



CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION • JUNE 2018

President's Message

from
Reid Kilburn



It was 1978 and the number one hit song was "Shadow Dancing" by Andy Gibb. The number three song was "You light up my life" by Debbie Boone - perhaps that tune conjures up more memories. Our Prime Minister was Pierre Trudeau. And perhaps most importantly for all of us, the Otty Lake Association as we know it today, was formed. The OLA is forty years young, considered a leader in lake associations in Eastern Ontario, guided by a Lake Management Plan and input from you, our members and friends and our partners. Your input has been essential over the years whether it be through participation in the development of the Lake Management Plan, participation in fish and wildlife enhancement projects, or through our surveys.

We were pleased once again with the response to our 2018 priorities survey. Over 40% or 197 responded to the survey. Not surprisingly water quality again turned out to be your highest priority. Your rankings and comments have provided input to your Board's planning cycle, and our goal is to share the survey results in more detail, our future direction, and our accomplishment to-date at our 2018 Annual General Meeting. Mark it in your calendar if you haven't already. Sunday, July 8th at 1:00 p.m. for displays and 2:00 p.m. for business and presentations at the Perth Legion.

The results of this year's survey can be found in this edition of Captain Otty's Log in graph form, as well as on the infographic provided in the



Photo: Mary Brown



information packages being delivered by our Counsellors.

The long weekend in May will have come and gone by the time you are reading this article. Cottages have already been opened and boats have been launched. Kayaks and canoes are taking advantage of quieter times. As we move into peak season for watercraft of all types I would ask that you respect boating rules and regulations and your fellow watercraft owners while on the lake. Also, our shorelines are vulnerable to erosion caused by wakes and pedestrian traffic. Please boat with care.

Also please check out the Jebbs Creek embayment project planned for this fall. Jennifer Lamoureux, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority biologist, writes about this exciting

project and what it will mean to fish and wildlife in our area. The OLA is pleased to be a partner in this project and we will be canvassing for volunteers to help sometime in the early fall. Thanks to RVCA for their continued support of the OLA and its watershed.

Best wishes for another memorable summer on Otty Lake.

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TICKS AND LYME RESOURCES

Ticks and Lyme disease and its treatment are very much in the news these days. Otty Lake residents should be aware that there have been many instances of people staying at Otty Lake contracting the disease, and that Lanark County is a high risk area for the disease. In a May 13 email the OLA provided a few resources to consult in order to learn the basics. With our limited resources the OLA cannot possibly keep up with the latest



research and treatment protocols. We urge you to seek professional help from your health care practitioner or health unit and do your own research.

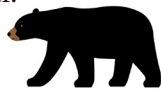
That being said, some feel that current provincial and federal legislation fails to adequately address the way Lyme disease is tested, diagnosed and treated in Canada and are advocating change. Otty Lake resident Myrna Lee is Chair of the advocacy organization, "Ontario Fights Lyme" and co-chair of the support group "Lanark Fights Lyme". Ontario Fights Lyme is dedicated to fighting the spread of Lyme disease as well as providing information, support, advocacy and activism to victims. You may wish to consult the [Ontario Fights Lyme](#) website and contact them for further information.

Barb Hicks

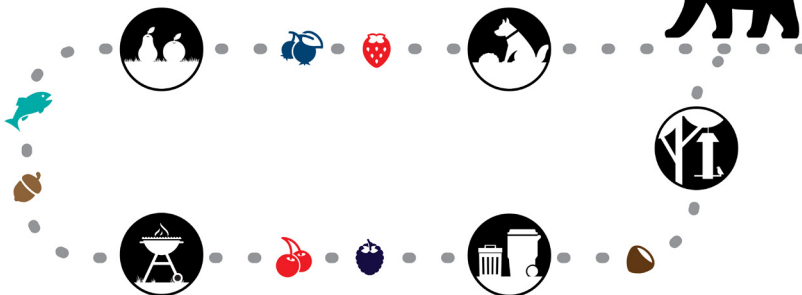
KEY BEAR COMMENTS SHARED BY TREVOR HORVATIN, MAY 11

A presentation by Trevor Horvatin, Wildlife Technician with MNRF, was organized to better prepare the Area Counsellors for questions from the neighbours, and was opened up to others. More than 45 people attended in all, including 22 area counsellors. Key takeaways from the afternoon were:

- Commit as a community since a single person can habituate and create a community issue.
- Do not feed bears!! Garbage and recycling should be set out on the day of collection, remove bird feeders during bear migration, remove tempting berry bushes and composters, burn off BBQs.
- If you see a bear stand your ground, yell, wave a stick, use a deterrent and back away. Never run nor climb trees.
- Sightings can be called in to the hotline at 866-514-2327 to assist MNRF in tracking.
- Call 911 in an emergency situation, such as a bear approaching a public gathering or school yard or entering a residence.
- It is more likely to be struck by lightning than attacked by a predatory bear.



Gail Read



Eating Habits and diets. Their entire life revolves around food. When they are not hibernating, bears spend most of their time looking for food. Graphic: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

KUDOS TO PITCH IN PARTICIPANTS



During April's Pitch In campaign, groups were out picking up trash along Elm Grove Road, Rideau Ferry Road, Wildlife Road and in BurgessWood. Pitch In bags were available through our two townships who are also accepting the litter collected free of charge. One cottager, Stuart Abbot, collected all kinds of trash from the lake itself over several weekends. Some of the trash Stuart found came from decaying docks and rafts, so please make sure yours are not part of the problem.

On behalf of everyone on Otty Lake, thanks to those who participated this year including John Byers, Tom Spence, Jim Smith, Nancy Murray, Linda Toivanen, Jennifer Jilks, Gail Read, Stuart Abbott and all the other regular Pitch In volunteers we may have missed, including all those who contributed throughout the year. Thanks, too, to Elizabeth Allcock for encouraging Otty Lake involvement every year.

While not all the garbage collected was generated or discarded by those in our community, we can all be a little more careful to ensure our garbage does not end up in the lake or along the roadside.

Christine Kilburn and Barb Hicks

THE MORE YOU KNOW: TENT CATERPILLARS

You've likely noticed the hordes of caterpillars on your building, vehicle, hanging over the lane as you drive in, on your windshield, and you've probably found at least one inside your house/cottage by now. My four year old keeps them for pets. Great fun.

They're icky, slippery when squished underfoot, and stripping all the leaves out of the forest. Agreed. I could write an article about how much we hate them, but there's lots of chatter about that already, so here's a different spin.

Did you know:

- Forest Tent Caterpillars (aka the invasion) are different from Eastern Tent Caterpillars (aka the ones with all the tents). Forest Tent Caterpillars don't build the tents, it just seems to be a 'happy' coincidence that it's a good year for the Eastern Tent Caterpillar as well!
- Forest Tent Caterpillars and Eastern Tent Caterpillars look very similar but there's a notable difference—FTCs have dots down the back while ETCs have a solid stripe.
- Forest tent caterpillars are a native species and documented infestations date back over a century.

Infestations occur every 10 years or so and last for 3-6 years.

- Infestations tend to be fairly synchronous throughout Ontario and Quebec (neat!) Birds, fish, small mammals and even bears eat caterpillars. One researcher dissected a pile of bear poop and estimated that the bear was consuming 25 000 caterpillars per day!
- Infestation years mean that fish are well-fed, so they may be a bit more reluctant to take the bait this year.
- Caterpillars can completely defoliate a tree, and this can damage or weaken the tree if it also occurs in a drought year. Trees usually recover fully from defoliation (although maple sap may decline the following year).
- The defoliation allows sunlight to reach the forest floor and may be of benefit to plants that normally don't get a lot of direct sun.
- Defoliated trees often re-leaf, so those branches won't be bare all summer!
- *Sarcophaga aldrichi* (also known as the "friendly fly") is a natural predator of the Forest Tent Caterpillar. You'll definitely notice an increase in these flies in the next couple of years. They resemble the housefly but are a bit larger and much less skittish. They'll land and crawl around until brushed off. They're pretty fun (and easy) to swat, but you might want to control the urge. These flies lay eggs in the caterpillar

larvae. A noticeable increase in friendly flies often signals the beginning of the collapse of the infestation.

- Caterpillars will munch their way through the forest until late June/early July. They'll cocoon and become moths after about 10 days. The moths won't be here long, they mate and lay their eggs quickly—in small egg sacs that encircle branches.
- Eggs hatch only once a year, soon after leaf-out. Fortunately we only need to deal with one generation of caterpillar per year! By the time you read this article, the worst (for this year) will be behind us, and you can look forward to a caterpillar-free summer.

For more information and your reading pleasure, please see the following links:

rivercare.org/news/tent-caterpillars-are-for-the-birds

cottagetips.com/tips/forest-tent-caterpillar-facts/

nrcan.gc.ca/forests/fire-insects-disturbances/top-insects/13379

dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/ftc02.pdf

cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/tent-caterpillars-outbreak-infestation-northern-ontario-1.4159768

Kyla Haley



CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG is produced by the Otty Lake Association (OLA) three times a year, and is distributed by e-mail or Canada Post to all OLA members. Contributions to the Log are welcome.

Coordinator: Barb Hicks
Proofing: Don Beattie
Distribution: Robert Cosh, Shari and Don Beattie
Layout and Design: David Bromley

To find out more about the OLA, or to see past issues, please see: www.ottylakeassociation.ca. Or write to: The OLA, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6.

PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS.

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS PLANT?

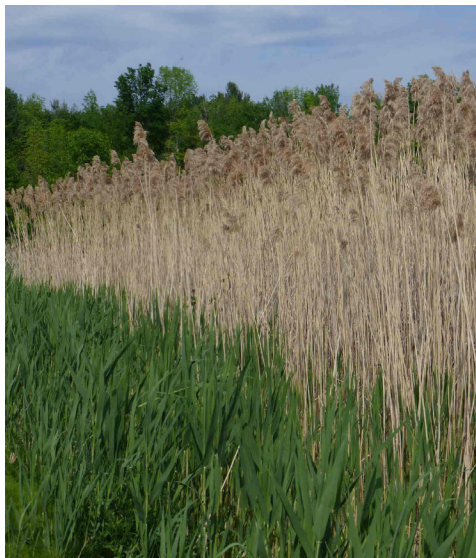


Photo taken along Wildlife Road in the Otty Lake watershed.

This is non-native *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed), which is an invasive plant that poses a major threat to the viability of our native wetlands. This plant grows well in wet areas and reproduces by seed or rhizome. It out-competes native plants altering habitats and affecting wildlife.

Non-native *Phragmites australis* is regarded as our most invasive plant in Canada. Its presence has been known in Ontario for some time but most of the efforts in curtailment have focused on the open wetland habitats that surround our Great Lakes.

The wetlands in Eastern Ontario are wide open to an invasion of Non-Native *Phragmites*. Counties such as Lanark, Renfrew and Frontenac have interlinked wetland complexes, and in many cases are difficult terrain to negotiate. *Phragmites*--once established within such complexes--is virtually impossible to eradicate.

Invasive non-native *Phragmites* takes **less than 5 years** to dominate an open wetland.

What can we do?

1. Report sightings of invasive *Phragmites* to EDDMapS Ontario.

When reporting your sighting, include a photo, the date and location and the extent of the cell of *Phragmites*. EDDMapS Ontario is supported by the Ontario Government and managed through OFAH's Invasive Species Awareness Program. This tool allows the public to report on any invasive species.

*Reporting more sightings will provide government agencies with a greater understanding of the extent of the invasive *Phragmites* situation in our area.*

2. Removal of invasive non-native *Phragmites*

- It is important to seek out and identify the locations of smaller cells. These cells may be a few plants; seed heads may not be present. In the early season (June) the cell will be a healthy size, growing fast with blue-green leaves giving away its presence. These plants are found along the shoulders of our county and township roads. Their presence is due to the mowing of necessary sight lines. In any case, these are the cells that eventually will be mowed into the next favourable wetland. It is important that these cells be stopped. At this early stage, this plant is most vulnerable and accessible for removal.
- Note: In marshy environments, invasive *Phragmites* most likely makes its first appearance at forest edge not at water's edge. Special care is required to check on the edges of the forest. All-terrain vehicles moving within our forested regions have a huge potential to introduce this invasive species into off-road areas.

- Invasive *Phragmites* gains its success by the development of a network of rhizomes under the ground. Some 80% of its biomass is held unseen in its rhizomes and roots.
- Invasive *Phragmites* seed heads and stalks should be cut to ground and stored in dark plastic garbage bags that are doubled up before they are removed for disposal. Large cells that require many bags need the cooperation of our Public Works Departments to remove material for burial under an overburden.
- It is a challenge to attempt rhizome removal, which is probably not possible in established cells. However repeated removal of renewed growth reduces the plant's ability to store its future energy needs.
- No individual or group can make headway against this plant without support from others. As a unified voice we can work with our counties and townships to help slow this plant down.
- Unlike the invasive strain, native *Phragmites* does not require control since it rarely develops into monoculture stands, does not alter habitat, has limited impact on biodiversity and does not deter wildlife.

*Prepared by Karen and Murray Hunt using material from David Overholt's "Working to Combat the Invasive Plant *Phragmites Australis*". Dave is a resident of White Lake, Lanark County.*

RESOURCES

EDDMapS Ontario Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System
eddmaps.org/ontario

Invading Species Awareness Program,
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters & MNRF
invadingspecies.com/invading-species-reporting/hotline 1-800-563-7711

Lanark County Brochure on *Phragmites Australis*

Ontario Invasive Plant Council: 705 748 6324 ext. 243, ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/what-we-do/training/

Government of Ontario:
ontario.ca/invasivespecies

Characteristics	Native <i>Phragmites australis</i>	Invasive/Non-Native <i>Phragmites australis</i>
Stand Height	No taller than 2 metres	Up to 5 metres
Stand Density	Sparse, interspersed with native vegetation	Dense monoculture, up to 100% invasive <i>Phragmites</i>
Stem Colour	Reddish-Brown	Beige, tan
Stem Texture	Smooth and shiny	Rough and dull
Leaf Colour	Yellow-Green	Blue-green
Seedhead Density	Sparse, small	Dense, large

THE OLA SURVEY – METHODOLOGY AND PURPOSE

In the spring of 2018, the Otty Lake Association administered a survey to property owners on or with access to the lake. The purpose of the survey was to determine areas of principal interest in the community. This information allows the Board of Directors to plan its future activities and dedicate its resources to topics that matter most to the community.

The bulk of the survey instruments were administered electronically. However, since a small percentage of property owners do not have access to personal computers, fifty-five (55) surveys were administered by mail.

A total of 197 property owners, or 40%, responded to the survey. This response rate far surpasses the accepted level (30%) that is deemed as a valid indicator of a target population. Credit must be given to those Otty Lake property owners who completed the recent survey.

Survey Results. Seven topics were listed in the survey. Respondents were asked to rank all seven topics in order from their most to least important. Here are the results of this ranking. Note that percentages have been rounded.

- Water Quality – 44%**
- Aquatic Vegetation/Algae – 28%**
- Development Pressure – 9%**
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat – 6%**
- Groundwater – 5%**
- Public Awareness/Education – 5%**
- Social Events – 3%**

Survey data was looked at in a second manner and is represented below. In this case, the total number of responses that listed a topic as first, second or third priority were calculated. A slight shift in priority rating is seen.

- Water quality – 80%**
- Aquatic vegetation/Algae – 70%**
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat – 51%**
- Development Pressure – 47%**
- Groundwater – 32%**
- Public Awareness/Education – 18%**
- Social Events – 4%**

Write In Comments. The survey instrument provided space for respondents to comment on other topics or concerns. Roughly 63 write-in comments were received that covered a wide variety of subjects. Some comments and recommendations were beyond the mandate and authority of OLA. Other concerns and their solutions are the responsibility of individual property owners. No one issue presented in the write-in comments represented more than 2 (two) percent of the survey population. As a result, the Board will not take direct action on topics surfaced through write-in comments. OLA expresses its appreciation for each respondent who provided write-in feedback and suggestions.

LOON WATCHERS NEEDED

The lake is alive with birds, bugs, and boats and it's a new year for the loons of Otty Lake. Loons returned to the area in April as the ice was receding, and their calls have been echoing in the evenings. The 2018 Loon Survey has begun again, and we are eagerly awaiting what we hope to be a loon-baby-filled summer on the lake. We are hoping to be able to gather enough information to give us a good idea of how many loon

pairs and singles made their home on the lake this year, and how many babies are born. We need your help!

Do you have a loon pair that lives near your home or cottage? We'd love to hear from you! Do you enjoy cruising or paddling around the lake? We're always looking for folks to help provide us with information about loon sightings! If you have information you'd like to contribute, or have questions, please contact Kyla at ottylakeloonsurvey@gmail.com.

Information will be compiled onto this [google map](#) and will be updated as the year goes on. Happy loon watching!

Kyla Haley

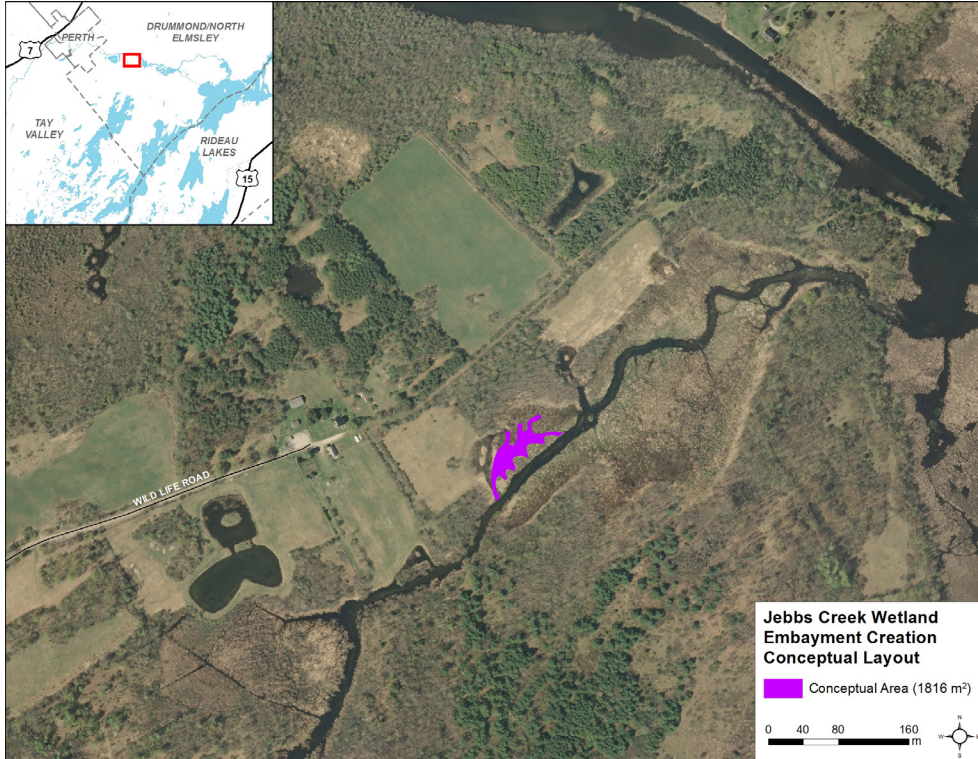


Photo: Rick Stojak

Where Do We Go From Here? It is important to understand that OLA, and the OLA Board, is a small volunteer organization with limited financial resources. As a result, the OLA Board will focus its attention and resource allocation on topics identified as being of most importance to the Otty Lake community. This may involve examining current approaches to topics and enhancing them through different or more extensive work. For example, Otty Lake has an extensive and effective lake water quality sampling process. Increasing the level of this testing will not necessarily tell us anything that we don't already know. But, water testing can be supplemented with other initiatives that may improve the overall water quality in our lake. Because of increased attention on key priority topics identified by the community, lower rated topics will receive less attention.

Wally Robins

JEBBS CREEK WETLAND EMBAYMENT PROJECT



Background

An effort to provide enhanced recreational and natural environmental learning opportunities at the Perth Wildlife Reserve Conservation Area, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority identified in 2012 that a constructed wetland embayment (a recess in a shoreline forming a bay) along the shoreline of Jebbs Creek would align with those goals. As a result the Wetland Embayment Creation project was adopted as a management action in the 2012 Perth Wildlife Reserve Conservation Area Management Plan. In addition to enhanced recreational opportunities the RVCA recognized that a habitat improvement project could be created on public land in the Tay River watershed. Jebbs Creek is one of the largest tributaries in the watershed and is the surface water connection from Otty Lake to the Tay River. Our tributaries are the lifelines of the Tay River and affect water quality and biodiversity in the larger systems. By using a combination of embayment creation, aquatic vegetation planting, shoreline planting, wood structure installation and turtle basking habitat creation, this project will result in a healthier, more vibrant

public space for people and the natural environment.

Overview

The project involves converting a small area of existing meadow habitat in the RVCA's Perth Wildlife Reserve Conservation Area to a series of small riverine wetland embayments along the shoreline of Jebbs Creek within Drummond/North Elmsley Township. Jebbs Creek supports a warm/cool water fishery. The purpose of the Jebbs Creek Wetland Embayment Creation Project is to create 1600 m² of new spawning, nursery, rearing, and feeding habitat for the 20 species of fish that reside in Jebbs Creek. The Kemptville District of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry manages the Tay River watershed for an extremely diverse fishery which includes northern pike, smallmouth bass largemouth bass and walleye. Northern pike is a local sport fish, well known for its large size and predatory nature. Despite its reputation as a top predator, northern pike are particularly sensitive during spawning and are often subject to high egg mortality; therefore it is crucial to ensure that suitable spawning

habitat exists to support this species. Through a multi-tier approach, it is our goal to create and maintain a suitable spawning and nursery site for northern pike along Jebbs Creek, while helping to improve shoreline stability, riparian habitat and water quality. The project will also provide small riverine wetland embayments along Jebbs Creek, which will provide important habitat for breeding birds, amphibians, and turtle nesting, with a goal to increase overall biodiversity. Since the project is located in a Conservation Area there is a strong opportunity to engage the community and provide educational and enhanced recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the area.

We are pleased that the Otty Lake Association has agreed to partner with RVCA on this important project. There will be an opportunity for volunteer participation in September – more details coming in the late summer.

Adapted from text by Jennifer Lamoureux, Aquatic and Fish Habitat Biologist, RVCA

**OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JULY 8, 2018,
1 TO 4 P.M.
PERTH-UPON-TAY LEGION
26 BECKWITH ST. E., PERTH**

Social Time and Displays: 1 -2 p.m.
AGM Business: 2 – 4 p.m.

THEME: OLA celebrates 40 years in existence, and 10 year anniversary of Lake Management Plan

Hear about:

- our lake then, now and in the future
 - an upcoming project you can take part in
 - how our Townships work with and support us
- Your input regarding our future direction will be welcomed.

Septic Savvy a Success. The Lake Networking Group's Septic Savvy Workshop held May 26 in Perth was, by all accounts, a big success. Counting the presenters and partners there were about 80 in attendance. We are very fortunate on Otty Lake to have mandatory septic re-inspections. Tay Valley Township supports mandatory septic re-inspection on eight other lakes within TVT, whereas D/NE supports mandatory septic re-inspection on Otty only. On most other lakes in the LNG region, septic re-inspection programs, if they even exist, are voluntary. You can view the Septic Savvy presentations on the [Lake Networking Group page](#), hosted on the Friends of the Tay Watershed site. Just go to the bottom of page and click on the Septic Savvy 2018 button.

2018 Municipal Election is October 22. Waterfront property owners and residents have a right to vote in municipal elections. You can vote in a municipality if you are a resident of that municipality, or you and your spouse own or rent property in that municipality. But you vote just once, regardless of how many properties you own or rent. Make sure you are on the list by consulting [VoterLookup.ca](#). DNE voters will be voting by paper ballot. Electors in Tay Valley Township will be voting electronically, by internet or telephone. There will be no paper ballot

Household Hazardous Waste Depots. Local HHW depots are seasonal, so be sure to get your dangerous, flammable, poison, toxic, or corrosive materials to a Ministry of the Environment licensed depot before the fall. Be prepared to show proof of residency. Drummond/North Elmsley residents have access to the HHW depot on Patterson Crescent in Carleton Place. It operates Saturday mornings from 8:00 a.m. until noon, this year from May 19 to September 1. Tay Valley Township residents can take their HHW to the Middleville Depot operated by Lanark Highlands at 4686 Wolf Grove Road, Lanark, from the Victoria Day weekend to the Thanksgiving weekend. Hours are Mondays 3 to 6 p.m., Wednesdays 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturdays 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Spring/Summer Information Packages (SIPs). If you have received your SIP already, you will notice it is lighter than usual! Your association has aimed to provide less paper in response to the reduced availability of free printed materials, our own printing costs, and the availability of most materials via the web. Thanks to the area counsellors who so diligently deliver the materials to all 500 and some households. Their visits are also an opportunity for people to begin or renew their membership in the OLA, confirm contact information, and ask or relay any questions they may have about the lake or lake activities. If you think you have been missed, contact the Coordinator, Gail Read at read2read@outlook.com or see links to electronic versions of the SIP contents on the sidebar of the Meetings page of our [website](#).



Photo: Derek Smith

FoTW Representation. Reid Kilburn has volunteered to represent the OLA and Tay Valley on the Friends of the Tay Watershed (FoTW) Board of Directors. Robert Cosh, OLA Past President held the position since 2012. The FoTW, formed in 2001, is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the health of the Tay River Watershed. Otty Lake is located within the northern end of the Tay River Watershed.

Watershed Discovery Day Aug. 18. The FoTW hosts an annual Watershed Discovery Day in Perth in partnership with the Perth Farmers' Market. This year's event takes place the morning of Sat, August 18 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Crystal Palace. The event features informative and interactive environmentally themed activities for both adults and

children. See the FoTW website www.tay-watershed.ca closer to the date for details on exhibitors.

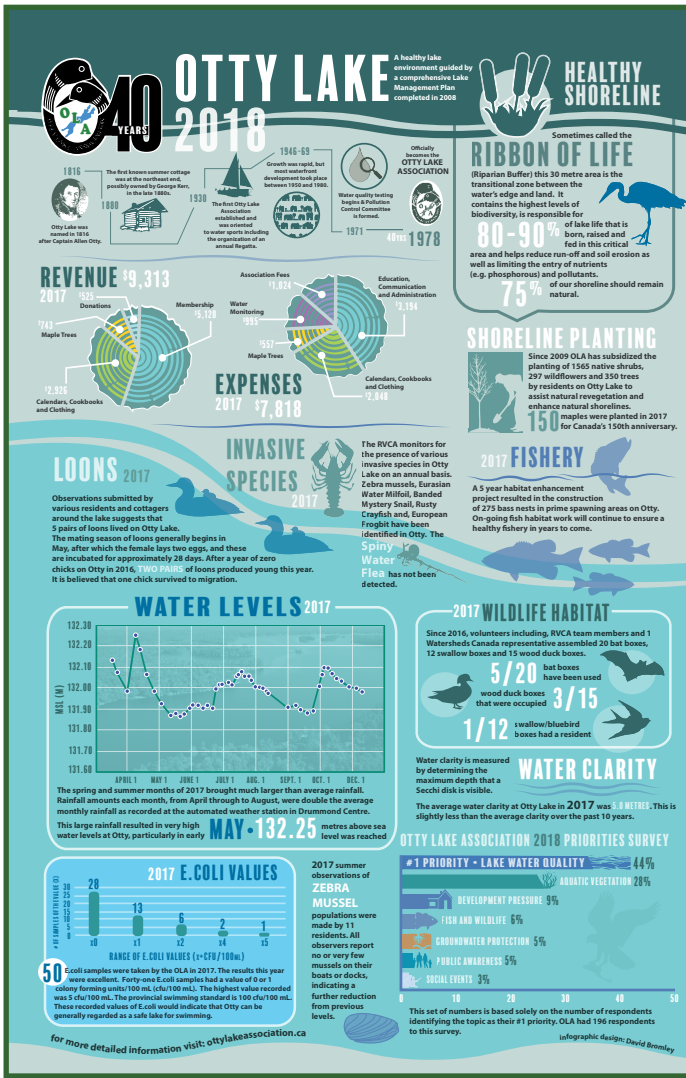
Tay River Subwatershed Report. The RVCA has just released a new Tay River Subwatershed Report incorporating data from the 2012-2017 time period. Otty Lake water quality is now rated as "fair to good" over the 2006-2017 period compared to the "poor" rating assessed in the 2012 report. The next step is the development of a detailed assessment report of water quality and other factors for each "catchment area" of the Tay River Subwatershed. The OLA has had the opportunity to comment on a draft of the Otty Lake – Jebbs Creek catchment area report. [See the summary report here.](#)

Membership Renewals. Dave Bell reports that he has already processed 126 membership renewals. This is impressive considering we were only up to 47 renewals at this time last year. Perhaps the "Why Wait" email and e-transfer option had something to do with it? Many members renew when their area counsellor comes calling. But you can also mail your \$20 cheque directly to the Otty Lake Association, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6 or do an e-transfer to financial@ottylakeassociation.ca, using "the nearest town" and "Perth" as the security question and response.

Family Picnic. After receipt of the survey results we confirmed that a family picnic and games day would not be planned for this year. A big round of applause to Gail Read and her team for coordinating this fun event for so many years. The door is open if someone else in the community would like to organize a similar summer social event.



Photo: Christine Kilburn



INFOGRAPHIC

Our thanks to David Bromley for his fabulous infographic summarizing current OLA data, particularly State of the Lake findings, and celebrating our 40th anniversary! A full version was included in the spring/summer information packages for residents and is also available on our website. The area counsellors have found it a valuable addition to the packages and source of discussion with their neighbours. David also created and included a 40th anniversary version of our logo which you will be seeing more of this year.

2ND ANNUAL BIOBLITZ – MURPHYS POINT PROVINCIAL PARK

Want to know what that flower is? Confused by the diversity of birds around the lake? Or perhaps you want to know more about citizen science? Join us on Saturday 18th August and we'll hopefully have some of those answers for you.

Following on from the success of our inaugural event last year, we will once again be holding a BioBlitz at Murphys Point Provincial Park. This will be a day of public events with park naturalists and outside taxon experts leading nature discovery sessions from our base camp at the main beach. We will also have an 'outdoor lab' at the beach where participants are welcome to chat with experts, browse our field guides and apps, and hopefully identify the wildlife they see.

For those who have never attended one before, a BioBlitz is a nature survey taken over a short period of time. Scientists, naturalists, and volunteers get together to record all of the living species discovered within a given area. This data is then compiled to represent the biodiversity of that area at a given time. The knowledge gained from a BioBlitz is crucial for naturalists who are managing the park's wildlife. By taking part, you're playing an important role in maintaining the health of the park's environment.

For more details, check (ontarioparks.com/park/murphyspoint/events) or contact Mark Read, Park Naturalist at 613-267-5060 ext 233.

Mark Read



Photo: Sandra Kari

GIVE DRIVEWAY CAR WASHING A PASS

Sunny summer days may inspire some people to wash their car in their driveway, or maybe even convince the kids to do it! It sounds like a useful, fun thing to do, but think again. Washing your car in your driveway is not an environmentally friendly activity. In fact, some Canadian municipalities have banned it.

Beside using more water than is necessary, the wash water coming off the car contains oil, grease, heavy metals such as lead, chemicals, dirt and depending on your cleaning agent, phosphates. If you are washing your car in your driveway, that water is not getting treated and can enter the groundwater or run directly into surface waters (such as Otty Lake!). Even in an urban area, the wash water could be entering a storm drain and not be completely treated before being released into a water body.

The solution is to use a commercial car wash. Commercial enterprises are getting more sophisticated, using less energy and utilizing water reclamation methods so much less water is used. Runoff is directed to a municipal sewer system, where the water will be treated to certain standard before being discharged to a lake or river. Some operations actually capture contaminants before water is released to the municipal sewer system. Others use high-pressure steam technology that allows cars to be cleaned using less than a few litres of water per car, with therefore less water runoff.

So consider using a commercial car wash over washing your car at home. If you are organizing a charitable fundraiser, avoid parking lot car washes, or consider partnering with a commercial car wash.

Barb Hicks