

Flying Pond Improvement Association

Spring 2020

*This spring,
things have been coming, going and staying put.*



photo by Chad Dwelley, mid April

- Merganser ducks arrive early April
- 12 loons spotted April 8
- Ice out: April 12, 2020. (The average day of "ice out" is now 9 days earlier than when they began keeping records in 1970 a/c Lake Science Director, Dr. Danielle Wain of 7 Lakes Alliance)
- Snowstorm hits April 9, dropping 10 inches of wet snow
- Governor Mills issues "Stay Safer at Home" Executive Order April 29 re the COVID 19 virus. Keep up to date by checking: Maine.gov
- Mothers' Day weekend snow (oh no)



Photo by Alice Olson

In This Issue

Contrary Spring

Hiking Trails

The Amphicar

Invasive Plants and
Flying Pond

Fishing News

Anniversary of the FPIA

Related Organizations



on The Mountain trail
Photo by Nancy Hemphill

HIKING TRAILS

Meghan Regan-Loomis and her family are avid hikers. They particularly like the trails in the Kennebec Highlands area, which ranges from Vienna to Rome. Maps are available from the 7 Lakes Alliance in Belgrade Lakes (formerly the Belgrade Regional Conservation Alliance.) Other hiking opportunities are in Franklin County, both on Mt. Blue and in Weld. The Kennebec Land Trust in Winthrop also offers a trail guidebook and map. Here are some of Meghan's comments on their favorite trails.

French Mountain

This is the easiest of the loop trails with a view of the lakes at top. A short up and down, there are several viewpoints to the east from the top, so even though it is a popular hike, there is generally room to hang without a crowd. This hike is easily less than an hour in its entirety.

Round Top

This is the longest and arguably the best of the round trip trails for a good workout-hike with nice views to reward the effort. A short spur trail at the top affords a view of the western vista that can't be seen from any of the other trails in the area. There is a little bit of scrambling on big rocks on the way down, and be sure to follow trail signs, as the route takes some turns and missing them will land you on private property and well off the trail.

Sanders Hill

Moving clockwise on this loop, the first half of this trail passes through lovely forest and eventually parallels a babbling stream for a mile or so. Midway, it crosses the Kennebec trail and continues on a newish section that extends the trail and continues to follow the stream. Be sure to look for the picnic table situated between the trail and the water—a great picnic spot. The trail comes back toward and re-crosses the Kennebec trail before heading up Sanders Hill and down over the other side, where it wends its way back to the parking lot. This is a long but moderately challenging hike. There aren't great views from Sanders when the foliage is full, but be sure to check out Watson Pond when you are within a half mile of the parking lot.

Mount Phillip

This is a go-to trail for weekend visitors or families with young children. It is a medium-steep climb up, not long, and has great views of Long and Great Ponds, with large rocks to sit on at the top. It is a loop trail and can be completed within an hour. Big views for a little hike.

The Mountain

With the addition of a long new loop through a gorgeous pine forest a few summers ago on the Great Pond side, this trail definitely wins the Most Improved award. This is a good family trek if kids are big enough to do a couple of miles. Be sure to study or take a picture of the map, as the "top" of the loop—where the trails intersect—can be a bit confusing. The Long Pond side has a nice view and a bench; though you can hear traffic from below, it's a nice place to take a break and a picture.

Mt. Blue

Driving north into Farmington on Route 27, Mt. Blue is easy to spot well beyond town, near Weld, as its western face is distinctly steep relative to its other side. Climbing Mt. Blue is a local rite of passage, and for good reason. It's a merciless day hike—steep, with loose rocks and a fairly direct route to the top, right up that distinctively steep face. Though it's under two miles to the top, getting up can take a couple hours, and getting back down isn't much better. The view is quite spectacular, but the setting at the peak—with a

giant fire tower, cell tower and maintenance building—isn't itself inspiring. If you do it, be sure to peel off to the right for a better viewing experience before the top.

Len Roe's Amphicar

Have you seen a car in/on Flying Pond, and it is not driving on ice? If so, that little red car is my Amphicar, model year 1968. Production of Amphicars began in West Germany in 1961 with 3,878 built, with about 3,000 imported to North America. Red was the most popular color, but Amphicars were also available in green, white and light blue as well. All Amphicars are convertibles with rear engines and clutches of Triumph manufacture. The car/boat supposedly can do 70 MPH on land (not with me driving) and 7 MPH in the water. It is registered as both a boat and a car. The car uses a Volkswagen fuel system, Mercedes brake system on the front and American brake system on the rear. It has a Porsche-built land transmission coupled in series to an Amphicar boat transmission. The transmissions can be used together and must be used simultaneously to get out of the water. It has both car and boat lighting systems and must meet Coast Guard as well as automobile safety and emission requirements. Mine has two bilge pumps, the second one serving as a back-up.

When new, the Amphicar sold for \$2,800 to \$3,300. Recently vehicles in good condition have sold for as much as \$100,000. I have only met one original owner. It is estimated that 400 Amphicars still exist in North America with another 100 in Europe.

Len Roe





Call to Action:

the fight against invasive plants on Flying pond

Lidie Robbins, Executive Director of the 30 Mile River Watershed Association

At the beginning of the 2019 summer season, 31 lakes and ponds, and 14 stream and river segments in Maine were known to be infested with invasive aquatic plants. The majority of these waters are infested by variable leaf milfoil, and other invaders include curly leaf pondweed, European frog's bit, European naiad, hydrilla and Eurasian water milfoil. All of these infestations are in the southwest portion of the state, south of Skowhegan and west of Waldoboro.

In October, one more lake was added to this list: Big Lake. Big Lake is the second largest lake in Washington County, covering 10,444 acres, and is one of the largest lakes in Maine. Near the New Brunswick border, it is known for its remote, wilderness beauty and extraordinary fishing. An initial survey by staff from the Maine DEP and Lake Stewards of Maine (LSM) determined that the infestation of variable milfoil was quite extensive, indicating that it had been present for a number of years. Roberta Hill of LSM wrote, "This new infestation in a remote, previously uninfested part of the state has been a wake-up call for all of us." No lake in Maine is safe.

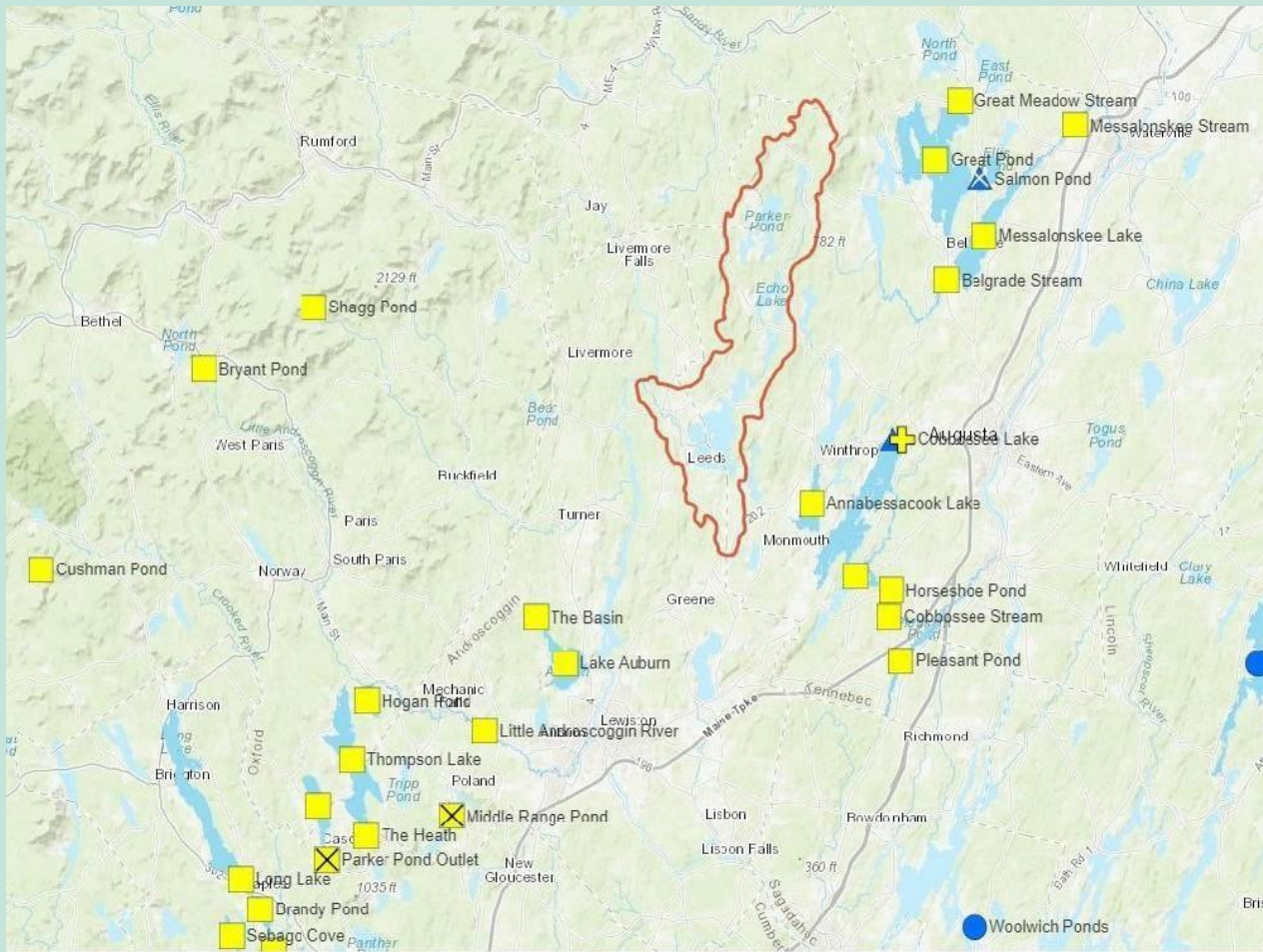
On Flying Pond and the other lakes and ponds in the 30 Mile River Watershed, we take a two-pronged approach to protecting against invasive plants: 1) Keep hitchhiking plants on boats and trailers from getting in through the courtesy boat inspection program and 2) catching infestations early through surveys conducted by trained volunteer invasive plant patrollers.

Since 2008, 30MRWA has partnered with FPIA to provide courtesy boat inspections for Flying Pond. FPIA contributes funding and 30MRWA implements the program, providing and coordinating the staff. Last summer, paid inspectors conducted 236 inspections on Flying Pond, over 179 hours.

That may sound like a lot of inspection hours, but is it enough? Most of our inspections happen on Saturdays and Sundays, when the launch is likely to be the busiest, but there are many times when our boat inspectors are not there. With a volunteer force supplementing our paid staff, we could expand our coverage.

Flying Pond's Invasive Plant Patrol team is organized by Debbie Roe. In 2019, FPIA's 15 trained volunteers spent 72 hours on the water looking for invasive plants. (Fortunately, none were found.) This work is vital because if Flying Pond does become infested, we must catch it early to get it under control. The more eyes we have on the water, looking for things that don't belong, the better.

Are you ready to join us to boost your lake's chances of not being added to the list? If you like spending time in your kayak, observing the natural world, we hope you'll consider becoming an invasive plant patroller. Maybe you are a people person who would like teaching others about how to protect the lake; if so, being a courtesy boat inspector may be for you. Please contact Lidie Robbins at lidie@30mileriver.org to learn more.



The map shows just how close the 30 Mile River watershed (outlined in red) is to infested water bodies (yellow squares).

Oh, let me tell you what I see! Every day I journey to my cove, a small beach nestled into the edge of the lake. I close my eyes and listen to the waves. Their steady rhythm reminds me that some aspects of my life are untouched by the virus.

I think about our future and all the “what ifs,” and the lake seems to say to me: “Stay in the now. Come what may, I will always be here.”

It reminds me of the life before, and calls me back to the places in myself that remember that no matter what happens, the lake will always be there.

And so it feels like I will never truly be alone.

Cynthia E. Frantz, Burlington, Vt.

From the New York Times, May 6, 2020, “One Foot in Front of the Other: How a Daily Walk Helps Us Cope”

FISHING REPORT

GARY COURTELYOU, FPIA BOARD

Last year the State stocked 500 brook trout, 100 Brown trout and 125 salmon. This spring, 300 brook trout were added. This what the state has been doing the last 5 years. To see the stocking schedule from the Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, go to: <https://www.maine.gov/ifw/fishing-boating/fishing/fishing-resources/fish-stocking-report.html>

Flying Pond is considered a holdover lake in that the fish live through the summer, as our lake is deep enough to have cool water down 30 feet deep. The trout spend the summer in the cool, deep water, and spend time in shallow waters only during spring and fall. They are hard to catch in the summer as we have a lot of different high and low areas.

The best fish to catch are the small and large mouth bass as we have a large population of them. The best way to catch them is with soft plastic senkos. Texas rigged and jig worms all work well. Green pumpkin is a great color, but remember not to throw them in the lake as the trout eat them and die. The state is considering banning them, as they have with lead sinkers.

Fishing licenses and gear are available at the Flying Pond Variety Store.



Photo by Gary Courtelyou

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FLYING POND IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Flying Pond Improvement Association has been around a long time informally, but it became “official” in 1960, when it filed a Certificate of Organization of a Corporation with the Maine Attorney General’s Office. The AG’s Office and Maine Secretary of State certified the documentation and filed documents approving the incorporation on September 9, 1960. You can find these documents online at the Kennebec County Register of Deeds’ site, in Book 1191, Page 226.

The signatories to the incorporation were: Carl Fellows, Barbara Springer, J.L. Scott, Clyde Waugh, and Max Webber. They held their organizational meetings at Larch Lodge, a historic cabin owned by Leland and Avis Howe.

The purposes set out in the incorporation are the same that govern the organization today:

- To maintain the dam;
- Create policies and practices to conserve, restore, protect and safely regulate natural resources;
- To raise money or acquire other property to promote conservation;
- To encourage participation in the commercial, civic and industrial betterment of the locality; and
- To promote fellowship and community among its members.



site of the old Larch Lodge



1946 photo of Avis and Leland Howe. Both photos from Jacque Ward Howe

Call to Action

The FPIA is only as strong as its membership and volunteers. Please send your photos, ideas, and willingness to get involved to nancy.h.hemphill@gmail.com.

To join FPIA, contact Cindy Ripley, at: ckripley@gmail.com. Dues are \$40 per year.

Help expand our membership by passing this along to your neighbors and friends. If you belong to a road association, ask them to spread this around.

Another way to stay informed is to read the Town of Mt. Vernon Community Newsletter. It's free and is published monthly. Go to <http://mtvernonme.org/Newsletter.html> or call (207) 293-2379 to get on the email list. A printed and mailed copy is available to Mt. Vernon taxpayers.

The FPIA Annual Meeting is on the calendar for Saturday, July 11, 2020, at the Vienna Grange Hall, but due to COVID-19, we may hold our first virtual meeting. Look for an update on the FPIA website and FaceBook page closer to that date.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Update your email and mailing addresses by notifying

- Cindy Ripley@ ckripley@gmail.com
- Find us at: flyingpond@gmail.com
- <http://fpia.weebly.com>
- on Facebook @ Flying Pond Improvement Association

Related Organizations:

30 Mile River Watershed Asso.

<http://30mileriver.org/>

7 Lakes Alliance

<https://www.7lakesalliance.org/>

Maine Lakes Society

<https://mainelakessociety.org/>

Kennebec Land Trust

Tklt.org