



Winter Newsletter 2012/13

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The Association is working for you by:

- comprehensive water testing (e.g. e-coli, phosphorous, clarity)
- Benthic testing (ensuring our mix of aquatic creatures are beneficial to our lake)
- liaising with the MNR, MoE, and Perry Township when relevant issues arise
- promoting our community with annual events
- communications
 - Newsletters and website
 - www.baylakeontario.ca



Season's Greetings

It is hard to believe that 2012 is almost over and that 2013 is just around the corner. As always, a special thank you to our Executive, our volunteers and our members for your support that resulted in another successful year.

Although winter is typically a quieter time of year with less activity on and around the lake, many take advantage of the snow and ice for winter sports such as snowmobiling and ice fishing.

In this edition of the newsletter we have included some articles regarding the lakes whitefish population for our winter anglers and in the interest of safety, there is information, guidelines and general tips regarding ice safety. I encourage you to read these timely safety topics and to share them with family members and your visitors to the lake.

Wishing you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year.

Glen Vey

A full colour version of this newsletter is posted to our website at: www.baylakeontario.ca

Unless otherwise noted photos are provided by J. Paterson

Note to activate links - hold cursor over link, press control and click

Winter Update

by J. Paterson

This October and November were unusually mild on Bay Lake. Warm weather prevented snowfall, but didn't stop the natural progression to winter protection and camouflage for animals that usually experience snow at this time of year. This writer observed frequent sightings of the Northern Flying Squirrel, that normally is in hibernation in November. Also spotted during daylight hours was the primarily nocturnal hunter the Long Tailed Weasel. His white winter coat made him painfully obvious against the dark snow free woods and ground, and this likely accounted for his day time hunt.

Meteorologists are predicting a more normal winter this year after the record mild winter we experienced last year. Our area is forecasted to have heavier snowfall because of warmer than normal lake temperature in Georgian Bay and Lake Huron. This is likely because of a hot summer and mild fall.

A heavy snow cover on the lake will force the lake ice to sink under the water surface. This causes water to enter into the snow layer which then becomes saturated. When this slushy layer freezes snow ice or white ice is formed. White ice is only half as strong a clear ice.

Please refer to the ice safety guidelines included in this issue on pages 5 and 6, and take all the necessary precautions for safety on the lake this winter.

Here are our usual reminders for this season:

- Do not park in snowplow turn-around areas - Vehicles left in these areas are subject to tagging and towing.
- Parking on roadside - please ensure that you leave enough room for the snow plow and for emergency vehicles to pass.
- Snowmobilers please drive far enough from shore to avoid hitting docks hidden under the snow in order to prevent damage to property and avoid possible injury.
- Snowmobilers please drive to the side of the concrete boat launch - driving on the concrete ramp increases the frost shift that damages our ramp each winter.
- Please do not feed the deer. Feeding the deer can actually cause harm to their winter metabolism.
- Please use caution -check ice thickness before venturing out on the ice. Always carry ice claws/picks with you.



Northern Flying Squirrel



Long Tailed Weasel in Winter Coat



Window Frost



New Snow on N Bay Lake Rd

The Nature Nut

by J. Paterson



Lake Whitefish

Photo - MRN

For a list of Baitfish permitted for use in Ontario go to:

<http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/LetsFish/2ColumnSubPage/198684.html>

For information on Ontario Ice Fishing Regulations go to:

http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/LetsFish/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_165366.html

Why Not Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count - for information go to:

http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/learning/bird-feeding-tips?utm_source=Cornell+Lab+eNews&utm_campaign=032d40c5bc-GBBC_eNewsletter_October_2012&utm_medium=email

Ice Fishing for White Fish

You may have noticed the MNR buoys that were in place on Bay Lake briefly in this summer. A Fishery crew from the Ministry of Natural Resources was conducting a survey that takes place on Ontario's lakes every 5 years to monitor fish populations, take water samples and check for invasive species. The information that they gather is used to help make decisions about managing fisheries, including setting seasons and size limits for anglers.

Surveying on Bay Lake confirmed that our lake has a healthy population of Lake Whitefish which is good news for Ice Fishermen. This cold water species is popular with these fishermen because it can be easily caught in winter. Lake Whitefish are schooling fish so if you catch one, it usually means there are more around. Live bait such as small minnows purchased from a local licensed bait dealer is recommended. For more on legal bait see the box to the left.

Although it is called a whitefish, its skin is actually greenish-brown on the back, with silver sides and a silvery-white belly. The Lake Whitefish is a member of the salmon family and has a small head and a "snout." A typical length for a Lake Whitefish is 30-65 centimetres (12-26 inches) and a typical weight is 0.9-1.8 kilograms (2-4 pounds). The Lake Whitefish has a sweet mild flavor which is considered by some to be better eating than Lake Trout. Lake Whitefish is fished commercially in the Great Lakes.

Winter Finch Predictions for 2012-13

Relatively dry conditions throughout much of North America have resulted in reduced seed and cone crop yields in boreal forests, so expect to see species such as Common Redpolls and Evening Grosbeaks wandering down from their normal winter ranges. You can read more about, winter finch predictions by Ontario birder Ron Pittaway at: [Ron Pittaway's Winter Finch Forecast](#)

Sky Gazing



International Space Station

Google Image

While searching for content for this season's issue, I chanced to visit the website of the Canadian Space Agency and discovered their Kids Space which is designed for children 6-8 years of age. This section features an animated colouring book that teaches kids about the space station, the Mars lander and a Radarstat satellite. Also available are recommended fun books to teach kids about space. There is lots of interesting stuff for grownups too. For more information go to: www.asc-csa.gc.ca/eng/kidspace

In the Neighbourhood - just a few of many events

Portage Flyer Christmas, Saturday December 22, 2012, 5-8.00 pm. Muskoka Heritage Place - \$5.00 per person. An evening of magic with lights and seasonal celebration. Portage Flyer Christmas is an event that has become a tradition among families looking to spend some great quality time in the fresh air and surrounded by holiday spirit. For more info go to: www.muskokaheritageplace.org

Santa-Fest at Santa's Village, Bracebridge, Dec 22,23,28, 29, 11.00 am - 4.00 p.m.: Admission is \$7.50/person and children under 2 are free! Enjoy winter activities, decorate Christmas cookies, roast marshmallows, make a craft, petting zoo and horse drawn wagon rides. For more info go to: <http://santasvillage.ca/santafest-2012/>

Cross Country Skiing in Algonquin Park: Looking for a great place to cross country ski? Canadian Geographic recently named Algonquin Park one of Canada's Top Nordic Ski Destinations. For more information go to: http://www.algonquinpark.on.ca/visit/recreational_activites/skiing-in-algonquin-park.php

Winter Activities in Arrowhead Park: Even closer to us, Arrowhead is offering many great winter activities practically at our doorstep. The park has always been known for its excellent cross country ski trails and last year, the park invested \$100,000 in improvements to winter operations. Be sure to check out the parks snowshoeing trails and the 3 metre wide one kilometer looped skating trail. The park staff have even set up fire pits and warming shelters nearby the trails so that people enjoying the activities can warm up. With the closing of the Huntsville tube hill last season, you may be interested to know that Arrowhead has a very popular tubing hill with a chute 100 metres long and 3 metres wide. The park provides the tubes and the warm up fire. For information on purchasing a Day Pass or Seniors Pass go to: http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/pdf/day_use_fees2005.pdf

Kearney Dog Sled Races - Feb 9th and 10th, 2013: This is a great annual event with dog races to watch, and music, food, face painting and a silent auction in the community centre.

The local Canadian Legion hosts an annual Roast Beef Dinner on Saturday Night and Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday. For more information go to:

<http://www.kearneydogsled.com/menu.htm>



Portage Flyer

Photo Muskoka Heritage Place



Wagon Rides at Santa-Fest

Photo Santa's Village



Arrowhead Tube Run

Photo - Arrowhead Park



Dog Sled Racing Kearney

ICE SAFETY GUIDELINES

These are recommended minimum thicknesses
for New Clear Ice Only.

White ice or "snow ice" is only about half as strong as new clear ice. Double the thickness guidelines below when traveling on white ice.



8
centimeters

(3 inches)

or less

-STAY OFF!

10 Centimetres
(4 Inches)
Ice Fishing

13 Centimetres
(5 Inches)
Snowmobile or ATV

20-30 Centimetres
(8-12 Inches)

* Car or Small Pick-up *

30-38 Centimetres
(12-15 Inches)

* Medium Truck *

- Children should be supervised at all times on the ice. Many drownings in winter involve children.
- Pets should also be supervised especially during times of thin ice in the early winter and late spring. Do not put your own life at risk to rescue your pet. Most dogs and cats are able to use their claws to climb out on their own.
- Avoid Alcohol when on the ice. Alcohol will slow your reactions in an ice emergency.
- Do not drive on the ice at night - pressure ridges and open water are more difficult to see in the darkness.
- Always carry ice picks or large nails to use as picks to pull yourself out if you fall through the ice.
- When driving a car or truck on ice, always drive with your windows down and doors partially open . **

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The Bay Lake Property Owners Association strongly discourages the driving of cars and trucks on the ice surface of Bay Lake due to under water springs and currents which create areas of thin and unsafe ice for large vehicles.



Vehicle being pulled from Bay Lake after spending the winter on the lake bottom.

Note: Ice Safety guidelines based on recommendations published by the Department of Natural Resources, State of Minnesota.

How to make Ice Picks.

Materials Needed:

- 2 pcs. -4-5 inches in length of 1-1/2"-2" doweling or similar material
- 2 large strong nails such as concrete nails
- 1-1/2 to 2 meters of strong cord.

Tools Needed:

- Hammer, file, drill



1. Hammer a large, strong nail, such as a concrete nail, into one end of each dowel. Note, If you use material other than wood, be sure the material will float if dropped in water.
2. Using a file, sharpen the head of the nail (left exposed after the nail was hammered into the dowel) to a point.
3. Drill a hole into each dowel, large enough to thread the cord through, at right angles to the dowel and at the end of the dowel opposite the nail.
4. Thread the cord through each dowel and tie a knot large enough that the cord will not slip out of the hole. The end result will resemble the mittens on a string of our youth.
5. Finally, drill a hole the size of the diameter of the nail, one in the end of each dowel an equal distance from the nail so that when the nail of the opposite dowel is inserted into the hole, the other nail will line up with the hole in the opposite dowel, covering both points.
6. Always carry the picks in your pocket when on the ice.

What to do if you fall through the ice.

1. Remain Calm.
2. Turn in the water towards the direction from which you came - the ice is probably strongest in that direction.
3. Grab your Ice Rescue Picks from your pocket and dig the points into the ice while vigorously kicking your feet. Use the picks to pull yourself onto the surface of the ice on your belly.
4. Roll away, or pull yourself away with the picks, from the area of weak ice. Stay on you belly on the ice until you reach safe ice - this will distribute your weight evenly and will help avoid breaking through the ice again.
5. Immediately seek shelter and heat. Change to warm dry clothing. Drink warm, non-alcoholic, and non-caffeinated drinks.
6. If you feel disoriented, have uncontrollable shivering, or have any other ill effects; you may be suffering symptoms of hypothermia, a life-threatening drop in the body's core temperature, and should call 911 or seek medical attention.