



# Lake Soundings

The Gilmore Lake Association Newsletter - Fall 2023



## GLA Board Adopts 5-Year Eurasian Water Milfoil Treatment Plan

*Comprehensive aquatic plant management plan combines herbicide treatments, manual removal & education*

Gilmore Lake Association's long-term efforts to control invasive Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) and conserve native plants entered a new phase with the adoption of a comprehensive five-year aquatic plant management plan.

The plan, developed by Lake Education and Planning Services, LLC, highlights the robust health of Gilmore Lake's native aquatic plant community, which may be healthier than it was in 2010. However, a dense eight-acre bed of EWM in the North Basin presents a substantial risk of spreading to other areas of the lake. While the twin strategy of physical removal and limited herbicide application has successfully kept EWM in check in the lake's central and southern basins and in Little Gilmore, additional actions are planned to minimize the threat posed by the North Basin EWM bed.

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## President's Message

Dear Lake Neighbors,

I hope you enjoyed the summer season on Gilmore Lake this year. It is a privilege and honor to live on such a clean and healthy lake with excellent fishing and wonderful neighbors.

Our updated Aquatic Plant Management Plan will help guide our efforts to manage Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) and educate all lake users on ways we can keep our lake clean and healthy. The Plan is available

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## The Fascinating World of Loons

Many of us on Gilmore Lake are fascinated with the loons that grace our waters. We eagerly watch for their return every spring and follow them all season until they leave in the fall. These remarkable birds are intriguing for many reasons.

Did you know loons have four distinct calls in the summer, but are silent in their winter habitats? Or, as they molt in late summer to replenish their feathers for optimal insulation, buoyance and flight, they are temporarily flightless?

The male loon is the first to return to the lake. He will revisit last year's nesting site to assess its suitability for the upcoming season. Shortly after, the female

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## Mark Your Calendars

The 2024 Gilmore Lake Association Annual Meeting will be held at 10:00am on **July 6, 2023** at the Jack Link Aquatic & Activity Center in Minong. Free membership lunch to follow.

Next year's Annual Boat Parade will be at 1:00pm on **Friday, July 5** (rain date is the following day). The parade theme will be "Your Favorite Song."

**Officers:**

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**Project Leaders:**

AIS/Eurasian Milfoil: Larry Stokes

Membership: Kristi O'Kane

Fundraising: Joan Mellor and  
Larry Stokes

Website: Jim Schneider

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## Loons from Page 1...

joins him. Despite mating for life, they do not migrate or spend winters together. Loons have an average life span of 15 to 30 years.

Loons typically lay one to two eggs, although on Gilmore Lake it's rare for a pair to successfully raise more than one hatchling. Exceptions occur and I remember a year with three babies. Both parents share responsibility of incubation, taking turns on the nest over the 28- to 30-day process. Eggs generally hatch in late June, and if two eggs survive, the hatchlings are usually a day or two apart.

Baby loon chicks tire easily. To aid them, parents will partially submerge to allow the chicks to ride on their backs between the wings. By three weeks of age, the young loons are already half the size of their parents. Parental guidance continues as mom and dad will catch and stun fish and then release them so the young will learn the skill of capturing prey.



In the fall, once the young have learned how to fly, the adults will leave on their migratory journey. Surprisingly, the juveniles do not depart until as late as early November. They need to rely on instinct to navigate their way to their winter home on a long solo flight. They will not return to their birthplace on Gilmore Lake for three years. Their migration route follows the Great Lakes to the coastal regions of middle New England states or along the Mississippi flyway to the Gulf of Mexico.

The loon has survived longer than any other flying bird species presently on earth. These iconic birds have skillfully adapted to many changing environments. While they face numerous natural predators, humanity poses their greatest threat. Their ever-changing habitat is impacted by acid rain, fertilizers and shoreline development. And the human

temptation to get close for a great photo, or careless boating practices, jeopardize the return of these magnificent birds and what I affectionately refer to as the "sounds of summer."

I ask everyone to approach our graceful loons with the utmost respect. By doing so, we can ensure that both our generation and those yet to come will enjoy their presence on Gilmore Lake.

By Sandy Stokes



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## Five-Year Aquatic Plant Management Plan...

"Our goal is to continue to protect and enrich the natural aquatic plant ecosystem of the lake while containing Eurasian Water Milfoil and preventing the intrusion of new aquatic invasive species," said Larry Stokes, the GLA Board member leading EWM management efforts. "Education of both lake users and property owners is essential, and we've already begun implementing the new strategy."

The North Basin management options are complicated by the vast size of the EWM beds and limits on herbicide use due to the presence of protected wild rice, which has cultural and spiritual significance for many Native American tribes.

In August, the GLA initiated systematic efforts to physically remove EWM in the North Basin. Volunteers meticulously hand-pulled EWM along the southeast shoreline and a professional firm was hired to conduct Diver-assisted Suction Harvest (DASH). This effort resulted in the removal of approximately 132 large onion bags of EWM covering roughly one acre of the lake.

"We are pleased with these initial efforts but there is still much work ahead," said Larry. "A more accurate assessment of treatment effectiveness will come next spring when we see how rapidly milfoil reoccupies the cleared areas."

In addition to future DASH projects, educating lake users and property owners is a top priority. EWM warning signs have been posted at the boat landing and the entrance to the North Basin. Education handouts for cabin renters and guests are being



Top Left: A small portion of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) removed from the North Basin August. Top Right: Warning signs placed at the boat landing and entrance to North Basin. Bottom: A diver uses suction to harvest EWM.



created. "Our goals are to ensure that everyone can recognize EWM, steer clear of infested areas and remove it from the water when they see it," said Larry.

A challenge going forward will be securing the funds necessary for more intensive EWM clearance initiatives. In addition to Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources grants, the lake association board will explore other fundraising options.

"We remain optimistic that we can effectively contain the milfoil," said Fran McCloskey, GLA Board President. "Complete eradication is unrealistic, but through vigilance and the collaborative efforts of everyone who enjoys Gilmore Lake, we can minimize its impact on the lake's overall health."



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## President's Message from page 1...

for download from our [website](#). It is packed with interesting information about Gilmore Lake and how we can work together to manage our precious resource. I consider it mandatory reading for anyone that owns property or cares about Gilmore Lake because the health of the lake is at risk due to the proliferation of EWM.

A small yet dedicated group of volunteers is working diligently to manage EWM, but we need everyone to participate in the effort to control it. Funding our effort is of great importance. Expenses related to containing EWM are growing due to the higher costs of new treatments and the expanding size of infested areas.

Our WDNR treatment grant concludes this year, and we are not slated to receive new grant funding for treatment until 2025. Therefore, the Association will be responsible in 2024 for covering the full cost of treatments to keep EWM at a level that doesn't jeopardize the health of the lake. We estimate the costs for EWM management in 2024 will be around \$20,000.

In the past four years, membership dues and donations have provided around \$5,200 per year. This will not be enough to cover 2024 treatment costs. The board is developing a plan for raising sufficient funds to continue our EWM management efforts without interruption in 2024. I strongly encourage you to consider making a year-end donation to support EWM treatment efforts. (The membership and donation form is on the last page of this newsletter.)

In January 2024, I will be hosting a "town hall" virtual meeting to provide more information and get your input (details to come). EWM and funding will also be an important topic of discussion at our 2024 annual meeting on July 6, 2024. The meeting is also a great opportunity to learn more about the lake community and meet your neighbors.

I also want to welcome Joan Mellor to the GLA Board and thank John Breiting for his service. I wish you all a peaceful winter and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Fran McCloskey  
President  
[franmccloskey@yahoo.com](mailto:franmccloskey@yahoo.com)



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**Gilmore Lake Association**

The Gilmore Lake Association is committed to protecting our lake and your investments through the proactive management of Eurasian Water Milfoil and monitoring water quality in our lake. By joining the Association, your dues help support this work. Please complete the form below and mail it, along with your \$25 check or money order, to:

Gilmore Lake Association  
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