

GROWLER CONSERVATION NEWS

Fall for Fabulous



There is no doubt about it: fall in the Haliburton Highlands is fabulous. As the days shorten and the temperature drops, the colours surrounding us at the lake prove just how gorgeous the later stages of life at the cottage can be. Without the long fall checklist of purely seasonal cottage owners, once the boats are in, the

docks are floating freely and the summer furniture is packed away, we at Growler can sit back and enjoy the most colourful art nature has on offer.

So grab a sweater and read through some fall and winter friendly tips your conservation committee has compiled just for you!

Fall 2021

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Chinese Mystery Snail Update:

As reported in the *Haliburton Highlander*, there were 450,000 snails removed from area lakes this season. Reid Rusonik completed the Mystery Snail training course last spring and officially reported NO snails at Growler Lake in 2021.

Don't Take the Bait: Ice Fishing Do's & Don'ts

Heading out onto the hard water for a day of ice fishing is a great way to enjoy the outdoors during Ontario's long, cold winters. In addition to safety and fishing regulations, an understanding of the changing live baitfish rules is vital for protecting our lakes from invasive fish species and in guarding against the spread of viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), a disease that infects most game fish and some baitfish.

There are forty-eight species of fish legally allowed to be used as baitfish in Ontario, all of which—and the pertinent laws regarding their use—can be found at

www.ontario.ca/page/fishing-live-bait#section-2.

Identifying which minnows are native and legal to use (see *Baitfish Primer* and its app published by the Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans) is critical. For example, confusing the similarly looking sculpin minnow, a native fish, and the Round Goby, an invasive fish, has helped the Round Goby invade Ontario waters.

As of January 1, 2022, live bait usage in Ontario will

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BUY LOCAL BURN LOCAL

FIREWOOD ALERT!

Moving Firewood Transports Tree-Killing Insects and Diseases.

The Asian Longhorned Beetle threatens Canada's \$100 million maple syrup industry.

BUY LOCAL
Buy firewood at or near where you will use it. Leave any unused firewood on site.

BURN LOCAL
If you brought non-local firewood with you, use first and burn completely. Next time, only use local firewood.

HELP PROTECT OUR TREES AND FORESTS

Canadian Council on Invasive Species / Conseil Canadien des Espèces Envahissantes

BuyLocalBurnLocal.ca

Annual Roadwork/Shoreline Clean Up Day

The annual roadwork day was held August 7. As usual, it was a success with road edges, culverts and overhanging branches cleared as well as potholes filled. Due to COVID many people worked on their section of road in their own time on a different day. This meant we missed some of the great bonding time spent with friends during this communal event, but we will all catch up another year! Thanks to Al Dodington for orchestrating us.

For the first time we added a lakeshore cleanup to our list of chores. Volunteers in two canoes closely inspected the shoreline and gathered some garbage along Growler's otherwise clean and unspoiled shores. But we did fill our canoes with a few beer cans, bottles, plastic water bottles, and a bunch of water toys—torn rafts, inner tubes, water guns, balls and a noodle—as well as a few plastic pieces, wrappers, Tupperware, fishing line and some

TURTLE DELIVERY

Did you notice the protected area of the road close to the beaver pond near the Y in Growler Lake Drive that lasted from June-September this year? Nancy Dickson spotted a female turtle laying her eggs in spring and Sharon & Al Dodington cordoned off the nest hoping to protect it from vehicles.

When the 90-day incubation time passed and no baby turtles emerged, Sharon, Al Dodington and granddaughter Emie went to investigate. Much to two-year-old Emie's delight, they ultimately freed several baby turtles that were trapped under the hard, gravel packed road. They watched the baby turtles make their way safely to the nearby beaver pond before swimming away.

Nancy contacted The Turtle Guardians in Haliburton and will be making cages to protect turtle nests next year. More on the Turtle Guardians and on what you can do to help this Keystone species in the spring newsletter.



lures. Odd pieces of stray lumber with nails in tact had also washed up on shore.

A natural, garbage free shoreline is a stated goal of GLPOA membership. Please do your part to protect it by securing anything that might blow off docks and decks in summer. Pick up any debris you may find on the ice in winter. A clean, healthy shoreline is the best way to keep the water of Growler Lake as pristine as we found it.



Blue-Green Algae

What is it? How can I prevent it?

Vital to our survival, algae provide half of Earth's oxygen by producing it through photosynthesis and releasing it into the water. Like land plants, algae store vast amounts of carbon dioxide and can be a source of food (seaweed), fertilizer and potential biofuel.

However, not all algae are created equal. Cyanobacteria, commonly called blue-green algae, are microscopic organisms that have inhabited the earth for over 2 billion years and are normally not visible in the water. Yet when conditions are right, this algal population can rapidly multiply creating a harmful large mass or scum in the water known as a **bloom**. Once formed, blooms can reoccur annually.

Blooms generally appear in late summer and early fall in mostly shallow, warm, and slow moving water. In Ontario, phosphorous levels tend to be the nutrient that controls how much algae can grow. Nitrogen levels, warming lake water temperatures due to climate change, and disappearing natural shorelines also contribute to algae blooms.

Haliburton lakes experienced **60%** more blue-green algae blooms in 2020. Natural shorelines with native flora intact act as a filter protecting the water from contaminants that would otherwise contribute to the formation of blue-green algae. See the Tip Box below for what GLPOA members can do to eliminate the possibility of blooms on Growler Lake.

NOTE: Blue-green algae blooms are toxic. Contact with contaminated water can result in itchy, irritated eyes and skin and flu like symptoms (fever, headache, diarrhea and other gastrointestinal issues). The CDC has noted that blue-green algae can cause neurological problems as well as damage to the liver and kidneys in humans. Dogs have died from drinking infected lake water.

New blooms can look like turquoise paint or pea soup. Very dense blooms may form clumps resembling freshly mowed grass. Older blooms may smell like rotting garbage. If you suspect a bloom at Growler, take a photo of it and contact a member of your Conservation Committee, or call the **MOECP Spills Action Line at 1-866-663-8477**.



TIPS FOR PREVENTING BLUE-GREEN ALGAE BLOOMS

- Maintain a natural shoreline and healthy septic systems
- Use phosphate-free detergents, personal care products & household cleaning products
- Do not use fertilizers

LIGHTS OUT, PLEASE

Ecological light pollution—light that points into our lakes, forests, and eyes—is known to alter the natural regime of ecosystems year round; the darker skies of winter are just as important for this natural process as the brighter summer skies. Section 4.3 (p. 25) of our *Growler Lake Plan* addresses the importance of reducing light pollution at the lake.

Artificial light does have its important uses at Growler, as does maintaining external lighting systems that are minimally invasive to your lake community and the night sky. If a light on your property serves no purpose other than to generate light, please consider leaving it off entirely!

Since nature creates her own magnificent light display all year round, be sure to check out the Quadrantids meteor visible around the end of December to early January in Haliburton. This season's peak will be for a few hours Jan. 3-4, 2022. What a great way to start the new Growler year!

CLEAN + DRAIN + DRY YOUR BOAT



Help prevent the spread of invasive species, take a few simple steps to preserve Ontario's waters and fisheries:

- ✓ **CLEAN** any plants, mud, mussels or debris from your boat and equipment
- ✓ **DRAIN** all standing water from your bilge, motor, and live well
- ✓ **DRY** for at least 5 days or disinfect with hot or pressurized water



ZEBRA MUSSELS



ROUND GOBY



EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

**DON'T LET THEM CATCH A RIDE
STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS**

TO REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES:
1-800-563-7711
www.EDDMapS.org/Ontario



The CHA is providing and installing free of charge these Invasive Species Boat Cleaning signs to its members. We hope to have two signs in place at Growler next spring.

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be separated into Bait Management Zones (BMZs). Anglers wishing to use live bait outside of the BMZ of their primary residence will have to purchase (not harvest) it in the BMZ in which they plan to ice fish (Growler's BMZ = Central Zone or Fishery Management Zone 15). It is illegal to move baitfish and leeches (live or dead) from one BMZ to another. Anglers using bait within the BMZ of their primary residence may either purchase or personally harvest their baitfish and do not need a receipt. Remember to always:

- Retain the sales receipt (valid for 2 weeks) listing the quantity, date, and location where bait was purchased. Submit a legible, valid receipt to a conservation officer upon request.
- Do not release baitfish kept for live bait (use, freeze or kill it). Do not dump a bait bucket into the water when moving from one body of water to another. Always dump water 30 metres from the shoreline.
- When ice fishing with two lines, remember to stay within 60 metres at all times of any line or tip-up and have an unobstructed view of your lines. Register your ice hut online!

Minimum Ice Thickness
Guideline for loads parked for more than 2 hours but less than 7 days on clear, good quality ice

Ice Thickness	Equivalent Load
2 inches (5 cm)	KEEP OFF
6 inches (15 cm)	ice fishing and foot traffic
10 inches (25 cm)	snowmobiles and light ATVs LESS THAN 500 KG
16 inches (41 cm)	mid-size cars and small trucks 1000-2000 KG
18 inches (46 cm)	mid-size trucks 2000-3000 KG
21.5 inches (55 cm)	3/4 ton 4x4 trucks UP TO 5000 KG