

FALL/WINTER 2013

VOLUME 18, ISSUE TWO



LAKE LINES

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association
University of Wisconsin-Extension/Burnett County

Looking for a Great Gathering of Lake Lovers? Attend the Lakes Partnership Convention

April 24-26, 2014 Holiday Inn Hotel & Convention Center, Stevens Point

2014 marks the 36th year that folks will gather statewide to learn about and organize for the protection of Wisconsin lakes. In the early years, UW Extension organized gatherings of lake district commissioners at the UW Madison and Stevens Point campuses. The organizing committee at that time focused on the threats of acid rain, and the nuances of operating lake districts, which were still relatively new and uncommon. Now there are more than 200 districts and many more incorporated lake associations all working hard to protect and restore our freshwater treasures.

To make it a little easier for all of us to get together in one place, we are moving the annual Lakes Partnership Convention back to Stevens Point in 2014. The new Holiday Inn on the city's east end will be an excellent gathering space, and the central location will make it a bit easier for lake lovers in north central and northwest Wisconsin to join us. We are also reverting to a schedule that focuses the "meat" of the convention on Friday and Saturday, with optional half- and full-day workshops and field trips on Thursday. We hope that by having part of the convention on a Saturday, we can attract more folks who have weekday work commitments which, because of this, have limited their involvement in

recent conventions. We believe that by holding the convention closer to the UW-Stevens Point campus, we will be able to better connect with professors, students, and others who can enliven our annual gathering.

If you are part of a lake organization, now is a good time to think about how many members you would like to send to the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership convention and who they might be. Early bird registration for the 2014 convention will be approximately \$135 for Friday and Saturday with additional costs for Thursday workshops and tours (Friday only - about \$80, Saturday only - about \$65). Registration includes morning and afternoon breaks and lunches for these two days, a Thursday evening Welcome Reception, the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards Banquet/Dinner Friday evening, and convention materials.

We hope that by having part of the convention on a Saturday, we can attract more folks who have weekday work commitments.





Message from the President

By Roger Noe, BCLRA

Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association

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Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association, Inc. Annual Meeting –

June 29th, 2013, 8:32pm - 9:01pm. With a fiscal year ending balance of \$8,142.07, BCLRA is able to continue educational efforts for Burnett County's lakes and rivers. It is a healthy mission that BCLRA enjoys.

The highlight of the 2013 annual meeting was the presentation by Randy Korb, The Frog Guy, to an audience of 60-75 participants, mostly children. What a fun and enlightening session! With lots of frogs and critters to meet, Randy raised the level of awareness in kids towards amphibians and the importance of their habitat.

BCLRA will continue to feature an educational component at its annual meetings. Look for information about our next meeting in late June 2014 in our BCLRA spring newsletter.

Giving Back... I have been on the shores of North Sand Lake for almost 60 years... WOW!!!! North Sand Lake has given me a lifetime of family memories, fun, and bluegills. What have I done for North Sand Lake? I am reminded of John Kennedy's quote – "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." What can we do to help the cause of our Burnett County lakes and rivers? There are lots of avenues to pursue that do not have to be a big deal and can be fun.

Some thoughts....

1. Take a child (grandchild) fishing.
2. Join your local lake association.
3. Get involved with the "Shoreline Incentive Program" – call Dave Ferris at Burnett County Land & Water Conservation, 715-349-2186. This one will even save you money!
4. Volunteer through your lake association for Clean Boats/Clean Waters.
5. Help organize a lake association – contact BCLRA – we can help.
6. Organize an Aquatic Plant Management Survey for your lake – contact Bob Baker, BCLRA.
7. Allow your shoreline property to remain natural for the critters (allows for more playtime for you!).
8. Attend the Wisconsin Lakes Conference in April in Stevens Point (see page 1 for more information) – awesome conference.
9. Attend the Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference in June - another awesome experience – contact BCLRA.
10. Encourage your children/grandchildren to journal their outdoor/critter experiences – it tunes them in.

This list is endless. Take a moment and think about what your lake has given you...maybe we can all give back a bit.

Grow with the 2014 Lake Leaders Program

By Mike Kornmann, UW-Extension

How many of you have thought about taking on a leadership role with your lake association? Have you been asked? One of the reasons for not being on the board that I hear from lakeshore owners across the county is “I don’t know enough.” Resources are available to help you take on a lake leader role, if you have the interest. Every other year the UWEX/UW Stevens Point Lakes Program provides a Lake Leaders Institute that assists citizens in developing and enhancing both their technical and people skills, to enrich their communities and the waters within them. Participants learn in an atmosphere of openness, trust, friendship and camaraderie. There are three seminars, each lasting two days. They are typically held during May, September, and October at retreat centers around the state, with the opportunity to take field trips, enjoy natural beauty, exchange ideas, and develop friendships.

2014 Seminars

**Seminar I - Society and Environment:
Philosophy and Ethics of Lake Management**

Seminar II - Aquatic Ecology and Watershed Management: Impact of Development on Lakes

Seminar III - Organizations, People, Politics

Your main investment will be your continued commitment to Wisconsin’s lakes. Graduates have taken their new skills and personal connections back to their communities and are helping to preserve and protect Wisconsin waters. Graduates have been elected to town boards, county lake associations, the Wisconsin Association of Lakes’ board, and teams developing state water policy. The cost of the program is approximately \$350, which covers lodging, meals, field trips, boats, equipment and materials for the three seminars. Some participants are

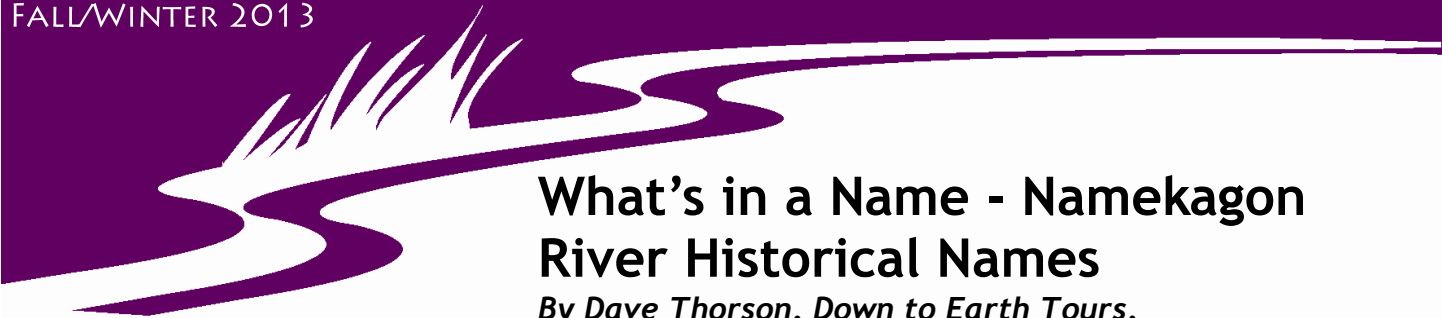
able to secure financial support from a local lake organization or other sponsorship. Consider requesting funds from Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association to assist with your participation.

Our ability to be skillful leaders is fundamentally linked to the future of our lakes. Please consider joining us or nominating a friend for the next Lake Leaders Institute.

Past graduates of lake leaders include Burnett County’s own Susan Wallin. Susan currently serves on the BCLRA board of directors and has served as president and in other roles. She has also served on the Wisconsin Lakes board, bringing her leadership to the state level.

If you have questions feel free to contact the UWEX Lakes Program, UWEX Burnett County, or Susan Wallin.





What's in a Name - Namekagon River Historical Names

By Dave Thorson, Down to Earth Tours, downtoearthtours.com

The debate on the spelling of this unique place, lake, town, and wild river has been going on for well over 150 years, and undoubtedly will not end any time soon. In a nutshell, the town and the local lake people spell it Namakagon - with an 'a' in the second syllable. Everyone else uses an 'e' - Namekagon. This bothers some, is irritating to others, and to the true local believers, their choice is 'gospel' and set in stone. First, we must be aware that words spoken by the Ojibwa people were written down as the listener, writers, or explorers heard them. One person may hear it one way and spell it as such, another something else. There begins the problem. An example is in the word naming the native people in this part of the world: Ojibwa, Ojibwe, Ojibway, Otchipwe and Chippe-wa, for example, are five of the numerous spellings used,

Words spoken by the Ojibwa people were written down as the listener, writers, or explorers heard them.

even today. Researching the history of the word Namekagon or Namakagon does not settle the issue, but it does provide some insight.

Let's begin with the definition. From the authoritative *Dictionary of the Ojibway Language* by Father Frederic Baraga (1885) the word *name* means sturgeon. The suffix *gun* or *gon* puts a geographical context onto the word. Hence *namekagon* means place of the sturgeon. This is sometimes confused with *nama kowagon*, which refers to the sturgeon weir or fish trap on the St. Croix River.

At some point the Town of Namakagon took up this very issue and proclaimed their name would be Namakagon, and the lake followed suit, at least on local maps. Then there is also a tiny community on the east shore spelled the same.

I studied the 1850's Land Survey Maps. I thought this surely would provide some answers and offer a bit of weight in determining the correct spelling. I started at the river's mouth and moved town by town from the mouth upstream one hundred miles to the lake. The names identified on the 1850's maps for the river are: Namekagan; Namekagon; Nimacoggin; Nimekagon; Nimekagan; and Namakagan. Count them - six different spellings. Between the river's beginning at the lake and where the river enters the St. Croix, there were six different spellings in eleven different township maps where the river was named.

We ought to just agree to disagree and move on, and not lose any sleep over it. Then recently, while visiting the Cumberland Library, I ran across an old logging photo of a camp in 1905, nine miles east of Cable. The caption says it was located on Nemmacogan Lake. Now we are up to seven spellings. Whether it is spelled with an 'e', or an 'a' in the second syllable, or with a 'u' or an 'a' or an 'o' in the last, it is just too darn complicated. Take your pick!



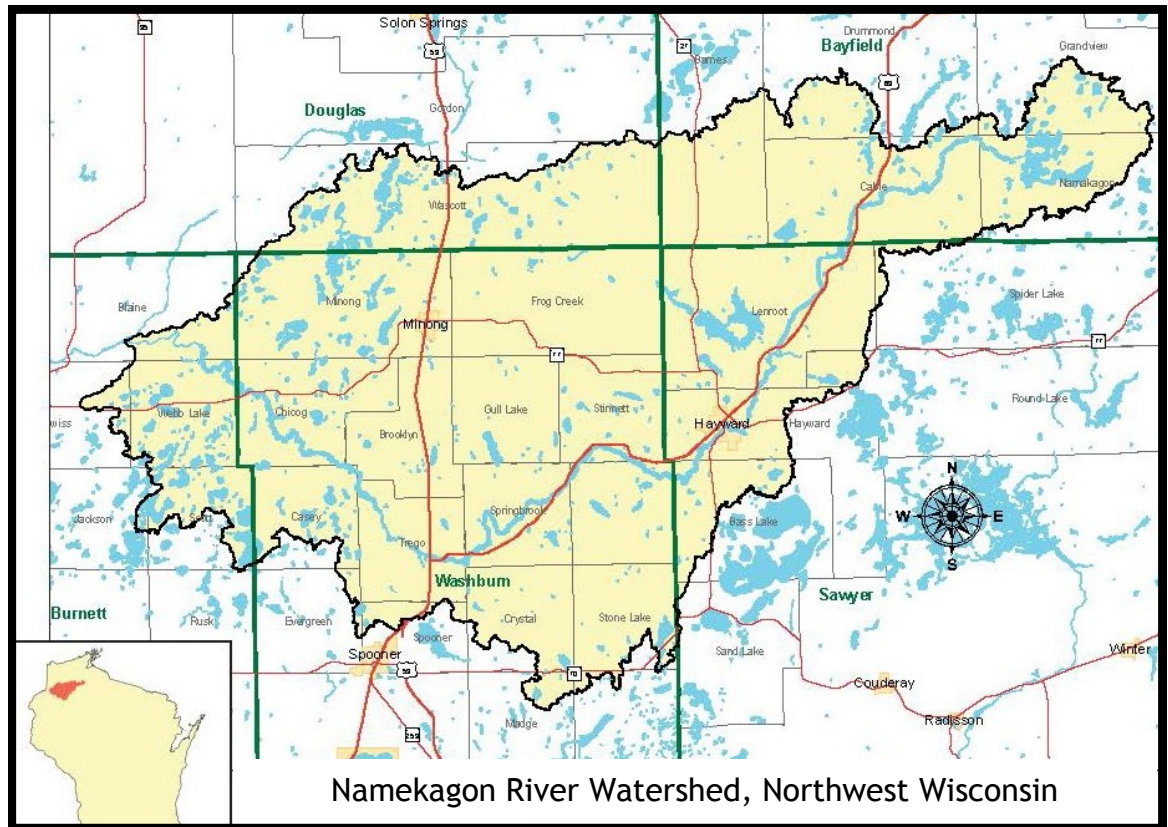
You Can Help the Namekagon Partnership

By Mike Kornmann, UW-Extension

While many of us spend time on the lake where our cabin is located, many of us also spend time on a trip in a canoe on the Namekagon and St. Croix Rivers. Over the last two years, a new group has organized to advocate for a healthy Namekagon Watershed. Many of the lakes in towns of Scott, Webb Lake, and Jackson are in the Namekagon watershed.

The citizen-volunteer river organization in northwest Wisconsin is working to celebrate and conserve this national treasure. Namekagon River Partnership, Inc. (NRP) is organized as a Chapter 181 Wisconsin Non-Stock Corporation and has received IRS designation as a **501(c)(3) non-profit** public charity. All memberships and donations are tax-deductible. NRP has been approved by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as a **Nonprofit Conservation Organization (NCO)** and is thus eligible to apply for DNR River, Lake (Watershed), Aquatic Invasive Species, and Stewardship Grant Programs for funding.

NRP works cooperatively with local citizens and businesses, governmental agencies, and non-profit organizations that share its interests in conserving the fishery and the plant and animal habitat of the Namekagon River. NRP aspires to be a positive and proactive voice of the river, and to operate transparently. We will increase the visibility of the river, retell its history,



Namekagon River Watershed, Northwest Wisconsin

and advance a science-based discussion.

What we have been working on:

- Annual Namekagon River Cleanup event in partnership with National Park Service (April 2012 & 2013),
- Youth paddles in partnership with the Canoes on Wheels program,
- Effort to establish a family friendly river paddling atmosphere on the Namekagon River,
- Growing our organizational capacity through DNR River Protection Planning Grant funding,
- Collaboration with watershed stakeholders and planning for an anticipated watershed study.

If you would like to volunteer or participate in a Namekagon River Partnership program, visit namekagon.org for more information.



Did You Know Most Leeches Are Not Blood Suckers?

By Bleu Heindl, UW Stevens Point Student

In Wisconsin, our abundance of lakes, streams and ponds make it natural for you to come across a leech or two. I recently discovered that there are actually 26 species of leeches in Wisconsin, 11 of which were all found in the same lake! Many people are fearful of leeches but don't necessarily know why.

Maybe it is because they could suck your blood, or perhaps it's their slimy, black, undulating body that's so frightening, or maybe it's simply the fear of the unknown!

After doing some research on leeches, I realized some of the tremendous things they do. In more ways than one, leeches should be recognized as a blessing in disguise, rather than something to fear. Many of us know that leeches are great bait for fishing, but their benefits to humans go far beyond catching that next walleye.

Because a leech's nervous system is very similar to that of a human's, they are a great benefit to us in our quest to find answers to many health problems. Even though a leech has three jaws and 300 teeth, its saliva contains a natural anesthetic (which is why you can't feel it latch on), along with a natural anti-inflammatory, and an agent that prevents bacteria from infecting a wounded area. A leech's saliva also contains a vasodilator, which causes human blood vessels to open, and an anti-coagulant that can help blood from pooling near a wound, which is remarkably effective in saving a limb. In a way, leeches are like teeny, tiny, natural drug stores, and they have been used for medical purposes as far back as 460 BC.

Leeches are now classified as FDA-

approved medical devices and are used as tools in medical procedures such as skin grafting and reattachment surgery. They have also been used during plastic surgery for improving brain circulation. Some leech therapy can cause infection due to a bacterium (*Aeromonas*) that lives in the leech's digestive system.

If you do find a leech attached to your ankle and are terrified of it drinking all of your blood, don't worry. Leeches, on average, can only drink five times their body weight, which usually only amounts to about 20 milliliters (0.67 ounces) per hour of feeding. When they've had enough, they will simply fall off, and then can go for up to 6 months between meals! Most leeches are not even parasitic; their idea of a good meal includes worms, snails, insect larvae and crustaceans.

So, are leeches a friend or foe? We're not saying you have to pick sides, but consider all of the marvelous things they do before you run away screaming.

Leeches should be recognized as a blessing in disguise.



From *Historia Medica* by W. van den Bossche, 1638

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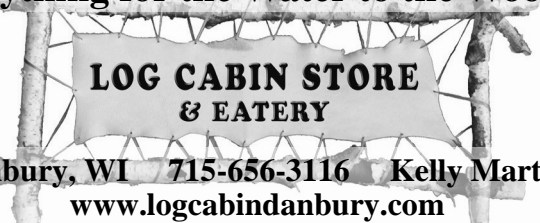
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Fishing Northern Pike Through the Ice

By Terry Margenau, Fisheries, WDNR - Spooner

Where to fish. Do a little homework. If you don't have a favorite lake already, check our internet page (dnr.wi.gov/topic/fishing) for lakes in your area, or better yet, contact your local fisheries biologist. They can provide information from recent surveys and send you in the right direction. Keep it simple. Don't try to out think a northern pike. Northern pike will suspend in the water column, they will be found along deep rocky bars, but for the most part they are going to be associated with vegetation. Vegetation is where the food generally is located and it also provides concealment for a stalking predator, like the northern pike. In most inland lakes vegetation extends to depths of 10-15 feet of water. Find the vegetation and you will find northern pike.

“Northern pike are the ultimate winter sport fish, the “people’s fish.” Any angler worth his or her salt will admit a northern pike has saved many fishing trips from being a skunk.”

Best depths and bait placement. Split the difference. Many anglers, when setting tip-ups, place their bait a certain distance off the bottom. For example, say water depth is twelve feet. Find bottom and set your bait one or two feet off bottom. If you are fishing in vegetation my general rule is to think in halves. In twelve feet of water, put your bait at six feet. This serves two purposes. First, vegetation is still occupying a fair portion of the water column at early ice. If you place your bait based on x feet from the bottom there is a good chance it's in the vegetation. No sight means no bite. Second, predators like northern pike cruise the water column. Even if they are near the bottom, they can find prey above them. The opposite is less likely to be true. Don't forget the shallows. Especially during early ice northern pike will frequent water less than five feet deep. When setting up your tip-ups put one in shallow. You won't be disap-

pointed.

The mystique of the northern pike. Northern pike are common in Wisconsin. At last count they were found in over 2,000 inland lakes, rivers, and flowages in Wisconsin. Not to mention the bays of lakes Michigan and Superior, and the Mississippi River.

Northern pike are multi-dimensional. They are mostly known as a food fish but also provide trophy opportunities. Northern pike fillets in a skillet are second to none. Check our website for proper filleting techniques to remove those troublesome “Y” bones.

Northern pike are active and bite all day. Show up at noon and you are good to go. No more of that putzing around in the dark. You should be on your way home by then.

Northern pike are low maintenance; the perfect winter fish for kids. Drill a few holes in the ice, put in some tip-ups, sit back and have a cup of coffee, let the kids play, and when a flag goes up, everybody runs. That's good living in a Wisconsin winter.

You can often find Terry... on the ice...fishing... for northern pike.



Wetland Critters for Kids The Spiny Softshell Turtle

By Christian W. Cold - Wildlife, WDNR - Ladysmith

What is a softshell turtle? A spiny softshell turtle looks like a large, olive-gray to chocolate-brown pancake. It has a flat, flexible, leathery shell, large webbed feet, a long neck and a slender head which is tipped with a fused, tubular nose (which is used as a probe and snorkel). There are many, little, rubbery, cone-like (spines) along the front edge of the upper shell. Some females are as big as a garbage can lid! Males are the little guys.

Where can I find one? This turtle lives in the Mississippi, St. Croix, Wolf, Wisconsin, Black, Chippewa, Flambeau, and other rivers. It also lives in many of our lakes. It prefers areas with sand, muck or fine gravel bottoms. It tends to avoid areas with lots of vegetation or large rocks.

Why don't I see this turtle very often? The spiny softshell is very shy and alert to humans. As it basks on the bank in the afternoon sun, it watches carefully for the approach of other animals. When a human arrives on the scene (even at a great distance), it will slip into the water, where its massive, webbed feet can quickly take it a great distance in a very short time.

What does it eat? The spiny softshell is a bottom-feeder with a special fondness for crayfish and aquatic insects (and their larvae). It will also hunt small fish and occasionally eat carrion (dead animals).

Where does it go in winter? Spiny softshells gather in loose groups at the bottom of deeper pools in rivers where there is little current but plenty of dissolved oxygen. Here they spend the winter months buried in 2-3 inches of sand or mud. They are "late risers", coming out after most other turtle species have already emerged.

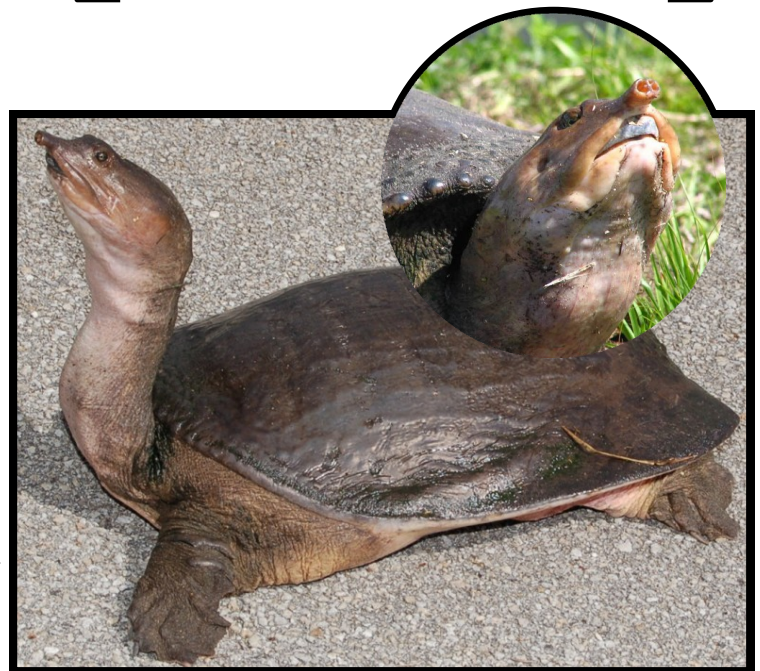
Are there any threats to softshell turtles? If water becomes polluted, softshell turtles are one of the first turtles to disappear. They need water of reasonably-good quality which supports a variety of prey species, has good levels of oxygen, and clean sand or fine gravel shorelines for nesting.

What "good" is it? If we must say "good or bad"

about any animal, we must be thinking about how it fits into our lives as humans. Many people say it is good to see a softshell sunning itself on the bank of a river. Some folks find that the softshell turtle is especially good to eat (if properly prepared). Biologists say it is a good indicator of water quality and the presence of a rich variety of other small animals that provide it with food. What do you think?

Did you know?

With its tremendous, webbed feet, the spiny softshell turtle can swim faster than you can run. If you question this, I would suggest that you try to catch one! If you are successful, please handle it carefully as it can inflict a very painful bite with its sharp beak.



Spiny Softshell Turtle

Book photos courtesy of amazon.com

Wild Chervil - On the Move

By Ann Lane, Burnett County LWCD

According to Kelly Kearns, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources conservation biologist and invasive plant expert, Wild Chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), is on the move.

This latest ecological threat invades roadsides, open woods, fields and pastures. It is a host to parsnip yellow fleck virus, which infects carrots, celery, and parsnips. It has been planted as an ornamental and is found in some European wildflower seed mixes.

Also known as bur chervil, cow parsley or keck, this invasive has currently been reported in a handful of counties in Wisconsin. But closer to home, reports from Chetek, Bloomer, and Polk County are noted.



Wild Chervil

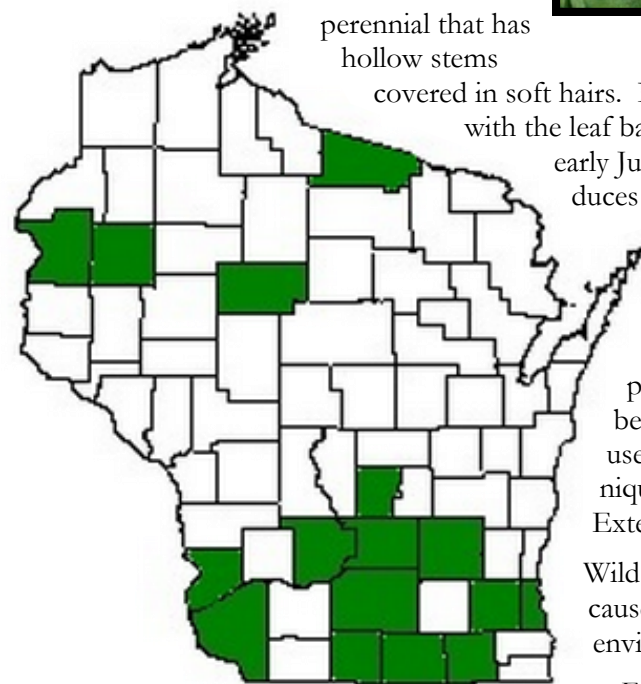
Wild Chervil is a perennial that has hollow stems

covered in soft hairs. Its leaves are alternate, fern-like leaflets which are nearly hairless with the leaf base clasping the stem. White flowers, which bloom late May to early July, are umbels that are small and five-petaled. Each flower produces two shiny, long brown seeds that are joined. A thick taproot with lateral buds can be up to six feet deep.

Control methods include hand pulling or digging up rosettes or small plants, carefully removing the entire root. Repeated mowing throughout the growing season will deplete root reserves and prevent seed set. Foliar spray, with either clopyralid or dicamba, before blooming and one month after a pre-bloom cut can also be used as a method of control. For more information on control techniques, visit the [Wild Chervil Fact Sheet](#) by University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Wild Chervil is classified as Prohibited/Restricted in Wisconsin because it is likely to survive and spread, potentially causing significant environmental or economic harm or harm to human health.

For more information you can send the DNR an email at invasive.species@wisconsin.gov, contact Kelly Kearns, WI DNR, 608-267-5066, or the Burnett County LWCD at 715-349-2186.



[Counties in Wisconsin](#) where wild chervil has been reported (as of July 2013). Both vouchered and unvouchered reports included.



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LakeLines is now featured online at www.burnettcounty.com/LakeLines