



DRIFTWORDS

SERVING THE RIDEAU SINCE 1911 • POONAMALIE TO NARROWS LOCK

Celebrating Driftwords' 22nd Year

May 2002

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Publisher:
Big Rideau Lake
Association Board of
Directors

Editor:
Angee McKellar

Bass Out Of Season: Keep'em Off The Hook!

By Stacy McLean

With the beautiful weather on its way, many lake users are beginning to settle in for another summer on the Rideau and surrounding lakes. Many of them will take advantage of the weather and will go fishing. Just remember that it is **ILLEGAL TO FISH FOR OR TAKE BASS BEFORE JUNE 29TH**, even if they are released.

Bass are very vulnerable at this time of year, as they are spawning and are very aggressive while guarding their nests. In the few minutes it takes for an angler to reel the fish in and release it, the nest can be wiped out by predators such as sunfish, rockbass and perch. There is also a 50% chance that the guard male will abandon its nest due to stress.

Fishing for bass out of season could lead to serious fines. You could pay up to **\$100,000** and your boat, gear and vehicle may be confiscated.

Lake users can play a big part in bass conservation. If you are out on the water and witness anglers casting near shorelines or on shoals in water three to six feet deep, chances are they are not fishing for



pike. So take action! **Without confrontation** you can have a friendly chat with the angler and remind them that it is illegal to fish for bass out of season. If they respond negatively to your message, please write down their boat license number and report it to the Ministry of Natural Resources at 1-800-667-1940 on weekdays and a message at 258-8204 on weekends.

Other methods to spread the word is to purchase a **"NO BASS FISHING SIGN"** at Dry Dock for \$5 which can be mounted to your dock or boathouse. Also, come and pick up a stack of our "Bass Out of Season: Keep'em off the Hook" brochures to hand out to anglers and non-anglers. This excellent brochure has been in print since 1996 and has been improved and reprinted every year since. Thanks to the help of the Environment and Information Centre (RLEIC),

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Bass Out Of Season: Keep'em Off The Hook....continued

approximately 25,000 copies have been distributed over the years to bait shops, businesses, lake associations and other interest groups.

If you are interested in becoming more active, call us to get more information on the Ministry of

Natural Resource's Fish & Wildlife **Guardian** training program. This program is geared to train volunteers to be the "eyes and ears" for the Conservation Officers. The BRLA is having a Master Guardian come again this spring and perform a training session for interested volunteers.

So please take part in the fight against poaching and help protect the future of bass in our lake: Bass Out of Season: Keep'em Off the Hook!

For more information please contact Stacy at 272-3629 or mclean@sustainablewatersheds.ca



Landfill/Recycling Summer Hours

Portland Site

Summer hours start May 15th
Wednesday 8 am to 4 pm
Saturday 8 am to 4 pm
Sunday 4 pm to 8 pm

BBS Burgess Site

Summer hours start May 20th
Saturday 12 pm to 5 pm
Wednesday 2 pm to 9 pm
Sunday and Holiday Mondays
2 pm to 9 pm

Drummond North Elmsley

Monday, Tuesday, Friday 10 am to 5 pm
Saturday 10 am to 1 pm

* Please note that the Portland site only accepts garbage in CLEAR bags that are labeled with the township stickers. For more information contact Township of Rideau Lake at 928-2250. Township of BBS Burgess at 267-5353 and Township of North Elmsley at 267-6500

Rideau Lakes Water Quality Monitoring Revamped!

By Erika Kiss

As lake residents are starting spring clean-up in anticipation of summer fun on the lake, the *Rideau Lakes Centre for Sustainable Watersheds* is busy restructuring our water monitoring strategy. While water quality data suggests that Rideau Lake is healthy in general, it is a multi-basin lake with many secluded and open bays. The size and complexity of our lake causes variations in water quality throughout the system, and makes determination of the status of water quality an immense undertaking. This year we

will be improving coverage on the lake by adding some bay sites to our traditional monitoring sites.

To make matters better, we are getting some new equipment! In partnership with the Upper Rideau Lake Association, the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation fundraising efforts have enabled us to acquire a water quality field-testing unit. This equipment, which will test for pH, conductivity, temperature, dissolved oxygen and chlorophyll, will allow us to increase the frequency

of testing to provide more comprehensive monitoring on the lake. We will also be purchasing an E. coli test kit, to allow us to test for bacteriological contamination in-house, reducing our travel costs (as E. coli testing requires immediate processing at the lab). We will continue to take samples to an accredited lab for analysis of total phosphorus, nitrogen, and suspended solids.

For more information, please contact Erika at 272-5136 or kiss@sustainablewatersheds.ca

President's Pen

By Richard Bradley

This is the time of year when those of us who are seasonal cottagers start to get giddy about "opening up". Only a cottager would understand how an otherwise sane individual could relish the thought of sweeping up mouse dirt and wading in paralyzing water in the spring rituals of displacing the rodents and submerging the water intake. We haven't really won any battles. The fact is the critters are happier outside and Mother Nature has decided that the lake should be freed from winter's grip by mid-April.

The Lake remained bisected until the ice left Rocky Narrows on April 12, 2002. Did you know that the ice plug in the Narrows is always the last to break up in the spring?

AGM August 3, 2002

The Directors have decided to move the date of the Annual General Meeting to Saturday, August 3, 2002 at 2 pm in the

Portland Community Hall. We hope that the new date will accommodate the attendance of more members. Please put the date on your calendar and contact me through the Association if you have time for some public service. We have a job to suit any level of commitment. I am particularly keen to recruit a "resident boater" representative to the Board. This is an important part of our constituency.

The Saga Continues

The Mason zoning appeal will be heard before the Ontario Municipal Board in Portland over the week of June 3 to June 7, 2002. The BRLA is supporting the respondent position of the Township of Rideau Lakes in opposing the rezoning application for expanded waterside marina activities including the houseboat fleet. The OMB hearings are open to public attendance but participation is limited to those who made

submissions at the public meeting.

Donald M. Ritchie

I note with regret the recent passing of Donald Ritchie, a cottager, with his wife Mildred, since the 1940's. Don canoed Big Rideau from his cottage on the inside passage of Tar Island as recently as last summer. In his mid-nineties and clear of mind his was undoubtedly a life well lived. Mr Ritchie will be among those honoured in our thoughts during a period of silent affection, prior to the meeting on August 3. Please let me know the names of any family members or cottage neighbours who have passed away in the last year.

Pleasure Craft Operators Card BOATING COURSES

\$75.00

Saturday June 22, 2002

Saturday July 17, 2002

Saturday August 10, 2002

Time: 9am - 5pm

**Location: Carriage House,
14 Water St. Portland**



Costs include textbook, handout materials, instruction, exam, and immediate issuance of provisional certificate. Each course limited to 20 people.

\$20.00 down payment payable at time of sign-up at Dry Dock. Balance due on day of course.

SPONSORED BY BRLA & RIDEAU LAKES POWER SQUADRON

Rideau Lakes Centre For Sustainable Watersheds

By Sarah Rosolen

In keeping with our overall mandate of protecting Rideau Lake and the habitats it offers, and to support our on-going environmental programs, BRLA has formed the *Rideau Lakes Centre for Sustainable Watersheds*. Over the years, BRLA's work has extended from the boundaries of the lake to look at watershed processes and how they may be impacting on the lake. Water that flows through the watershed – over land, in streams, in rivers, and as groundwater – reflects processes that are occurring in the watershed. Water serves as a link from land and resource use to ecosystem health, and those changes in the watershed area that can directly impact the lake. The creation of this *Centre* works to encompass a watershed-approach to lake protection that integrates research, learning and advocacy. Working with our partners in education, business, and government, the *Centre* will provide an important link between research and decision-making.

The *Centre* expands on the research that has been carried out on Rideau Lake watershed, working to better the scientific understanding of watersheds with the development of standardized protocols for research and monitoring, technologies and Best Management Practices (BMPs). The formation of the *Centre* facilitates partnership creation and networking, as well as fundraising for these projects.

Sustainable watershed management also requires a union between scientific knowledge and social understanding. While science provides cold hard facts about watershed processes, the human element is an overriding and often unpredictable force. The *Centre* will present scientific knowledge and social

understanding together in its contributions to watershed management and policy decisions.

The natural boundaries that are used to define watersheds often transcend social and political delineations. Rideau Lake, for example, spans three townships, 5 villages and towns and 2 counties, and falls under the mandate of a conservation authority and several governmental agencies. And within this region there are over 2000 properties, several marinas, campgrounds, tourism & recreation operators, and a provincial park. Effective watershed protection involves coordination of the various stakeholders to achieve an overall vision for the watershed.

One of the most important jobs ahead is public education on the importance of watershed management. The *Centre* can be seen as a link between the scientific community and the public, helping to explain the connections between watershed processes and ecosystem health, to promote BMPs and positive action for the protection of our water resources. Public perception of the usefulness of BMPs and environmental policies is also important to success in water protection – and we will be looking at success stories and barriers to acceptance to help make improvements.

Currently there are 15 employees working for the *Centre*, which we will be expanding in the summer months to help implement our research, monitoring and outreach programs. HRDC's Job Creation Program, which largely enables us to hire this staff, is definitely a win-win situation – we benefit from excellent employees with a diverse skill set, and the employees

receive training and hands-on experience in leading-edge watershed research and outreach. Our recognition as a credible research centre has also spurred new funding prospects, and offers new partnership opportunities.

Story Continued on Page 5

Bio-Blitz

On Friday 31st May, the public is invited to join us at Mill Pond for the Great Canadian BioBlitz. BioBlitz is a community-based volunteer initiative linking science, education, and public participation. The objective of BRLA's BioBlitz is to survey Mill Pond and identify and record as many species as possible in a 24-hour period.

This is the third year that we are hosting the BioBlitz, and we have an exciting agenda planned. Everyone is invited on an Owl Walk planned for Friday evening starting at dusk, and an early morning Bird Watching excursion on the Saturday, starting at 6:00 AM. School groups will be participating on the Friday from 9:00AM till 3:00 PM to help identify local plants, birds, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, etc. If you would like to participate at any of these events, please contact Shawn at 272-5136 or barnes@sustainablewatersheds.ca.

Rideau Lakes Centre for Sustainable Watersheds....continued

All traditional BRLA programs have been encompassed in the *Centre*, and then some. Below is a list of most of the programs being carried out this summer.

Fisheries

Contact Stacy McLean: 272-3629
mclean@sustainablewatersheds.ca

• *Lake Trout Population, Bass Survival & Mortality, Bass Spawning, Littoral Inventory, Historical Fisheries Data, and Bass Off the Hook*

Water Quality

Contact Erika Kiss: 272-5136
kiss@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Bioblitz & Educational Programs

Contact Shawn Barnes: 272-5136 or
barnes@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Nutrient Management

Contact Barbara Robbins: 272-5136 or
robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca

• *Septic Systems, Composting Toilets, Living by Water, and Shoreline Stewardship*

Watershed Health: Environmental Indicators

Contact Geof Hall: 272-5136 or
hall@sustainablewatersheds.ca

• *Loons, Frogs and Amphibians, Invasive Species, Birds, Plants, Macroinvertebrates, Phytoplankton and Zooplankton, Take a Little Lead Out (TALLO)*

The *Centre* is looking to increase public involvement in our monitoring programs. Please contact Nelson Amaral: at 272-5136
amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Wastewater Garden

Contact Sarah Rosolen: 272-5136 or
rosolen@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Watershed Use and Assessment

Contact Mark Sunohara: 272-5136 or
sunohara@sustainablewatersheds.ca

• *Land Use Assessment, Watershed Characterization, Historical Data, Stormwater Run-off Investigations*

Alternative Energy and Efficiency

Contact Shawn Barnes: 272-5136 or
barnes@sustainablewatersheds.ca



Invasive Species Investigation Program

by Geof Hall

Invasive species are a growing concern to the stable ecosystems of freshwater resources in Canada. The Rideau system, being a heavily used, interconnected waterway, is under increased stress due to the ease of transport of non-indigenous species.

In order to address this concern, the *Centre for Sustainable Watersheds* has initiated a comprehensive Invasive Species Investigation Program. Researchers from the *Centre* will study the population dynamics of current invasive species, their distribution and predation throughout the lake and through long-term monitoring, attempt to gauge the effects on native species. Through the use of a powerful Geography Information System, data

management for these studies will be particularly effective at identifying important trends in species population dynamics. The most visible invasive species found in Rideau Lake are zebra mussels and the aquatic 'nuisance' plant, Eurasian milfoil. However there are other less visible species, including the rusty crayfish and the spiny water flea, that are a threat to the viability of native species. Our website, www.sustainablewatersheds.ca, will soon feature a section dedicated to this program, and will provide a resource for those searching for more detailed information on invasive species that are currently found in Rideau Lake and those that are known to be approaching the system. In addition, the website will

announce any volunteer initiatives developed to aid in monitoring the changes in the Rideau Lake ecosystem. Residents and lake users are encouraged to keep a vigilant eye out for any new invaders observed in the lake and to report any changes they observe. The Aquatic Research Group can be contacted at any time to investigate a potential new invasive species, or simply to discuss concerns about these new inhabitants.



For more information contact Geof at 272-5136 or hall@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Stormwater Runoff Investigation

By Sarah Rosolen

Last summer, BRLA initiated a multi-stakeholder project with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (involving the Townships of Rideau Lakes and Drummond-North Elmsley, and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority) to look at stormwater runoff coming from the villages of Rideau Ferry and Portland.

Results from water quality sampling near some storm drain outlets in both communities during the summer and fall of 2001 indicated that pathogen and nutrient concentrations (E.Coli, total phosphorus) exceeded recommended limits established by the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life. Due to low rainfall last summer, this contamination could not be conclusively linked to stormwater

run-off. However, it did raise some concern, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities supported our recommendation to extend the study for another season.

The aim of the study is to provide simple and effective stormwater management strategies aimed at minimizing the impacts of runoff. In order to design appropriate mitigation strategies, it is important to understand the extent of the problem – where the run-off is coming from, how much is being discharged to the lake, and the contaminants it carries.

The study has been revamped this year, in order to better assess the problem. The monitoring strategy has been revisited, and will now include storm sewers and other conveyance systems. And, with the

expertise of new staff Mark Sunohara, an Information Management and Land Use specialist, and Lori Hohban, a GIS technologist, we will be able to incorporate information on land use, and topographic data into a Geographic Information System database. This will aid in the analysis of stormwater runoff drainage patterns within the urban areas. Dr. Bruce Anderson, a professor of Civil Engineering at Queen's University in Kingston, has also joined the study, looking specifically at the effects of stormwater run-off on nutrient and pathogen leaching from septic systems.

For more information contact Mark at 272-5136 or sunohara@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Free long distance calls to BRLA and RLCSW

If you are calling BRLA or RLCSW from the following locations please dial these numbers first.

Smiths Falls/Ottawa area: 723-6339

Perth area: 345-2434

Kingston area: 384-5065

Cornwall area: 930-2686

Once you dial the numbers then dial 272-3629 or 272-0299 for BRLA and 272-5136 for the Centre. We would greatly appreciate your help in decreasing everyone's phone bills. If you are calling from outside eastern Ontario, please continue to call us toll free at 1-877-774-3328.

Leopards and Zebras and Loons, Oh My!

Would you like to be more involved with the research and monitoring happening on Rideau Lake this summer? The *Rideau Lakes Centre for Sustainable Watersheds* is looking for volunteers to help monitor loons, frogs, birds, bass spawning, invasive species, and water quality, to name a few. You can participate as much or as little as you want - collect information on your own, or come join us in the field! We will provide all necessary training, so don't be shy – come get your feet wet with us!

Contact Nelson Amaral at 272-5136 or amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca for more information.

Living By Water

by Barbara Robbins

Through simple changes in actions within houses and around lakeside properties, we can help create and preserve healthy waterfront habitat for ourselves and our surrounding flora and fauna.

Shoreline residents can have a substantial impact on fish and wildlife habitat and water quality. Cumulative effects of these influences may significantly reduce the health of our ecosystem. The *Rideau Lakes Centre for Sustainable Watersheds* has formed a new partnership with the Ontario *Living by Water* Project to develop a strategy to address water quality concerns identified from water quality sampling on the Rideau Lake. This program will include a demonstration site, workshops, educational materials and home visits to promote healthy and sustainable shorelines.

The *Living by Water* demonstration site is being developed on the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority lakefront

property at the new *Rideau Lakes Welcome Centre* in Portland. This initiative will focus attention on ways we can naturally conserve and enhance our shorelines, showcasing “best management practices” and natural landscaping. Interpretive signage, explaining the benefits to both ecosystem and landowner, will allow “self-guided” tours.

A workshop is being organized at this site, for the *Sun, Sand, Wind and Water Fair* on August 17th. This event will feature experts talking about “best management practices” for shoreline living including wastewater treatment systems, natural landscaping, home cleaning products, fish and wildlife habitat and water conservation.

This summer, we are offering site visits to help waterfront residents learn how to make their homes and properties more environmentally friendly. Designed as a one-on-one program, a trained staff member will work through a checklist to help evaluate the property and provide recommendations. The visit will also help the landowner develop a “conservation plan” and provide the tools to carry out these initiatives. Promotion of the *Living By Water* program will be featured in our shoreline visits this spring and summer.

For more information on this program or to book a site visit please contact Barbara at 272-5136 or robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca.

Shoreline Littoral Inventory

By Paul Bíscaia

The *Centre* will be conducting a littoral inventory on the Rideau Lake this coming season. The littoral zone is the near-shore area of the lake where light can penetrate to the bottom, allowing aquatic plants to grow. This is an important area in any lake, providing habitat crucial to the survival of many fish and wildlife species. Adjacent land use and terrestrial habitat greatly influences the littoral zone of a lake.

The intent of the littoral survey is to provide an inventory of the lake’s aquatic and terrestrial habitats and also to document the surrounding shoreline’s land usages and human structures. Specific information that will be documented includes aquatic

vegetation, the different types of shorelines and their uses, substrate type, existing stumps and logs and observations on fish activities (eg. spawning and nursery areas). This data will be used to provide an intensive snapshot of the littoral zone, and identify sensitive areas in order to monitor the impacts of development on the lake. To conduct this study four crews will be necessary to complete the job in one season. It will be slow, painstaking work requiring careful observations and map work as every foot of this critical shoreline zone will be surveyed and recorded. Including all bays and islands, this amounts to more than 150 miles!

We are greatly indebted to Colin Horsfall and Len’s Cove Marina for the generous donation of four 4-stroke 9.9 units.

The first ever littoral study on this lake was completed by BRLA’s first full time summer staff under the supervision of Blake Seward in 1990 and 1991. While it is time to update this work using state of the art GIS mapping technology, the earlier study will provide a useful comparative baseline to observe littoral trends over time.

For more information contact Stacy at 272-3629 or 272-0299 or mclean@sustainablewatersheds.ca

Dry Dock Hours

- M ay 18 to June 21

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm
Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm

- J u ne 22 to September 2

Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm
Sunday 10am to 4pm

- S eptember 3 to October 13

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm
Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm



30 Colborne St Portland, On
613-272-3269

BRLA Special Events

Great Canadian Bio-Blitz

BRLA Yard Sale

Canada Fireworks

Annual Regatta

BRLA Annual General Meeting

Sun, Sand, Wind & Water Fair

Friday May 31: 9am-5pm, 8:30pm & Saturday 6am at Mill Pond

Saturday June 22: 9am-5pm at Dry Dock

Saturday June 29 : at Dusk from Cow Island

Saturday August 3 : 10am Cow Island

Saturday August 3: 2pm Portland Community Hall

Saturday August 17: 10am to 6pm at Rideau Lakes Welcome Centre

Your "trash" can be someone else's treasures!

If you have any "trash" that could be someone else's treasures, please drop it off at Dry Dock daily from 9am to 4pm for our **YARD SALE**. The **YARD SALE** will take place Saturday June 22nd at 8 am at Dry Dock. So when you do your spring cleaning, remember to come and donate your used but not abused items!!

Rideau Lakes Welcome Centre Hours

RVCA Conservation Area

- May 17 to September 2

Monday to Saturday 9am to 7pm
Sunday 10am to 6pm

- September 3 to October 19

Monday to Saturday 9am to 5pm
Sunday 10am to 4pm



2797 Hwy #15 Portland, Ontario
613-272-3300

* specialty beverages & ice cream * fresh popped popcorn * sundries