Prohibited Invasive Plants Released to Local Waterways

Across the state, two NR40-prohibited aquatic invasive plants were repeatedly found growing in our lakes and streams this year. These plants, water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) and water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*), are commonly purchased for water gardens, and both have aggressive growth rates that allow them to form huge floating mats of vegetation. Although the proper, legal way to reduce these mats is to throw extra plants in the trash, some water gardeners illegally release extra plants into a nearby waterway.

In Lake Winneconne, CLMN volunteer Valerie Stabenow was out paddling to pick up trash from the lake when she noticed an unusual floating plant. Although this plant is native to South America, not Wisconsin, Valerie recognized it as water hyacinth from previous experience seeing it growing in fountains and water gardens. She had also heard about it by participating in a recent “Aquatic Invasive Species Snapshot Day” organized by the River Alliance of Wisconsin. She collected a sample, reported it to Oshkosh DNR staff, and led a group of staff and volunteers out to search for and remove the rest of the plants. Hundreds of water hyacinth plants have been removed from Lake Winneconne to date, and Valerie continues to be on the lookout for more. Recognizing the limited staff resources available to monitor our abundance of lakes and streams, Valerie offered, “We as citizens can volunteer and do our part to watch out for these aquatic threats.” She added, “I have seen photos of lakes where the citizens did not take the threats of invasives seriously. The resulting damage to the water, fish, birds and other creatures can have far-reaching consequences.”

In Lake Onalaska, a resident enjoying the lake noticed a strange plant covering the surface of a small channel. He immediately reported the plant to Eau Claire DNR staff, which was confirmed as water lettuce. A partnership between WDNR, River Alliance of Wisconsin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and dozens of great volunteers from the...
Seeking Ice-on and Ice-off Data
Please consider recording the dates that your lake is completely frozen over this fall/winter and completely thawed next spring. CLMN ice data is used to understand the length of time that Wisconsin lakes are frozen, and how this period varies between lakes and between years. The simple form used to report ice data is available at this link http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/programs/clmn/ice.aspx

Announcements

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Watch for Zebra Mussels When Removing Piers, Boats
Fall is an easy time to monitor your lake for zebra mussels. These small critters (up to about one inch long) like to attach to piers, swimming rafts, boats, buoys, anchors, and other items that you might be removing or inspecting in preparation for winter. If you find any zebra mussels or other suspicious animals, please contact your Regional CLMN Coordinator.

Please Enter CLMN Data ASAP
In order for us to be timely with reports and awards, we ask for all CLMN data (except ice data) to be entered into the SWIMS database by November 1. If you haven’t already entered your 2015 monitoring data, please enter it as soon as possible.
Thank you for another great monitoring season!

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