Fall/Winter 2014

Volume 19, Issue Two

LakeLines

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

Eating Invasives

By Mike S. Putnam, Water Resources Management Specialist, Wisconsin DNR
Reprinted from Lake Tides, Vol. 38, No. 4, Fall/Winter 2013

Bob Wakeman, the Department of Natural Resources' statewide Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Coordinator, responded two years ago to a question by a citizen about the legality of collecting the invasive, but edible, Chinese mystery snail *Cipangopaludina (Bellamya) chinensis* for eating. A Department attorney provided the answer. Changing attitudes about food make this response as timely today.

This question prompts consideration of recent culinary developments. First, it reflects recent trends in food circles of people trying to do some good with their food practices. Some give credit to doing-good-through-eating to the Slow Food Movement, which started in Italy in response to the (invasive?) spread of fast food and the perceived decline of the nation's fabulous cuisine. Slow Food promotes local cuisine as an antidote to fast food. Others also credit author Wendell Berry's many writings on food and agriculture.

A Slow Food offshoot is the notion of becoming a "locavore" – a person that strives to obtain as much of her food as possible within a few hundred miles of home. This notion gained attention with ethnobotanist Gary Paul Nabhan's 2002 book Coming Home to Eat. Some claim that benefits from eating closer to home are that local foods are fresher, require less travel, and support neighboring farms and the local economy.

With the stage set, a new movement in slow, local eating has emerged. Some are seeking to do good by being an "invasivore" – a person that eats invasive species. A group of graduate students, many associated with AIS expert Dr. David Lodge at the University of Notre Dame, started a website, invasivore.org, dedicated to promoting the eating of invasive species of many kinds, including, yes, mystery snails, as a way to control their populations and raise awareness of the problems posed by invasive species.

In this photo of an adult Chinese mystery snail, the three rows of tiny hairs (indicated by arrows) are visible on the front of the shell, but have worn away around the top of the shell. Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org.

After careful consideration, the attorney decided that the capture of AIS for personal consumption was legal with a few caveats. First, snails or any other AIS should not be transported in water, but transport on ice is acceptable. Second, AIS must be transported in an escape-proof container to comply with AIS laws. Finally, AIS cannot be "transferred," which means to buy, sell, barter, give, receive, or offer to do any of these exchanges. In the end, the attorney recognized that eating an invasive species was a form of "disposal," which is the "lawful discharge, deposit, dumping or placing of any invasive species into or on any land or water in a manner that prevents the establishment, introduction or spread of a disposed species."

Although the poorly studied Chinese mystery snail does not appear to negatively affect native snail populations in Wisconsin, this species has been found to host parasites in other regions of North America and has the potential to alter the microbial portion of lake food webs with its powerful filter-feeding. Therefore, it is important that we stay vigilant in our quest to prevent its spread. So if anyone is interested in trying Chinese mystery snail cuisine as a means for "disposal," check out invasivore.org. May we suggest the mystery snail ceviche or the mystery snail fettuccine?

Bon appetit!

Message from the President

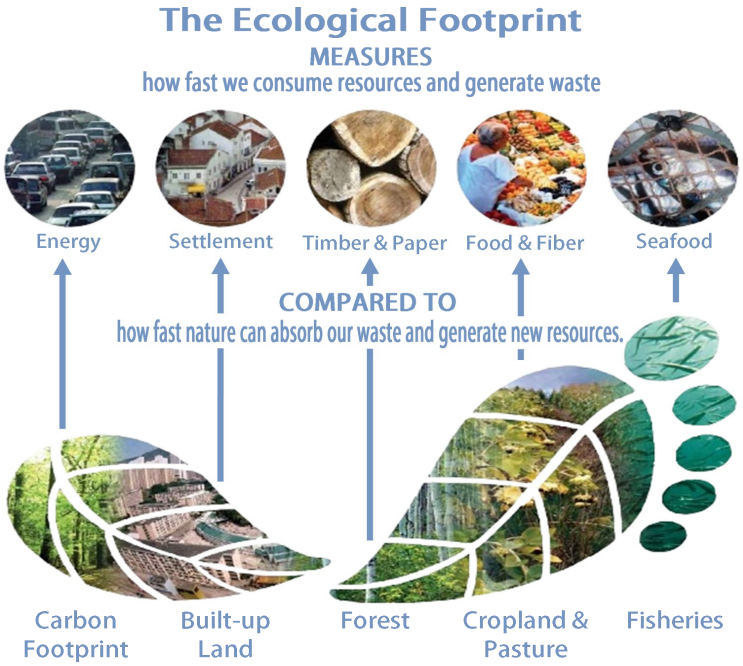
By Roger Noe, BCLRA

The boat is under cover. The dock is on land and the leaves have descended. Fall is here and soon to be gone. The polar express is rapidly approaching. What a beautiful October we have had! We need to tuck it away for viewing in February.

I recently returned from a hunting trip to central Wisconsin. My, what a beautiful state we live in. The natural beauty and resources shown brilliantly on those warm October afternoons. The opportunity to view and pursue waterfowl in such surroundings is a gift that is immeasurable. As one traverses the highways of Wisconsin, the roads of Burnett County, one wonders what price the environment will pay for what some call "progress". Aldo Leopold states in his Sand County Almanac, "Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them." As we look at frac sand mining issues, lakeshore zoning, iron ore mines, mass transit, lake plant management - whatever, it boils down to a question of degree. It appears to be a minority of us that see a law of diminishing returns in what we label as "progress."

Leopold speaks clearly about viewing our land, our natural resources, as a community which we are simply a part. The lakes, rivers, and forests are not simply commodities to be consumed by us. Burnett County is blessed with abundant natural resources. As humans, it is our ethical duty to be a working part of these resources, improving them for our grandchildren.

As we head into the quiet beauty of winter, make it a priority to think about how you might become a more active participant in your lake or river "community."



Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association

Board Members

- **Roger Noe, President**
  North Sand Lake Association
  715-635-6309, dknoe5@gmail.com
- **Susan Wallin, Vice-President**
  Deer Lake Association
  715-259-7766, swallin@eraparkside.com
- **Bob Baker, Secretary/Treasurer**
  Lipsett Lake Association
  715-635-3882, 651-777-6246
  robert.w.baker@uwrf.edu
- **Tim Adair**
  Birch Island Lake Association
  763-263-3601, 612-518-9624
  timadair@windstream.net
- **Marsha Crist**
  Minnow Lake Association
  952-380-0624, christclan@gmail.com
- **Arne & Barb Enslin**
  Hayden Lake Association
  715-656-7217
  arnenslin@gmail.com or
  barbenslin@gmail.com
- **Buck Gooding**
  Love Lake Association
  715-656-7628, dvlovelake@gmail.com
- **Steve Johnson**
  Fish Lake Association
  612-386-5545
  srjjohnson@yahoo.com
- **Paul Kipping**
  Rooney Lake Association
  715-635-8692, pjkipping@centurytel.net
- **Bruce Marx**
  Mallard Lake Association
  715-866-5109, 763-792-8978
  bassmarx@earthlink.net

About this publication:

Editor: Mike Kornmann, University of Wisconsin-Extension
Community Development Agent
http://burnett.uwex.edu
715-349-2979
mike.kornmann@ces.uwex.edu

LAKELINES is published semiannually at no charge by the University of Wisconsin-Extension Burnett County, 7410 Co Rd K, #107, Siren, Wisconsin, 54872.

Shallow Waters Run Deep

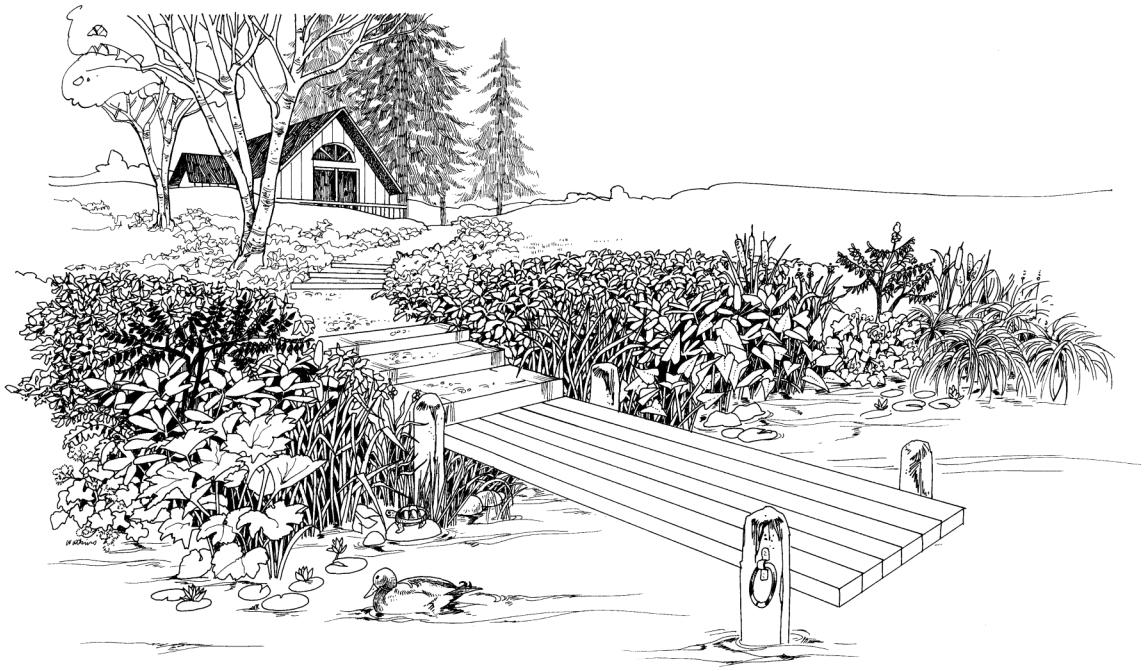
By Brad Morris, AIS Program Director, Burnett County LWCD

The core of life in all fresh water lakes is cradled in the shallow waters near shore. Much of a lake ecosystem depends on what happens in this shallow water. When parts of the lake, such as plants or wood, are removed from this shallow area, it is like removing a house in the neighborhood. The residents that once lived there can no longer return. When enough homes are removed, and enough residents lost, the interactions that make the neighborhood a viable community cease, and the community fails. This is similar to what we see with our own human communities due to events like hurricanes or the mortgage crisis. A community of aquatic plants is part of what makes a healthy lake ecosystem. We are beginning to see aquatic plants in a new light, for their beauty and ability to protect and nourish a lake. These plants are the binding thread in a watery tapestry of life.

> [Aquatic plants] are the binding thread in a watery tapestry of life.

- Aquatic plants create a thriving habitat for animals.
- Plant roots create networks that stabilize sediments at the water's edge.
- Plants are essential to the spawning success of many fish species.
- Plants provide refuge for near shore animals.
- Plants provide habitat for many non-game fish species that are often "invisible" to most people, but are important to the food chain.
- Plants photosynthesize, creating life-giving oxygen to the animals that live in the littoral (shallow water) zone.
- Submersed plants absorb phosphorus and nitrogen over their leaf surface and through their roots, making nutrients less available for nuisance algae.
- Native aquatic plants can limit aquatic invasive plant growth.
- Plants, fruits and tubers provide food for mammals, waterfowl, insects and fish.
- Plant beds provide cover and nesting for marsh birds, songbirds and waterfowl.

It is important to remember that plant communities can vary from lake to lake and from year to year. It is also important to realize that water levels in lakes fluctuate. During times when water levels are low, shoreline preservation is extremely important. A natural, undisturbed shoreline results in fewer algal blooms and protection against invasive plants, which in turn generate higher property values. Freshwater resources are extremely valuable to everyone. We must be dedicated stewards of these resources in order to ensure success of the communities that live there now and for all our future generations.



Adopt-A-Lake Program in Phelps School District

Case study details submitted by Don Zirbel and Jason Pertile

The North and South Twin Lakes Riparian Association (NSTLRA) is an organization of concerned property owners working to maintain the integrity of the lakes. At a 2001 Vilas County Association of Lakes meeting, the association learned about the Adopt-A-Lake program, which supports youth and adults working together to protect lakes in their community. The Association knew that Phelps School was very close to North Twin Lake and thought it might be a good opportunity to get youth involved in lake issues in their community. They approached the school about getting a program started. At the same time, Eurasian water-milfoil was first discovered in North Twin Lake.

What did they do?

When NSTLRA approached the Phelps School District, the district administrator was extremely supportive of the idea. They planned three meet-the-lake pontoon trips for the 6th and 7th grades in the fall of 2001. The first was on North and South Twin Lakes. The second trip was to nearby Sand Lake, which was so heavily infested with Eurasian water-milfoil that channels had been cut to allow boat access to deeper waters. This made an impact on students and Association members, making them aware of the potential impacts of Eurasian water-milfoil. For the third trip, students returned to North and South Twin Lakes, where they conducted water quality monitoring activities.

The students collected plant samples, identified them, and pressed them. They created Eurasian water-milfoil awareness posters to display in Phelps and gave presentations, including one at the NSTLRA annual meeting. They also used a video teleconference with three other schools to further share their findings and information about Eurasian water-milfoil.

Ultimately, Kindergarten, 2nd, 6th, and 7th grade classes as well as some high school students have become involved in the Adopt-A-Lake efforts.

Cost

The pontoon boats and other associated materials and support were provided by NSTLRA. The school district also received a $950 grant from the Land-O-Lakes Fish and Gun Club to purchase materials and equipment.

What worked (and what didn't) - how did they measure success?

The Phelps School District and NSTLRA won the youth stewardship award at the 2002 Wisconsin Lakes Convention in recognition of their efforts, which were instrumental in raising awareness of Eurasian water-milfoil in their community. NSTLRA is very active in the fight against Eurasian water-milfoil on both North and South Twin Lakes. They are exploring new treatment options and looking for ways to raise additional funds needed for control.

Since North and South Twin Lakes are heavily used by the public, the school feels that they have an opportunity to truly make a difference through education and plan to continue their efforts.

Next steps

In 2004, NSTLRA representatives attended Clean Boats, Clean Waters training workshops. They are planning to partner with the school to begin volunteer watercraft inspection efforts at boat landings in 2005. Prior to the start of boating season, 6th grade students will use Clean Boats, Clean Waters materials to learn more about the species of concern. High school environmental education students will design their own aquatic invasive species brochures and educational materials.

High school students will also be sampling macroinvertebrates in the lake in 2005. They will continue to monitor the Eurasian water-milfoil populations, mapping the aquatic plant beds, which will help NSTLRA with future planning and control efforts.

Lake Policy News Straight to Your Inbox

By Michael Engleson, Wisconsin Lakes Executive Director
wisconsinlakes.org

One recurring comment that ran through WI Lakes' (www.wisconsinlakes.org) recent member survey was that regardless of where you are in the state, you're having a hard time getting much news on public policy regarding lakes.

That really isn't all that surprising, I suppose, what with few media outlets employing a journalist who primarily covers the environment (with some notable exceptions being the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, WI Public Radio, WUWM radio in Milwaukee, WXPR radio in Rhinelander, and the Center for Investigative Journalism).

It's not so much that the coverage that exists is bad, it's just that there isn't all that much of it, and to really keep abreast of what's happening, you need to seek it out.

For one solution to the problem, at least as far as public policy impacting lakes, you will soon be able to turn to our monthly "Lake Policy Report." This monthly electronic newsletter, a companion to the more generally focused "eLake Letter", aims to capture the latest news and updates, as well as link to some longer form analysis of the issues (mostly right here on this blog) and let you know where WI Lakes stands.

Wisconsin Lakes proudly introduces *The Lake Policy Report* email news digest.

WI Lakes' communication strategy on public policy is threefold. First and foremost, the best policy decisions come from an informed and educated electorate, so we'll always attempt to give you an objective look at an issue, without overblown rhetoric or a blatant position statement. That way, you'll have the information you need to form an educated opinion of your own.

Still, it's important that the members and followers of WI Lakes understand where we're coming from, so if we have a position on an issue, we'll tell you what it is, and why.

Finally, on a few key issues that we believe are of utmost importance and urgency, we'll invite you to take action by contacting your elected officials.

In the end, after all, it is you, the thousands of individuals who use and care for our lakes, who have the power to keep them healthy and well protected, by working for strong, effective public policy decisions. Joined together, your voices are the ones that will reach the ears of those who need to hear it, and WI Lakes pledges to provide you with the information you need to be an effective advocate for the lakes you love.

So, through the *Lake Policy Report*, *Lake Action Alert* emails, blog posts right here on *The Landing*, on the policy pages of our website, articles in The Lake Connection, posts on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media channels, and in-person updates at workshops and conferences we hope you begin to hear what you've been wanting, and what you need to effectively speak for lakes.

Our Sponsors

Mention of any product or service does not imply endorsement by University of Wisconsin-Extension

Our Sponsors

Mention of any product or service does not imply endorsement by University of Wisconsin-Extension

Sharing the Lake with Our Feathered Anglers

Reprinted from Lake Tides, Vol. 39, No. 3 Summer/Fall 2014

If you are an avid *Lake Tides* reader, you may remember the article from our Spring 2009 edition (vol. 34 no. 2) titled "Call O' the Loon: 'Stop Using Lead, Please!'" The article covered the migrating, nesting and eating habits of this magnificent water bird, and cited several studies showing how ingested lead tackle is deadly for loons.

They can swallow lead tackle that has broken free from fishing line, eat fish that have ingested lead tackle, or even go after your bait while you're fishing! "Young loons are particularly known to follow fishing lures and be attracted to live bait," warns Mike Meyer, Research Scientist for the Bureau of Integrated Science Services with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. "If this seems to be the case while you are fishing, it's best to retrieve your lines and move to another location."

Photos Courtesy of Raptor Education Group, Inc.

What should you do if you accidentally hook a loon while fishing or notice a loon tangled in fishing line?

If you have stout fishing line and a musky/salmon net, plus the ability to manage a 12 pound struggling bird, you may consider "landing" the loon, and removing the hook/line or transporting it to a local wildlife rehabilitation center. "Most rehab centers do not have a boat or the resources to capture a loon, and the DNR has limited resources and availability during open water season. The loon has a better chance of survival if you are willing and able to take action," says Meyer.

Here are some recommendations if you decide to take action: **ONLY attempt to capture a hooked/tangled loon if you feel safe doing so!**

1. The loon will struggle and has a very sharp bill, so once the bird is *landed*, a partner should cover the bird immediately with a coat or towel, making sure the eyes are covered (this will ease the stress and struggle of the loon). Being careful not to hook yourself, kneel OVER (not ON) the loon to restrain it. WARNING: The loon will most likely defecate when handled.

2. Remove the bird from the net, carefully cutting or drawing the netting from wings and legs if they are entangled.

3. Once removed, one person can carefully restrain the bird while the other examines it, and if possible, removes any hooks or fishing line. If the hook is external with the hook exposed, you can cut the barb and pull the hook back through.

4. Once free from any hooks or fishing line, the loon can be released. If you cannot free the bird, remove from the net and hold the loon firmly on your lap, **making sure to keep the wings and legs tucked in and its eyes covered with a coat or towel**, then transport it to shore. Take care not to hook yourself! You can then use a towel-lined, covered dog kennel or cardboard box to transport it to the nearest wildlife rehabilitation center, or it can also be transported in your lap. **Please be aware that if you are transporting a loon on your lap, it will struggle the**

A list of wildlife rehabilitation centers in Wisconsin are listed on the DNR website at http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/directory.html. Not all rehabilitators can care for birds, however. A federal permit is required to work with protected avian species.

Sharing the Lake with Our Feathered Anglers

Continued

entire time. If the loon's head is exposed, it will strike with its bill so care should be taken to keep the head covered, but loosely, so it can breathe.

So, when you're out on the lake fishing and enjoying the peacefulness, remember to be considerate of other anglers…especially the feathered kind! "A loon can live for over 30 years," says Meyer, "so it's important for all of us to play a role in making sure the lives of these enchanting birds are as long and healthy as possible."

"GET THE LEAD OUT!"

- Stop using lead tackle!
- Dispose of lead tackle properly! Do not toss it in the lake or a trash can – take it to your local household hazardous waste collection site.
- Spread the word to fellow anglers! Go to the LoonWatch website for a list of non-lead tackle suppliers: (www.northland.edu/loonwatch).

THE FIVE DO NOTS…

1. **NEVER** offer minnows to loons! It has been reported that folks are feeding loons that have become relatively tame. This almost guarantees that rewarded loons will approach fishing boats, increasing the risk of them getting tangled in lines/hooks.
2. **DO NOT** fish near loons that appear to be focused on your bait. It is best to temporarily remove your line(s) or move to a different fishing spot.
3. **DO NOT** attempt to capture a hooked/tangled loon if you do not feel safe doing so. If you feel you cannot retrieve a hooked/tangled loon safely, cut the line and report the situation immediately to your local wildlife biologist. Be sure to describe the bait used and the likely manner in which the loon is hooked. Only report if you are certain the bird has been hooked or is visibly tangled.

4. **NEVER** swaddle a loon! Loons do not have diaphragms, and need to be able to expand their chests to breathe. They cannot be restrained on their backs, especially for long term transport.
5. **NEVER** place a loon in a small body of water! Loons need at least ¼ mile runway to achieve flight (this is the length around a standard high school track). If a loon is placed on a lake that is too small for it to have a successful take-off, it will most likely try to move over land and be an easy dinner for predators.

Odds and Ends

Did You Know Fathead Minnows Help Control Mosquitoes?

Wisconsin's native fathead minnows have been stocked into sloughs, ponds, and ditches for mosquito control. Research on the fathead minnow in Madison found it to be effective in reducing mosquito densities in storm water drainage channels and ponds, including those mosquito species implicated in the spread of West Nile virus. In the lab, a single minnow consumed an average of 74 mosquito larvae in a 24-hour period. Minnows may even be more effective at reducing mosquitoes than bats or purple martins! We don't recommend dumping minnows into your lake, which is both an expensive idea and could introduce invasive species or VHS disease. To help out fatheads, make sure that they have access to nesting sites. Fatheads usually seek out the underside of a submerged log or rock resting on a sand or gravel lake bottom. They will then excavate a nesting cavity underneath the object and the females will enter the cavity and attach eggs to it. Like sunfish, male fatheads will vigorously protect a nesting site and stick around to care for the fertilized eggs.

Save the Date for Wisconsin Lakes Convention

Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention April 23-25, 2015. Stevens Point, WI.

How Healthy is Your Water? - Wisconsin Land Use Megatrends

UW-Extension's Center For Land Use has developed a publication helping us to understand the health of our Wisconsin waters. The fifteen page publication covers a variety of water health topics. They include: Wisconsin water history, public trust doctrine, water resources, water use, human and environmental use, water economics, recreation and stewardship, and state and local policies. Graphs, charts and photos help to make this publication a great resource for many to learn more about the health of our waters. Visit our web site at Burnett.UWEX.com.

Jordan Buck Centennial a Success

The amazing Jim Jordan Buck was the world record typical whitetail from 1914 – 1992. It wasn't a simple journey to the top of the record books. Learn about the current number one USA record whitetail buck and the centennial celebration. A commemorative guide that tells the story and includes a copy of the official score sheet is available at the UWEX office, Webster and Grantsburg libraries, Log Cabin Store, and Crex Meadows Education Center. The celebration included a proclamation from the Governor declaring November 20, 2014 James Jordan Buck Day in Wisconsin. In addition, North American Whitetail Television dedicated an entire episode to Burnett County and the James Jordan Buck that aired on the Sportsman Channel. Learn more at BurnettCounty.com/JordanBuck100.

Dates to Remember

Don't forget about Free Fishing Weekend, always the 1st weekend in June and the 3rd weekend in January - no license required. Here are the dates for 2015:

- Free Fishing Weekend - Winter, January 17 & 18, 2015
- Free Fishing Weekend - Summer, June 6 & 7, 2015

Wetland Critters for Kids
The Beaver (*Castor canadensis*)

By Christian W. Cold - Wildlife, WDNR - Ladysmith

What is a beaver?

The beaver is our largest rodent. It has soft, dense, brown, water-proof fur. Its hind feet are large and the toes are webbed for swimming. It has a broad, flat, leathery and scaly tail. Beavers get big! One from Iron River, Michigan was 110 pounds!

Beavers live in a family group called a colony. A beaver colony consists of two parents, their new children (kits), and their older children from the previous year.

Where do beavers live?

Beavers can be found throughout most of Canada, the United States and northern Mexico. They live in and near a water supply. While this may include lakes and marshes, beavers especially like to live on streams and small rivers with forested shorelines.

What does a beaver eat?

The preferred food of a beaver is the leaves and tubers of water lily. It also likes other water plants, and the leaves, buds and bark of certain trees (especially aspen and willow).

Why do beavers build dams?

Beavers need to enter the forests along the shoreline to cut trees, which are used for food and building materials. Dry land is a dangerous place for a beaver to be! There are animals here that hunt beavers for their tasty flesh.

When beavers build a dam on a stream, the water flow stops. The water level rises and the stream floods back into the forest. Now the beaver can swim in the safety of water to its food supply. Once cut, the tree limbs can be floated back to the pond and used for building a house (lodge) and repairing the dam. Small branches are stuffed into the mud at the bottom of the pond in a bunch called a "cache". This will be the winter food supply (bark) for the colony.

How many beavers are in Wisconsin?

There may be as many as 90,000 beavers in Wisconsin. They are most common in the northern and western parts of the state.

Some beaver history:

Beavers were important animals when America was young. Their pelt (skin with fur) was used as money for almost 300 years. During this period, beaver pelts were provided by natives and trappers in exchange for goods and supplies. In the early 1800's, a time when a typical person would earn 50 to 75 cents a day, a beaver pelt brought a whopping four dollars each!

Are beavers good or bad?

Beavers are so important that we think of them as "keystone species". That is- they make big changes to their surroundings by creating wetlands. These wetlands provide for the needs of many animals, including ducks, geese, herons, muskrats, mink, raccoons, frogs, turtles and many other critters.

Beaver wetlands gradually fill in with fine soil particles, which wash in from upstream. Eventually beaver ponds dry up and become meadows. The rich soils in these meadows eventually become some of the most valuable cropland in the area.

Sometimes, beaver dams flood roads and lawns. In such cases, beavers are often removed. Whether a beaver is good or bad often depends on where it lives and what it is doing at the time.

Did you know?

Next to humans, no other living animal appears to do more to change the landscape in which it lives.

LakeLines
Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association

7410 County Road K, #107
Siren, WI 54872

UW Extension
Burnett County

LakeLines

Fall/Winter 2014

Volume 19, Issue Two

In This Issue

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