest cover and a mix of conifers and hardwoods.

As depleted forest cover has regrown, so have fisher populations of eastern Ontario. Populations are dense in the Kemptville region, where there can be one fisher per 3.6 square kilometres (889 acres) compared with one per 29.9 square kilometres in Algonquin Park.

There are five genetic groups of fishers in Ontario. DNA shows that the Kemptville population has arisen from fishers in the Adirondacks of New York state, not from Ontario populations.

Female fishers create a natal den in a hollow tree, often aspen, where they give birth in late winter to 2 to 4 kits. They mate soon after giving birth; the fertilized eggs will not attach to the uterus wall for about 10 months, a process known as "delayed implantation."

The female does all the hunting to feed the kits as they grow. She gradually spends less and less time with them; the kits leave the den at about 8 weeks. Only 1 to 2 will survive until the following spring.

by Aileen Merriam

Zebra Mussels in Kennebec Lake???

Zebra mussels commonly become established in a water body when their microscopic larvae are transported there from an infected lake in fishing gear or on boats. Even so, if there is not enough calcium (Ca) available to build their shells, they may be unable to establish a population. If they do, however, they can remove so much of the organic particles from the water column that the food chain can be affected and fish such as walleye may be unable to grow. Mussels also clog up water intakes, cut swimmers and are a general nuisance.

A recent research paper by T. Whittier, et al.—"A calcium-based invasion risk assessment for zebra and quagga mussels (*Dreissena* spp.)," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, May 2008—says the risk of establishing zebra mussel populations is very low if the Ca concentration is below 12 milligrams per litre. Ca measurements in Kennebec Lake (analyzed by MOE) varied from about 6 to 11 milligrams per litre.

Although our lake's Ca level is adequate for some large, native clams to build shells, it seems that the lack of zebra mussel populations in Kennebec Lake may be due to the low calcium concentrations.

by Gray Merriam

Editor/Design/Input: Aileen Merriam
Text Editors: Charlotte DuChene, Judy Kennedy
Reproduction: Judy and Terry Kennedy
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