



Discovering Lakes Through a Lens

Taking pictures of the amazing life in and around lakes can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. With so many reasonably priced digital cameras on the market that offer user-friendly features, it is no wonder why lake lovers of all ages have delved into the world of photography. As you look through the eye of the camera, here are a few tips to help capture those special moments at the lake.

Catching the Viewer's Eye

Accomplished photographers use composition to produce photos that are visually pleasing and balanced to our eyes. One of the most useful techniques is the "rule of thirds," which is a compositional rule of thumb used in visual arts such as painting, photography and design. The rule states that an image should be divided into nine equal parts by two equally-spaced horizontal lines and two equally-spaced vertical lines, and that important compositional elements should be placed along these lines or their intersections. Proponents of the technique claim that aligning a subject with these points creates more tension, energy and interest in the composition than simply centering the subject would.

Creating Magic With Light

One of the most important concepts in photography is lighting. Typically the best light for nature shots occurs in the early mornings and in late afternoon to evenings (when the sun is at a lower angle), when the light is softer in intensity and more diffuse. This creates warmer colors and more dramatic photos. Hazy or overcast days can be better for photographing close up images of insects and wildflowers.



A. Kowalski

(Continued on page 8)

Some of the new digital cameras offer a feature where you can see these lines that make up the rule of thirds while you're looking through the viewfinder or at the LCD panel.



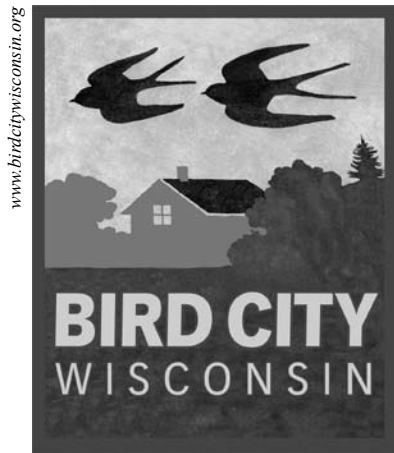
R. Korth

Bird City Wisconsin

Living in a City “for the birds” is a Great Thing!

By Carl Schwartz, Bird City Wisconsin Coordinator

Perhaps you already have seen the signs in a nearby community and wondered just what the heck “Bird City Wisconsin” was. Or maybe you know because you are lucky enough to live in one.



When an alliance of state bird conservation groups put together their plan for Bird City Wisconsin in 2009, they modeled it after the widely-successful Tree City USA program. Their hope was to do for urban bird conservation what the Arbor Day Foundation and Tree City have done to enhance urban forestry.

Now, just nine months after its first application deadline, Bird City Wisconsin:

- ✎ Already has recognized 20 communities statewide
- ✎ Just unveiled its procedures for communities to renew their recognition and/or upgrade to “High Flyer” status
- ✎ Now has 10 new applicants under review -- watch for an announcement this month at www.birdcitywisconsin.org
- ✎ Will accept a new round of applications Nov. 1, 2011

The value derived from the observation and photography of wetland-dependent birds alone is at least \$10 billion a year.

~US EPA

Organizers knew from the outset that lakes and wetlands would be a major focus of the program’s habitat emphasis since they are critically important for songbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl and wading birds. And wildlife viewing -- including ducks, geese, swans, loons, martins and swallows, just to name a few -- is one of the major joys of lake living.

About one-third of North American bird species use wetlands for food, shelter and /or breeding. For most wetland-dependent birds, habitat loss in breeding areas translates directly into population losses.

Bird City Wisconsin also stresses the economic incentive for communities to practice

conservation. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that more than half of all U.S. adults hunt, fish, bird watch or photograph wildlife, spending a total of \$59.5 billion annually, and that the value derived from the observation and photography of wetland-dependent birds is at least \$10 billion a year!

Birds also are unheralded assistants to backyard gardeners, flower fanciers, private and municipal landscapers, farmers and foresters. Without birds, communities would have to spend far more money keeping natural systems in balance. Insect-eating birds reduce the need for chemical pest control. Birds also are voracious eaters of weed seeds and rodents.

So Bird City developed 22 criteria across five categories:

- ✎ habitat creation and protection
- ✎ forest management, hazard limitation
- ✎ public education
- ✎ recognition of International Migratory Bird Day

The goal is to see municipal governments implement additional conservation practices while educating their residents. In turn, Bird City offers highly visible public recognition to those communities that succeed in meeting at least seven of its criteria. A Bird City receives two street signs, a flag, a plaque and its own page on the Bird City web site. And Bird City’s recognition is renewable annually.

The idea sprang from the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI), a statewide cooperative partnership dedicated in part to “keeping common birds common.” WBCI partnered with the Milwaukee Audubon Society, the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, the Wisconsin Audubon Council and the Natural Resources Foundation to win a \$31,700 TogetherGreen Innovation Grant to expand the project statewide. The grant was part of nearly \$1.1 million awarded last year by an alliance between the National Audubon Society and Toyota Motors.

Given the model Bird City used, it came as no surprise that 16 of the first 20 communities it recognized took advantage of their Tree City status to meet the “Effective Forest Management” criteria. But nearly that many advanced some manner of wetland acquisition, protection or restoration effort to meet one of the required standards. Some examples:

In Stevens Point, Kent Hall, vice president of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin, observes: “We featured a 19.5- acre site combining Kozcizkowski Park and the Erickson Natural Area. This site has 4 acres of wetlands and ... has proven to be uniquely situated as a stopover site for spring migrants. Our bird list stands at 171 species.”

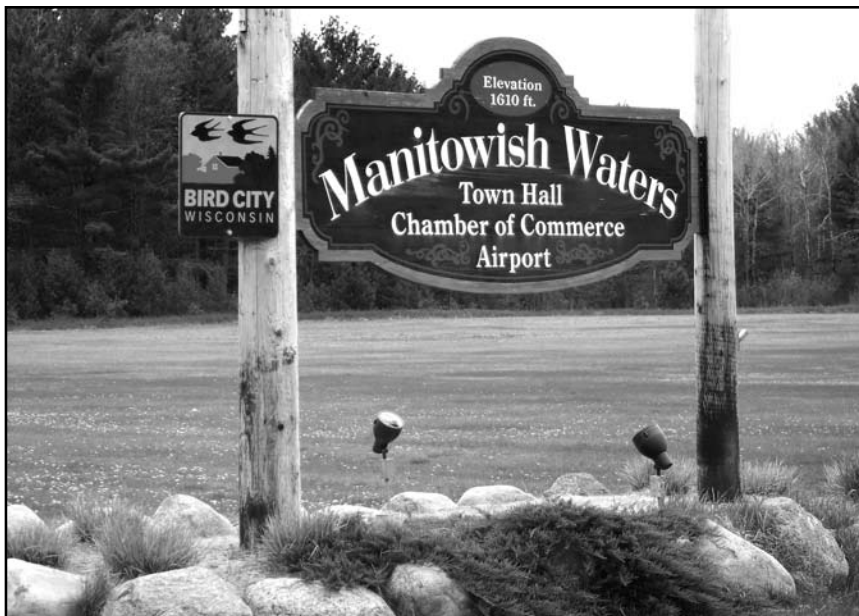
Michael Reed, director of the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, observes: “Since before Nicolet arrived here in 1634, estuary marshes have been a dominate feature of the Green Bay landscape. These wetlands are of vital importance to thousands of birds that count on them to nest or as a critical migratory route. Bird City gives us one more tool to bring our leaders and fellow citizens together to protect these natural wonders. Some 252 bird species have been sighted at Bay Beach.”

In Oshkosh, shallow 140-acre Millers Bay lies on the west shore of Lake Winnebago, surrounded by Menomonee Park. It supports intense recreational use, as well as extensive waterbird colonies.

Ozaukee County restored a 24-acre wetland at Lion’s Den Gorge Nature Preserve on Lake Michigan. The wetland has improved habitat for migratory birds, waterfowl, amphibians and native coastal vegetation. The boardwalks and educational signage provide opportunities for wildlife viewing and education.

Muskego has restored and enhanced over 100 acres of wetlands, and installed a webcam on an osprey nesting platform on Big Muskego Lake. Every few minutes photos upload to the city’s web site.

The inaugural group of Bird Cities also includes the cities of Mequon, New London, Lake



Geneva, Brookfield, River Falls, Racine and Evansville; the villages of Bayside, Chenequa, Hales Corners, Williams Bay and McFarland; the Towns of Manitowish Waters and Presque Isle, along with Brown County.

This Bird City Wisconsin sign in Manitowish Waters was unveiled as part of the 7th annual North Lakeland Discovery Center Birding Festival.

The project uses its Web site, www.birdcitywisconsin.org, to guide communities and individuals. It walks foresters, parks directors, city planners and others through the application process, and its “Best Practices” pages offer how-to details on implementing conservation strategies. It also maps how each of its 20 inaugural communities earned recognition, providing good tips for those who follow.

Bird City encourages interested individuals to form a team of local officials and conservation groups to work together on earning Bird City recognition. It’s often easier than it looks. Take advantage of the criteria your community already meet -- knowing that members of your team may be the reason for some of them – and then start building your application around those.

Questions can be addressed to Carl Schwartz, project coordinator, at (414) 416-3272 or cschwartz3@wi.rr.com.

Protecting Our Feathered Friends

Birds need our help now more than ever to face the threat of habitat loss magnified by global warming. Millions of birds are killed due to other human-related causes. Scientists estimate that 300 million to 1 billion birds die each year from collisions with buildings. Up to 50 million die from encounters with communication towers. At least 11 million die from car strikes. Up to 1 million may die EACH DAY from attacks by cats left outdoors.



Purple Martins

Keeping Our Native Birds Common

By Simone LaMarche, UWSP Student with contributions from Dr. Noel Cutright and Carl Schwartz

Driving down an old country road you come upon a birdhouse. This isn't just any old bird house nailed together in someone's grandson's shop class; this bird house is an extravagant complex with many compartments each with a tiny balcony. It would almost be worth it to be a bird to live in these cool digs. What many people don't realize, however, is that these houses belong, almost exclusively, to the Purple Martin.

www.alamospringsranch.com



The Purple Martin is a native bird that spends its summers in North America and winters in Brazil and surrounding areas.

It is the largest North American swallow and is noted for diving at great speed, with extreme flight agility. These birds are also aerial insectivores, meaning that they catch insects in mid-flight. When they need to hydrate, martins swoop down over the surface of a pond to scoop water up with their bottom beak.

The males are distinguished by their entirely black, glossy bodies with a steel-blue sheen. The female is a light-brown creature, yet she still retains some of that purple-blue sheen that

gives the Purple Martin its name. Together, the male and female make a monogamous pair. They spend the spring and early summer in Wisconsin breeding. The couple cooperates to build their nest and after the chicks have hatched, both parents work to feed the young for about a month and a half.

Just like humans, Purple Martins thrive in colonies, and choose to live in pre-made houses. Housing for Purple Martins can range from natural to man-made structures. Old woodpecker holes and cavities within cacti are two examples of natural martin housing. However, in many areas within its breeding range in North America, including Wisconsin, the Purple Martin is entirely dependent on humans for its supply of nesting sites.

What sort of local research is being done on martins? On July 13, 2010, with support from Bird City Wisconsin, Noel and Seth Cutright, Carl Schwartz and boat captain Tom Schaefer surveyed Purple Martin nesting structures for almost 12 hours from the water along the 88 miles of the Lake Winnebago shoreline. They recorded 228 poles at 131 locations

that supported 200 nesting structures (103 wooden, 97 aluminum) and supplied 3,078 nest holes.

It's for a lack of these man-made nesting sites that the population is decreasing. According to

Fast FACT

Early returnees from Brazilian wintering grounds are known as "scouts." However, contrary to popular belief, these birds were not "sent ahead" to find prime nesting sites for their colonies. They are typically older males, ahead of the game, looking for prime real estate for themselves!



the Breeding Bird Survey (the only real population monitoring resource for Purple Martins), the trend for Wisconsin shows the Purple Martin population has decreased 6.2% per year between 1980 and 2007. In neighboring states the annual decline is as high as 10%. Despite the decrease in population, there is little conservation priority being given to martins in Wisconsin and no specific monitoring program is currently in place.

Fast FACT

It is often more productive to expand the size of an existing martin colony than to attempt to attract them to a new location. One of the shining examples of this is in the city of Oshkosh where the Oshkosh Bird Club has worked at the city's water treatment plant to establish and increase a martin colony from a single pair to nearly 50!

The tradition of humans constructing purple martin housing is one that dates back hundreds of years. Native Americans such as the Choctaws and Chickasees would hang dry, hollow gourds near their homes to attract the martin. This practice was adopted later on by many black sharecroppers in the southern states. The Purple Martin, being a very

territorial animal, is quick to chase any number of predatory birds from its territory, making it an invaluable resource for the rural farmer.

If you would like to help keep these birds common, check out this web site dedicated to Purple Martin landlords (<http://www.purplemartins.com/>). Without an official monitoring or conservation program in place to protect, create, and maintain martin habitat, it's up to compassionate individuals to take it upon themselves to become freelance Purple Martin landlords and care takers.

Research from http://nationalzoo.si.edu/scbi/migratorybirds/featured_birds/default.cfm?bird=Purple_Martin and <http://purplemartin.org/main/mgt.html>



The trend for Wisconsin shows the Purple Martin population has decreased 6.2% per year between 1980 and 2007.

~ Breeding Bird Survey

Fast FACT

The Purple Martin has been given the nickname "mosquito-eating bird." While the Purple Martin does feast on winged insects, the mosquito makes up a very small percentage of their diet. First of all, mosquito and Purple Martin activity overlap for only about 10 minutes at dusk. And second, this bird prefers to fly relatively high in open areas, while mosquitoes buzz low over water in dense forests.

yardenvy.com





CLMN Superstars



Wisconsin is fortunate to have many talented and knowledgeable people acting as Citizen Water Quality Scientists on their lakes. We would like to highlight some of the accomplishments of the volunteers in the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN). Want to see a CLMN volunteer acknowledged in Lake Tides? Please send information to Laura Herman, CLMN Statewide Coordinator at Laura.Herman@uwsp.edu.

Frank Splitt is an active Clean Boats, Clean Waters volunteer and former water clarity monitor on White Birch Lake in Vilas County. Frank published *Wisconsin Lakes: A trilogy* in December of 2000 and *Birge and Juday Data: Application and Reliability Perspectives* in February of 2001. Frank’s work was published under WDNR Lake Planning Grants. His papers take an in-depth look at lake ecosystems and help many lake residents come to terms with and understand the lake system on which they live.

Frank holds a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Northwestern University. He is the former McCormick Faculty Fellow of Telecommunications, McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, Northwestern University. He has been recognized by the State of Wisconsin for Outstanding Lake Stewardship. Thank you, Frank, for all you do to protect in partnership our legacy of lakes!

Court Case Assures That DNR Can Regulate Groundwater Withdrawals

By Eric Olson, UW-Extension Lakes Specialist

The Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a ruling on July 6 which is being hailed by lake advocates as an affirmation of the state’s obligation to protect surface waters from the negative impacts of groundwater withdrawals. The case, *Lake Beulah Management District v. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*, culminates a series of challenges posed to the Village of East Troy’s newest high capacity well.

potential environmental harm to waters of the state when reviewing a high capacity well permit application...The DNR should use both its expertise in water resources management and its discretion to determine whether its duty as trustee of public trust resources is implicated by a proposed high capacity well permit application such that it has an obligation to consider environmental concerns.”

With respect to the lake district’s appeal, however, the court found that the district did not properly submit its scientific data to the DNR for consideration. It noted that the statutes and DNR policy provide a method for submitting research into the permit review process: “...in order to ensure that information will be considered by an agency in its decision making and will be included in the record on review, citizens should submit evidence to the agency decision makers while they are deciding what action to take. More specifically, in regard to proposed high capacity wells, we conclude that to trigger the DNR’s duty to consider the impact of a well on waters of the state, citizens must present sufficient concrete, scientific evidence of potential harm to waters

Wisconsin State Journal



The district argued that the DNR must take into account research findings that project a negative impact on lake water levels due to East Troy’s new well. They argued in a separate case that a district ordinance restricting the transfer of water out of the Lake Beulah basin should apply to the Village’s well.

The court found, in part, that “...the DNR has the authority and a general duty to consider



of the state directly to the DNR decision makers while they are considering the well permit application.”

As a result, the court ruled that the Village’s well can continue to operate, though the district was advised that they have the option to file a nuisance claim should the well prove detrimental to the lake. In the related case, the

court ruled that the state legislature delegates regulation of high capacity wells to the DNR and as a consequence, lake management district’s cannot create ordinances which would supersede state authority.

The court’s rulings can be found online at <http://www.wicourts.gov/opinions/supreme.jsp#opinions> 💧

I concur...

Retired Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice William Bablitch passed away this past winter at age 69. He was known for his colorful and pragmatic opinions. Justice Annette Ziegler quoted a lengthy section of a Bablitch opinion from 1995, in her concurring opinion on the Lake Beulah Management District v. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources case. Justice Bablitch was commenting on whether or not “fee fishing” should be equated with “fishing” as allowed in a county’s conservancy zoning district:

“Fishing is many things, the least of which to many who indulge is the catching of fish.

It is, in the winter doldrums, the casual browsing through the fishing catalogues, the fisherperson’s equivalent of the gardener’s seed catalogues, contemplating the coming renewal;

It is the snap of a twig across the lake on a dew filled morning signaling the approach of a deer taking the first sip of the dawn;

It is the desolate cry of a loon signaling its mate in a most haunting communion indecipherable to mere humans;

It is the screech of the owl ten feet above the river bend warning the invader of its displeasure as we approach at dusk to witness the fleetingly hypnotic hatch of the mayfly,

ironically renewing itself at the moment of its demise;

It is the swish swish swish of the giant wings of the heron as it rises reluctantly from its shallow water preserve, glaringly reminding us that this is its home, not ours.

It is all of this, and more, that brings us back again and again. This is fishing; the catching of a fish is merely ancillary.

...

An artificially constructed pond within yards of a natural waterway, 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 3 feet deep into which is put a corn or pellet baited hook with sufficient strength of line to water ski a polar bear is not fishing.”

County. of Adams v. Romeo, 191 Wis. 2d 379, 391-92, 528 N.W.2d 418 (1995) (Bablitch, J., concurring in part, dissenting in part).



(Lakes through a Lens, cont.)

Bright mid-day sun can create undesirable contrasts and shadows by flattening textures and washing out the colors of more delicate subjects. Filters can be used on higher-end lenses to produce better results under these conditions.

Analyzing the set-up of your picture to determine the best direction of its light source is worthwhile to get the best possible picture. See how your subject appears with backlight, sidelight, or light from the front. Backlighting can silhouette the subject in unique and beautiful ways. Side lighting often enriches colors and can help reveal surface textures and dramatic shadows that create more depth. Timing is everything if you want the very best lighting conditions for special effects or dramatic images.

Three Legs Better than Two Arms?

Top results for sharpness and crispness in your final photos comes from the camera

and the subject being dead still. The serious photographer's best tool to accomplish this goal is a tripod. It's virtually impossible to hand hold a camera without some movement. When in a pinch, you can use a dock, fence post, car hood, tree stump or the ground to steady your hold on the camera to get a good shot. If you are looking to purchase lenses for a more advanced camera system, look for those with "image stabilization," which will help in those situations when a tripod is not handy. The longer the shutter remains open on the camera, the more critical it is for both camera and subject to be perfectly still, meaning tripods are especially important in low light. Enlarging a photo will make a lack of sharpness more noticeable, so if you're planning to use your image for a large wall photo, display or billboard, make sure it's crisp.

How do professional photographers get great photos?

Well, we thought we would ask some of them and here's what they told us...

Q: What one piece of advice would you give to someone who is headed out to the lake to take pictures?

A: Get there early or stay late to take breathtaking sunsets and sunrises.

*~ Laura Miller
Stevens Point, WI*

A: Bring a tripod and a mug of coffee and head out early in the morning. It doesn't matter what season it is or what the weather is like, there is nothing more ethereal than the quiet time right at daybreak.

*~ Sara Kramer
Stevens Point, WI*

A: Sit still, don't be afraid to get wet, and the light makes the image.

*~ Robert Korth
Gresham, WI*

A: Go slow and "look small." So many of us seem to be in such a hurry all the time. Slow down. Take your time. Sit quietly and just observe. When you do that, the magic of our lakes will unveil itself to you.

*~ Eric Engbretson
Florence, WI*

Q: What is your favorite subject to photograph?

A: Little kids, water, waterfalls and mountains.

*~ Laura Miller
Stevens Point, WI*

A: Children - their innocence and energy are refreshing.

*~ Sara Kramer
Stevens Point, WI*

A: Fish - but there is so much going on near the water - birds, mammals and people doing all sorts of things are great subjects.

*~ Robert Korth
Gresham, WI*

A: Fish underwater - I love fish, and to be able to show them in their natural habitat is the only way to depict their true, inherent beauty and magnificence.

*~ Eric Engbretson
Florence, WI*



Q: Describe the photograph you are most proud of and tell us why.

I especially like candid photos. In this particular shot we were in Santa Cruz, CA and my niece decided to spontaneously cartwheel across the beach. I was able to capture her innocence and zest without interrupting that carefree moment. I like that a picture can take you back to a particular time and put a smile on your face, or make you shed a tear, or even make you laugh out loud!

~ Laura Miller



Here is one of my favorite pictures. It's hard to get pictures of fish eating because it happens so quickly, but every now and again you just get lucky. This is a picture of a smallmouth eating a crayfish.

~ Eric Engbretson



We also thought you might be interested in hearing how these photographers got started and what lured them in to taking photos like these. So we asked them.

(Continued on page 10)

My favorite pictures take me back to a happy memory or emotion. When I took this photograph we were staying with friends at a cabin in Laona for the weekend. I took off early in the morning for a walk with my camera while everyone was still asleep. The morning was so peaceful. There was a light frost on the ground, some colorful leaves were still barely holding on to the trees and the sky was clear. On my way back I saw this weed. For some strange reason I can never pass up a backlit weed without taking a picture. I love the way the light is shining down on it. It reminds me of how much I enjoyed that quiet morning walk and watching the woods wake up.

~ Sara Kramer



I'm most proud of some of my shark images from places like the Red Sea, the Coral Sea and the Galapagos but that was back when cameras used film! I think some of my best images are of big sharks (16+ footers).

~ Robert Korth

Scanned from slide film



(Lakes through a Lens, cont.)

Q: What inspired you to start taking pictures?

Nature photography is an art, and takes years of practice and experimentation to perfect.

A: When I was little, we went horseback riding in the mountains – a once-in-a-lifetime experience for us small-town folk from Wisconsin – and my mom took pictures. Well, my dad’s head ended up getting cut off in every one. It turns out I was the only one who could take pictures and ride horse at the same time. Today I strive to capture breathtaking moments and love to look back at those images and remember the good times we had.

*~ Laura Miller
Stevens Point, WI*

A: My grandfather inspired me. He was an industrial tech and photography instructor. He took care of me in the summer and taught me everything from re-glazing windows to cribbage. He had a collection of old cameras, which I got to play with. Nothing is quite like an old Pentax K1000 and some black and white film to inspire creativity.

*~ Sara Kramer
Stevens Point, WI*

A: I’ve always loved fish and that life-long interest led to me learn all I could about them through books and encyclopedias. But just reading about them and occasionally catching them while fishing wasn’t enough. I had to see for myself how they live in their world. Once I began going underwater and seeing that magical, watery world, I knew I had to share what I was seeing with others. While a picture can never fully depict the stunning beauty under the surface of our lakes the same way seeing it for yourself does, it does help to bridge the two worlds.

*~ Eric Engbretson
Florence, WI*

A: SCUBA diving and getting a little housing for a Kodak box camera in 1962.

*~ Robert Korth
Gresham, WI*

Brenton Butterfield



Even though the original photo, titled “Pretty in Purple,” was meant to be viewed in color, the dynamic qualities still pack a punch as a grayscale image. Brenton Butterfield received honorable mention for this entry in the Wisconsin Lakes Convention Annual Photography Contest. See the original and get more information about the photo contest at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes.



Practice Makes Perfect

The more you use your camera (preferably in tandem with an owner’s manual), the better photographer you will become over time. Try the different settings. With today’s modern digital cameras, mistakes and trial runs cost much less—just your time, really. Nature photography is an art, and takes years of practice and experimentation to perfect.

So wade in with your camera and experience the magic of aquatic diversity in our lakes. The beauty you find there will warm your heart and inspire you to be an even stronger advocate for our lakes. So what are you waiting for? Apply these assorted tips to your next photography outing, snap away and see the improvements in your photos! 🌊

Sources: “Photographing wildflowers: are your pictures worth 1,000 words?” by Robert C. Korfhage, *Kalmiopsis* Volume 13, 2006, pp. 13-20; NatureWatch web site < <http://www.fs.fed.us/outdoors/naturewatch/index.htm> >; “Through the eye of the camera.” by Beth Anderson, *Wildflower Magazine* Winter 1987, p.4.

Blending Arts & Science Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to Michael Waak, 2011 recipient of the *Robert M. Korth Scholarship – Blending the Arts & Science*. Michael will graduate in May 2012 with a degree in Water Resources. Growing up in Green Bay, Michael learned to appreciate

Provided by CNR, UWSP



Wisconsin's natural resources through many avenues including camping, biking and Boy Scouts (Eagle Scout rank). He recently worked in the Water and Environmental Analysis Lab in the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point. Congratulations to you, Michael!

If you are interested in helping more students like Michael, you can keep this scholarship active by giving a tax deductible contribution. To donate online go to <http://www.uwsp.edu/Foundation/givingForm.shtm> (please specify Bob Korth Scholarship), or send a check made payable to "UWSP Foundation – Bob Korth Scholarship" and mail it to: UWSP Foundation

2100 Main Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481

How Low Can You Go?

What is a Secchi disk?

A Secchi disk is an 8-inch diameter metal disk painted in alternate black and white quadrants used to measure water clarity.

Ever wonder how far you can lower a Secchi disk in your lake before it disappears from view into the watery world below your boat? Well, there are

over a thousand volunteers across the state who answer that question every open-water season to keep a record of water clarity on their lake. These volunteers belong to the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network and they share this data and knowledge by entering it into a statewide database. After looking at the data for 2010, we can get a sense of which lakes are the clearest in Wisconsin (at least of those that are monitored). In 2010, Black Oak Lake in Vilas County had the best average Secchi reading of 33 feet! Maiden Lake in Oconto County recorded the deepest single reading of 38 feet! Of all the monitored lakes in the state, we have 25 that have an average Secchi reading of 20+ feet! Now those are some clear lakes!



www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/clmn

Q&A Lake Districts

We often get phone calls and emails from Lake Tides readers with a variety of questions about lake districts. Do you have a question about lake districts that you would like to see answered in Lake Tides? Send it to uwexplakes@uwsp.edu so we can include it in a future issue.

Q: Can a lake district set aside money into “reserve accounts” to pay for future expenses?

A: Yes. Lake Districts in Wisconsin can establish non-lapsable funds for capital purchases and maintenance at their annual meeting. (§33.30(4)(d), Stats.). Such a fund can be used to purchase aquatic plant harvesting equipment, water patrol boats, land, and office equipment. It can also be used to pay for maintenance of capital equipment, but such accounts may not be tapped for operational expenses. “Non-lapsable” is a legal term applied to accounts that cannot be terminated or forfeited due to their non-use; in more simple terms, money in such an account cannot be “raided” for operational expenses but the size of such accounts can grow or shrink based on expenses and contributions identified in the annual budget.

For more information on lake districts, see *People of the Lakes: A Guide for Wisconsin Lake Organizations*, www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes/districts.



Conflicts on the Water

WI's Recreational Boating Survey, Part 2

By Kim Peterson, Edward B. Nelson, and Dreux J. Watermolen, Bureau of Science Services, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

In the last issue of *Lake Tides*, we listed some of the findings from a recreational boating survey conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). In this issue, we present some findings related to user conflicts. The DNR is using this data to prioritize future boating safety and enforcement work.

Conflicts Aboard

We asked boaters if others on the water caused problems or interfered with their activities in any way. Most of the problems identified by respondents arise from encounters with other boaters. They frequently talked about “interference,” and described how the actions of others detracted from their boating enjoyment. The primary causes of interference: lack of consideration, lack of knowledge, and the size and geography of the lake. We summarized these responses below.

Lack of Consideration

It appears that some boaters do not consider the rights and needs of others or the environment. Survey responses concerned behaviors on the water, as well as at boat launches and landing sites. Complaints similar to the following were common:

“Coming too close and fast to where I was fishing.”

“Fishermen dropping anchor in our ski path after we started skiing.”

“Fishermen with oars out won't give way to sailboats under sail.”

“People at the boat landing swim and lounge there and don't get out of the way when I put my boat in.”

Lack of Knowledge

Some boaters appear to be unaware of rules, laws, or procedures, or may not demonstrate common sense. This survey documented several complaints of boaters not abiding by the new (as of 2009) statewide laws:

1. It is illegal to transport invasive species.
2. It is illegal to operate a vessel within 100 feet of the shore of any lake at greater than slow-no-wake speed.

There were also several respondents who listed alcohol consumption as a problem.



You can read all of the rules and regulations in “*The Handbook! Of Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities*” 2011 Edition at: www.boat-ed.com/wi/handbook/pdf_index.htm

Size and Geography of the Lake

Some water bodies, particularly smaller lakes, cannot adequately accommodate human demand without crowding and user conflicts. This concept is explained in depth in the book *How's the Water? Planning for Recreational Use on Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers* (T. Dudiak, R. Korth, 2002) as “carrying capacity.”

“Biological carrying capacity” refers to the level of use a system can withstand before signs of degradation begin to appear. “Social carrying capacity” refers to the number of people that may be on the water at any given time before an individual begins to feel crowded and the quality of the experience is diminished.

Expectations and Perceptions

Comments from survey respondents suggested that some boaters simply lack respect for the rights of others. Having a great time on the water depends on our expectations and our own personal biases and experiences. This is very apparent in the following statements from the survey:

“Just because I’m a jet skier, boats think they have the right to cut me off.”

“Pleasure boaters who have no respect for the anchored or drifting fisherman.”

“In my opinion, the typical bass fisherman has no respect for pretty much any one else on the water.”

A seemingly uneven application of laws or perception of prejudice creates hard feelings and may lead to more conflict:

“Jet & Water skiers are extremely rude; never follow any of the rules. We’ve never seen any of them boarded and checked; it’s always fishing boats.”

“Boats seem to get away with anything and everything while jet skis get picked on. Laws don’t seem to get applied to boats as they are with jet skis.”

How Do Boaters Respond?

As drastic as this seems, some boaters have bought new boats or plan to sell the one(s) they have in response to on-water problems. Reasons ranged from “[buying] a bigger boat for my kids’ safety [because of] all the other boaters racing around making big waves” to “[selling a jet ski] because people automatically think I’m dangerous...and assume I’m an idiot!”

Many boaters have simply restricted or modified their on-water activities, only venturing out during no-wake hours or before/after the weekend rush. Anglers and swimmers reported yielding to power watercraft by utilizing bays and shorelines during busy times. It was reported that some water users, however, have employed a more passive/aggressive approach to ‘guard water turf’ by obstructing others with anchored boats and rafts.

Managing recreational water use conflicts around your lake or river can be a complex task, and keeping things in perspective is critical. Remember that no matter how angry we get, we have the great fortune to live in a country where we have the luxury of arguing over how to play! (How’s the Water, T. Dudiak, R. Korth, 2002) 💧

Managing recreational water use conflicts around your lake or river can be a complex task, and keeping things in perspective is critical.

Call or email your order

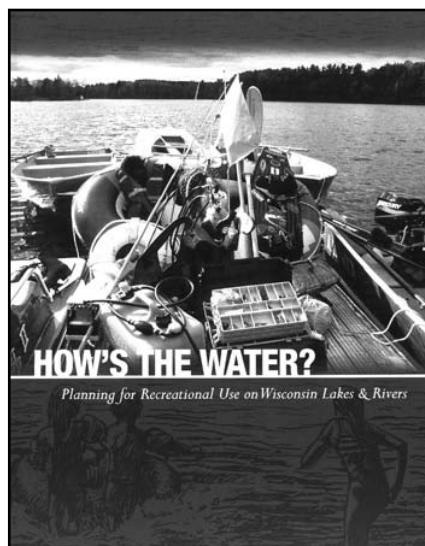
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Mention you saw this article in “Lake Tides” when you order your copy of How’s the Water: Planning for Recreational Use on Wisconsin Lakes & Rivers and get your copy for only \$15 - S & H included (regular price = \$21.95).

Order a case (21 books) and save even more!



Need Help?

Top Ten Tips for Recruiting Leaders and Volunteers to Your Lake Organization

Most Wisconsin lake organizations are wholly dependent on volunteers to carry out their mission. For many reasons, volunteers need to be replaced on a regular basis and recruiting new people can be a daunting task if you don't know where to start. Here are ten tips that might help your lake group grow and flourish.

1 Ask “Who’s not here?”

Understanding the make-up of your lake community allows you to analyze the leadership pool and know when a section of the community isn't represented. Your answer to “Who’s not here?” helps you develop a plan to increase involvement and target needed areas.

2 Look for skills, not names

Rather than depending on the same people again and again for help with certain tasks, take a look at the skills needed for the job at hand and seek out a new helper. By looking at skill sets rather than names, you can discover others' leadership potential and involve new people in your lake organization activities.

R. Korth



3 Encourage involvement in degrees

Ask for assistance with small, simple tasks that allow people to grow into larger commitments. Gradual involvement aids in the emergence of leaders and also builds a cohesive group.

4 What’s in it for me?

Match your recruiting style to the personal motivation of new leaders and volunteers. Seek to understand why prospective volunteers might be motivated to contribute to your lake group.

5 Use a wide-angle lens

Keep in mind that even the smallest, most limited volunteer effort can be part of the leadership activities of your lake community. What's important is seeing how each contribution fits into the whole lake stewardship and management picture.

6 Define the task

The simple technique of recruiting new leaders by asking for help becomes very effective when the task is well-defined by the time commitment needed. Identifying the skill sets to be used in accomplishing the task and recognizing the contribution that the completed task will make to your lake community's efforts can further motivate people to become involved.



7 Use current leaders to recruit new leaders

Current leaders and volunteers are in the best position to draw new leaders and volunteers into lake community activities. Visibility, position or authority, and leading by example are powerful tools when persuading others to become involved and take on some responsibility with your lake work.


8 Create a history of efficient use of time

Practice good time management by keeping meetings focused and well-organized. A reputation for efficiency always helps recruiting efforts in the end.

9 Offer membership “premiums”

What are the advantages and rewards of assuming a leadership role? A “premium” can be anything from a trip to a convention or a workshop to a certificate of appreciation presented at an annual lake group meeting.

10 Market your wares

Build on the reputation of your organization as effective and important to the lake community. Reports, newsletters, newspaper submissions, radio spots, and other public awareness campaigns can do this formally, and word of mouth works great too. 

Taken from: “Making grassroots grow: building and sustaining byway organizations.” Tele-workshop fact sheet. America’s Byways Resource Center. 2002. 46 pp. Original source: Heartland Center for Leadership Development <http://www.heartlandcenter.info/>.



CALLENDAR

September 17, 2011 – Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup

The International Coastal Cleanup (ICC), a worldwide event since 1986, is coordinated each September by the Ocean Conservancy and has been happening in Wisconsin since 1989. Each year the ICC gathers data from the debris collected on waterways around the world.

For more information: www.coastalcleanup.org.

September 18, 2011 – World Water Monitoring Day

This international education and outreach program helps build public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world by engaging citizens to conduct basic monitoring of their local water bodies. Celebrate with us on September 18, or host your own World Water Monitoring Day anytime from March 22 until December 31, 2011!

For more information: <http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org>

October 26-28, 2011 – NALMS 31st International Symposium

The North American Lake Management Society invites you to join them in Spokane, WA this fall for their 31st annual symposium. The theme for 2011 is “Diverse and Sustainable Lake Management.”

For more information: www.nalms.org

To get the most up-to-date lake-related events, go to www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexplakes and click on the Lake Event Calendar.



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Reflections

For most of us, knowledge of our world comes largely through sight, yet we look about with such unseeing eyes that we are partially blind. One way to open your eyes to unnoticed beauty is to ask yourself, "What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"

~ Rachel Carson

