



Spring 2024

FHLA NEWSLETTER

WELCOME MESSAGE



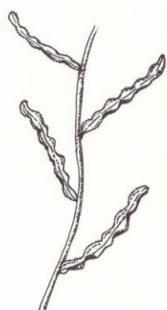
I hope this note finds you and your family well. The blooming crocuses and daffadoils serve to remind us that spring has sprung at Fox Hill Lake. During the off-season, the Board has been busy planning for lake management with three treatments that will take place from May to August. The goal is to reduce the amount of water lilies that inhibit our waters through these treatments.

We applied for two Aquatic Invasive Species(AIS) grants with the objective of treating and controlling the spread of Curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian milfoil. These are invasives that are present in many Connecticut waters. One of the main ways that invasives are introduced into our lakes are through boats transporting in these species from other bodies of water. If you boat in other lakes, please be sure to inspect and clean it before launching into Fox Hill Lake.

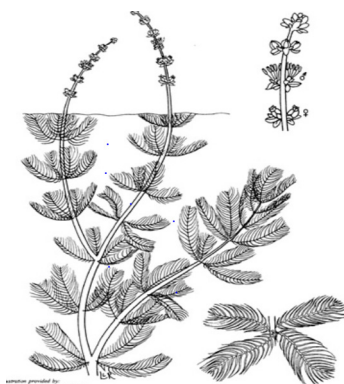
You'll find that the newsletter has lots of important information regarding projects and other elements pertaining to lake life. Thank you to each and every one of you for your support-whether through your time, FHLA membership dues, or additional donations towards our upcoming projects. In the past few years, we have averaged about 55 members and welcome new memebers every year. Check out the calendar of events on page 3 and see which ones you can add do your calendar. I encourage your involvement!

See you around the lakes!

-Krenare Osmani



Curly-leaf pondweed has alternate leaf pattern on the stem. Can also be reddish in color.



Eurasian milfoil has thick red stems and leaves appear feather-like.

Board Members:

Krenare Osmani, President
Bevin Carsten, Vice President
Ellen Burns, Treasurer
RoseAnne Nagle, Secretary
Cindy Crean, Member-at-large
Jeff Gaines, Member-at-large

WILDLIFE

BY ELLEN BURNS

Happy Spring! We are so fortunate to live near a lake! The wildlife that live in, on or around fresh water lakes and ponds includes an amazing array of reptiles, amphibians, birds and fur-bearing animals. How many have you seen or heard?

The first warm days of the year bring the beautiful sound of spring peepers: a tiny (1") chorus frog we hear every year on our lakes (see Jean Linville's article on Amphibians). The lakes are also home to **Painted turtles** and **Box turtles**, although the latter are becoming rare due to habitat loss. We also have a population of **Snapping turtles**—you may see the females in the spring emerging from the water to lay her eggs. Fish present in the lake include **sunfish, bass, perch**, and possibly **pickerel**. There are still a few of the weed-eating grass carp in the lake—they are quite old now and very large!

It's so important for us to maintain the health of the lake for our benefit as well as for the wildlife that share it with us! All photos were taken on our lakes.



Canada goose gosling



No, not a mop! A Beaver (see his tail?)

Great Blue Heron



Bald Eagle



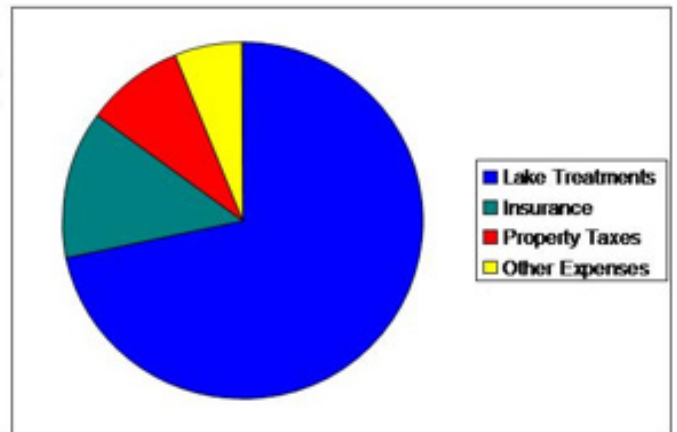
Virginia Rail
Photo by Allen Welby
Ridgefield Conservation Commission

We usually have one or two active beaver lodges on our lakes—you can see them in the early morning or at dusk as they gather food and materials for their lodges. The Nagle family on Shady Lane have seen a family of **otters** on the north lake—check out the lake association's Facebook page for a cool video of the otters having breakfast one winter morning! Muskrats also live on the lakes.

The lakes also provides habitat for many birds—from **Red-winged blackbirds** and **Belted kingfishers** to **Osprey, Egrets, Great blue herons**, and **Bald eagles**. In addition to the (too) many **Canada geese**, we also have **Mute swans, Wood ducks, Mallards, Virginia Rails, American black ducks**, and seasonally we have visits from **Cormorants, Ring-necked ducks, Hooded mergansers, Greater scaups, Buffleheads**, and **American wigeons**.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our fiscal year ended September 30, 2023 showed revenues of \$14,035, including \$9,850 in membership dues, and \$4,145 in extra contributions. The FYE 9/30/23 included \$700 in dues from the prior fiscal year (received after 9/30/22). Membership included 57 households. Our expenses were \$9,572 for lake treatments, \$1,916 for insurance, \$1,124 for property taxes, and \$827 for all other expenses. For the new season, we have maintained the dues at last year's level, which is \$250 for lakefront, \$150 for lake view, and \$50 for all others.



Please fill out and return the membership form, along with your check as soon as possible. Your membership dues include one boat sticker at no charge, and additional boat stickers are \$15 each. If you prefer, you can pay on VENMO (@foxhilllake). If you pay on VENMO, please be sure to include your street address and the details of your payment (dues, contribution, boat

UPCOMING EVENTS



July 4th BBQ 2023

April 27: Rid Litter Day and Beach Clean Up
July 4: Annual BBQ and Community Fire Pit
October 31: Halloween Event
October (TBD) : Annual Meeting
Full Moon Floats:
April 23- Pink Moon
May 23- Flower Moon
June 21- Strawberry Moon
July 21- Sturgeon Moon
August 19- Blue Moon
September 17- Corn Moon
October 17- Hunters Moon
See you on the lakes at 8PM!

NATURE NOTES

BY JEAN LINVILLE

Support Our Local Ectotherms!

Did you know that reptiles and amphibians are ectotherms? This classification means that they are cold-blooded animals whose body temperature fluctuates with the temperature of their environment. We are lucky in Connecticut to have 11 resident species of frogs and toads, 10 of which we can find in and around Fox Hill Lake including: American bullfrog, green frog, northern leopard frog, pickerel frog, gray tree frog, wood frog, spring peeper, American toad, Fowler's toad and the Eastern spadefoot toad. Peepers grab our attention early in the spring with their high, sharp pitched mating calls, but they are not the only amphibians active in the spring. Wood frogs also mate early in the season and they are often found accompanying peepers along lake edges and in vernal pools. As the temperatures warm, more and more toads and frogs make their presence known including bellowing bullfrogs and trills of tree frogs. Frogs and toads are wonderful to have in your yard and garden as they eat lots of insects such as mosquitoes, slugs, and beetles. Unfortunately, their numbers have been declining worldwide for several years.



Frog Shelter

Green Frog



The best way to help them out a bit is by building some frog habitats and discontinuing any pesticide applications on your property. Frogs can be directly and indirectly exposed to pesticides during different stages of their life cycle. Because frogs rely on their porous skin for hydration and some of it for respiration, they are extremely vulnerable to pesticide absorption both on land and in the water. To make a frog shelter, you can simply use a broken clay garden pot that you partially bury on its side or you can turn it upside down. To make the shelter even more appealing, surround your frog shelter with moss and leaves and add a little pool of water if possible. So hop to it! Support your local ectotherms and see what frogs and toads you can discover this year. If you would like to learn more, check out this website, <http://wildlifeofct.com/frogs%20and%20toads.html> and also consider participating in the Frog Watch, <https://frogwatch.fieldscope.org/>, citizen scientist program.

BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

BY ROSEANNE NAGLE

As we welcome the arrival of spring and the promise of warmer days ahead, it's a perfect time to come together as a community to support and enhance our beloved Fox Hill Lake. With that in mind, we're excited to share some exciting projects and events that we hope you'll join us in making a reality

- **Conservation and Preservation:** One crucial aspect of maintaining the beauty and health of Fox Hill Lake is the preservation of its aquatic species and the delicate balance of its ecosystem. To this end, we are seeking funds for ongoing Phragmites control and aquatic species treatments. These efforts are vital in ensuring the long-term sustainability of our lake's natural habitat.

- **Dam Repair Projects:** In addition to preserving our aquatic ecosystem, it's essential to maintain the infrastructure that surrounds Fox Hill Lake. We have identified two dam repair projects that require immediate attention. By investing in these repairs, we can safeguard the structural integrity of our dams and ensure the lakes do not empty out due to faulty dam maintenance.

- **Supporting Community Events:** Our community is thriving on the spirit of togetherness, and our events play a significant role in fostering that sense of unity. We rely on your generous donations to make events like the Fourth of July BBQ and our Annual Easter Egg Hunt possible. These gatherings not only bring us joy and camaraderie but also serve as opportunities to strengthen the bonds that make Fox Hill Lake such a special place to call home.

How You Can Help:

Your support is invaluable in bringing these projects and events to fruition. Whether you're able to contribute financially, volunteer your time, or simply spread the word, every bit of assistance makes a difference. Together, we can ensure that Fox Hill Lake remains a vibrant and thriving community for generations to come.

Get Involved: If you're interested in contributing to any of the projects mentioned above or volunteering for upcoming events or have ideas, please reach out to info@foxhilllake.com. Your involvement is crucial to the success of our community initiatives, and we welcome your participation with open arms.

Thank you for your continued dedication to Fox Hill Lake. Together, we can accomplish great things and create a brighter future for our community.



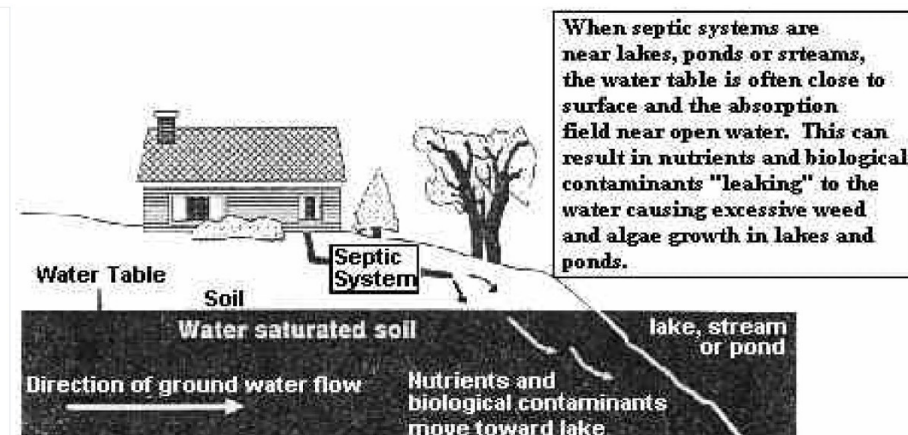
Easter Egg Hunt 2023

SEPTIC MAINTENANCE

BY BEVIN CARSTEN

Best practice to maintain the health of the lake and our drinking water wells, which we all share. Have your septic tank pumped out regularly, every two to three years depending on the amount of usage.

Another way to help support the health of our lake and water well is to limit the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers which can degrade the condition of the water, which is essential to our environment and community.



STAY IN TOUCH!



Provide your email address on the membership form. It's how we mainly communicate important information.

Keep up-to-date on activities-Join the Facebook Group-Fox Hill Lake Community-

Visit our website -Foxhilllake.com for pertinent information relating to our lakes.

For questions/concerns please email:fhlainfo@gmail.com or contact Krenare Osmani at 631-220-9007.