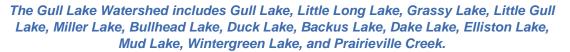
THE GLQO WATERSHED JOURNAL





Gull Lake Aquatic Plant Survey

This past March, the Gull Lake Quality Organization retained Progressive AE to conduct a whole-lake vegetation survey. The survey was conducted in two phases. The first phase was completed in late June and included a hydro-acoustic survey of the lake to measure plant bio-volume (i.e., the height of plants in the water column). The second phase included a point-intercept survey in which GPS reference points were established across portions of Gull Lake less than 30 feet deep, and plant samples were collected at 300-foot intervals from all plant beds identified during the hydro-acoustic survey.

In total, 21 submersed species, three floating-leaved species, and one emergent species were observed during the survey. Of primary concern were the exotic (i.e., non-native) plant species Eurasian milfoil and starry stonewort. Fortunately, only very small infestations of these plants were found in the lake during the surveys. The Gull Lake Quality Organization has been coordinating spot-treatments of these plants to help prevent their spread in the lake.

In addition to the plant bio-volume data collected during the hydro-acoustic survey, lake bottom depths were measured, and a new lake depth map was created. (Please see page 2.) Interestingly, the water depths measured this year were nearly identical to original depth map of Gull Lake that was created in 1941, some 77 years ago.

A final report of this year's plant survey and lake mapping results will be available soon.

This was the third vegetation survey conducted on Gull Lake. The first, in 2013 was conducted by volunteers. A professional survey in 2015 confirmed the presence of starry stonewort. The results from the prior studies are consistent with the current results.

FALL 2018

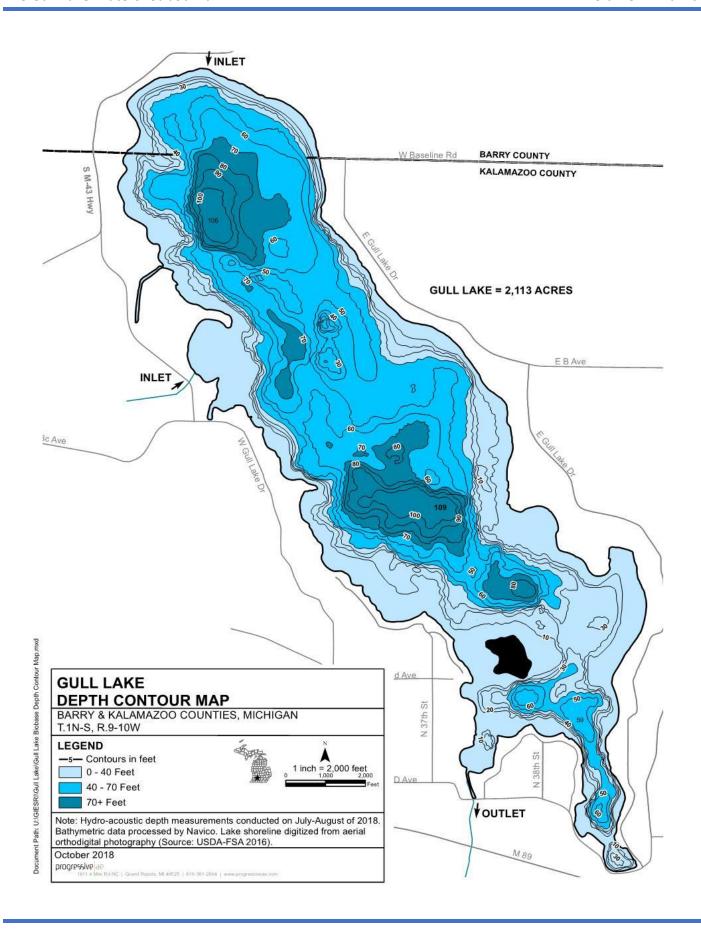
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Appreciating GLQO Members

The Gull Lake Quality Organization is an all-volunteer organization. Our mission is to address concerns and provide education regarding the use of natural resources of the Gull Lake Watershed.

Remember...Don't rake or blow your leaves in to the lake and don't burn your leaves near the lake. The best way to dispose of them is to compost them.





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Beware of Big Red Visitors from the South

By Brook Wilke, GLQO Board Member

Crayfish are an important part of aquatic ecosystems in Michigan, including Gull Lake and surrounding water bodies. One of the more common species in the Gull Lake area is the Virile (a.k.a. Northern) crayfish, but a number of other Native species may be found in our watershed, including Devil crayfish, Paintedhand mudbug, Northern Clearwater crayfish, Big water crayfish, Digger crayfish, Calico crayfish, and White River crayfish.

Other crayfish species have been introduced to Michigan waters via accidental releases, stemming from their use as fishing bait, food (crawfish boils) or pet / classroom projects. One of these species is the Rusty crayfish, which is a large crayfish (up to six inches in length) native to the Ohio River basin. The Rusty crayfish often displaces native crayfish and consumes a significant amount of food (vegetation, small aquatic animals), subsequently altering the ecosystem. This species has spread to numerous water bodies in Michigan, but not to the Gull Lake Watershed, to the best of our knowledge.

More recently, the Michigan DNR has confirmed a new invasive crayfish species in a couple of Michigan lakes, the Red Swamp crayfish. These visitors from the south can be identified by their large bodies, dark red raised bumps on their claws, black to blue line under the tail, and black wedge-shaped stripe on top of the tail. They are particularly dangerous invaders because of their burrowing abilities, which can result in shoreline erosion and damage to dams and other lakeside earthen structures.





Above: Photo of the entrance of a red swamp crayfish burrow that is adjacent to an infested pond in Novi, Michigan. The fresh mud near the entrance is indicative of an active burrow that is being used by a crayfish.

Left: Red Swamp crayfish found in Michigan lakes

(Photos and supporting information courtesy of Seth Herbst, MDNR)

Volunteers Conduct Aquatic Plant Survey on Little Long Lake

By John Etzcorn and Gary Mittelbach, Water Quality Committee

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Little Long Lake is a spring-fed, 160 acre lake situated north and slightly west of Gull Lake along M-43. As part of the Gull Lake Watershed, Little Long Lake drains into Gull Lake via a creek running under M-43 near Interlaken Drive. It has no public access. In summer 2018, the Gull Lake Quality Organization funded an aquatic plant survey of Little Long Lake through the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program.

A group of residents from Little Long conducted the survey under the guidance of Dr. Jo Latimore from the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University. The survey was initiated in July and completed in August. The result of the survey was good news for the Gull Lake Watershed – no invasive species of aquatic plants were found in Little Long Lake and overall plant densities were low to moderate. Samples were collected with a rope/rake mechanism from 33 sample sites (1, 4 and 8 foot depths) at 11 locations around the lake. The following is a summary of the aquatic plants found in the lake and ranked by their overall abundance.

		# of sites observed	Overall Density Rating
•	Sago Pondweed	31	3.36
•	Stonewort (<i>Chara</i>)	30	3.03
•	Spiny Naiad	26	2.12
•	Wild Celery	11	0.70
•	Illinois Pondweed	9	0.55
•	Whitestem Pondweed	7	0.39
•	Common Bladderwort	10	0.39
•	Flat-leaved Bladderwort	6	0.36
•	Bushy Pondweed	3	0.24
•	Native Milfoil	4	0.12
•	Floating-Leaf Pondweed	3	0.09
•	Variable-Leaf Pondweed	2	0.09
•	Large Purple Bladderwort	2	0.09
•	Fine-Leaved Pondweed	1	0.03

Other Species observed:

Bulrush (on the island and around the perimeter in shallow areas)
Jointed spikesedge, which looks like horsetail, (on the island and in shallow areas among the Bulrush)
Yellow Water Lily
White Water Lily
Various free-floating Duckweeds



Pictured left to right: Gary Mittelbach, Philip Dawson and John Etzcorn

GLQO Annual Meeting Notes and Board Updates

Boater Safety by Tom Gallagher and Pete Hawk, Boater Safety Committee

With extremely warm weather and record high water levels requiring "no wake zones" at neighboring lakes, Gull Lake experienced increased numbers of recreational boaters and fishing tournaments.

This summer, over 100 area youth completed the Kalamazoo Sheriff Boater safety classes.

On July 4th, the Sheriff Marine boat served as an escort for the participants in the Wooden Boat parade. A few of the participants expressed their appreciation for the assistance of the Sheriff's Boat clearing the way for the parade.

Pirates Day and Mardi Gras at the "sand bar" were very busy weekends. The Kalamazoo Sheriff's Marine Division, Kalamazoo Sheriff Road patrol officers, DNR and Barry County Marine Division were all present. Residents living near the "sand bar" area report that the increased law enforcement and Ross Township noise ordinance has greatly improved the quality of life.

This year, the Marine Patrol logged 1285 hours of patrol time. This is up from 2017 when the patrol hours were 1253 hours.

The 2018 Sheriff's Marine Patrol statistics for Gull Lake are as follows:

- Careless Operation Citations (10), warnings (176)
- Navigation Citations (1), warnings (39)
- Noise Ordinance Violation Citations (8)
- Personal Flotation Device Citations (1), warnings (50)
- Registration Violations Citations (5), warnings (111)
- Safety Compliance Inspections (76)

Water Quality

At this year's GLQO Annual meeting members and guests learned the results of this summer's aquatic vegetation survey completed by Progressive AE. A preliminary report from Progressive AE is found in this newsletter.

Membership by Gregg Pierce, Membership Committee

Gregg Pierce, Membership Chair, provided an update on this year's membership drive. Membership stands at 419 members of which 55 members are new to GLQO. This is the highest membership count in over a decade! Thank you! It is through membership dues that we are able to monitor the lakes, respond quickly to threats and keep you informed.

Soon, members and lake enthusiasts will receive the annual membership appeal for 2019. You may recall that in 2016, GLQO streamlined the membership renewal process. Two mailings are sent: one in the fall and one in the spring. If you don't renew your membership in the fall; you will receive the membership appeal in the spring.

Red Swamp Crayfish Continued from Page 3

As of September, 2018, Red Swamp crayfish have only been identified in two Michigan locations: a set of retention ponds near Novi and Sunset Lake near Vicksburg. In order to avoid further spread of this damaging species, do not import live crayfish for any purposes (Note that invasive crayfish are prohibited in Michigan), and definitely do not release commercially traded crayfish into the wild.

More information about aquatic invasive species in Michigan can be found on the MDNR website:

https://www.michigan.gov/invasives/. If you encounter crayfish in the wild or in commercial trade that you believe might be one of the invaders, contact and send pictures to Seth Herbst, the DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator (herbsts1@michigan.gov).



Little Long Lake Aquatic Survey Continued from Page 4

Overall, it's a very healthy mix of aquatic plant species and densities for a lake this size. The highest density plant (Sago Pondweed) has an overall density rating of "moderate," and would probably be considered as the closest thing to a "nuisance" plant (certainly to the fisher men and women) in the lake due to its height and density. The second densest plant is Chara, which is technically an algae (not rooted). This plant tends to be "crunchy" and "smelly", but it's rarely thick or heavily matted in shallow water. The next most common is Spiny Naiad which is another somewhat "crunchy" varietal with serrated, or "saw-tooth" edges along the leaves. Finally, there are several areas with an abundance of Bulrush, which are the tall slender shafts that grow above the water line in shallow areas. Although some residents might consider these a nuisance for swimming and boating activities, they play an important role for wave reduction, erosion control, nutrient and sediment capture and aquatic wildlife habitat. After that, there's a fairly sparse blend of indigenous aquatic plants that are critical to a healthy aquatic ecosystem.

In summary, aquatic vegetation is a key part of lake quality. It is a critical component of food, habitat and oxygen supply for fish and other aquatic organisms. The current vegetation of Little Long Lake is a healthy mix of native species, but we need to remain vigilant against invaders of all types (plant and animal). The Gull Lake Quality Organization and its volunteers will continue to monitor the water quality of Little Long Lake into the future.

A special thanks to the Little Long Lake survey team of Gary Mittelbach, Kay Gross, Philip Dawson, John Etzcorn and Jo Latimore of MSU! Questions regarding the survey may be emailed to John Etzcorn at jvebronco80@gmail.com.

An Interview with the Anglers

By Bryan Beck, Fisheries Committee Chairperson

The GLQO had the pleasure of speaking with Denny Hoorn, a long-time Gull Lake angler, and Jared Havenaar, a former member of the Western Michigan University Fishing Team and Gull Lake bass fisherman, to talk about their experiences fishing on Gull Lake. We thank them both for taking the time and for allowing us to publish the below in our newsletter!

1. What do you typically fish for on Gull Lake these days?

Denny: Lately, I've been trying to catch one of the lake trout, but have inadvertently pulled in quite a few small pike in the process.

Jared: Largemouth and smallmouth bass.

2. What makes Gull Lake a great lake to fish?

Denny: The diversity of fish species. Over the years, the lake has included species not available in other nearby lakes, including lake trout, rainbow trout, brown trout, and Atlantic salmon.

Jared: Agree with Denny, and would add that the depth and size of the lake can result in large fish in the lake.

3. How has the fishing changed on Gull Lake over time?

Denny: It is very rare to catch a perch these days. Also, the bluegill and sunfish have not been this large since before lake residents hooked up to the city sewer system. More recently, I can offer up my deep trolling catch data which shows a concerning decline over the past year, which may be related to the smelt die off:

Year	# of Trips	# of Lake Trout	# of Pike	# of Bass
2017	24	4	22	8
2018	12	1	5	0

Jared: Relative to other regularly bass-fished lakes, Gull Lake is becoming very challenging. While there are a lot of bass tournaments on Gull Lake, I don't believe that these tournaments are directly impacting the bass populations as the anglers in the tournaments typically release the bass and are the most knowledgeable when it comes to "fizzing" the bass so that they do not die upon release. I have noticed that throughout the summer, the bass seem to "get smart" due to the high volume of catch and release. It seems that the bass fishing has been getting tougher during the summer months. Also, the bass appear to be schooling at deeper depths than they were in the past. I think this is because of the fact that they're having to search harder for food to eat with the lack of smelt the last few years.

4. What are your greatest concerns about the Gull Lake fishery?

Denny: I have three main concerns involving three different fish species.

Lake Trout: Every year or so a number of small fingerling lake trout are stocked in Gull Lake. These fish appear to neither grow to adulthood nor ever be caught, and my theory is that they are mainly an

An Interview with the Anglers Continued from Page 7

additional source of food for the larger fish that are higher up the food chain. A couple of years ago, some very large adult brood stock were put in the lake. I know that some of these trout were caught. I believe that they are rarely released after being caught, and, in any case, rarely survive after being caught. This really limits the number of actual lake trout catches on the lake. Ideally, it would be possible to stock more of the large brood trout, however, there are likely constraints on availability, in which case, perhaps a heavier or more regular stocking of the fingerling trout would result in a greater likelihood of survival into adulthood.

- 2) Northern Pike: There does not appear to be a shortage of pike, however, the size of the pike has been getting smaller and smaller over the past couple of years. I know that the DNR is conducting a study to determine the age of the pike that are being caught, which could help us understand what is happening. Personally, I think that the die-off of the smelt population has severely limited one of the primary food sources for the pike and, therefore, they are unable to reach larger sizes.
- 3) Smelt: The die-off a couple of years ago has the direct effect of ruining this unique fishery, including the ice-fishery in the winter. The indirect effects could be even more harmful as the pike and other predatory fish lose a primary food source. One of the top priorities should be to quickly rehabilitate or introduce a healthy smelt population in the lake.

Jared: In addition to my answer to the previous question, I'm also concerned about the lake quality. Issues such as agricultural run-off, riparian lawn fertilizer, invasive species, and overcrowding/usage of the lake during the summer months can all have an impact on the fishery.

5. Do you have any suggestions for improving the fishery?

Denny: Public and private stocking initiatives need to increase. Considering the size and depth of the lake, along with the heavy angler pressure, the lake can sustain a more concentrated fishery.

Jared: Continuing education of all of those who use the lake around best fishing practices and preserving lake quality. I think stocking smelt or cisco would help the whole fish population.

GLQO Annual Meeting Notes and Board Updates Continued from Page 4

Treasurer's Report by Don Paulson, Treasurer

Total Membership Revenue in 2017 was \$38,320.22

Total Other Revenue in 2017 was \$8,345.92.

This included general donations, Summer Party income, marine patrol donations, boatwash and weed control donations and advertising revenue.

Total Expenses in 2017 were \$73,327.34.

This included: Boat Wash planning and construction \$52,638.87, Boat Wash labor \$5.532.13, Water Monitoring \$400.00, CLMP \$430.00 and Weed Control \$2,962.50.

Anticipating the boat wash construction in 2017, GLQO built its reserves to properly fund the project and its staffing.



Plan to Attend: MLSA Annual Meeting Friday & Saturday May 3 & 4, 2019

WHERE: The 58th Annual MLSA Conference will be held at Crystal Mountain in Thompsonville, Michigan.

WHO: Many past attendees live on inland lakes and streams. Some want to learn more about lakes, others are educators, some are service providers or are volunteers who participate in the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program. All care about the future quality of Michigan's inland lakes and streams.

WHAT: This year's conference theme is "Innovate Lake Stewarship."

SUBJECTS PRESENTED: Lake Levels, PFAS, Wake Boats, CAFO's and more.

INFORMATION: Visit www.mymlsa.org/mlsa-58th-annual-conference/.

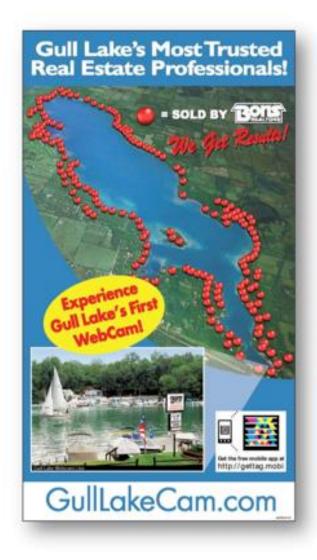
Mark Your Calendar!
Gull Lake Quality Organization

Welcome to Summer Party is Sunday, June 2, 2019!



We thank the 2018 GLQO Corporate Members

Abigail Hayden Interior Design, LLC
Banner Beachfront Equipment
Bell Tower Lake House Living, LLC
Boris Realtors
Gull Lake Country Club
Hawks Hollow Builders
Mac's Garage, LLC
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We thank the 2018 GLQO Individual and Family Members

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The Gull Lake Quality Organization

P.O. Box 144 / Richland, Michigan / 49083 Website: glqo.net Contact: info@glqo.net







Upcoming Events

Tuesday, November 7, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. GLQO Board Meeting Gull Lake Ministries

Tuesday, March 3, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. GLQO Board Meeting Gull Lake Ministries

Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. GLQO Board Meeting Gull Lake Ministries

Welcome to Summer Party Sunday, June 2, 2019 Gull Lake Country Club

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Robert Phillips (19-1) Gregg Pierce (20-1)

Linda Shierlaw (19-1)

Brook Wilke (20-1)

allow volunteers to serve as directors for two consecutive threeyear terms. After each Director's

GLQO by-laws

name are two numbers: the **year** their current term expires, and the

number of the current term.

We welcome you to volunteer for committee work (of your choice) and to participate in our board meetings.