



TODDY POND ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2016

Issue 37

OUR MISSION

We believe that we have a responsibility to protect Toddy Pond and its watershed so that we and future generations may enjoy its beauty and the recreational opportunities it provides. Our objective is to protect the air, water, soil, plant and animal life of the watershed and to preserve its economic, ecological and aesthetic value by encouraging responsible land and water use.

Finally ...

TP Dam Gets Some TLC

Chris Dadian

Anticipated for more than a year, the Toddy Pond dam is receiving some much-needed maintenance. To call it TLC might be going a bit far, but for those of us who worried that it might not happen at all, this development has been heartening.

On October 26 a crew from Commercial Divers came to Toddy to perform routine maintenance, as they did last year. As we reported in last fall's newsletter, this primarily involves the equivalent of forcing chewing gum into new cracks on the "wet" side of the dam (does anyone remember Chevy Chase at the Hoover Dam?). Of course the gum is ultra-high-test epoxy, and this annual touch-up is extremely important to prevent erosive channels from forming. But this year the repairs didn't end there.

Over a number of years large areas of spalling had developed on the concrete piers that support the sluice gate and gate lift, and the damage has spread season by season. In a photo I took in September an arc of broken concrete could be seen extending from the top of the gate to the toe of the east pier, exposing rebar, and similar damage was visible on the west pier. While the headwall was being dressed by the divers, another crew cleaned out the spalled material on both piers and replaced it with new concrete.

Another major area of concern has been the gate itself. Several of its boards and the framing that is supposed to seal the sluice have deteriorated, to the point where a steady flow of water spurts through gaps even when the gate is closed completely (you can see the leakage at the bottom of the gate in the September photo, and higher up shreds of the plastic sheeting that was used in recent years as a seasonal stopgap; in the October photo a sandbag has been deployed to stanch this leak). This small but steady leakage has contributed, along with other factors, especially drought, to low water levels in late summer.

Joe Kacer, who is the president of Commercial Divers, and headed up the crew, told me that AIM has engaged a contractor to replace the entire gate, and will also install an "emer-

June 24 — Maine Lakes Conference

Wells Conference Center, University of Maine, Orono.
For information, go to www.mainelakesociety.org

June 25 — TPA Hail to Summer BBQ

Balsam Cove Campground pavilion, 4:00–7:00 (food served around 5:00)

July 21 — Toddy Pond Loon Count, 7:00–7:30am

gency" backup gate, which will facilitate future maintenance. We've not yet received confirmation of this from AIM, but Joe said he had spoken with the contractor, who had already taken measurements and drawn up plans.



East pier on September 26 (left) and on October 26 (plywood forms to be removed after concrete has set up).

Mr. Kacer also repeated his assessment from last year that even without the additional repairs to the concrete and gate the Toddy Pond dam is in good condition for its age and does not present a significant risk of failure.

This is all wonderful news, but a bit surprising. Ever since a massive rain storm on the last day of September, 2015, which raised the lake level by a foot overnight and highlighted the need for maintenance beyond the routine (see the article in last fall's newsletter), our attempts to get AIM to address spe-

cific issues, including the concrete piers and gate, produced a disappointing response. Over the next eleven months we were told that an engineering consultant was preparing a plan, then that the consultant's recommendations were being studied, then that contractors were being sought to perform unspecified tasks (but that the grass had been mowed and some sinkholes on the embankments filled with gravel). As late as this September 8, almost a year after the storm, we were told that there was still no definite workscope or schedule.

Then, in mid-October, Jeff McGlin, the AIM vice president in charge of operations in Bucksport, notified us and the Alamoosook Lake Association that maintenance was scheduled at our dams for the last week in the month and that in the case of the Toddy Pond the work would be limited to routine crack-filling on the headwall and the replacement of the plastic sheeting behind the gate to "seal" the sluice through the winter (when the gate is opened, as usually happens during the spring and autumn high water, the seal is permanently broken).

When I wrote back immediately to ask directly whether AIM was rejecting the evidence provided by us and its consultants of the need for repairs – specifically, repairs to the gate and concrete piers – McGlin replied, in high manager-ese, that the immediate "goal" was to reduce leakage, and that all these issues, which were "not new," would be "monitored" over the coming months (he did offer that the plastic sheeting might be re-installed next summer if "required").

Yet here we are, with some actual progress to report. Though the aims of AIM remain inscrutable, it would be nice to think that it was our patience and persistence that paid off. But a more realistic assessment – perhaps no less hopeful in the long run – may be that AIM is simply taking care of what it considers to be a valuable asset.

Whatever. For now, we'll take it!

Courtesy Boat Inspections

Barbara Leaf

It is with great nostalgia that we have pulled in our docks and stored the boats for yet another season. It was a wonderful summer and the boat landing was busy. Thanks to both our paid inspectors and the many volunteers we were able to inspect every day during July and August. We have been told by Lakes Environmental Association that our coverage is impressive given the size of our organization. Toddy Pond inspectors checked 770 boats this summer and 21 plant fragments were found. Fortunately, none of them were found to be invasive. Ours is a small but important part of the statewide effort. As of the end of July 42,856 inspections were performed throughout the state. During those inspections 2,224 plants were found and 60 of those were identified as invasive aquatic plants. That is 60 potential infestations stopped by Courtesy Boat Inspectors this summer (August reports notwithstanding). These numbers are staggering and indicate that we cannot afford to be complacent. While we cannot inspect every boat, we can continue to encourage self inspection when inspectors are not there.

While so much focus is on motorized boats it is every bit as important to check our kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards. They are more easily hauled from one waterway to another and can easily carry invasive plants. Last July, a CBI in-

spector was checking a kayak launching at Lovewell Pond in Fryeburg. The owner reported that he had last paddled in Lake Arrowhead. Knowing that Lake Arrowhead had a high level of invasive variable milfoil, the inspector made sure she checked thoroughly. She found a small fragment stuck to the side of the kayak. The piece was too small to be certified as invasive but this incident does serve to remind us how easily these plants can travel.

We will begin our efforts to hire 2017 inspectors in April. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please contact Lucy Leaf or me. If you would be interested in volunteering a few hours at the boat landing, we would welcome a call or email. Again, thanks to all those who made this year a success.

Plant Patrol 2016

Lucy Leaf

Seventeen members participated in this year's plant patrol, providing near complete coverage of the entire shoreline of Toddy Pond.

Priming up for the season, five members attended the IPP 101 certification course offered by VLMP at the Craig Brook Fish Hatchery. In August, five more members took the three-hour IPP Plant Paddle, held at Branch Lake.

As to the results of this year's surveys, no invasive plants were found on Toddy Pond. One milfoil is now under investigation, though not likely an invasive. Here is the scoop on milfoils. Toddy Pond has milfoil, several species found to date, but none are invasive species. Most patches found were in South Toddy and some fragments in Middle Toddy. Milfoil has the distinctive feathered leaves. If feathered leaves are found, the plant requires close scrutiny. So there has been much discussion on the Pond and in the workshops about these milfoils. Is the leaf arrangement whorled? How close are the whorls? Can you see the little brown fruits on the stem? Are the fruits smooth or ridged? Did we look for flowers and bracts above the water's surface?

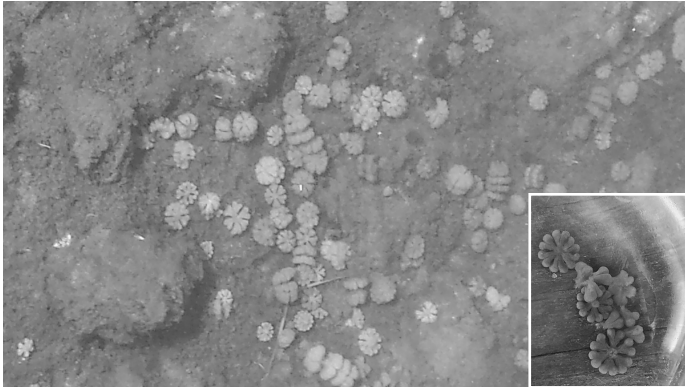
The two milfoils prevalent in Toddy Pond are low water-milfoil and Farwell's water-milfoil. Low water-milfoil is now competing with the prevalent bladderwort species seen in the coves. Megan Facciolo from Hancock Soil and Water assured us last year that this is not a big concern. "Species come and go," she said. "That is a natural event."

Another invasive look-alike is a pondweed. There are many types of pondweed, but this year we have seen a lot of reddish colored pondweed floating around with wavy leaves resembling lasagna. Curly-leaf pondweed is the invasive, so this plant was a concern. Here is where our magnifying glass came in handy. The invasive plant has serrated margins and a distinctive vein pattern. Our samples did not. A photo sent to VLMP confirmed it to be the native, red/alpine pondweed.

A final look-alike in Toddy is the naiad. This plant sits on the bottom, and you have to look for its short spray of arched, thin leaves. We've only found a sprig here and there or a small colony. Again, we are looking for toothed versus smooth leaf margins. Toothed is bad. Fortunately, our samples are smooth. The base of the leaves provided more clues. So, it's not unusual to see a plant patroller floating about in a kayak, hunched over a plant in a tray, peering through a magnifying glass.

Some people might confuse bladderworts for milfoil. Bladderworts have a branched leaf pattern which is quite easy to distinguish, but even more distinctive are the little sack-like bladders. Most people are surprised to learn that these prevalent bladderworts are carnivorous plants. Lacking roots, they are free-floating or trailing on the lake bottom, ready to capture small prey like zooplankton or tiny insects. If the bladders are black, the plant has had a good meal. The kids will love this little tidbit.

Last year we had emails bouncing about regarding a slimy, translucent, hard mass found on the base of the Tenneys' dock. The best description for it was "gross." This turned out to be from the class of bryozoans, an invertebrate animal species. We have found several more this year, glued to rocks and sticks. Another flurry of emails went out this year with a photo of elusive, green, star-shaped "discs" found in shallow water in South Toddy. After much internet probing by our own members, and consultation with experts available to the VLMP, it was determined that the "mystery algae" was nothing more than expanded excrement (i.e. poop) that had fallen into the water from a terrestrial caterpillar.



Mystery "algae"

Plant patrolling can be lots of fun. But there is a major risk. VLMP provides a public health warning: "if you find you have more pictures of weeds on your camera than photos of your grandchildren, you may be experiencing addiction." Another sign of this affliction is the number of aquatic plants you have stored in your refrigerator. Linda Jellison, our long-time patroller from North Toddy added: "If you have a bryozoan stored in your fridge, you may be experiencing divorce."

Loon Count 2016

Steve Antell

The 2016 Toddy Pond loon count took place from 7:00-7:30 AM on July 16. As in previous years, the pond was divided into 17 sections with volunteers assigned to cover each area. After crunching the numbers while attempting to make sure no loons were double counted, we came up with 22 adults and five chicks, a modest increase from 2015 and pretty much within the normal range over the 30 years of the Toddy Pond count. The data has been forwarded to Maine Audubon, which will aggregate the information with the other counts done throughout Maine at the same time. My thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who rose early on a Saturday morning to participate in this valuable citizen science project. I look forward to doing it again next year.

Watershed Protection: Taking Stock and Next Steps

Chris Dadian

In the spring of 2011, when Megan Facciolo, manager of the Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Laura Wilson, from the UM Extension, told us about an opportunity to apply for a grant that would support a survey of sources of pollution from run-off in the Toddy Pond watershed, and that that survey in turn might lead to a follow-on grant that would provide funding from the Federal Clean Water Act to help mitigate these sources, the board of the Toddy Pond Association nearly walked away.

It was not that we failed to appreciate the importance of minimizing nonpoint source (NPS) pollution, especially from phosphorus-bearing run-off. But the grant application required that the TPA commit to an in-kind match for the grant, including 250 volunteer hours over the following year. We were struggling then to mobilize a somewhat smaller volunteer effort – to provide courtesy boat inspections on weekends in July and August (this was the year before we turned to paid inspectors and expanded the CBI program significantly). Meeting this additional commitment seemed impossible, but fortunately the argument that won the day was that given our mission and the potential impact the TPA simply had no choice but to accept the challenge.

Now, nearly six years later, we've completed the follow-on grant, and the final project report being prepared by HCSWD (still in draft) lists some accomplishments that vindicate TPA's bold decision:

- Mitigation projects at 25 road sites have been completed, involving 6 different BMPs (Best Management Practices), ranging from culverts and ditches to surface profiling and turnouts.
- 19 residential sites have employed 8 BMPs, including vegetative buffers, berms, and rain gardens.
- Technical assistance was provided at an additional 25 sites, many of which will eventually implement BMPs.
- The total match (cash and in-kind, including TPA volunteer hours) exceeded the required 2/3 by more than \$20,000.
- The estimated reduction in pollutants per year as the result of mitigation projects is 99.61 tons of sediment, 106.01 pounds of nitrogen, and **96.63 pounds of phosphorus**.

Of course the last is the true bottom line, and not just literally. Ninety-seven pounds – a few shovelfuls – may not sound like much in a waterbody the size of Toddy Pond, which contains something on the order of 136 billion pounds of water. But when you consider that critical concentrations of phosphorus, sufficient to have a significant impact on the aquatic environment, are measured in parts per billion (ppb), that recent tests of the concentrations at the surface of Toddy Pond have yielded results of about 5 ppb, and that at a level of 12–15 ppb nuisance algae blooms are likely, those few shovelfuls – about 0.7 ppb every year – could make a real difference.

Impacts in the areas of outreach and education are less well documented in the report, though much effort was devoted to both, and will continue.

Now that the grant is completed, our challenge is finding

ways to reinforce and expand the substantial gains achieved. Stay tuned. In fact ...

Superfluous BMP Spotted at Balsam Cove Campground

When the call went out to protect Toddy Pond from pollutant-bearing run-off, the Thatchers of the Balsam Cove Campground on North Toddy responded. With guidance from the Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District, owners Lorraine and David and managers Ruth and Justin implemented several Best Management Practices (BMPs), most of them rather staid though effective. But one is a knockout – the rain garden.

From a distance you see a lovely garden bed, whose purpose could be purely aesthetic. But come closer and you see how its design is so effective in dealing with run-off.



Usually placed adjacent to an impervious surface (in this case, a gravel road that runs parallel to the lakefront and about 50 feet from the pond's edge), and on ground sloping toward the waterbody, the bed is depressed several inches below the surrounding terrain. So the rain garden acts as a catchment for already laden run-off that has actually picked up speed – and particles of gravel – crossing the road surface. Rather than rushing into the lake, the run-off seeps into the bed, filtering slowly through the soil and leaving behind the nutrients it carries – especially phosphorus and nitrogen – to nourish the garden rather than Toddy Pond.

Beautiful and talented! Find information about building your own rain garden with links to several articles at the HCSWCD website (scroll down to Plants), at <http://ellsworthme.org/soilandwater/Publications.htm>

Paddleboard Traveler

Lucy Leaf

It's not an unusual sight to see a paddleboarder on Toddy Pond. But this summer, a person sitting on their camp porch sipping a morning coffee may have noticed a boarder passing by that looked like he was going somewhere. Closer inspection would have revealed that it was a she, not a he, a rather petite she with a pack on her back.

This traveling boarder was our own South Toddy resident and long-time plant patroller, Linda Jellison. She was out to prove to herself that she could paddle the entire length of Toddy Pond. At age 69, this was not an easy feat for Linda.



Paddleboarding was not something she took up lightly. Observing neighbors paddling around on these strange boards, she admitted, “it was love at first sight. I thought that, as I was aging, instead of going to balance class, I would buy a paddleboard.”

Standing up from the kneeling position was an initial challenge, but once upright, she gained confidence and found herself quite comfortable on the board. Initially she thought she would paddle close to shore and home, “but that got old real quick.” She set her sights on the far shore, which gave her a half mile over and back. Then she aimed for five miles. At that point, she considered herself “in training” for the big one, a paddle from her dock on South Toddy all the way to the boat landing on North Toddy.

Her husband said she'd never make it, and her daughter wouldn't hear of her trying it alone. On the day her daughter was available to accompany her, there was lots of wind, but it was blowing in the right direction – toward the landing. “It practically blew me down the lake.”

But that paddle was only from her dock to the landing. She then became bent on paddling the entire length of the Pond, end to end. To Linda, that meant paddling from a beaver dam to the outlet dam. But there are weeds on either end of the lake, which can tangle in the board's skeg. So Linda bought a GPS device she could strap to the front of the board, and figured out the exact mileage for the length of Toddy Pond. On the day of the big paddle, she started from her dock and headed in the opposite direction from the landing to fill the mileage gap, and then began her northbound paddle from Saunders' beach.

Linda left at 6:30 am on a partly cloudy morning with just a slight breeze blowing. She had already reached the Short Point narrows when husband Phil caught up to her in his motor boat. The backpack Linda carried is called a “mule,” containing water she could sip and a power bar. At 9:45, she pulled into the landing, logging 9.1 miles in a little over three hours.

“I found it was very good exercise and a great way to recalibrate,” Linda told me. Re-calibrate, I wondered? Linda is not exactly sedentary by nature. For a decade, she and her husband motorcycled and camped all around the country.

Hardly five feet tall, Linda rode her own bike. Now they find it hard to leave Toddy Pond in the summer.

What does she like best about paddleboarding? “Going with the wind,” Linda replied. “It’s a rush. I just love going with the wind.”

Hot Off the Press! New Edition of TP History

The 2016 edition of *Toddy Pond: A History*, by Sarah LeVine, is now available. More than a third longer than the 2010 edition, with many new articles and color photos, every camp and coffee table will want a copy.

To order this treasury of all that is Toddy Pond, contact Sarah at sarahlevine5@gmail.com. The price is \$15.00, if you can wait to pick it up next spring. If you can’t wait – Christmas is coming – an additional \$7.00 will cover the cost of domestic shipping.

White Birch Landing on Trundy Lane

Yvette Tenney

This article is reprinted from the 2016 edition of Toddy Pond: A History.

Richard and I were familiar with Toddy Pond, having vacationed as guests of Bob and Mimi Teghtsoonian at Bear’s Den, owned by the Webster family on Middle Toddy. Bob and Mimi had been renting Bear’s Den since 1958 or 1959 and had got to know Nick Webster and his parents, Janet and Albert. In those days, Bear’s Den was advertised in the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Bob and Mimi responded to the ad and drove all the way from Philadelphia to rent it, sight unseen. Al Webster told Bob and Mimi that they were lucky, because that was the year they had just replaced the “chick sale” with indoor plumbing.

We had been visiting the Teghtsoonians at Bear’s Den every summer since the 1970’s. When we retired, we decided it was time to look for a camp of our own so we could spend summer and fall on Toddy. After looking at places to buy, we decided to build. We’ll never forget the email from Jim Stoneton, our realtor, sent near the end of November, 2010, listing the land for sale at the end of Trundy Lane on South Toddy. The pictures showed views of both Blue Hill and Great Pond Mountain. We were a bit incredulous, because we were sure it was impossible to see both mountains from one location on the shore. It turns out Trundy Lane is one of the few places on the pond where, surprisingly, both mountains are visible.

We were visiting in Manhattan at the time, so we sent Jim to check out the property. He told us to come right away. We drove from Boston with two kayaks on top of our car check out the shore area. We noticed that we were the only ones travelling to Maine with boats. It was early December – duh!

To us, the property looked like a state park, pristine and untouched. We tromped around and found some bones, including a skull, which turned out to be from the skeleton of a goat, and we watched the sunset. We were enchanted! We bought the property in December of 2010 from David and Jan Evans,

another Massachusetts couple, who also owned the property adjacent to it. They were planning to retire the following year and were ready to build. So two new camps went up simultaneously on the last two parcels on Trundy Lane, ours and the Evans’. Ours was designed by architect Rick Malm, who, with his wife Barbara, has a camp on White Birch Lane. Our builder was Nate Holyoke, who was only 29 at the time, though he’d already been a builder for something like 16 years. Our intent was to build a “Scandinavian Rustic” camp, modeled in part after Bear’s Den, with the addition of Holyoke’s signature trusses. It helped that Rick Malm’s heritage is Finnish. We spent the summer of 2011 in a trailer, watching the foundation, septic, well, and framing take shape. By summer of 2012 the camp was ready for occupancy. We decided to call it “White Birch Landing.”

According to neighbors long resident in the area, our property, which belonged to the Cunningham family, who were among West Surry’s early settlers, has a rather dramatic history. Wilbur Saunders remembers his cousin Phil Cunningham returning from WWII. “My, was he a wild man! He came back from the Battle of the Bulge with what nowadays we’d call PTSD. His wife managed to straighten him out pretty well, but then she died and Phil went wild again...”

In those days where our house now stands there was a forested knoll belonging to Phil’s widowed mother, Ethel. “Phil decided to build a resort – a *resort* on Toddy Pond in 1951!” Wilbur shakes his head in wonder. “So he cut down the trees and sold them for lumber, bulldozed the top off the knoll, pushed the gravel down to the pond to make a beach, and then hired me, a junior in high school, to help build three or four rental cottages on the newly-flattened knoll.

“But then,” Wilbur continues, “Ethel Cunningham died, Phil and his sister Connie Cunningham Harper had a falling out over the property and Connie brought a law suit against Phil, which she won. So Phil lost pretty much everything, including his “resort.” He knocked down three of the cabins and the fourth he sold to Al and Susan Brown who moved it through the woodlot at the end of Trundy Lane to make an extension to their camp on Landing Lane.”

Growing up, Lucy Leaf heard so much about the devastation Phil Cunningham had wrought on his mother’s lakefront property that even though she’d been a toddler at the time and couldn’t possibly have been there, she was convinced she’d seen that D6 bulldozer flattening the knoll with her own eyes.

By and by Connie Cunningham Harper sold what had been her brother’s “resort” to a Mr. Abbott, who sold it to David and Jan Evans, who by and by sold half of it to us.

These days, to protect the lake from polluting run-off (but without sacrificing the fabulous view), we’re encouraging trees and vegetation to grow on the lower slopes of what remains of the knoll.



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