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# Parker Pond Association

## Fall 2024 Newsletter

Chesterville, Fayette, Mount Vernon, and Vienna, Maine

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### President's Message

I canoed to Birch Island on the southern part of Parker Pond at the end of October to assess the damage the December storm caused to the campsite there. It was a clear blue sky type of day and I was sitting on the warm granite boulders on the water's edge. The incredible green landscape and brilliant blue water made me think I was in heaven. Where else could it be so beautiful. It's hard to believe that this is actually Parker Pond in Maine. Back to earth. Parker Pond association volunteers spent two days clearing a path to the campground on Birch Island, and making the toilet accessible but I think camping is not safe because of all the hazardous trees that are hung up on each other by the campsite. We are in ongoing conversation with the Department of Conservation for the State of Maine about how to manage this going forward. PPA is the steward for the islands and the state owns them. Stay tuned.

On July 6th a loon nest was discovered on the small island in Fellows Cove. Mother loon was sitting on two eggs that successfully hatched and two chicks arrived on Parker Pond. News of the nest spread and attracted curious paddlers that probably made the loons anxious. PPA board members have been in communication with the Maine Audubon Society to find out best practices to protect them. It is recommended to post signs in the water around the nest, alerting the public of nesting loons. Since the state owns the island we have discussed with the Department of Conservation ways to protect the loons. This is another reason to discourage fireworks in Fellows Cove and Parker Pond as a whole.

I am encouraged to see all the enthusiasm that has been generated in the field of invasive aquatic plants. Two lakes in our watershed (30 Mile River Watershed) have problems with invasive plants. They can choke the life out of a lake. Under the leadership of board members, Karen Rogers and Lidie Robbins with expertise from Silas Mohlar(30MRWA) PPA continues to assemble an effective plant patrol. Karen Rogers and Tim Keegan discovered an invasive terrestrial plant that was growing down to the water's edge in Fellows Cove in the Headlands on KLT(Kennebec Land Trust)property. This has been mitigated by KLT.

The Board of PPA is very interested in growing our membership. We can do more for the lake with broader support. Please encourage your neighbors to join PPA. Tell them about the work we are doing as an organization to protect Parker Pond from soil erosion and invasive plants. The mission of PPA is to protect and preserve the water quality of Parker Pond and to maintain the Dam. We all care deeply about the lake. I want to express my appreciation of the work that is done by the 14 board members of PPA and all you volunteers who help in so many ways with different projects on the lake. We are fortunate to have dedicated people focused on the stewardship of Parker Pond and the mission of PPA. We are all water protectors. Enjoy the Silence of Winter. On behalf of the board, I wish you a joyful holiday season.

Sincerely, Gerry Tinguely, President,PPA

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Photo: Bob Weimont - Parker Pond after the rain

## LakeSmart

Deb Cayer

As we close another season of LAKESMART evaluations, we would like to impress upon our shorefront owners how important this program is for keeping the water quality of our lake in good shape.

This past summer our bike group toured several miles around Lake Champlain in Vermont. The water quality in that piece of water was just awful. Due to development, yes, but mostly runoff into the lake, it was unswimmable. Imagine a lake that big being so polluted.

LakeSmart is an educational program designed to help landowners learn ways that they can help protect the lake from erosion and stormwater runoff which carry pollutants such as phosphorus. This pollution can lead to algae blooms, fish kills, poor water quality, and poor habitat. LakeSmart property owners who maintain their properties in ways that protect lake water quality may receive the LakeSmart award, but mostly we want to work towards protecting our water quality in any way we can.

If you are new to the pond or are engaged, now or in the future, with any type of work on your property, thinking about a visit may help both you and the lake in many ways. All visits are free, voluntary, and non-regulatory.

We all know that our lakes are priceless. To try and put an economic value on our natural resources is important though, as we strive to preserve our water quality, keep invasives at bay and our ecosystems intact. Water quality directly ties to lakefront land values. Recreation alone generates 50 million per year in Maine with a 14.5 billion annual economic activity value. We have a dedicated group of volunteers who are working hard to keep our lake pristine. Please do your part in protecting such a beautiful piece of water.

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## Quimby Lane Boat Ramp Improvement

Ken Tillman

At the beginning of the season it was pointed out that the Quimby Lane boat ramp was not in great condition. The ditches, culvert, and diverters were clogged with debris and water erosion had created channels down the ramp delivering unwanted sediment to the lake. In order to protect our beautiful lake, the Parker Lake Shores Recreation Association (PLSRA), which has responsibility for maintenance of the ramp, worked with Whitney Baker of the 30 Mile River Association to develop plans to repair the ramp. Permits were then obtained from the Maine DEP and the Town of Fayette, and Paul Jackman Excavation and Trucking was hired to re-grade the ramp.

Prior to Paul Jackman coming with his heavy equipment, 15 volunteers from the PLSRA community participated in a workday and installed a silt fence, removed the rip rap and fabric liners from the ditches, removed the water diverters from the ramp, and cleaned out the culvert. Soon thereafter Paul Jackman, with the assistance of one volunteer, spent a day further cleaning out the ditches, re-grading the ramp with new bluestone gravel, and building 2 water bars on the ramp to divert water into the ditches. The following weekend there was another community workday where 8 volunteers reinstalled the fabric liners and the rip rap (which had been thoroughly washed off by 2 gracious volunteers) and removed the silt fence. In total, more than 60 hours of volunteer time was contributed to the project, saving all of us that utilize the ramp a lot of money! Even better, everyone seemed to enjoy the project and it was great to see people work together and build community. Funds to cover the cost from the project came from the boat launch fees paid by PPA members that utilize the boat ramp, so thanks to those of you that pay those fees. We couldn't have done the project without your contribution!

Now the boat ramp is in great condition and hopefully will not require major maintenance for several years. One neighbor commented that the boat ramp looks better than it has in 20 years! And the ramp is working exactly as designed with water being diverted into the ditches by the water bars and sediment no longer being flushed into the pond. In addition, the boat removal season is just about over and the ramp remains in excellent condition. The Quimby Lane boat launch both serves its purpose and protects beautiful Parker Pond! Thanks to all who contributed!

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## Plant Patrol News and Views

Karen Rogers [krogers3411@gmail.com](mailto:krogers3411@gmail.com)

We are recruiting! Our team of plant patrollers has come together nicely this year putting in many volunteer hours, discovering native plants, and looking out for invasive ones in Parker Pond. We have 26 current or interested patrollers. New patrollers work along with mentors and with our team. We had 2 well attended group meetings late summer bringing samples and discussing native or questionable plants. Luckily, Lidie Robbins is one of our volunteers and Silas Mohlar has joined us as a plant identification expert both from 30 Mile River Watershed Association (30MRWA). With climate change happening, we can expect change in the flora of our water bodies and need to be ready to intervene if needed.

### What did we find?

Luckily we did not find any invasive water plants this year, but of concern was a patch of Phragmites australis that is an invasive terrestrial water loving plant found in Secret Cove on Kennebec Land Trust's (KLT) property. Thank you to KLT for removing it safely. This plant grows rapidly and this site will be monitored for 5 years at least. You may know this tall grassy plant from wet marshy areas and along roadsides.

Metaphyton - green gooey glob- is still present along shorelines and is being monitored.

Gleotrichia - the floating bubble looking algae- seems to have been less noticeable this year, but again still being monitored.

### Invasives Nearby:

Did you know that Tilton Pond has literally tons of invasive Swollen Bladderwort? Why does this matter to us? Tilton drains into David Pond which enters into Parker Pond. 30 MRWA has done a great job trying to keep it from escaping Tilton, but we could still be impacted. It is a larger bladderwort than the many native types.

### You too can be a plant patroller:

Our team can't find or see everything. We also learn from those around us. Your eyes looking and you questioning "new to you" plants are important to lake health. Please contact me or a team member to help identify your plants of interest. Are you ready to join our team? Even if you don't wish to be "official" we can all benefit from all eyes on board.

### How can you help? See links below

- Notify us of any plant you have not seen before or meets the criteria in the link below. Native plants are also important to identify.
- Clean Drain and Dry your boat going in and out of our lake.
- Know where you are taking your boat re: an infested lake.
- Avoid runoff from your property, have a free Lake Smart evaluation.
- Volunteer
- Take the online class this winter.

Winter days by the fire are great times to learn more online

### Check out these links:

### Look for Plants:

<https://30mileriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Quick-Key-New-VLMP-Logo.pdf>



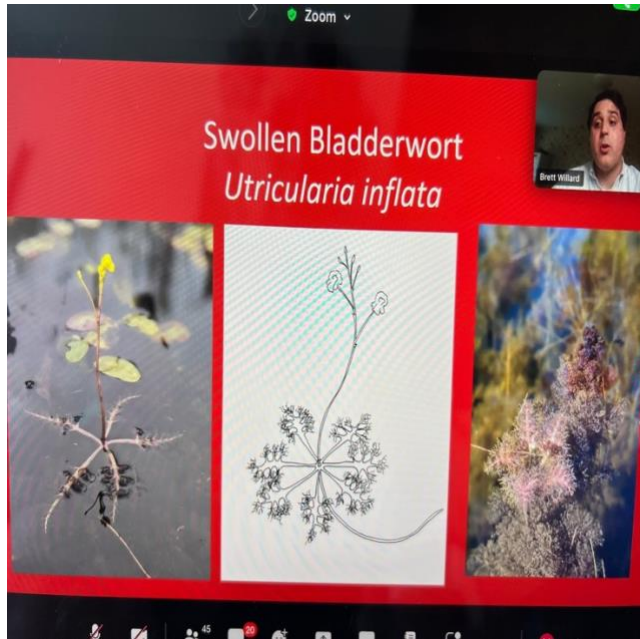
**Inspect your Boat: Know which lakes are infested:**

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/invasives/inspect.html>

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/water/invasives/2024%20Infested%20lakes%20brochure.pdf>

**Take an online class:**

<https://www.lakestewardsofmaine.org/ipp-101/>



Photos of swollen bladderwort and the Phragmites

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## Treasurer's Report

Waine Whittier

### Year-to- Date Oct. 31, 2024 Revenues and Expenses

Income		Expenses	
Dues	\$4,104	Invasive Plants	\$18,000
Contributions	12,982	& Water Quality	
Interest	702	Other	1,348
Total Income	\$17,788	Total Expenses	\$19,348
Net Gain	\$(1,560)		

Revenues are a little behind expenses year-to-date. Hopefully, good year-end contributions will bring us into positive territory. Most of our expenses go to 30-Mile River Watershed Association for boat inspections and water quality monitoring. Our balance is \$41,463. I believe that this is a strong enough balance that we can keep up our increased efforts to protect water quality and keep invasive plants out of Parker Pond. Thank you for your continued support. We really need those extra donations that you make to keep up our water quality program. You probably already know this, but anyway, if you are of retirement age and make a donation directly from

your IRA or 401K it can count towards your mandatory distribution, and is probably tax free. If you would like more details about the finances, send a message to me at [wpwhittier@aol.com](mailto:wpwhittier@aol.com).

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## News from the 30 Mile River Watershed Association



*Photo: (1) Large mat of swollen bladderwort (SB) tangled in native bladderwort on Tilton Pond. A free-floating plant, SB is often found tangled within native plants. (2) 30 Mile summer staff, Lina Martinez Nocito and Elisha Stenger check the fragment net along Tilton Pond's outlet for any SB fragments.*

Our multidimensional approach to aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention, early detection, and control isn't possible without volunteers. **Thanks to three dedicated volunteer Courtesy Boat Inspectors (CBIs) – Deb Cayer, Maggie Chadwick, and John Lanoue** – along with our paid staff, we were able to continue the strong AIS prevention efforts on Parker Pond. Paid and volunteer CBIs at the Tower Road boat launch inspected nearly 900 boats for hitchhiking plants and animals, logging 481 paid and 49 volunteer hours, all while educating boaters about the threat of invasives.

30 Mile manages two aquatic invasive species infestations in the watershed: variable leaf milfoil in Androscoggin Lake (Wayne) and swollen bladderwort in Tilton Pond (Fayette). For Parker Pond, the swollen bladderwort infestation is of heightened concern because of Parker's location downstream. Our work upstream on Tilton Pond has included placing a fragment net at the pond's outlet, increasing plant surveys on David Pond, and the town limiting trailered boat access at Tilton Pond's town launch. We're continuing to learn more about this plant – how it grows, when it flowers, best management methods, and more – so that we can implement an effective and sustainable management plan for the future. On Androscoggin lake, our consistent surveying and removal over the past four years has prevented the infestation from becoming worse. Our control work has expanded to include the use of benthic barriers – tarp-like mats that smother plants and the light they receive. We expect to use barriers heavily in 2025.

### **Increasing threats to the health of our lakes and ponds**

As climate change impacts become more prevalent, Parker Pond and other water bodies in our watershed are more vulnerable to invasive species and water quality problems. We have measured declining water quality within the watershed on Androscoggin Lake, which experienced an algal bloom 3 of the last 4 years, with Secchi readings as low as 1.5 meters (4.9

feet). A Maine Public radio series earlier this fall discussed the threats that Maine's lakes are now facing due to climate change. Androscoggin Lake, our staff, volunteers, and other organizations alike were featured. To listen to the series, visit <https://30mileriver.org/maine-public-series-on-climate-change-and-maines-lakes-features-30-mile-staff/>.



*Photo: Near peak algal bloom, Androscoggin Lake's water color turns significantly green.*

### **Building Update**

We're excited to announce that construction of our "new" building - renovating the barn (Phase I) - will be completed by the end of this year, becoming our home base in the watershed. By revitalizing this building in the heart of Mount Vernon Village, we will create a space for the community to work together to protect our beloved lakes and ponds. Stay up to date by subscribing to our E-newsletter the [Watershed Roundup](#), and following us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We can't wait to be in Mt. Vernon!

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### **Classified Ads and Communications**

We will once again be offering classified ads for those wishing to find lost items, have property to rent or sell and for events happening in the area. Submit items to [communications@parkerpond.org](mailto:communications@parkerpond.org) for the Spring 2025 Newsletter. We'll do our best to send out lost and found announcements quickly.

**Could you please add [Communications@parkerpond.org](mailto:Communications@parkerpond.org) to your email address book? Many of the first batch of newsletters went to spam.**

Best wishes for joyful holidays and winter-perfect months ahead. See you in the spring. MC