



# TODDY POND ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2018

Issue 41

## 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.*

## Overtured Boat Found – What To Do?

Lucy Leaf

On Saturday, Sept 22, in mid-afternoon, an overturned Sunfish (a small sailboat) was spotted offshore by camp owners on the Surry side of South Toddy. It was a very windy, blustery day with a chill wind. The camp owners went out in the choppy waters and retrieved the boat. Discovering that the sails were still set on the mast, they became worried and called the game warden. Warden Chris Sargent, in Castine at the time, came immediately, and they began a search for the boaters.

None of the searchers knew that the boaters had swum safely to shore, only a few hundred yards upwind. I say “safely,” but it was just lucky that another camp owner was checking on something at his camp, an errand that would take five minutes, and happened to notice swimmers in distress aiming for his shore. One yelled, “Help”! It was lucky, for one of the boaters was quite exhausted and likely hypothermic, needing help to get out of the water and requiring several rests before the others could get him to a vehicle not far from the shore. The boaters were driven the short distance home where family members determined that the exhausted swimmer needed to get to the emergency room immediately. Two days later, he was in the ICU in Bangor, still in bad shape, but later reported to be recovering.

Both boaters were wearing life jackets, which may have been crucial in the outcome, though their attire included blue jeans and boots which likely impeded their swimming progress. It’s also likely that the sailors started out in the calmer waters of their cove and got slammed by the blustery southwest wind when they lost the protection of Decorum Point.

The boat rescuers looking for the boaters never found anyone, nor heard about the incident. The next day, an email was posted from the Toddy Pond Association to be on the lookout for an overturned sailboat, noting also that the boaters had swum to safety. A boat adrift can be a safety hazard to other boaters. A call was also posted to the local police, indicating that the swimmers were safe, though the overturned boat was still missing.

### 2019 Calendar

#### June 22 — Maine Lakes Conference

For information, go to [www.mainelakessociety.org](http://www.mainelakessociety.org)

#### June 23 — TPA Hail to Summer BBQ

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

#### July 20 — Toddy Pond Loon Count, 7:00–7:30am

#### August 11 — TPA Annual Meeting

Blue Hill Consolidated School, potluck dinner at 6:00 followed by meeting

Two days after the capsizing, Association members were out searching for the Sunfish. It was found tied to a camp dock not far from where it had capsized. The camp owners were relieved to hear that the boaters had reached safety. They asked us to please call the warden service “so that the case could be closed.” I spoke with Chris Sargent, the warden on duty, who is also the warden for this area, to thank him for his quick response and willingness to go out on a very cold and blustery day to search for the boaters. I also asked what should be done when an overturned boat is found to start a warranted search effort or prevent unnecessary searches when swimmers are safe.

The warden indicated that BOTH the warden service and the local police should be notified as soon as possible. This can be accomplished with one phone call to 911. Retrieving the boat is helpful, if possible. If the boat has a motor and registration number, an owner can be found. With non-motorized craft, he indicated it is very helpful to have identification on the boat indicating the owner, address, and phone number, so a quick follow-up can occur. This can be as simple as writing the information on the boat with a waterproof marker.

Anyone using watercraft is subject to some kind of mishap. We thank all those who helped out in this particular incident. It is also a reminder that in colder weather particularly, the actual wearing of a life jacket can be a life saver.

## Why I Am a Toddy Pond Boat Inspector

Dede Carlsten

Last summer Bruce and I did Toddy Pond Courtesy Boat Inspections and found we enjoyed them rather than them being a chore. We met a variety of people who cherish Toddy Pond. Some of them live on Toddy or their families have camps on Toddy. For example, Bev Robshaw's son-in-law, Glen, brings his boat to North Toddy so all the grandchildren and great grandchildren can go tubing. This is the only lake that Glen's boat goes to. Another person had just bought a camp on Toddy but has lived on Toddy Pond Rd (the Surry Road) for quite a while. He invited me to blueberry in his fields. Another couple is from Middletown, RI and rents a place in Ellsworth for the summer; however they bring their boat to Toddy having decided that it is the best lake in the area. I even met a guide with a canoe that held two-three other fly fishermen. One of the men was from Mount Desert Island and bemoaned the fact that those lakes are not as protected from invasives as Toddy is.

When not looking at boats and trailers for dangling plants we may read. Often I wander the shoreline identifying plants and wade offshore to see what is growing in the water.

Finally, we've met a lot of dogs that love to swim and chase sticks and balls in Toddy.

Boat Inspections can turn up surprising results. A trailer carrying a homemade sailboat with a handmade wooden mast showed up from the upper Midwest. After initially inspecting the boat, Bruce and I had a wonderful time talking with the owners about their boat and we didn't notice a small amount of plant material (milfoil) attached to the wheel hub of the trailer. Later I found it and put the material into a plastic bag to be definitely identified. Then Bruce and I and the family thoroughly reinspected the boat and trailer from "stem to stern." The flexible teenage son was under the trailer looking upwards, particularly at the wheel hubs. His mom joined him. It was the perfect teaching moment for us all.

The boat was from a lake filled with many invasives, however it had been "cleaned" and out of the water for two weeks. Fortunately we noticed the milfoil that was later identified to be an invasive.

This reminded us that we need to use boat inspections as teaching moments and that we as inspectors need to take particular care when checking trailers, props and rudders (in other words anything that might "grab" weeds). The irony of all of this was that the boat belonged to a family that is part of the fabric of Toddy Pond and they were mortified. It's a warning to all of us to be careful if our boats or others' boats are going to or coming from other lakes. This includes kayaks and canoes.

## 2018 Loon Count

Steve Antell

The 2018 Toddy Pond loon count took place on July 21. Twenty-eight intrepid volunteers jumped out of bed for the 7:00 AM start, only to discover that the pond was totally socked in by fog. Not having the luxury of waiting for better conditions, people were forced to do the best they could. Some ventured forth only to be turned back by the fog, some blundered around

not quite sure where they were on the pond, and a lucky few happened to have a brief clear spot. It's the only time I have been on the pond, unable to see land in any direction, and it was a little nerve wracking not knowing where the rocks were. Naturally, the fog lifted promptly at 7:30 when the count was finished, revealing the beautiful day to come.

Under the circumstances we were fortunate to happen across twenty adult loons, close to average for Toddy Pond. Unfortunately, no chicks were observed during the official count period, the first time in many years that we have been shut out. Not all is lost, however. The nest between south and middle Toddy successfully produced one chick, seen both before and after count day, and a second chick was subsequently observed in the shallows at the south end of the pond. For the first time in memory there was not a nest on Indian Island in Middle Toddy. Maybe a couple of those non-nesting adults will reclaim that prime spot next year. At the end of the day, I think it is reasonable to conclude that the Toddy Pond loons are holding their own, but it sure would be nice if we could confirm a few more chicks next year. We will be out there trying again on the third Saturday in July 2019.

Many thanks to all the people who volunteered their time in 2018, perhaps honing their navigation skills in the process.

## Invasive Plant

### Patrol – Going Strong

Lucy Leaf

We had another successful summer for Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP). The success is that, once again, the entire shoreline of Toddy Pond has been patrolled to rule out invasive aquatic plants while it was also surveyed for the most common native plants. I am pleased to report that no invasives were found.

The boat landing sector got several thorough inspections and the south end near Blue Hill had its usual team of three people surveying due to the density of plant life there. As our patrollers become more experienced and familiar with their sectors, identification of the native plants is also improving.

With twenty-eight patrollers out surveying the twenty-five delineated sectors of Toddy Pond, we are indeed a model for other lakes in our region, most of which are only partially inspected, if at all. We are also one of the first in our region to begin an IPP program, having submitted data to Lake Stewards of Maine (formerly VLMP) for the past eighteen years.

So what's new for Toddy Pond? IPP goes hand in hand with CBI (Courtesy Boat Inspection). As you will read in this newsletter, a second invasive milfoil was discovered this year on a boat trailer about to launch into Toddy Pond. The first occurred last year, also found on a trailer. The boats came from out of state, the last lake entered known to be infested with Eurasian water-milfoil. CBI is our front line, but we simply can't inspect every boat that launches. Seaplanes can bring in invasives, as well as birds. The patrollers look for signs that an infestation has started, which could be the discovery of a mere floating fragment. Like catching a disease early, new infestations can be halted or controlled. So every IPP volunteer has a critical role in protecting our lake from invasive outbreaks, as do our CBI volunteers.

Established infestations are now common in southern

Maine, and more are found now in central Maine west of Augusta. Eradication or control is frightfully expensive, even when caught early. Unfortunately, most of the revenue from the annual “milfoil sticker” fees goes toward costly clean-up efforts to save a lake or pond. Prevention is secondary. It is up to us to fill the gap.

With a simple key, plant patrollers rule out the eleven invaders which threaten Maine waters, only two of which are water- milfoil. We spend a lot of time peering at “look-alikes” to the invasives. The native milfoils are the most common look-alikes. Yes, Toddy has milfoil, but what we are seeing is not the invasive type. Our “Native Plants of Toddy Pond” booklet shows the two types of milfoil we have been finding in Toddy. Low water-milfoil is the most common, followed by Farwell’s water-milfoil.

This year we added a third milfoil to our survey list: alternate-flowered water-milfoil. Fragments have been found in several locations and a thick colony showed itself on South Toddy. Though the distinct feathered leaves are smaller than our other milfoils, this one is a little more scary because the leaf arrangements are consistently whorled, making it a closer look-alike to the invasive milfoils, which are all consistently whorled. There are no little fruits on the submersed stems to definitively rule them out as potential invasives. This milfoil needed to go to Lake Stewards of Maine for identification.

So is milfoil bad, if it’s not the invasive type? We are told not to worry. Native plants, even native milfoils, keep the invasive plants out. Diversity of plant life is what keeps a lake healthy.

Colonies of plants come and go, we are told. I have been observing this myself, at the boat landing sector. For a few years, we observed a fair amount of the native low water-milfoil at the far north end, just before the Route One bridge. For the last two summers, I haven’t found any at all, though I have searched diligently with a large trunk scope for better visibility. I did note an increase, however, in pickerel weed as well as a common type of pondweed. Don’t knock those weeds, I say.

Confidence in recognizing and identifying the plants comes from simply getting out there and doing it. My biggest gains now come from surveying other lakes in our county. Every lake or pond shows me at least one new plant. I spent two whole days, including a campout, surveying an entire lake in northern Hancock County. It was just me and my canoe and all the time I needed to spend with the plants. They have become friends. Passing the Advanced ID test this year doesn’t begin to compare with seeing the plants in their natural habitat. I forget what is presented in a workshop, but I remember what I myself discover in a pond or lake.

On a recent trip to Vermont, I observed for the first time a large pond filled with the invasive Eurasian milfoil. I won’t forget that either.

## **Courtesy Boat Inspection**

Barbara Leaf

The courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) program was alive and well in 2018. Stephen Sheehan and Sandi Kuykendall, our paid inspectors, returned for their third season. Between our

paid inspectors and eighteen volunteers, we conducted 989 inspections, which is close to what we did the year prior. During those inspections three plants were found one of which was identified as invasive (Eurasian milfoil). Even that one plant dramatically demonstrates the need for continued vigilance to maintain the quality of our pond.

Each year we apply for a grant from the Department of Environment Protection which covers approximately half of what is paid to the inspectors. The remainder is paid from TPA funds. In order to receive the grant, we have to document an active volunteer component. Here is the bad news. This year we had seven fewer volunteers making it difficult to cover as many inspection hours as we would like. We really need to increase our volunteer pool next year to provide adequate coverage to protect the lake that we love. If you have been a volunteer in the past, we thank you and look forward to your continued participation. You who have not volunteered, please consider joining the effort.

## **The Long Point Wildlife Preserve**

Sarah LeVine

In 1974 Josef Lemmen, who owned a garden center business on Long Island, purchased Long and Short Points on the western shore of the narrows between North and Middle Toddy. The cove between the points and the eight “floating islands” of various dimensions within it were included in his deed. At that time, the western shore of the narrows was thickly forested and almost wholly undeveloped. Route 15, the nearest paved road to Long Point, was two miles away; Dog Town Road, though a little closer, remained unpaved until 2018. After putting in a connector road from Dog Town and roads along both points, Joe Lemmen divided Long Point into twenty-five two-acre lots and Short Point was eventually divided into twenty-six lots. Though they remained unsold for many years, after 2000 they started to go quickly.

Jere Armstrong, who with his his wife, Jane bought two lots on Long Point Way and built a year-round waterfront home in 2002-2003, is treasurer of the Long Point Homes Association. Founded by Joe Lemmen, the Association originally focused on the maintenance of Long Point Way, but has grown to include property owners on Short Point. About half the residents, including Jere and Jane Armstrong, are retired, which allows for quite a bit of socializing.

“In addition to collaborating on road maintenance, the fifteen households who live here year-round have a joint contract for snow plowing,” says Jere. “We help one another with our personal projects too. And about a dozen men gather one evening every week to play pool in the winter – one Short Point man and one Long Point man own a pool table – and bocce in warm weather. Ours is a very congenial group.”

Neither the floating islands nor the half-mile long strip of shoreline over which Long Point Way travels to connect the points were suitable for development. So in 2003 Joe Lemmen established the Long Point Wildlife Preserve, which he donated to the Long Point Homes Association. The deed specifies that the property and islands remain forever wild, with no construction or development of any kind; that no portion of

the donated land ever be sold to private individuals; and that the area be called the “Long Point Wildlife Preserve”.

“Subsequently,” says Jere, “the Association made a nature trail on the strip between Toddy and the road and called it the Weaver Trail after one of their members. In 2016 another member with the help of a friend from the University of Maine identified every tree and plant species on the place with small signs. Only Association members and their guests have access to the trail. To date it’s still rather rough but even so, it’s nice to have it.”

Joe Lemmen kept one Long Point Way lot for himself, on which he built a log cabin and spent his summers before retiring to Fort Myers, Florida.

## Am I Due? Here’s the Clue

Have I paid dues this year or did I maybe pay ahead at the end of last year? There’s no reason to fret. All will be revealed in the TPA newsletter.

If the current year appears in parentheses following your name in the address block of the newsletter:

Todd D. Ponder (2018)

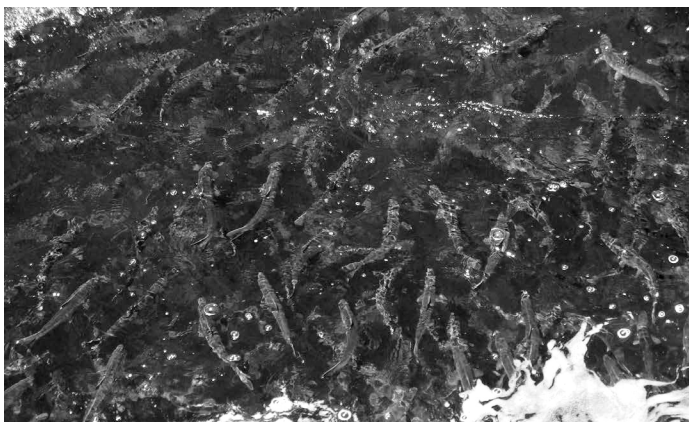
our records show that your membership dues for that year are paid in full.

If not, you’re due! If you think our records are in error, contact Barbara Leaf at leafan@comcast.net or 802-734-4102.

## The Long Run

Chris Dadian

If you were driving on Route 1 over the tip of North Toddy at the end of May or early June you probably did not notice a solitary individual clinging to the cyclone fencing at the east side of the Toddy Pond dam, peering intently into the water. But if your curiosity had drawn you down Toddy Dam Road to follow that constant gaze you would have been rewarded with remarkable sights: the pools at the headwall of the dam and below the spillway boiling black and silver with teeming fish.



Since time immemorial alewives and their close cousin the blueback herring – together also called river herring and in maritime Canada, gaspereau – have “run” up Penobscot Bay in the spring; up the Orland River and the Narramissic into Alamoosook Lake, then finally, en masse, up to spawn in

Toddy Pond. Mission accomplished, the adult fish head back in a less frenzied fashion the way they came, to the Gulf of Maine. The young of the year stay on Toddy through the summer, growing to more than half their adult size, then in early autumn follow their parents back to the sea, where they will remain for several years before making their own first spawning run back up to Toddy.

“Anadromous,” a term you’ll hear applied to alewives and other salt-water species that migrate to fresh water to spawn – like shad and sea-run salmon – means “up-running,” and serious climbing is often involved. The alewives have to scale fish ladders to pass around the Orland Village, Alamoosook, and Toddy dams, and before they reach the foot of the last ladder at Toddy there’s a climb of about 150 feet of elevation over three-quarters of a mile (about a 4% grade), against the current.

The annual alewife run is like a gigantic food truck wending its way through numerous estuarine and riparian neighborhoods before parking for the summer at Toddy Pond, carrying the bounty of the sea to feed fish, birds, reptiles, and mammals – including humans, who harvest more than half of the run, primarily for lobster bait.

But despite the depredation, enough young are produced in the freshwater spawning to sustain – we hope – the population that returns to the Gulf, replenishing an essential food supply for creatures there. In his 1887 survey of Hancock County, Samuel Wasson recognized that “[u]pon the presence of the anadromous fishes in our rivers and ponds, depends the existence of cod, haddock and pollock in our bays. The relationships are those of cause and effect.” Wasson was also aware 140 years ago that the run was much diminished from “olden days,” due in large part to the many dams that blocked or severely restricted upstream passage.

That solitary individual at the top of the Toddy Pond fish ladder last spring, gazing intently down at the finish line, was one of a dozen or so volunteers who counted every alewife that passed into Toddy Pond during three randomly selected 10-minute intervals each day, a total over a month of about 5000 fish, from which we can estimate, conservatively, a run of 92,580, or about 46 fish/acre. According to an advisor from the Maine Department of Marine Resources, that’s a little lower than expected, but respectably above what DMR considers a minimum sustainable production of 35 fish/acre.

We learned a lot from the 2018 count and are planning to count again next spring, hoping to either confirm or improve upon this year’s estimate. If you’d like to participate, send me a note at toddymail@toddypond.org and I’ll keep you posted as plans develop.

## Dam Q&A’s

At the TPA annual meeting in August several members asked questions about the dam, and particularly about its inspection and maintenance. Since these concerns are widespread and many members were not able to attend the meeting, we’ve decided to reproduce the discussion in a Q & A format.

To make the conversation extendable and permanent, we’ve posted the first entries at [www.toddypond.org/the-dam](http://www.toddypond.org/the-dam). We’ll add – as best we can – A’s as we get more Q’s, and publish a selection in future newsletters.

Yesterday I awakened to a beautiful mirror calm Toddy Pond. It was seven o'clock and I considered this an opportunity to wet a line. A quick cup of coffee and I was off in the canoe to the floating islands where I knew the "Big One" would be waiting.

I had already attached the "Tiny Torpedo" to my ultra-light spinning rod. I love the action of this particular surface lure. It spins its tiny propeller at the slightest movement, and when moved a little faster it generates a whirring sound, which in the past has been a deadly bass attractor.

I didn't have to wait very long for the first action. I plopped the lure down six inches away from the edge of one of the floating islands and just let it sit there for a count of ten. A slow retrieve immediately caused a hit where both fish and lure exploded from the water. A few minutes later, after several leaps, I released a beautiful 10-inch smallmouth.

Working my way along one of my favorite stretches, my heart quickened as I noticed a wall of water suddenly engulf my lure. This is a particularly fascinating phenomenon when it happens against the glare of an early morning sun. Obviously something of leviathan proportions was about to inhale my bait. A pause of two seconds to make sure whatever it was had the lure and I set the hook into solid and heavy and moving.

At this I am reminded of a few years ago when a similar experience caught me a hundred-pound snapping turtle. Fortunately, the turtle – Three-claw, an old friend – allowed the hook to be disengaged without harm to either of us.

This, however, was not a repeat performance. It moved much too fast. I was able to see from a flashing side that this was, indeed, a large fish. Five minutes of canoe circling energy allowed me to lift a four-pound largemouth by his bottom lip into the canoe. I'm thinking this will make a wonderful photo opportunity – his 20-inch torso against my 15-inch bare foot. At that moment the fish, with a mighty swing of its tail loosened my grip on his lower lip as he adroitly re-set one of the hooks of the aforementioned Tiny Torpedo deeply into something solid, and heavy, and – yes – me.

Fortunately, the hook which had caught the fish was easily removed and (forget the photo op) I was able to release the fish with my left hand. Meanwhile my right hand, somewhat incapacitated by the Tiny Torpedo hanging from the fleshy under-part of its thumb, was beginning to throb. I knew from experience what to do. With my Leatherman pliers I was able to back the hook out with a quick motion. This maneuver tears a bit of the flesh caused by the barb, but if done properly, causes much less damage than forcing the hook through the flesh beyond the barb and then using a cutting pliers to cut off the barb entirely allowing one to then back out the now barbless hook. The procedure was quick and while nerve wracking it was simple.

Hardly a drop or two of blood and I was again fishing for an even larger fish. I moved to another spot still among the floating islands. By the way, these islands really do float. They are made up of masses of sphagnum moss, which support a few small trees and lots of water-loving plants and flowers. At the edges of them the water frequently drops off to an instant six

to eight feet of depth. Also they are often undercut to provide an excellent habitat for fish both large and small.

While concentrating on the action of my lure, I failed to notice that my canoe had drifted up against another of these islands. I turned and found myself eyeball to eyeball with a nesting loon. Gently putting the rod down, I unpacked my camera, took the shot and quietly paddled away from this magnificent beast. For some unknown reason the photo was unspoiled by my shaking hands. The loon had never left the nest.



I headed the canoe back to camp. Enough excitement for a morning on Toddy Pond.

*John's article was originally published in The Newsletter of the Connecticut Fly Fisherman's Association. Ask John.*

*With Warmest Wishes for Peace and Joy  
in the New Year*

from The Toddy Pond Association

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