

LAKE DAMON NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

Dear Readers,

We are excited to open our camp for the season this coming weekend! We will be taking some time on Sunday to help with the Farm House Spring Clean up. If you have a little time Sunday morning, please stop by and help. Gloves + gardening tools would be handy to have with you. There are lots of other projects around the pond, so if you can't help Sunday please reach out and we can assign you a task to complete on your own time.

_Christine

Reminders:

- **Farmhouse Clean up this Sunday May 18th at 10am**
- **Dam Assessments were sent out recently and are due by June 1st**
- **Garbage cans are out at the beach. Please help scoop goose poop to keep our beach + water clean.**

Next Board Meeting

Date: June 14th

Location: The Mill

Time: 10am

2025 LDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Denise Beltz- President
Aram Flores - Vice President
Cassandra Celatka - Clerk
Cynthia Burr - Treasurer
Bruce Schwartz- Dam Master
Carol Blanchard
Allyson Brown
Matthew DiRocco
Ethan Fenn
Mike Frost
Robert Gosselin
Marianne Hoag
Sherrill Redmon
Steven Stathis
Christine Willis

Lake: Mike Frost...chair
(413) 568-4176
molly.frost@gmail.com
Robert Gosselin
Steve Willis

Land: Carol Blanchard...chair
(413) 296-4212
cblanch93@verizon.net
Ethan Fenn
Sherrill Redmon
Janet Scully

Dam: Bruce Schwartz...Dam Master
(413) 531-4567
bhschwartz@comcast.net
Matt DiRocco
Allyson Brown

Buildings: Aram Flores: VP and chair
(917) 756-5487
aramflores@icloud.com
Christine Willis
Marianne Hoag
Steve Stathis

Weed Boat Update

- Weed boat structure + floater have been assembled but still waiting for the metal grating for the top of the weed boat to arrive. They may have to use wood temporarily until this comes in
- Exact launch of the weed boat is still TBD, Matt was delayed a few weeks in the build process due to work obligations. We will keep you posted.
- A custom trailer was built to hold the weed boat because they could not find one to purchase that could fit the boat with the floaters.
- We've raised our goal of \$22K so that's great. The cost is a few thousand \$ more than that, so if people can still donate, that would be awesome.
- Steve Stathis and a few friends worked on the old weed boat and got it working- not ready for the pond working, but working. This boat does not have a harvester, but our new boat will

Land Updates

- The Culvert on Antin Rd failed and will cost \$2000 to be replaced. First the contractor will determine if the culvert can be repaired. A small amount of water is draining through but the water is being damned by the road, and at one point was covering Antin Rd.
- Please continue to help fill in potholes on our roads. Trap rock can be found on Don Emerson Rd, Farmhouse Rd, and Bray/Antin Rd. Stockholders can take what they need for maintenance of Corporation roads. The trap rock will harden when exposed to water, so make sure to cover the pile when you are done.
- After a windstorm this winter, Bray Rd lost its power, a phone line was down on the ground, and the power company cleaned up the debris in the road. However, a big mess of downed trees and limbs make for unpleasant viewing. Several directors volunteered to help with chainsaws and I'm sure they would welcome extra hands to help.

Lake Updates

- The lake committee is planning to cover the deck of the swim raft with outdoor carpet or astroturf to prevent the wasps from crawling through the space between the Trex decking. We won't launch until this problem is solved.
- Gail has volunteered to bring our weekly water testing to the lab again this summer. Thanks Gail! This saves the LDC money in transportation costs.
- Porta potty will be out at the beach by Memorial Day Weekend.
- Don't forget to help scoop the goose poop! Put the top securly on the garbage can when finished so they don't fill up with water.
- The spring flush has been completed. Thanks to the BOD's who completed this task.
- Thanks to whoever removed the hemlock that the beavers dropped on the rescue boat

WHAT'S BITING

If you've ventured outside around the pond in recent weeks you've probably been introduced to this month's featured creature: the Blackfly, or Black Fly, or Black-Fly, AKA Buffalo gnat or Turkey gnat. They're often erroneously called Mayflies, which are harmless ephemeral insects of no interest to anyone who isn't a fish. Blackflies are insects of the Order Diptera, which includes flies and gnats, all of which have only two wings (di=two, ptera=wing), whereas other flying insects typically have four, like butterflies and dragonflies. But who's counting? What's important is that there are about 2200 identified species of blackflies worldwide, all of which feed on the blood of mammals and birds, can be a major nuisance to humans, and can transmit serious diseases (River Blindness) in certain parts of the world. Swarms of hungry blackflies have been known to kill wild and domestic animals through blood loss or severe immune response. Fishermen and health officials have been saying for years that blackflies matter.

The males are content to simply sip plant nectar, but the females are out for blood. Mosquitoes have mouthparts that come together to function like a hypodermic needle which penetrates the skin into tiny capillaries to feed. Blackflies, like deerflies and horseflies, have mouthparts like a miniature scissors which cuts the victim's skin until it bleeds then leisurely lap up the blood. They simultaneously secrete saliva into the wound with anticoagulant and numbing properties which enable them to feed longer without being noticed. They prefer the soft skin around the ear, the nape of the neck, just inside the sleeve of your T-shirt or under your clothing in places you can't scratch in public. Individual inflammatory responses are variable, the itching and swelling starts in a day or two and can persist for 10 days. If you're able to examine a blackfly up close, usually on your palm after smacking it while feeding on your forehead, you'll notice their bulky black hump-backed thorax (hence, Buffalo gnat), short wings, legs and antennae. Following a blood meal the female drops her eggs into fast moving streams. The larvae hatch and attach to rocks via tiny hooks on their abdomens and feed on algae, bacteria, and organic debris which they filter out from the moving water. The adults emerge in May and June, floating to the surface in a tiny bubble of air and take flight. They are not strong fliers with their big bodies and little wings, but they can travel for miles carried by the wind. They typically feed only in the daytime and appear to be attracted by exhaled carbon dioxide, sweat, certain perfumes, and dark colored clothing, especially blue. Repellants containing DEET and cosmetics like Skin-So-Soft have limited effectiveness, so avoidance is the best strategy. Wear light colored clothing, long sleeves, tuck your pants into your socks and wear your bee bonnet. Staying in a breezy area is helpful and, if the wind is calm, a small smoky fire helps keep them away when working in the garden or chopping wood, for example. When all else fails, I suggest staying in your parent's basement until July. But then you'll have to contend with the mosquitoes and deerflies.

By Mike Frost





Share your pictures with the
community!
You can email them to
cscatko@gmail.com

.....



Wood Duck, Photo by Janet Scully

I have lived at the pond forty-two years, and have only seen a porcupine here a few times. One was sitting in a tree next to the group garage, munching away. The trail cams have caught them once a year. The first time was on an interesting night with a huge variety of animals appearing. Then a porcupine came huffing and puffing down the road. I have seen porcupines around, of course, but they were quiet. There was one that was seen along Damon Pond Rd near the stream. One time I had my headphones on and became aware that a car was driving slowly next to me. I looked at the driver and he pointed behind me. The porcupine was trailing me. Do other people see porcupines at the pond? Please let me know about interesting sightings- not just porcupines. You don't need to have a picture!

Porcupines are born in the spring after a seven-month gestation. Just one pup is born, with black fur, and it doesn't molt and obtain the dark brown fur of adults until the spring following its birth. Young pups stay with their mother until fall, when they disperse.

(Info from Naturally Curious with Mary Holland)

The screenshot near the wood pile was from May 2024, and the black and white picture is from 2025-04-28.

- Carol



Photos: Carol Blanchard