

FALL/WINTER 2016

VOLUME 21, ISSUE TWO



# LAKE LINES

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

## Keep Wildlife Wild

By Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Wisconsin's year-round outdoor activities bring people outside to enjoy the natural environment and have an opportunity to view and appreciate wildlife resources. Wild animals are valued by many, and it's important to observe them at a respectful distance to keep them wild and allow for their life in the wild to continue.

### Five Reasons to Keep Wildlife Wild

1. **Stress:** Wild animals view people and domestic animals as predators and are highly stressed by the sights, sounds and smells of being in close proximity to humans or domestic animals. This stress can cause serious health problems, and even death, for a wild animal.
2. **Diet:** Wild animals have specialized dietary needs that are not easily met in captivity. Young wild animals especially require a specific, complete diet; otherwise they are at a high risk of suffering serious nutritional deficiencies that can leave them deformed for life. Do not feed a wild animal human food items because non-natural food items will most likely cause more harm and will not provide nutritional benefits.
3. **Disease:** Wild animals carry many different diseases and parasites, some of which are transmissible to domestic animals and even humans.
4. **Habituation/non-natural behavior development:** Wild animals need to learn normal social behaviors from their own species. Wild animals that learn non-normal behaviors from humans or domestic animals will likely not survive if they are released because they have not learned the correct survival skills. They have lost their natural fear of humans and predators and they may be abnormally habituated to human activity. As young animals grow into adults, they can still demon-

strate dangerous wild animal behaviors that can threaten human and domestic animal safety.

5. **It's illegal:** Most wild animals are protected under state and federal laws and cannot be taken from the wild or possessed by unauthorized citizens. Raising a wild animal as a pet is not only against laws and regulations, but it is not doing the right thing for the animal. Wisconsin's captive wildlife regulations allow a citizen to possess a wild animal for up to 24 hours for the purpose of transferring that animal to an appropriately licensed individual, such as a licensed wildlife rehabilitator or veterinarian. Even though wild animals are cute, they should not be viewed as pets.

During the warmer months of spring and summer, the frequency of human-wildlife encounters increases, especially those involving young wild animals. While most of these encounters are harmless, there are times when well-intentioned people interfere in wildlife situations because they incorrectly assume a young animal is orphaned.

**Remember:** A young wild animal's best chance for survival is with its mother!

### How to Tell if a Wild Animal is Truly Orphaned

For the protection of all young wildlife, please do not revisit a nest site and do not let dogs and cats near the area. To help you determine if a young wild animal is truly orphaned, refer to the Wisconsin DNR website for guidance on evaluating wildlife situations and choosing an appropriate course of action. You can also contact the DNR by calling 1-888-WDNRINFO (1-888-936-7463) for additional assistance and to help find a licensed wildlife rehabilitator near you.

# Message from the President

By Roger Noe, BCLRA

## Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association

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Just in time for late fall, Mother Nature has finally settled the weather down. What a beautiful October and early November. To say the least our summer was an adventure. Most of us have had our fun with historic levels of water. The fact of the matter is Burnett County received between 35-40" of rain during the summer of 2016. WHEW!!

Speaking of Mother Nature... bad news to report from Big McKenzie Lake. Zebra Mussels were discovered in Big McKenzie late this fall. A property owner found them clinging to dock posts and a watering pump. The DNR is putting together a response plan to deal with the issue. Unfortunately, Zebra Mussels are an invasive that is difficult to control. They are a menace to the lake's biological pattern and will destroy part of the food chain, i.e. plants and vegetation. This could be very bad news for Burnett County as Big McKenzie is part of a much larger chain of waters.

So how can each of us help? Do your part as a lake front citizen – educate yourself, family, and neighbors as to healthy lake issues. Volunteer at the boat landing. Get involved with your lake association. Be proactive rather than reacting to consequences of negative and unnecessary lake behaviors.

If you have any questions please call Roger Noe at 715-635-6309.



### Zebra Mussels

on native mussel

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Zebra Mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

# End of Season Dock Removal

By Burnett County Land & Water Conservation Department

It isn't every day that someone has the ability to look underneath their dock and see what is happening on their structure. That rare opportunity will present itself as summer gives way to autumn and lake residents and lake service providers start to remove boats, docks, and piers from the water. Why would anyone want to take a look at the bottom of the piers?

"The clean equipment that gets installed every year provides an excellent home for aquatic invasive species (AIS) like zebra mussels to colonize," explains Dave Ferris, Burnett County LWCD. "It's often difficult to thoroughly inspect a structure while it's in the water; however during removal anyone involved with the process can easily monitor for invasive species."

AIS are non-native plants and animals that threaten Wisconsin's waters by causing environmental and economic harm. One example, zebra mussels, can clog water intakes and pipes, encrust piers, boats and motors, and their sharp shells can cut the feet of swimmers.

Zebra mussels have been found in less than 5% of Wisconsin lakes predicted to be suitable for zebra mussels. Unfortunately, zebra mussels were found here in Burnett County in October 2016. Only one small colony was identified in Big McKenzie Lake and the LWCD and WI DNR were immediately onsite to initiate control efforts.

It's very important to check for any invasive species, including zebra mussels, since a small plant fragment or any other unusual plant or animal that you find during dock removal could be an invasive.

To protect Burnett County's lakes and rivers, we're asking landowners and contractors to carefully examine piers, boats, boatlifts, rafts and any other equipment that has been in the water for a prolonged period of time for signs of zebra mussels during removal.

In addition to a visual inspection, citizens/contractors are encouraged to feel smooth surfaces of equipment to check for juvenile zebra mussels as they may have a "sand-paper like" feel and are often invisible to the human eye. If zebra mussels or other new invasive species are found:

- Check that the invasive species has not been previously found on the waterbody by visiting <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/AISLists.aspx?species=ZM>.
- Note the exact location where the animal was found.
- Take a digital photo of the animal in the setting where it was found (if possible). Then collect up to five specimens of varying sizes. Place in a jar with water; put on ice and transport to refrigerator.

## It's very important

to check for any invasive species, including zebra mussels, since a small plant fragment or any other unusual plant or animal that you find during dock removal could be an invasive.

- Contact Burnett County LWCD or Jeremy Bates, DNR AIS Coordinator at 715-392-0807 and deliver specimens.

"Responding quickly to new AIS detections is critical to help slow the spread into other waterbodies,"

says Tim Campbell, AIS communications specialist for UW-Extension and the Wisconsin DNR. "It can also help control AIS within a body of water. Efforts of citizens statewide can help us achieve that."

There are also specific laws lake property owners and contractors must follow to prevent the spread of AIS. Prior to transporting any equipment Wisconsin law requires you to:

- INSPECT boats, trailers, boat lifts, piers, rafts and equipment.
- REMOVE all attached aquatic plants and animals.
- DRAIN all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment.

To learn more about zebra mussels or Wisconsin aquatic invasive species regulations visit: [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) keyword "invasive species", or contact the Land & Water Conservation Department at 715-349-2186 or [lwcd@burnettcounty.gov](mailto:lwcd@burnettcounty.gov).



Zebra mussels attached to a floating dock. Credit: Sandy Kemsley (Creative Commons)

## Cabin for Rent - Considerations when Renting Your Lake Cabin

By Patrick Nehring and Mike Kornmann; UW-Extension

**T**here are a lot of factors to consider prior to renting your lake home. Is it for less than 30 days?

If it is, then a number of regulations take effect. And how will you deal with unplanned issues related to your visitors? There are best practices and regulations to consider when renting your lake home as a short-term rental.

### Know the Rules and Regulations

Surprises are not always good. As a property owner, you would not like the surprise of finding out that your insurance does not cover you or that you need to pay a fine for failing to file taxes. Most regulators are happy to help you out before you begin renting out your cabin. However, if they are surprised to learn that you opened a lodging business without telling them, they may surprise you in return with penalties for not complying with local laws.

Burnett County permits short-term rentals via a conditional use permit (CUP). Why? You bear some of the responsibility for the actions of those renting your property. And the conditions approved with the permit help to reduce conflict with neighboring properties and protect drinking water quality.

Sometimes there are also private restrictions on the ability to rent a cabin or home. There may be a deed restriction or a homeowner/condominium association that enforces rules about short-term rentals. Contract law provides the needed enforcement mechanism in these cases. Review your property deed before renting out your cabin. If you are a member of a homeowners

or condominium association, review their rules before renting out your cabin, as you may need to get permission from the association.

When renting out your cabin, you cannot exclude renters based on race, ethnicity, sex, disability, or type of family. Depending on the number of rental units you have, you may need to allow service animals, for example, in order to comply with the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Airbnb provides a well-organized discussion of FHA and ADA compliance (<https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/898/ada-and-fha-compliance>).

### Put Your Expectations in Writing

One way to address some of your liability is through a rental agreement. You may want to require a security deposit, which you

### Short Term Rental Best Practices

- Plan and use a good rental agreement. Keep in mind your behavior expectations and your neighbor's expectations too.
- Establish a local contact person and property manager.
- Seek out business advice: UW-Extension can help you establish a business and obtain the proper permits. The Wisconsin Business AnswerLine is: 800-940-7232
- Do your homework prior to applying. The Conditional Use Permit application fee is \$300 and is nonrefundable even if the request is denied.
- Be on good terms with your neighbors.
- Determine your septic system and size it properly.
- Visit the County Zoning website for guidance on potential restrictions and conditions at [burnettcounty.com/ShortTermRentals](http://burnettcounty.com/ShortTermRentals)
- Review County Zoning Applications at [burnettcounty.com/zoningforms](http://burnettcounty.com/zoningforms)
- Contact the Zoning Department with questions and clarifications prior to application. (715) 349-2138.

(Continued on page 5)

## Cabin for Rent - continued from page 4

(Continued from page 4)

must return in a timely manner after the rental period. It is important for the renter and owner to be sensitive to the recreational carrying capacity of your lake. An overabundance of recreational use can degrade even the most resilient lakes. Be mindful of this pressure when renting, keeping in mind that adding users to the lake on busy weekends may create some disharmony or angst in the lake community. Paying attention to how this theme plays out in your lake community is vital. You can use your rental agreements to specify the norms and expectations that you and your neighbors have. It always helps to be on good terms with your neighbors.

### Inform Your Insurer

Your homeowner's insurance may not cover any damage done by short-term renters or liability if someone should get hurt on your property. If the health department did not inspect your property or you failed to comply with the recommendations of the health inspector, you are less likely to qualify for liability insurance coverage. Check with your insurance agency for policy quotes. They may have a policy that is comparable in cost to your current homeowner's insurance. A word of caution: if you do not tell them you are renting the property, you probably are not covered.

### Tax Compliance

As a lodging business, you need to charge and forward sales tax payments to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue and applicable room tax payments to your local municipal clerk. You also need to obtain a Wisconsin Seller's Permit online (<http://www.revenue.wi.gov/>



[salesanduse/index.html](http://salesanduse/index.html)). Unless you have incorporated as something different, your property rental is considered a sole proprietorship business and you will need to claim business income on your taxes. However, you may also be able to write off some of your business expenses. Depending on the income tax form you use, you may want to contact a tax accountant, at least for your first year. If you plan in advance to make sure all local ordinances and laws are met, renting your lake home or cabin can be enjoyable for all involved.

### Get the Word Out

There are different ways to advertise that your cabin is available for daily or weekly rental. Various websites and apps are useful tools for marketing your cabin. These typically employ different fee structures for their services. Signs are another popular option for advertising your cabin's availability. If you want to use off premise signs, commonly known as billboards, contact the Burnett County Zoning Office for permit applications and requirements.

If a state or federal highway is where you would like to place a sign, you may need a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (<http://wisconsin.gov/Pages/doing-business/real-estate/outdoor-adv/default.aspx>). One last consideration when it comes to signage is "less is more". The simpler the message the easier it will be for people to read. Lodging establishment name and website is likely to be more effective than putting every detail about your cabin on the sign.



# Join LoonWatch and Make a Difference

By Erica LeMoine, LoonWatch Coordinator, Northland College

**L**oonWatch is a program of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at Northland College. Since 1978 we have worked to protect loons and their aquatic habitats through education, monitoring and research. Our primary focus is Wisconsin, but our programming activities extend to other areas in the Upper Great Lakes region, and beyond.

Loons are a charismatic symbol of our northern lakes, and are sentinels for healthy aquatic ecosystems. Loons are dependent on lakes with good water quality - they need to see their prey (fish) to pursue them. Loons are a long-lived bird, living 25 to 30 years, and possibly longer. Their typical dive lasts about 1 minute, but they can dive to depths of up to 200 feet and hold their breath for 5 minutes. Our Midwestern loons migrate to the Gulf of Mexico, and spend their winters in those waters.

Although common loons are still abundant and widespread in most of Alaska and Canada, their numbers and range have decreased since the late 1800s. Common loons used to be found in northern Indiana, northern Illinois and even Iowa. Our actions are the primary reason for the decline and disappearance of loons from our lakes. Shoreline development has minimized or destroyed suitable nesting sites. Toxins and pollution degrade water quality. Human disturbance, especially during sensitive nesting and chick-rearing periods, can reduce loon populations.

What can you do to help? LoonWatch offers many opportunities for citizens to get involved. LoonWatch coordinates a

## Burnett County Lakes Participating in LoonWatch's Annual Lakes Monitoring Program

| LAKE NAME         | TOWN       | LAKE NAME      | TOWN       |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Bass Lake         | LaFollette | Minnow Lake    | Oakland    |
| Big McGraw Lake   | Blaine     | Myre Lake      | Jackson    |
| Big McKenzie Lake | Scott      | Nicaboyne Lake | Webb Lake  |
| Birch Island Lake | Scott      | Oak Lake       | Scott      |
| Deer Lake         | Swiss      | Owl Lake       | LaFollette |
| Des Moines Lake   | Webb Lake  | Point Lake     | Jackson    |
| Green Lake        | Jackson    | Round Lake     | Trade Lake |
| Hanscom Lake      | Scott      | Spirit Lake    | Trade Lake |
| Lindy Lake        | Scott      | Tucker Lake    | Meenon     |
| Lipsett Lake      | Rusk       | Viola Lake     | Sand       |
| Long Lake         | Scott      | Warner Lake    | LaFollette |
| Loon Lake         | Jackson    | Webb Lake      | Webb Lake  |

network of 416 Loon Rangers who watch and record the activities of loons on 419 lakes throughout northern Wisconsin. Volunteers attend a Loon Ranger workshop in the spring to learn monitoring techniques, to learn what is new in the world of loon research, and to meet other loon enthusiasts.

We hope you will consider becoming an active part of our network. Out of over 500 lakes in Burnett County, only 24 are currently part of LoonWatch's Annual Lakes Monitoring Program. Since many lakes share the same name, it is im-

portant to know your lake's Water Body Identification Code (WBIC). For example, there are nine Bass Lakes in Burnett County. To determine if your lake is being monitored, please check the Wisconsin DNR lake finder website <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/maps/> to check for your lake's WBIC. Please consider becoming a Loon Ranger if your lake is not currently being monitored. To become a Loon Ranger, go to our website: <https://www.northland.edu/sustain/soei/loonwatch/>, call 715-682-1220, or email [loonwatch@northland.edu](mailto:loonwatch@northland.edu).

## You Can Help Protect Loons

- Keep a minimum distance of 200 feet from loons.
- Never fish near loons, pick up your monofilament line, and use non-lead tackle.
- Restore your shoreline with native plants.
- Plant a rain garden and use a rain barrel.
- Buy local, shop with re-useable bags, and support alternative energy.
- Use non-toxic pesticides, and non-phosphorus fertilizer.
- Support LoonWatch.

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## The Water Column

By Diane Daulton

Songbird migration is in full swing, with that first flush of rose-breasted grosbeaks, colorful Baltimore orioles and stunning little indigo buntings. Did you know that birds are not the only colorful migrants who have already arrived “up north”? Some species of dragonflies are known to migrate, while most take up residence - first as aquatic nymphs, then emerging as terrestrial adults. According to WDNR expert Bob DuBois, two migrant species, common green darners and variegated meadowhawks, began arriving as early as April in the Northwoods. Although more research is needed to fully understand the dynamics of populations that migrate, early summer is an exciting time for observing these amazing aerial acrobats. The next few weeks will showcase a veritable explosion of their emergence.

Dragonflies have been around for a long time – in fact, a lot longer than humans. As many as 300 million years ago, early dragonfly-like griffinflies were not so different from our modern day dragonflies - except for their size. The fossil record documents their wingspans at 28 inches, but not all early species were so large. Today’s dragonflies are part of the order *Odonata* which includes dragonflies and damselflies. Both dragonflies and damselflies are voracious predators, with some easy to learn distinctive characteristics.

Simple observations can help distinguish the two sub-orders. Look for wing position at rest, the position of the eyes in relationship to each other, and flight characteristics. For example, resting dragonflies will hold their wings flat (away from the body), while damselflies at rest fold theirs together like praying hands. Looking closely at their giant compound eyes; dragonfly eyes are adjacent to each other (except clubtails)...



A fossil of *Protolindenia wittei*, a dragonfly with a wingspan of about 15 cm. This exquisitely preserved fossil was found in the Jurassic limestones of Bavaria, Germany.

Source: <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/arthropoda/uniramia/odonatoida.html>

seemingly almost fused, while damselfly eyes appear widely separated like a dog bone shape. As their names suggest, dragonflies have larger, more robust bodies. They are strong fliers, cruising along business-like in their manner, while damselflies are more delicate, sometimes exhibiting a tilting, butterfly-like flight pattern.

Speaking of dragonfly flight...it’s hard to explain without getting bogged down in physics, fluid mechanics, and the intricacies of how motion and wing structure translate into lift. University of Virginia’s *UVA Today* describes their amazing abilities, including the capacity to “propel themselves in six directions – upward and downward, forward and backward, and side to side – and sustain bursts of speed of 30 mph.” Scientists studying dragonflies are creating slow motion 3D simulations, allowing for greater understanding of exact motions during take-off (body motion and wing flex) and the resulting vortices. These recorded images show



Aquatic dragonfly nymphs like this shadow darter are voracious predators.

Photo courtesy of Ken Tennesen, Wautoma, WI

(Continued on page 10)

*The Water Column - continued from page 9**(Continued from page 9)*

each of the dragonfly's four wings acting independently, increasing maneuverability and taking advantage of energy saving strategies in flight.

Dragonflies and damselflies spend most of their lives as nymphs living in a fresh water habitat. Nymphs, sometimes called larvae or naiads, are equipped with special extendable mouth parts that can dash out to grab prey, bring it to the chewing mouth parts, then fold politely under their chins. These same nymphs are one of an assemblage of species that are useful in biological monitoring for water quality.

As nymphs age, they outgrow their rigid exoskeletons and molt (an average of 12 times). The final stage nymphs (called final instars) climb out of the water and attach themselves to emergent vegetation. Their thorax cracks open and the new adult climbs out of the old shell, called an "exuviae". After a brief rest, they pump up their wings and extend their abdomen in preparation for terrestrial life. For the next few weeks or months as adults, their focus is on hunting, eating, establishing a territory, mating, and laying eggs. Mating is unmistakable, as males and females mate in the "wheel" position in order to transfer sperm (call me romantic, but the mating position looks more like a heart shape if you ask me). They also sometimes ride in "tandem" before and after mating. Eggs are then laid in sediments, vegetation, or laid directly in the water depending upon the species. For a fascinating in-depth look at life cycle, unique adaptations, threats and opportunities, go to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and enter "NRCS Dragonfly Conservation" in the search box.

Names like beaverpond baskettail, variegated meadowhawk, and ebony boghaunter provide inspiration worthy of a family outing. These pretty little gems darting around area lakes and streams are fascinating, fun to identify, and in need of conservation assistance. By the way, did you know that dragonflies and damselflies –



Springtime darners emerge early in May or June.

*Photo courtesy of Ken Tennesen, Wautoma, WI*

especially the nymphs - can help reduce mosquito abundance?

If you own property along a lake or stream, or where wetlands are present, it's a good idea to leave emergent vegetation intact and reduce mowing or weed whipping along the water's edge. Restoring and protecting wetlands from development and reducing chemical use also helps provide habitat. Citizens can learn more about identifying and monitoring dragonflies and damselflies in our neck of the woods through the on-line Wisconsin Odonata Survey or join the Wisconsin Dragonfly Society's Facebook page for news, and information from fellow enthusiasts.

*Diane is an independent natural resource consultant and lake and stream advocate. She can be reached at [ddaulton@centurytel.net](mailto:ddaulton@centurytel.net).*

# Social Media Connections for the Water Lovers

By Mike Kornmann, UW-Extension

More and more people are relying on social media sources to inform them about things that are important in their lives. Conservation information for lakes and rivers is available through a number of important organizations. Below you will find a list of the most useful ones for people interested in lakes and rivers in Burnett County.

Beginning this fall, UW-Extension Burnett County is working with the Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association to establish new online resources. The first item is the creation of a “newsflash” tool that will inform subscribers with current and timely information about lakes and rivers in Burnett County.

Some of the first notifications you will receive are of when the *LakeLines* newsletter is published online. This will help reach those who prefer to read the newsletter online and wish to share it with family and friends who also use their lake property. We will also use the newsflash to inform people between the spring and fall issues of *LakeLines*. For instance, we will provide timely information about the ongoing zebra mussel infestation in Big McKenzie Lake.

Subscribing to the Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Newsflash is easy. Just go to BurnettCounty.com and click “**Notify Me**” on the sign post.

- Enter your email address in the “*profile information*” text box.
- Select email and/or enter your texting phone number.
- Scroll down to **Lakes and Rivers** and select text and/or email.
- The last thing you need to do is confirm your account when an email comes in from the “List Serve – Civic Plus”.

## Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Newsflash Notifications

Email or Text Notifications:

<http://burnettcounty.com/list.aspx>

You can subscribe or unsubscribe at any time. Receive notifications on lake related information including when the *LakeLines* newsletter is available on-line. You choose if you want information via text or email.

So many lake property owners have extended families and friends who care about our lakes and rivers. We hope that you will encourage them to sign up for the newsflash and also visit the listed social media sites.

### Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway (National Park Service)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StCroixNSR/>

### St. Croix River Association

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/stcroixriverassociation/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stcroixriverassociation/>

### Wisconsin Lakes Partnership

UW-Extension, Wisconsin Lakes, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources make up the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership. These social media sources are provided by the UW-Extension Lakes Center located at UW Stevens Point.

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/Wisconsin-Lakes-Partnership-58292281911/)

[Wisconsin-Lakes-Partnership-58292281911/](https://www.facebook.com/Wisconsin-Lakes-Partnership-58292281911/)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/uwexLakes>

### Wisconsin Lakes

Your statewide lake association, Wisconsin Lakes is the only statewide non-profit organization working exclusively to protect and enhance the quality of Wisconsin’s 15,000 lakes.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/WisconsinLakes/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/wislakes>



LakeLines  
Burnett County Lakes & Rivers  
Association

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Burnett County

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# LAKELINES

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***LakeLines is now featured online at [www.burnettcounty.com/LakeLines](http://www.burnettcounty.com/LakeLines)***