



Captain Otty's Log

June 2013

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As I sit in front of my computer in mid-May composing this piece, I notice that the ice has *again* not returned to the lake! On the other hand, we're noting more insects. What amazing weather, it sometimes seems like at least three seasons in a single day! Hey, it's free entertainment, and there's not much you can do about it anyway, so you might as well enjoy it! To all of you *Hello!*, and to all you cottagers, *Welcome Back to the Lake!*

We have several activities planned for 2013. Look for information elsewhere in this newsletter and in future notices concerning the Shore Line Planting Program, and many other activities. Thanks to our Board members, Counsellors, and volunteers for their research, activities, and educational pieces, all of which help us to better enjoy a healthy lake.

Again this year the Maple Glen community is generously opening their waterfront recreation area to all who share Otty Lake, for a picnic with fun for all ages, including **FREE HOT DOGS, HAMBURGERS AND DRINKS!** Bring your family! Bring your neighbours! Bring a friend! Saturday 27 July, mark it in your calendar!

Three Otty Lakers were recently honoured by receiving the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. **Peter Wagland**, currently a Drummond/North Elmsley councillor, was cited for decades of volunteer service to United Way and several swimming leagues. **Murray Hunt** was cited for his service as our Lake Steward and



Photo: Rick Stojak

for his promoting of good environmental stewardship. **Karen Hunt** was cited for her leading role in creating the Otty Lake Management Plan, which has served as a model for other lake associations. ***Congratulations to our three honourees!***

Reduce algae by starving the lake of phosphorus!

The health of Otty Lake is a high priority for all of us, and positive steps are being taken to improve and maintain lake health for swimmers, boaters, fish, and other wildlife. Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley Townships have both implemented mandatory septic re-inspection programs. Besides ensuring a properly functioning septic system,

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President's Message, continued from P 1

experts recommend that we, as individual property owners, avoid the use of fertilizers, and maintain a vegetated shoreline buffer, to help absorb nutrients which would otherwise end up in the lake as food for algae and Eurasian milfoil. Your individual effort may not accomplish much, but collectively we can make a difference: If we follow recommended practices, we will help lower nutrient levels in the lake, which in turn will contribute to the reduction of aquatic vegetation, and enhance the appearance, enjoyment and value of our waterfront properties for current and future generations. Your Summer Information Package includes a fridge magnet depicting an imprisoned algae blob, as a reminder to keep phosphorus out of Otty Lake.

As advertised previously, Don Beattie has been looking for volunteers to work with him on our newsletter, and we're in luck! Meet **Barb Hicks**, the new editor of Captain Otty's Log. Barb comes to us with a family history of cottaging on Otty Lake South-West Shore, and a strong environmental background. She currently is President of the Rideau Environmental Action League, and also edits REAL's newsletter! Barb can be contacted at: dhicks11@cogeco.ca or 283-9266 (home). Welcome Barb!

If you have suggestions or comments on OLA plans, activities or priorities, or wish to get involved with OLA activities, visit us at <http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca>, click on "contact us", and email us your thoughts. You can direct your email to a particular Board member or to the Board in general.

Thanks to those of who paid your 2013 dues before 1 April, and received a \$5 discount. If you haven't paid yet, please support the work of the OLA by sending your cheque for \$20 to:

**Otty Lake Association
Box 20122, Perth Mews Mall
Perth, ON
K7H 3M6**

Capt'n Otty has this advice for Summer on the lake: Swim or boat with a buddy. Protect our fragile shoreline, don't make mega-wake on the lake. Have fun, be on the watch for ticks, and play safe! Have a great Summer, and I'll see you at the OLA Annual General Meeting on Saturday 13 July at the Perth Lions Hall, coffee at 8:30, meeting starting at 9:30 a.m.

Robert Cosh, President OLA

Fishing Regulations for 2013



In 2013, there are changes to the regulations governing bass fishing in FMZ 18 where Otty Lake is located. This year, the bass season opens on June 15 and closes on December 15. If you have a Sport Fishing Licence, the possession limit remains at a total of 6 bass. Holders of a Conservation Fishing Licence can possess 2 bass. Note that "possession" refers to the number of bass you have in your boat AND in your fridge combined. If you have a Sport Fishing Licence you cannot legally have 4 bass in your boat while you have more than 2 bass in your possession at home.

The pike season begins on May 11 and closes December 31. Possession limits

are 6 for holders of a Sport Fishing licence and 2 for those with a Conservation Fishing Licence.

If you are a regular reader of the newsletter, or if you've attended the Annual General Meeting, you are aware that Otty's bass population is in jeopardy. Over the past few years, the number of adult fish (2 pounds and above) has significantly declined. There are two causes of this. First, it is possible that a decade ago, the lake experienced a series of poor spawns. Second, the population has been subject to the over-harvesting of mature adult fish. This is the segment of the population that is the principal spawning source. Last year, a number of

residents and cottagers took some very positive steps to protect the fishery. I strongly encourage a continuation of this proactive, responsible approach. It takes a long time to grow an adult bass in Ontario. A 3 pound bass is at minimum, 7-8 years old. A 5 pound bass is well over 15 years old. Indiscriminate harvesting of mature fish will, in a short time, decimate a fishery in a small lake like Otty.

Please practice catch-and-release. If you want a fish dinner, consider harvesting some panfish like bluegills, sunfish and rock bass. They are far tastier than smallmouth or largemouth bass and their populations are at an all-time peak.

As well, please report illegal fishing on Otty, especially during the bass spawn in May and early June. Call the MNR TIPS hotline (1-800-222-8477). To report a crime you do not have to identify yourself. Please do your part to ensure that Otty's bass fishery remains healthy for many years to come.

Wally Robins

Let's Starve Algae in Otty

Algae - the Annual Loathsome Green Aquatic Eyesore. While this acronym isn't a scientific description of the plague we experience every year, it does capture the prevailing sentiment about those ugly green blobs that appear at docks.

Like all living things, algae need certain conditions to survive. They thrive in hot weather and prefer quiet water unaffected by wind. Algae also require nutrition, especially phosphorus. To reduce or even rid Otty of the green slime we all hate there's a simple solution - starve Otty of phosphorus run-off.

All lakes require a certain amount of nutrients including phosphorus, to support the natural cycle of life. Without some algae at the bottom of the food chain, lakes would be void of fish life. A lake without fish equates to a lake without herons, loons, ospreys and animals that feed on fish. However, there are a number of man-made sources of phosphorus that can enter a lake, pushing it over the tipping point and resulting in profuse algae blooms.

Man-made sources of phosphorus include ashes from firewood, sub-standard, faulty septic systems, and a



Ducks in algae. Photo: Hipea

major culprit, lawn and garden fertilizers. A fertilized lawn may look nice but every time it's watered, either by hose or by Mother Nature, phosphorus is washed into Otty.

Otty is a heavily populated lake. There are more large homes on it than ever before. Many seasonal and permanent properties have numerous "hard" surfaces like paved driveways and bigger decks. There is less natural vegetation every year. These

factors directly contribute to run-off of natural and man-made phosphorus after every rainfall.

Here are four simple things you can do to reduce the amount of phosphorus that washes into Otty.

- Dump your fireplace ashes as far from the lake as possible.
- Maintain a healthy septic system and support your township's septic re-inspection program.
- Avoid using fertilizers on your lawn and garden. Instead, use lake water which is rich in natural nutrients. Your lawn will look like a golf green and you won't be harming Otty.
- The last line of defence is a healthy vegetated shoreline buffer strip of native plants. Without this, you are providing algae with an always open buffet table of phosphorus. Plants and shrubs along the shoreline will slow and disperse runoff into the lake, allowing time for suspended particles to settle. Some particles will be absorbed by the shoreline vegetation. The bigger the buffer strip the better, but any size will help.

Please do your part to help starve Otty of phosphorus and put a **nail in the coffin of algae.**

Wally Robins

Art and the Phosphates



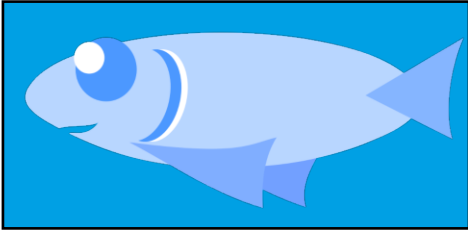
One of the main objectives of the OLA Environmental Committee is educating residents about algae and ways to reduce their growth. Since algae feed on phosphates the Committee decided a "Starve the Lake of Phosphates" program could provide suggestions and stimulate action.

In the summer of 2012, Beth Fischer (Trower) was visiting her parents at Otty Lake. Beth is a graphic artist who now lives in Germany. Late at night, around a campfire, David Reesor and Beth Fischer discussed a logo for the Committee.

Several months later this wonderful logo arrived by email. It will be used on the Committee's letterhead, a 2013 fridge magnet for lake residents and for other promotional/educational purposes. Thank you Beth!!

David Reesor

Fish Habitat Enhancement Project



The Otty Lake Association and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RCVA) will be working together to improve fish habitat in Otty this spring and summer. This project has two objectives.

The first is to enhance smallmouth spawning areas by depositing pea

gravel on and around existing, primary spawning grounds. Smallmouth bass prefer a hard but loose bottom for nesting. While Otty has lots of subsurface rock, most of it is comprised of large boulders and shelves.

The second objective is to improve overall fish and wildlife habitat. Based on the existing successful Fish Sticks program which has been introduced to some local lakes, brush and cut trees will be used to create feeding, sheltering and resting areas. Some wood will be sunk off-shore

while cut trees will be placed along shorelines. No local trees will be cut for this project. All submerged wood deposits off-shore will not interfere with or pose a threat to safe boating or swimming. All shoreline work will only be conducted with the permission of property owners. Shoreline wood that is both above and below the water line will provide natural habitat for fish, birds, underwater insects and invertebrates, amphibians and water mammals.

Wally Robins

Otty Lake Management Plan - Five Years Later

In 2008 the Otty Lake community, with the assistance of its community partners, developed a long-term plan to support the health and special features of Otty Lake. You told us what you felt needed to be done. The Otty Lake Management Plan reflected community consensus about what was needed to protect the natural, physical, cultural and economic aspects of Otty Lake and its watershed.

It's now 2013 and time to assess what has been accomplished over the past five years - and to identify areas that need to be addressed as we move forward.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED ONCE MORE!

Over the past few months the Lake Plan Action Committee has been drawing together a Five Year Review for the Otty Lake Management Plan. Your feedback would be very helpful. Please ask your Area Counsellor about this project and come to the AGM on July 13th to provide your input.

Karen Hunt



Photographer: Derek Smith

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Pitch-In 2013

Pitch-In is over for another year. We would like to thank everyone who participated in the clean-up; it was a dirty job but we did it. Approximately 56 bags were handed out and most of the main and side roads around Otty Lake have now been cleaned of garbage. The groups from BurgessWood and Maple Glen organized their own clean-up, so it is not known how many bags they took to the dump. It would be nice to think that the countryside would remain garbage free. Thank you again everyone for your noble effort.



Elizabeth Allcock with Pitch-In collectors' items. Photo: David Allcock

Watch For the Shoreline Survey Teams!

This summer for two weeks starting on June 24th, the Otty Lake Association will partner with the Perth-based Centre for Sustainable Watersheds and the Canadian Wildlife Federation to carry out the Love Your Lake Shoreline Survey Program on our lake. Otty Lake volunteers (and boats) will provide the water transport for the "surveyor".

The survey team (boat driver and data collector) travels around the lake viewing the shoreline of each property from the lake. They use a computer, GPS and maps to ensure accuracy, i.e. they know exactly which property they are looking at, and where the property boundaries are. For each property they take a photograph and make observations. They will look at items such as decks, docks, stairs, boathouses, vegetation,

wildlife habitat, type and degree of erosion and restoration or protection opportunities.

Each property owner will receive an individual confidential shoreline property report based on the data collected. The report will identify the positive things that property owners have done along their shoreline to improve water quality, and will provide constructive recommendations to improve shoreline health specific to that property. The reports will be completed over the winter and delivered to property owners next spring. The reports will not be shared with any regulatory body.

The new survey will let us see the shoreline changes since the 2005 survey. Over this time there has been considerable focus on shoreline stewardship, healthy septic systems,

shoreline plantings etc. – we want to know the results of this work. We also want to know which stewardship actions the OLA needs to focus on in the future.

You can help ensure that the survey is accurate. If you know of errors in the Otty Lake map distributed to OLA members, e.g. incorrect numbering, please let the lake association know as soon as possible - contact them at ola@ottylakeassociation.ca. If you have questions about the 2013 Otty Lake Shoreline Survey, please contact Karen Hunt at 613 264-9273 or mkhunt@ripnet.com.

So if you see a couple of volunteers in a boat making notes as they cruise along the Otty shoreline, please wave and say hello!

Karen Hunt

Lake Steward's Report

The ice-out this year was reported as April 17 by various observers. That may seem quite late compared to the ice-out on March 23, last year. However, there have been nine later dates than April 17 for the ice-out since 1986 in the record passed to me by an Otty Lake resident.

I am writing this article in mid-May and we have launched our water quality sampling program for the year. We take the first sample for phosphorus at the mid-lake deep point in early May under the Lake Partners Program of the Ministry of the Environment before the lake has stratified with a layer of warmer water on top of a colder layer. Mixed lake water gives us a more representative indication of the level of this nutrient in the lake. Additional samples under the Lake Partner Program will be taken each month until October.

This will be the second year of an augmented OLA program of water quality sampling at Otty Lake. One objective is to better understand the conditions that are leading to the increased blooms of green algae at Otty. With that objective the OLA conducted additional sampling for phosphorus (Total Phosphorus) as well as nitrogen (Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen) at three deep points on the lake as well as at several shoreline sites. All of the results of this sampling had values within the norm for these parameters. However, based on our current information, this year we will be targeting different shorelines of Otty that we feel may give us a better understanding of the dynamics of the nutrient loading in the lake. In the meantime please support the OLA "Starve the Lake of Phosphorus Program".

In 2012 we also expanded the OLA bacteria water sampling program to include additional sites. The E.coli levels in Otty Lake are very good based on this sampling. The highest value of

the 47 E.coli samples taken at Otty was 12 cfu*/100 ml ("cfu" refers to "colony forming units"). Most samples were 1 cfu/100 ml or less. The Ontario standard for swimming is 100 cfu/100ml. Nevertheless, drinking untreated lake water is not recommended.

We continue to support the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority by providing boat transportation and volunteer assistance with their four annual water sampling days on Otty and McLaren Lakes. This is part of their Watershed Watch Program of monitoring 39 lakes of the Rideau

Watershed. We appreciate their efforts as they are equipped to determine additional characteristics of lake water beyond that of the OLA. One example is the measurement of dissolved oxygen and temperature at one-metre intervals from top to bottom at the deepest point of a lake. These profiles are taken at both Otty and McLaren Lakes, four times a year. This information is useful to understand the dynamics of the lake as well as its suitability to support different species of fish and other aquatic creatures.

Murray Hunt



Otty Lake Picnic



Fun in the Sun with your family, friends and neighbours!


Saturday 27 July 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Maple Glen recreation area,
North-West shore, off Otty Lake Side Road

Bring a friend! Bring a neighbour!

Volunteers welcome to assist in the planning of the event.

Call Chris @ 264-1163 or chrisc@ripnet.com

Events for all ages to be announced at a later date

LUNCH:  FREE! Burgers, HotDogs, SoftDrinks, Water.



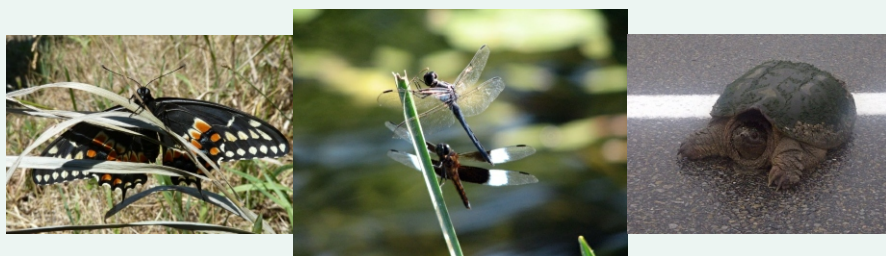
NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Perth Lions Club, at Perth Fairgrounds

Saturday 13 July 2013

- **8:30 Coffee, displays, and meeting friends and municipal representatives**
- **9:30 Business meeting**
- **Openings exist for positions on the Board of Directors.** If you are interested in running for a position, please contact Karen Hunt, Past President (mkhunt@ripnet.com or 613-264-9273).

Otty Lake Watershed Calendar, 2014: Flora and Fauna



Photographers: Susan Samila, Bill Hicks, Glen Bishop, Glenn McColpin (clockwise from top left)

This 16 month calendar of the Otty Lake watershed flora and fauna offers a different theme for each month with multiple pictures for each. A truly beautiful and informative edition!

Orders can be placed at your earliest convenience as we again anticipate a terrific response and have purchased only 400 copies.

Cost: 1 for \$10
2 for \$15

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Calendars are available now by contacting one of the following people:



- **Gail Read** 613-267-5381
read2read@hotmail.com
- **Karen Hunt** 613-264-9273
mkhunt@ripnet.com
- **Robert Cosh** 613-267-5723
robertcosh@hotmail.com

Or at the Annual General Meeting on July 13th!

Tick Update



Ticks are continuing to spread in the Otty Lake area. An Otty Laker reported that while he was opening his cottage this year his dog picked up four ticks, and his neighbour found three ticks on his own body after trimming bush. Dr. Sue Martin, a veterinarian near Perth reports that as of May 24th, 2013, 18 dogs have tested positive for Lyme disease at her practice so far this year. Last year between 25 and 30 tested positive.

We have posted links on our website, which you can see at <http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca/Environment.htm>. The "Local Update" link has the latest information from the local health unit, and the "Ticks, People, and Pets" link includes information about Lyme disease in dogs.

Lyme disease in humans is spread by black-legged ticks, also known as deer ticks. The deer ticks are carried by deer. People who feed deer are making their houses and cottages into tick magnets. 'Nuff said?

Keeping Deer Out of Your Garden



The culprits. Photo: Dan McIver

Captain Otty has been hearing a lot of unhappy Otty Lakers describing how rampaging deer are desecrating their gardens. Although 25 years ago you could rest assured that a bed of lush hostas would give pleasure to your guests from May through September, today the deer typically wait until the hostas have grown just high enough to be admired, then devour them in one night, leaving no more than celery stick look-alikes. Cedar trees have been decimated. Many techniques such as human hair, moth-balls, and prayer have been tried, and of course planting varieties of flowers and shrubs that are unattractive to deer is partly effective, as long as you want a garden that consists almost entirely of astilbe, furry or smelly plants, and ferns. In Captain Otty's garden, the deer have eaten many of the recommended plants that were sold as unattractive to deer. They love eating the holly, prickles and all.

Some gardeners have fenced their gardens with wire, polypropylene material, monofilament fishing line, or netting. Fencing is effective, but has a tendency to remind the visitor of a penitentiary, not a garden.

Below are some techniques from Otty Lake residents that have been reported to Captain Otty, divided into two categories.

Techniques That Work

Evelyn Dore puts six eggs in a large (1.89 - 2 litre) juice bottle, fills the rest of the bottle with water and shakes it up. She lets this mixture ferment for approximately five weeks. She recommends that you **not open** the bottle indoors and that you not keep it inside the house. After five weeks she uses the pungent mixture as a concentrate, pouring about 2 cm (1") in a plastic pump spray bottle and adding water. The mixture is sprayed on the plant and re-sprayed lightly about every three to four days in the spring, or when new flower buds appear and after a rainfall. Less frequently during the summer. She finds that one bottle of concentrate can last a season depending on the size of your garden. Apparently deer are repulsed by the smell of decaying eggs. Although this mixture does have a nasty smell when wet, the smell disappears when dry but the deer can still detect it. Plastic

pump spray bottles can be purchased from hardware stores.

The American commercial product Liquid Fence has been successful. The label states that it is based on "putrescent eggs solids" and garlic. The smell while the mixture dries is unspeakable, but the product is effective because it contains xanthan gum, which resists being washed off the plants by rain. The product must be re-applied when plants produce new growth. Liquid Fence is applied approximately once per month after the spring. In our garden, a good spray in the late fall repels the animals over the winter. Liquid Fence is not available in Canada.

Other commercial products have been used with varying degrees of success by local gardeners but our deer are wily critters and adapt their taste buds.

Techniques That Don't Work

Captain Otty has personal experience with several failed techniques, including running a 1200-foot wire and electric fence through the woods. The one technique that worked well but didn't please the neighbours at 2 a.m. was playing the bagpipes. The deer never lasted beyond the first eight bars of Scotland the Brave.

Unfortunately, our local deer also transmit ticks which may carry Lyme disease. These ticks are frequently deposited on plants in the garden where we and our pets pick them up.

If you have any experience with good or bad techniques for discouraging the deer, please write to Captain Otty at:

editor@ottylakeassociation.ca

If enough ideas are received, we may run a follow-up article. Thank you!

Captain Otty