Manoomin (Wild Rice)

History in your lake!

Wisconsin Lakes Convention, 2013
What Is It?
Annual, Aquatic Grass
Habitat Preferences

- Water depths in 0.5-3 foot range
- Water not acidic or darkly stained
- Annual water level fluctuations not excessive but year-to-year conditions not too stable
- Organic, mucky substrate (preferred)
- And, rice requires gently...
Flowing Water
Seasonal Variation
A North American Resource

The range of “northern” Wild Rice
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutritive Values (per 100g)</th>
<th>Wild Rice</th>
<th>White Rice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protein (g)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Dietary Fiber (g)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium (mg)</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium (mg)</td>
<td>177.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus (mg)</td>
<td>433.0</td>
<td>116.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium (mg)</td>
<td>427.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc (mg)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tremendous Value Ecologically,
and Culturally.
The Anishinabe (Ojibwe) Migration Story

From the Mishomis Book, by Edward Benton-Banai
“Wild rice is the most nutritive single food which the Indians of North America consumed. The Indian diet of this grain, combined with maple sugar and with bison, deer and other meats, was probably richer than that of the average American family of to-day.”

Albert E. Jenks, 1901
“No other section of the North American continent was so characteristically an Indian paradise so far as spontaneous vegetal food is concerned, as was this territory in Wisconsin and Minnesota”

Albert E. Jenks, 1901
Some Anishinabe elders relate an older term for wild rice: *Manito gitigaan*, or “The Great Spirit’s Garden”.
Historical Management

Accounts exist of:

- Water level management
- Pest management
  - Trapping muskrats; creating predator perches in the beds to discourage blackbirds
- Weeding competitive species
- Seeding
- Intensive harvest management
  - Regulating the number of harvesters, timing of the harvest, coordinating the direction of canoe travel, and more...
A Long History of Harvest

Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Historical Society
Photo courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society
Photo courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society
Photo courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society
The Fur Trade Era
Mentioned in the Explorers Journals Under a Wide Variety of Names

- Wild Rice
- Manoomin
- Blackbird Oats
- Mad Oats
- Foxtail Oats
- Marsh Oats
- Psin
- Canadian Rice
“...They raise plenty of Irish potatoes, catch pike, suckers, pickerel and whitefish in abundance. They also have beaver, deer, and moose, but the provision they chiefly depend upon is wild oats, of which they purchase great quantities from the [natives]...”

Coues Pike, writing about an outpost of the Northwest Company in Minnesota in the early 1800’s.
“... we came to a shallow lake where you could see water, but in the canoe tracks the wild oats were so thick that the Indians could scarcely get one of their small canoes into it, and the wild ducks when they rose made noise like thunder. We got as many of them as we choose, fat and good.”

Peter Pond 1775 Near Lake ButtedesMortes
“Here we were obliged to paddle through an immense long field of zizania [wild rice], growing in the water...and to encamp in the long grass, there being nothing else near us. I had a glorious scene here at sunset, that luminary lighting up with his parting beams several thousand acres of zizania extending at least five miles in one direction and two miles in the other; the heads of the plant all waving gently about, as we sometimes see those of an extensive wheat-field do. ... The wild ducks concealed amongst the plants were quacking loudly, the red-winged blackbirds were issuing from them in clouds, and the night hawks were wheeling about and screaming in every direction. Take it altogether, it was one of the most rare and pleasing scenes I ever witnessed.” G.W.F. Featherstonhaugh, 1835
“We left this bay to enter the river that discharges into it; it is very beautiful at its mouth, and flows gently; it is full of bustards, ducks, teal and other birds, attracted thither by the wild oats of which they are very fond.”

Fr. Marquette’s Journal

1673-1675
Lake States National Forests and Chippewa Ceded Territories: Treaties of 1836, 1837, and 1842

Ceded Territory *
MOU Signatory Tribe *
National Forest

* The ceded territory and tribal reservation boundaries are representations and may not be the legally binding boundaries.
“The privilege of hunting, fishing and gathering the *wild rice*, upon the lands, the rivers and the lakes included in the territory ceded, is guaranteed to the Indians, during the pleasure of the President of the United States.”

From the Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837
“T hat our people... desire a donation of twenty-four sections of land, covering the graves of our fathers, our sugar orchards, and our rice lakes and rivers, at seven different places now occupied by us as villages...”

From a “Petition of the head chiefs of the Chippewa tribe of Indians on Lake Superior, February 7, 1849
Our Maps Still Reflect this Request
(for example: the Mole Lake Reservation)
But Unfortunately Much Else Has Changed
A cascade of losses:

Testimony regarding the creation of the Chippewa Flowage, May 17, 1921:

- “As people eat bread and use it for food, we use rice.”
- “From the very place I get rice from my allotment, I get fish there.”
- “One of the reasons it is the best area to trap is there is considerable rice there, and the muskrats make their homes among the rice fields.”
- “The ducks come here to feed on the rice beds, and of course that means a living to us as well.”
Disruption of Natural Hydrology
“We left this bay to enter the river that discharges into it; it is very beautiful at its mouth, and flows gently; it is full of bustards, ducks, teal and other birds, attracted thither by the wild oats of which they are very fond.”

Fr. Marquette’s Journal

1673-1675
And the History we are Making Today?
Invasives
Clam Lake
Clam Lake

C lam
Lake
Lone Star Bay
Clam Lake
Climate Change?

The Big Lake Thoroughfare in healthy and diseased years.
Brown Spot Disease
Genetic Engineering
But there is good news too:
We are still harvesting manoomin
And the harvest is still celebrated
Hunting / fishing / trapping
The Re-Affirmation of Treaties
A Resurgence in Management
Phantom Flowage
Water Level Management
Mud Lake

2009

2010
Amik (Beaver) Control
ATTENTION BOATERS!
THIS WATER BODY SUPPORTS

WILD RICE!

Wild rice is important
to wildlife and human
harvesters, and is protected
by state law. Rice is
easily uprooted,
especially during the
“floating-leaf” stage from
May-June. Please use
care whenever boating
near the rice beds.

PRESERVE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

GLIFWC
P.O. BOX 9
ODANAH, WI 54891
(715) 682-6619

DNR: CONTACT LOCAL WARDEN
OR WILDLIFE MANAGER

WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WIC ceded Territory Inventory
Making Manoomin

Percent of WI Off-Reservation Harvest From Seeded Waters

![Graph showing the percent of WI Off-Reservation Harvest from seeded waters from 1989 to 2009. The graph indicates a steady increase in the percentage harvested over time.]
Cultural Restoration
Miigwech!

For More Information:
- 715-682-6619
- www.glifwc.org
LuAnn’s Wild Rice

- 2 cups grated cheese, any kind (I like swiss!)
- 2 cups sliced ripe olives
- 2 cans stewed tomatoes
- 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 cups wild rice (uncooked)
- ½- 2/3 cups olive oil
- 2 t salt
- ½ t pepper

Mix all above ingredients together; add:

- 3 cups boiling water
- Bake at 350, in a large uncovered casserole dish, about 2 hours
“The defendants agree to consult with the Voigt Task Force before the issuance of any permit which is required to be obtained from the State regarding any activity which may reasonably be expected to directly affect the abundance or habitat of wild rice in the ceded territory…”

From the Wild Rice Regulatory Consent Decree of the Voigt Litigation
Wasn’t that E A S Y !!!
Wisconsin Harvest Regulations

- State or tribal permit required – usually...
- Smooth, rounded wooden knockers, no longer than 38 inches (must be cedar for tribal ricers)
- Boats no longer than 17 feet or wider than 38 inches
- Propelled with a push-pole or paddles
- Hours 10:00 am to sunset
- Some lakes regulated by date
Making Manoomin

State and Tribal Harvest vs Abundance Index by Year

- Tribal
- State
- Both
- Abun. Index
- # Active

Why not just do this?
Cultivated vs “Wild” Wild Rice

What’s the difference?

- Genetics: not a great difference...yet
- Growing conditions: no herbicides, pesticides, fungicides on wild beds
- Hand vs combine harvesting: seed maturity
- Finishing:
  - Small batch versus industrial finishing
  - Greater variation – and choice with wild
  - The additional “curing” step of cultivated
Cultivated vs "Wild" Wild Rice

What’s the difference?

- Different color / cooking characteristics
- Price
- Flavor!!!
Mulligan Lake, Douglas County

Spur Lake, Oneida County

Spur Lake, Oneida County