



TWIN LAKES NEWS

• MAINTAIN • PROTECT • ENHANCE

• FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

• EDUCATION • COOPERATION

FALL 2019

TLPA NEWSLETTER

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Let's All Turn Off the Lights

Perhaps the most visible and valued difference between the city and being up at the lake is that at the lake you can see the stars splayed out over the night sky. Unfortunately there are fewer and fewer places on planet earth where the night sky is visible. Light pollution has become a significant fact of life over much of the earth. Dusk to dawn lights obscure our view of constellations, meteor showers, planets, and the landscape lit by the moon.

While we want safety and security from our lights, it is important to choose outdoor lighting which actually provides these results. Many outdoor lights are poorly designed and inefficient. And they create problems of **glare** and **sky glow**.

The first principle of good lighting is to illuminate only what we wish to see. When we see a light across the lake we are seeing light from the fixture itself rather than what the fixture is meant to illuminate. This is glare. Water reflects glare over long distances, and may have negative impacts on other people's enjoyment of the lake and sky. In addition, much of our existing lighting shines upward and is wasted, creating sky glow that obstructs the view of the stars. Ineffective lighting that produces glare and sky glow also makes it difficult to see unwanted persons or activities because so much of the light is wasted; the glare can also dazzle the eye and reduce our ability to see into the shadow.

But perhaps even more significant is the accumulating scientific evidence that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many creatures including amphibians, birds, mammals, insects and plants. Plants and animals depend on Earth's daily cycle of light and dark rhythm to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproduction, nourishment, sleep and protection from predators.

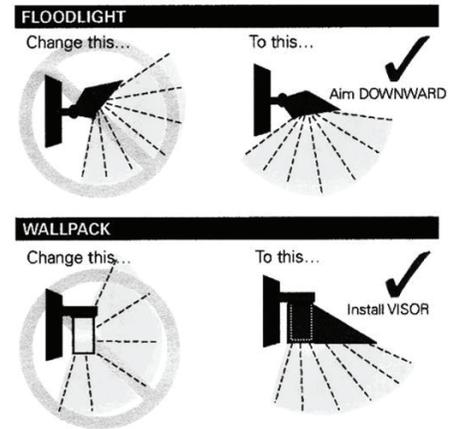
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TLPA's website is found at WCLRA.org, click on member organizations. Thanks to Trisha Rongitsch for taking over this job.

Lights continued

Best Practices:

- Provide adequate light for the task but don't over-light.
- Don't illuminate the neighborhood.
- Glare can be eliminated by shielding light fixtures so the rays of light cannot reach your neighbor's eye.
- Aim light fixtures away from the water, neighboring properties, and neighbors across the water.
- Use full cutoff light fixtures (those that emit no light above the horizontal).
- Retrofit existing lights with shields.
- Aim floodlights downward.
- Change over to motion or heat sensitive lights.
- **Turn outside lights off at night or put them on timers.**



Water Quality Update

It appears that the quality of all three lakes is holding steady at the mesotrophic level. In spite of bank erosion from high water, the chlorophyll and phosphorus readings remain similar to other years in South. Sechi disc readings in South were around 16 feet plus or minus. In North the water became somewhat less clear as the summer proceeded. There is no evidence of zebra mussels on the plates as of early August. And there are no reports of vegetative invasives like Eurasian water milfoil or curly leaf pondweed.

Loon Report

Our loons were not successful in hatching chicks this year. There were at least two nesting sites, including a platform installed on Middle Lake. While the nests appeared to have been occupied, no offspring resulted. Whether the sites got flooded out or were attacked by predators is unknown. Maybe next year?

Ice On and Off

Well, winter is coming and our lakes will freeze over, going to “sleep” until spring comes again. In general, North freezes before South by several days. The number of days of frozen water varies substantially from year to year; the shortest by far was 2015/16 with c. 100 days and the longest was 2017/18 with 171 days on North and 140 on South. Last year (18/19) was in between with freeze up in mid-November and thaw in mid-April. What will it be this year?

President's Message

It was a wonderful if very wet summer at the Twin Lakes. Now it's fall, my favorite season despite the many urgent chores it brings. However, fall brings significant changes to life at and around our lakes. By the time of this reading, most docks will have been pulled, most boats stored, and many will have made their last trip to the area until next spring. All too soon, the lakes will be covered in ice. Before I think also of winter, I'd like to comment on a couple of trends observed at the Twin Lakes this summer.

In recent years, the number and use of kayaks has proliferated on our waters, and stand up paddleboards have also become a more common sight. Now we have another option for relatively silent activity on the lakes, but with less physical effort. Electric pontoon boats first seemed to appear on our lakes a couple of years ago and are increasing in number. Powered by electric trolling motors and possibly equipped with solar panels, those I've seen seat 4, but I understand that smaller and larger models are available. The small and shallow Twin Lakes seem ideal for these watercraft, and they provide a quiet and relatively unobtrusive option for enjoying time on the lakes with less of a carbon footprint.

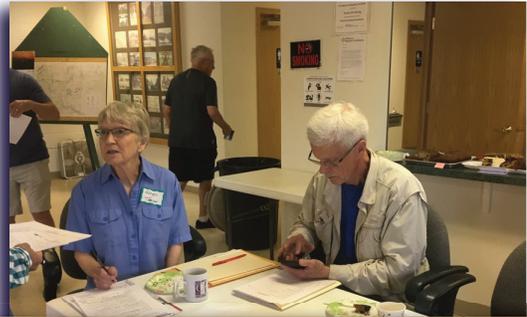
The open night skies and dark shorelines of a lake offer unique opportunities for looking at the stars, watching for meteors, glimpsing northern lights, and enjoying the changing colors of sunsets and sunrises. However, the enjoyment of these natural sights can be greatly disturbed when bright lights beam out from that dark opposite shoreline. We all are hopefully aware how sound carries across water, but many may not think how light does, too, when unobstructed by buildings or trees. In recent months and on each of the 3 lakes, spot lights, flood lights, and/or other bright yard lights have been beamed out towards the lake and left on for the entire night (or, in a few cases, weeks at a time). For safety reasons, "street lights" need to stay lit all night at *Brad and Kay's Campground*, but reasons for other bright yard lights burning for lengthy periods elude me. Please consider directing outdoor lights away from the lake, turn them off when not in critical use, and contemplate additional recommendations noted in the article on light pollution.

Stuart Braem, President (stuartbraem@gmail.com)

THE MISSION OF THE TWIN LAKES PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION IS TO MAINTAIN, PROTECT, AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE LAKES AND SURROUNDING AREA FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS BY EDUCATION AND THE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF OUR MEMBERS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.

It's Been A Social...

Annual Meeting!



Ice Cream Social!



...Summer!



Picnic!

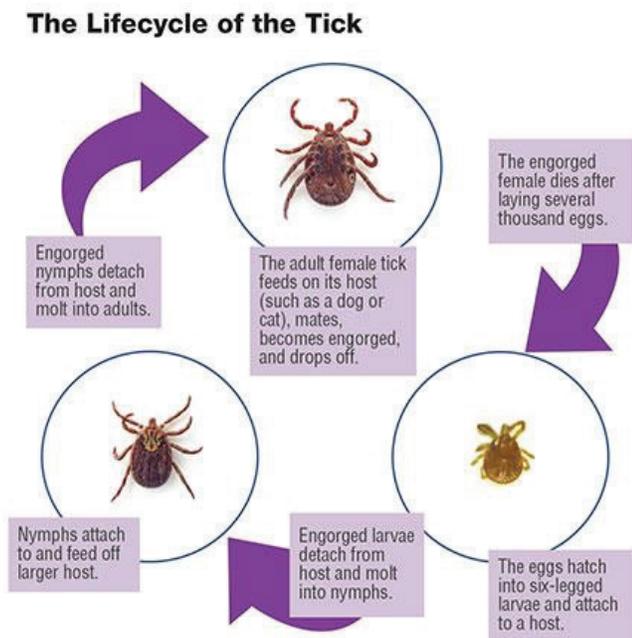


See ya next year!

Our Least Favorite Wildlife Neighbors: Ticks

I am sure we are all now “acquainted” with these inhabitants of our woods. Washburn County is, unfortunately, tick central. Given that we seem to be destined to try to coexist with ticks, perhaps a bit of information about their life cycle, habitat, and how we protect ourselves and our pets from them might be useful. This may be more than you care to know about ticks, but here goes:

There are several kinds of ticks but the two most common here are the dog tick (wood tick), the “big” one, and the deer tick (black-legged tick), the “small” one. They also differ in color; there are many images on-line. Ticks are not insects, but are related to spiders. The life cycle of each is in four stages, takes place over two years, and is illustrated as follows (taken from American Kennel Club website <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/this-is-the-lifecycle-of-the-tick>):



Ticks are, as we know, most active in the spring and early summer. However, the adult females may also have an active period as the weather cools in the fall. And, if the weather gets above 45 degrees in the winter, they may come out of dormancy. Generally, however, ticks are dormant in the winter, settling under the duff on the forest floor, insulated by the snow.

There are actually a whole group of diseases that are borne by ticks, with Lyme disease being just one. In WI and surrounding states, these diseases have been transmitted solely by the deer ticks. But, in the past several years, a few cases of 2 diseases that were previously confined to western and southern states have shown up here, spread by dog ticks. Due caution should be applied to any tick bite.

Ticks pick up a variety of bacteria from wild hosts (small rodents, deer, etc.) which they transmit to new hosts (us, our dogs, our kids!) through bites. They need to feed upon blood in order to reach the next life cycle stage as illustrated in the diagram. There is some difference of opinion about how long a tick needs to be on a host in order to transmit these bacteria; it is probably shorter than the three days we have been led to believe. In addition, the nymphs are so small that they are almost undetectable. You may not even know that you have been bitten.

Continued on Page 7

Ticks continued

Lyme disease is most commonly associated with a circular rash around the site of the bite. Then flu-like symptoms and/or muscle/joint pain can result. But the other diseases (anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis, babesiosis, etc.) are not associated with a rash, but rather with fever and other flu symptoms. Fortunately, all of these respond well to antibiotics, with doxycycline most often prescribed. So the wisest thing to do if you experience a fever and other flu symptoms, especially in the spring and summer, is to visit your friendly neighborhood emergency room. Diagnostic tests are quite often inaccurate, but physicians and ER staff here in this area will likely be proactive in treatment. The last time I had such a visit, I suggested to the nurse that she probably sees a lot of such cases around here; she responded “it’s mainly what we do.” Of course, it is important to avoid tick bites as much as possible.

- Wear light colors in the woods, pull your socks up over pant legs, use insect spray containing DEET
- Check yourself, your pets, and children after being in the woods, especially in hard to see spots like behind knees, etc.
- Most veterinarians recommend treating pets with tick prevention medicine.
- Mow yards frequently; create a 3-foot buffer of gravel or wood chips between the woods and the yard.
- And, don’t let the little buggers destroy your enjoyment of our beautiful north woods.

Firewise Update



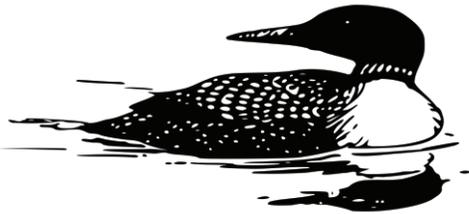
While the fire danger is low now because of all the rain, it is a good idea to get a head start on spring by cleaning leaves and needles off roofs and decks and by raking the downed plant material away from your house, creating a buffer. Our area continues to focus on wildfire safety. Several properties have benefitted from a town grant program which provides help in cleaning up excessive downed trees and brush. For more information on whether this is still available, contact Terri Corrie, tcorrie@centurytel.net.

Articles Needed for Next Year’s Newsletters!

We invite you all to share your stories and reminiscences of the time you and your family spend here on our beautiful lakes. Whether you are new-comers or old-timers, we are all interested to read what you have to say. If you don’t want to write something, let me know (patriciashifferd@gmail.com) and we can have a conversation which can be turned into an article.

**TWIN LAKES PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION
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TO:



Join the Lake Association? Why On Earth Not? We monitor lake water quality, provide important information via three newsletters a year, publish a free Handbook of Best Practices for lake property owners, and have fun together at the Summer Social and Annual Fall Meeting. Dues are only \$25.00 a year. To join, fill out the form below and mail with a check to TLPA, Box 410, Minong WI 54859. And thanks!

Name _____

Your Lake _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Lake Address _____

Phone _____ Lake Phone _____