



Les Cheneaux WATERSHED NEWS



SPRING 2019

LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1

2019 News and Plans

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For details on most topics, see our website:
www.lescheneauxwatershed.org

ZEBRA MUSSEL RETURN?



ZEBRA MUSSEL
Dreissena polymorpha

In the early 2000s our Zebra mussel invasion had peaked and their numbers declined steadily over the next few years. Since that time, mussels have been seen intermittently but not in the high density experienced during their peak growth. Or so we thought...

The boat hull shown here was covered with zebra mussels when hauled by the Viking Boat Harbor crew last fall. Admittedly, the boat had little use during the 2018 season, but this boat might be a warning to be on guard for a comeback of zebras in the Islands. The boat shown was kept in Islington Channel.

NATURAL CONTROL FOR INVASIVE EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL



Council members & Michigan Tech Researchers study rapid detection methods for invasive milfoil.

AFTER SIX YEARS OF FIELD RESEARCH, thousands of volunteer hours and coordinating with the U.S. EPA, the Watershed Council has developed an effective and safe biological control agent for managing the invasive Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) in the form of a native fungus that can effectively compete with chemical herbicides.

Although developed in the cooler northern waters of Les Cheneaux this naturally occurring mycobioherbicide can be used any place EWM poses a problem.

One hitch: No producers have yet shown interest in manufacturing the fungus for commercial use. Without access to this biological control agent our channels will again be clogged with invasive milfoil when the next outbreak happens.



Zebra mussels attached to hull of fiberglass runabout after the 2018 season.

This summer the Watershed Council will conduct a zebra mussel survey throughout the islands to determine if there are other areas where they might be increasing in number. Contact us through the website if you have seen increased zebra mussel numbers in your area. Results from our survey will be published next spring.

**Asincere Thank You to all
who support our projects!**

Find Us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Les-Cheneaux-Watershed-Council/140334046002322>

LCWC Office Phone: 906-484-3031 (Machine Answer)

AQUATIC PLANT LIFE AFTER THE MILFOIL INVASION

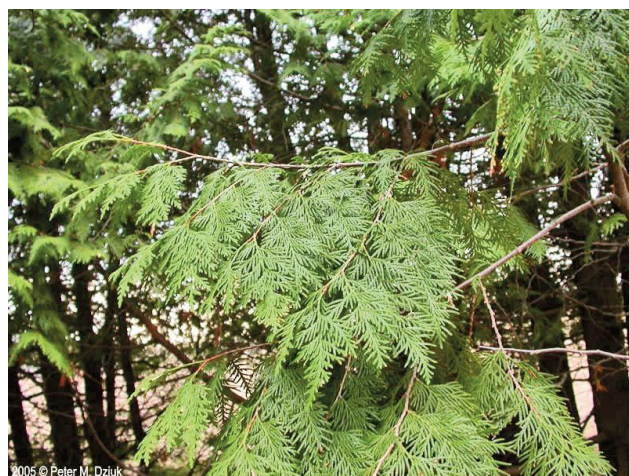
During the past six years since the Eurasian watermilo (EWM) invasion Council members have observed and quantified a steep downward trend of EWM populations in the two bays where it was most dense: Sheppard and Cedarville Bays. Yes, EWM is still around but our diverse and healthy aquatic plant population has shifted. As with other ecosystems, high species diversity contributes to resiliency when the system is stressed. In this case the stress was the EWM invasion. The same major rooted aquatic plant species are still prevalent, but in different densities than before the EWM invasion. Some of the major plant species decreased somewhat in population, others increased, and a couple species held a fairly steady level. One of the plants that has increased, Claspingleaf pondweed, is shown here.

Can we expect EWM to return? Yes. Exactly when depends on many factors which include water level, temperature and extra nutrients. All shoreline property owners can help delay or minimize a resurgence by keeping your riparian areas free of EWM.



CLASPINGLEAF PONDWEED
Potamogeton richardsonii

LES CHENEAUX FORESTS ARE CARBON DIOXIDE SPONGES!



Long story short: The forests within our Les Cheneaux watershed absorb over ONE BILLION POUNDS of CO₂ from the atmosphere each year!

Both full-time and seasonal Les Cheneaux residents are aware and concerned about the detrimental effects of unbalanced carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels on climate change. As individuals, we can all strive to minimize our carbon footprint, but have you thought about how the trees within our watershed contribute to absorbing CO₂ and the ability of our forests to effectively remove it from the atmosphere? Our forests absorb CO₂ and water from the air and, through photosynthesis, store the carbon as sugar then release oxygen and excess water to the atmosphere.

LAKE HURON WATER LEVEL 2012-2018

LCI WATER LEVEL CHANGES from July 2013 through July 2018

Dec 2012	Record Low
2013–2014	Up 14.4"
2014–2015	Up 13.2"
2015–2016	Up 12.0"
2016–2017	Up 6.0"
2017–2018	Up 2.0"

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is projecting our water level to be at least 2" higher than last summer. Heavy snow pack in the northern Great Lakes could contribute to an even higher level.

One effective method to decrease the overall rise in lake level is to restrict inflow from the Long Lac and Ogoki watersheds located north of Lake Superior. Such actions have been used twice during the past 35 years. It is estimated that restricting flow from these two watersheds will reduce the level of Lake Superior and the lower lakes by at least 2" per year.

This is a modest amount but the effect is cumulative over multiple years. Although restricted flow will negatively impact Ontario hydroelectric plants, they will still have the ability to produce clean, affordable power.



TOTAL RISE: 47.6" (121cm)



Lake elevation numbers were taken from Corps of Engineers charts.

SAVE THE DATES: FrogFest - Saturday, July 6th at Heritage Park / Annual Meeting July 11th



FrogFest is held annually on a Saturday in July with our primary interest being to engage the community, especially the young, and to raise awareness of the rich natural legacy to be enjoyed right here in Les Cheneaux by just stepping out the door!

Watershed Council Annual General Meeting
will be held on Thursday, July 11th at the
Clark Township Community Center.



CLARK TOWNSHIP WATER-CENTRIC PROJECTS

Three Clark Township Water-Centric Projects that started during Gary Reid's tenure and being completed during Mark Clymer's administration include: Development of Cedarville Harbor, a new bridge at the Hill Island Causeway and a more energy efficient Sewer Treatment Plant.

The causeway was completed last fall and the harbor is expected to be operational by late July. **Next on the list?** Conversations between the Township and Lansing are underway to improve Hessel Harbor.

Below left is a recent photo showing progress on the new **Cedarville Harbor** building since ground-breaking last fall. According to Supervisor Mark Clymer, the harbor house is contracted for completion by the end of July. The transient dock can be installed earlier pending completion of an onshore anchor. **Below right** is an aerial view from east to west showing the completed **Hill Island Causeway**. Two platforms at the left of this image were built to improve water flow and for the convenience of anglers and bird watchers.



At the Sewer Treatment Plant, phosphorus that serves as food for weeds and algae has dropped to record low levels since installation of an efficient micro-aeration system in 2015.

GOVERNMENT ISLAND

While brushing the Mike Mahoney hiking trails on Government Island Council members are often treated to the sight of wildflowers like this Gaywing.



LES CHENEAUX RECYCLES!



FOUR WAYS to provide continued financial support to LCWC with 501(c)3 status:

- ♦ **A check** sent to our address with the form at right letting us know you'd like to join our membership
- ♦ **PayPal** through our website, lescheneauxwatershed.org
- ♦ Through the **LC Community Foundation** directed to either our LCWC endowed or unendowed account.
- ♦ **Funds transferred directly from an IRA to LCWC.** This avenue is approved under the new tax code. For details, refer your tax advisor to the article, "How to Donate Your Required Minimum Distribution to Charity" from *U.S. News & World Report*.

<https://money.usnews.com/money/retirement/iras/articles/2017-12-04/how-to-donate-your-required-minimum-distribution-to-charity>

Membership or Donation to Les Cheneaux Watershed Council

We need your support to preserve the health of our waters!

Basic Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	Leopard Frog	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Spring Peeper	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	Blue Heron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
Green Frog	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Wetland	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000
Tree Frog	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	Water Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> \$_____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Email _____

Send check to: LCWC • PO Box 578 • Cedarville, MI 49719

LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 578
CEDARVILLE, MI 49719



**Microscopic view of the fungus
that attacks and destroys
Eurasian watermilfoil**

LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2019



BY POPULAR DEMAND the schooner, *Inland Seas*, will again be in Hessel on July 2nd and 3rd. As last year, she will sail twice a day while providing a unique, educational and fun experience for children and adults. The ship's crew will provide a hands-on experience in water research opportunities at multiple education stations as well as have participants take part in ship handling skills. The event is sponsored by our Watershed Council with support from the Community Foundation and Lions Club and is an activity of the Inland Seas Education Association (ISEA).

Ticket sales will begin in May.

Learn more about ISEA at www.schoolship.org

LOCAL BAT POPULATIONS – Thanks once again to residents for reporting bat sightings during the past three summers, we now have a better idea of relative numbers of bats as well as their locations around the islands. As reported last season, we have more “Little Brown Bats” than initially thought, but only a small percentage of the bat populations of previous years. In addition to our mobile monitoring equipment the Council will improve bat detection accuracy this summer with the use of fixed monitoring stations to better determine bat numbers and locations throughout the islands. **Please continue to report your sightings to BatMan Scott Myers.** Your input will help improve the accuracy of our bat counts and locations.



NON-NATIVE PHRAGMITES – Infestations in LCI are down significantly thanks to help from Cisma (Three Shores Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area of Chippewa, Mackinac and Luce Counties). For each of the past seven years Cisma has assisted LCWC in managing our non-native phragmites outgrowths. Thanks to Cisma, LCI is on a maintenance program whereby they help manage new patches that appear annually. Mike Stoll is the LCWC liaison to Cisma.

