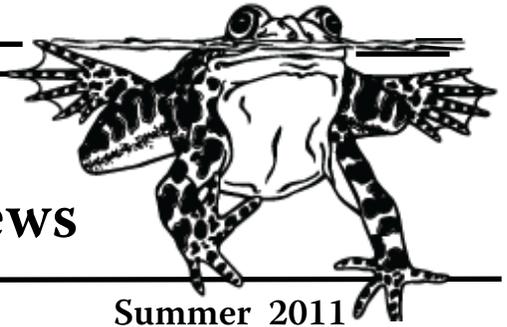


# Water's Edge

## Gratiot Lake Conservancy News



Volume 13

Summer 2011



Bill Deephouse (l) and Tom Rozich(r) surveying the Pilgrim River fish community using nets and shocking apparatus. Photo by Sue Haralson.

### *GLC's Annual Members Meeting*

*"The Gratiot Lake Fishery"*

Wednesday, July 27

Reception at 6:45, Business meeting at 7, Refreshments at 7:30,

Guest Speaker Tom Rozich at 8:00

**The public is cordially invited to attend this program.**

**Eagle Harbor Community Building on M-26.**

Our guest speaker, retired fisheries biologist Tom Rozich will explore the history of the Gratiot Lake fishery and share results of the lake survey completed this spring by the DNR. There will be a discussion period after his talk. Tom grew up in Painesdale enjoying all of the outdoor pleasures the Keweenaw has to offer, especially fishing. He received his BS in Forestry and his MS in Aquatic Biology and Fisheries from Tech.

Tom's career as a fisheries biologist in Lower Michigan spanned over three decades. Since Tom returned to this area, he has become actively involved in the activities of Copper Country Trout Unlimited and is currently serving as its vice-president. Last year Tom was a co-leader of a *Reading the Landscape* field trip which explored the aquatic ecology of the Pilgrim River (see photo above).

*Find GLC's summer workshop and events details inside.*

*Janet Avery Scholarships are available.*

### **RRIP-IT-UP**

## **Rapid Response Invasive Plant Intervention Team of the UP**

There is a new effort to stop the spread of invasive plants- *RRIP-IT-UP*. Invasive, non-native plants destroy local plant communities by outcompeting native vegetation and sometimes even inhibiting the reproduction of other plants including tree seedlings. Invasive, non-native plants are often a poor source of food for local wildlife and usually degrade habitat needed by wildlife.

The Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD) is spearheading the local *RRIP-IT-UP* effort to identify and map infestations of invasive plants in our neck of the woods. Some team members who removed a garlic mustard infestation in Laurium are pictured from L to R: Alex Mehne (MTU Botany Club), Meghan Stan (MTU Botany Club), Barb Flanagan, Andrew Maine (MTU Botany Club), Mark Klemp (HKCD board member), and Bonnie Hay (GLC).

Turn to page 4 to learn more about *RRIP-IT-UP* and invasive plants.



Photo courtesy of Sue Haralson

GLC Welcomes Life Members.

GLC is happy to announce two new life members, Angela Anderson and Charles S. Anderson.

*Please contact GLC for information on how to become a life member!*

Thanks to Victoria Budynsky the GLC group Facebook page is up-to-date.

Join the group at [www.facebook.com/GratiotLakeConservancy](http://www.facebook.com/GratiotLakeConservancy)



**We know you have talent! We hope you have the time.**

**Join others who help Gratiot Lake in so many ways:**

Enjoy feeding a crowd? Provide refreshments for the Members Meeting July 27.

Enjoy carpentry? Mount trail signs on the Bear Paw Path, remount a bat house, make and mount bee or bird houses

Enjoy gardening? Pull invasive plants such as knapweed from the perimeter of Gratiot Lake. Plant some native species.

Enjoy writing? Write an article for the GLC newsletter.

Enjoy watching wildlife? Keep a diary of nature happenings you and others observe at Gratiot Lake. Take photos. From time to time we get reports of various sightings, it would be wonderful to have someone compile this information.

Enjoy boating? Assist Dorothy Jamison with water monitoring and testing.

Enjoy walking on the shoreline? Help with the coastal cleanup of trash in September (or whenever you have time!)

The Conservancy is seeking volunteers. If you are handy with a pen, a chain saw, a shovel, a trowel, a paint brush, a camera, or a spatula, e-mail or call Bonnie at GLC.

GLC is grateful for contributions recently made  
in memory of these Gratiot lake friends and neighbors:

*John F. Flynn (1943-2000)*

*Bruce "Bud" F. Moore (1926-2011)*

*Pamela Schmitz (1947-2011)*

## About *Water's Edge*

*Water's Edge* is the newsletter of the Gratiot Lake Conservancy. Its purpose is to report Conservancy news, share information about the ecology and history of Gratiot Lake and its environs, and suggest ways to improve stewardship of the lake and its watershed. View *Water's Edge* in color on the GLC website.

*Please send questions, comments, or articles to*

**Bonnie Hay, *Water's Edge* Editor**

**Gratiot Lake Conservancy**

**P.O. Box 310**

**Mohawk, MI 49950**

**e-mail: [belh@verizon.net](mailto:belh@verizon.net) phone: 906-337-5476**

**Visit our web site: [www.mlswa.org/gratiot-lake-1508/](http://www.mlswa.org/gratiot-lake-1508/)**

The editor appreciates Ben Hay's proofreading of *Waters Edge*!

## ***RTL Thank You!***

*Reading the Landscape of the Keweenaw: Art and Natural History Field Trips for Adults (RTL)* is on sabbatical. Its next iteration remains to be determined. The program was sponsored by Copper Country Audubon Club, Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Gratiot Lake Conservancy, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD), Keweenaw County Historical Society (KCHS), Keweenaw Land Trust (KLT), Michigan Nature Association, North Woods Conservancy, and The Nature Conservancy. For eight summers the *RTL* field trips highlighted local natural treasures and tapped a wealth of local science, art, and natural history experts.

A personal note of thanks to Marcia Raley and Patricia Van Pelt, two people whose creative minds spawned the *RTL* series and whose boundless energy shepherded it over the years. These dynamos drew me into the planning process that each year generated this lively arts and natural history series, which ranged from field to forest to inland sea. The idea was to engage people, tourists and residents alike, in a very hands on experience of our local ecological highlights. Participants would record and reflect on their experiences through guided art expression. We hoped these close encounters would inspire greater appreciation for and stewardship of this wonderful place.

*RTL* programs required many, many hours (mostly volunteer) of planning and in implementation. Initially, the series was seeded with a small grant. It was sustained by contributions from sponsor organizations and enrollment fees. Keweenaw County Historical Society and subsequently Keweenaw Land Trust served as the program's fiscal agents. Sue Haralson of HKCD and Pat Toczydlowski of KLT were active in assisting with many administrative and planning tasks over the last few years. All in all, *RTL* exhibited the power of our community and of our special landscape.

## ***Public Use of Brockway Mountain***

This site used for several years as the venue for GLC astronomy nights is for sale. In addition to affording wonderful views of the peninsula, Brockway Mountain is an important landmark in the migration route of raptors and home to a special plant community. Eagle Harbor Township, The Nature Conservancy, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District, Copper Country Audubon Club, and Keweenaw Land Trust are working together to obtain grant funding to buy this jewel of the Keweenaw. For more information or to help make it happen go to [www.eagleharbortownship.org](http://www.eagleharbortownship.org) or call 906-289-4407.

Visit the Gratiot Lake Conservancy web site to view current and archived issues of Water's Edge Newsletter (in full color), informative articles, updated calendar, photos, video clips, and links to more information.

<http://www.MLSWA.org/Gratiot-Lake-1508/>

## ***Astronomy Night at Fort Wilkins***

***Friday, July 29, 7:30 PM-???***

**Heavy cloud cover or rain will cause a rescheduling of this program to August 5.**

Come at 7:30 for astrophysicist Robert Nemiroff's presentation of extraordinary photos of the cosmos taken by NASA telescopes and space probes. See planets, distant galaxies, and other celestial features. Robert recently authored a photo compendium entitled *Astronomy: 365 Days*. He is also co-author of the website *Astronomy Picture of the Day* <http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>

After the show, Robert and Tech astronomy students will be on hand to introduce us to Keweenaw celestial highlights using GLC's and Tech's big telescopes. Bring your insect repellent, blankets, beach chairs, binoculars, and telescopes. GLC will provide red film to cover your flashlight. Red light is less disturbing to night vision. GLC is partnering with the [Fort Wilkins Natural History Association](#) and [Fort Wilkins State Park](#) on this event.

To enter the park there will be a per vehicle fee charged if you did not purchase a Michigan Parks Passport with your Oct-July Michigan vehicle registration or do not drive a Michigan registered vehicle (Michigan vehicles with registration renewal due in August and September may enter free). If you do not have a Michigan Parks Passport, consider carpooling with others.





Continued from page 1.

When infestations are detected early, they can be removed or at least monitored to inhibit further spread. Some important targets of RRIP-IT-UP are spotted knapweed, garlic mustard, Japanese and giant knotweeds, and buckthorns. These destructive invasive plants not only come into disturbed areas like roadsides (as many non-native plants, like daisies or clover, do) but also make inroads into more pristine areas. Not all non-native plants are destructive invasives. The hope is that some of the more destructive species can be stopped in their tracks before they make it into native ecosystems including shoreline, riverbanks, wetlands, and woodlands. The HKCD offers identification and control information.

You can assist in this process by reporting suspected invasive plants in our area to the HKCD. HKCD will provide help with identification and advice on eradication. You can also help by volunteering on an invasive plant pull. Recently the RRIP-IT-UP team assisted a homeowner in the removal of a garlic mustard infestation. A RRIP-It-UP pull of spotted knapweed is scheduled for McLain State Park on June 28th and 29th. Contact HKCD if you'd like to help. GLC is a partner in RRIP-IT-UP and is coordinating a spotted knapweed removal effort near Gratiot. Contact GLC for information on this.

**If you see invasive plants pictured here in Houghton or Keweenaw County, please contact :** Sue Haralson, Administrator, Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (HKCD) to report the location: 906-482-0214 or [sue.haralson@mi.nacdn.net](mailto:sue.haralson@mi.nacdn.net). If you have identification questions, contact Janet Marr: 906-337-5529 or [jkmarr@mtu.edu](mailto:jkmarr@mtu.edu)

*Stop the invasion of...*

# GARLIC MUSTARD

*Alliaria petiolata*

## ◀ Description:

- Height: 12 to 48 inches tall
- Basal leaves: kidney-shaped, scalloped edges
- Stem leaves: 1-3 inches long and wide, alternate, sharply toothed, triangular
- New leaves produce a garlic odor
- Flowers: white, in cluster on single stem in spring



Chris Evans  
River to River CWMMA  
bugwood.com

Garlic mustard seed pods (at left)

Garlic Mustard plant with flower cluster (bottom left)

Garlic Mustard flowers (bottom right) (Not to scale)

## ◀ Impact:

- Dominates understory of forests
- Produces chemicals inhibiting other plants' growth

## ◀ What you can do:

- Report sightings
- Avoid transporting plants or seed by travel through infested areas
- Remove all seeds from clothing, shoes, pets, and equipment and tire treads
- Volunteer to assist with removal of invasive species



Steven Katovich  
USDA Forest Service  
bugwood.com



Chris Evans  
River to River CWMMA  
bugwood.com

*Report infestations of...*

## Japanese Knotweed

*Polygonum cuspidum*

### Description:

- Height: semi-woody plant up to 10 feet tall
- Leaves: somewhat heart shaped (except base of leaf not indented) leaves with a pointed tip, variable, 6 inches long and 3 to 4 inches wide, opposite on stem
- Flowers: whitish, upright spikes of small flowers
- Stem: stout, sturdy stems resemble bamboo, smooth and hollow between swollen joints. Rust colored in winter.
- Spread through seed and through long underground rhizomes.
- Similar in appearance to its invasive relative, giant knotweed, which grows taller, has even stouter stems and larger leaves (indented at base).



Photo Courtesy of Steve Garske, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission

### Impact:

- Forms dense patches along sunny streambanks, wetlands, and grasslands.
- Emerges vigorously and early, shading out native vegetation beneath.
- Competes with important native vegetation and is a poor food for wildlife.

### *Online resources for information on invasive species:*

<http://web4.msue.msu.edu/mnfi/education/invasives.cfm>

<http://www.invasive.org>

Links to invasive species info on the GLC website: <http://www.mlswa.org/Gratiot-Lake-1508/links.htm>

*Be on the lookout for...*

## Glossy Buckthorn

*Rhamnus frangula*

### Description:

- Height: woody, shrubby tree up to 25 feet tall
- Leaves: oval to elliptical, untoothed leaves that are shiny on the top. Alternate on stem.
- Flowers: small yellowish-green clusters.
- Fruit: red brown, ripening to black.
- Stems: multiple stems with hairy buds. Bark resembles cherry or plum.
- Similar in appearance to its invasive relative, common buckthorn which has leaves with finely serrated edges and twigs that often end in thorns.

### Impact:

- Displaces native trees and plants by producing dense shade and forming an impenetrable understory layer. Particularly aggressive in wet areas.

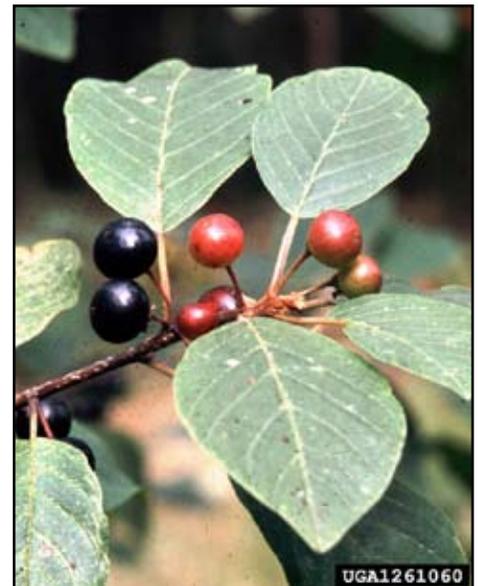


Photo courtesy of Gil Wojciech, PFRI, Bugwood.org

## *Beginners Workshop on Dragonflies and Damselflies*

**Bob Marr, Instructor**  
Saturday, August 13, 10 AM to 4 PM

Want to learn more about the Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies) of the Keweenaw? Amateur odonatist Bob Marr will lead a one day beginner's workshop on the identification of these "winged dragons" and "neon toothpicks."

The day will start at the GLC Noblet Field Station with a short overview of life cycle, ecology, morphology, and behavior of odonata followed by field identification at the GLC preserve. There will be a break for lunch and then more field observation.

Participants will be encouraged (but not required) to net insects for study and release. Insect nets and magnifying lenses will be provided for use by those without their own equipment. Whether or not you wish to net specimens, by all means bring your camera as there will be plenty of opportunities for pictures!

Last year this workshop netted the following interesting odonata species: Northern Spreadwing, Eastern Forktail, Tule Bluet, Hagans Bluet, Canada Darner, Black Shouldered Spinylegs, and White-Faced Meadowhawk.

Field guides will be available for reference at the workshop. If you wish to bring a field guide, we recommend *Dragonflies of the North Woods* by Kurt Mead and *Damselflies of the North Woods* by Bob Dubois.

**Advance reservations are required. Reserve early for this limited enrollment field trip. Although geared towards adults, this workshop is fun for children with an interest in natural history age 11 and older accompanied by an adult. The fee is \$20 (\$15 for GLC members.)**

In the case of unsuitable weather (rain, cold), the workshop will be held the following day, August 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Enrollment forms can be downloaded [here](#)** or mail GLC your name, address, and contact information along with check made out to "Gratiot Lake Conservancy."



## *Sketching Nature in Watercolor at Gratiot Lake*

**Marilynn Brandenburger, Instructor**  
Saturday July 16 and Sunday July 17  
from 10 AM to 4 PM

A workshop geared for the nature lover, landscape painter, gardener, or anyone who wants to record what they see and experience outdoors in a watercolor sketchbook. You'll learn how to simplify subjects, render them quickly in pencil, enhance your drawings with ink and watercolor, and add words to your pages. We will work from real life and photographs. Activities will include demonstrations, drawing and watercolor lessons, and outdoor sketching (weather permitting). Some drawing experience helpful; all levels welcome. Bring a sack lunch each day. Bring your own supplies or rent or purchase all or some supplies from the instructor. Supply list at <http://tinyurl.com/4ps9urp>

**The fee for the two day workshop is \$100 (\$85 for GLC members.) [Click here for more information and a link to a downloadable enrollment form.](#)**

**Advance registration is required and must be received no later than July 8. Class size is limited.**

Marilynn Brandenburger is a professional artist whose still-life and landscape paintings in watercolor and mixed media are in collections throughout the U.S. Her beautifully illustrated watercolor journals reflect her love of nature and provide inspiration for her paintings. She holds a master's degree in art education and has been happily teaching adults to draw and paint for more than 30 years. Marilynn was an artist in residence at GLC's Noblet Field Station in 2004. You can see her work on her website and her blog:

[www.brandenburgerstudios.com](http://www.brandenburgerstudios.com)

[www.marilynnbrandenburger.blogspot.com](http://www.marilynnbrandenburger.blogspot.com)



**For GLC Membership/Donation Form  
[click here!](#)**

**To apply for a Janet Avery Scholarship to attend any of these workshops, [email GLC](#) your contact information and a description of how you plan to use what you learn in your studies, work, or in volunteer activities.**



## *Aquatic Plant Workshop*

**Janet Marr, Instructor**

**Saturday, August 20 and Sunday, August 21, 2011  
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM**

This workshop will be useful to fisheries biologists, botanists, environmental consultants, biological technicians, aquatic biologists, extension agent, college students, volunteer monitors, lake association members, and others interested in learning how to identify aquatic plants and invasive species in order to protect healthy ecosystems in inland lakes. CEU's will be available for this workshop.

Activities will take place both at the Eagle Harbor Community Building and in the field at several Keweenaw lakes and channels/coves connected to Lake Superior. Submersed and floating-leaved aquatic plants will be identified with a focus on identification of pondweeds (*Potamogeton* and *Stuckenia* species) and rosette-formers including the Michigan endangered awlwort (*Subularia aquatica*). Techniques for collecting and herbarium specimen/label preparation will be demonstrated. Differences between aquatic invasive species such as Eurasian water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) and their native relatives will be discussed.

Space is limited and advance enrollment is required. The fee for this 2-day workshop is \$70 (\$55 GLC for members). [Click here for workshop details and downloadable application.](#)

A list of aquatic plant species, most of which will be seen and taught in the workshop, is available on the GLC website. All participants will receive a handbook (*Guide to Aquatic Plants of Gratiot Lake and other Keweenaw County Lakes*) and accompanying CD.

**Photos used in this newsletter, unless otherwise attributed, are by Jim Hay. Thanks, Jim!**

### *Why is there so much algae?*

Phosphorus and other nutrient runoff from residences and roads near lakes are likely contributors to excessive algal growth. Some studies of inland lake waters detect highest phosphorus concentrations directly off shore from homes. Biggest contributors seem to be septic systems and fertilization of lawns.

In 2010, Michigan decreased the amount of phosphorus allowed in dish detergent because of its adverse effect on lakes and streams. A new Michigan law in effect in 2012 will greatly restrict the use of phosphorus fertilizer on lawns. In fact the use of phosphorus in fertilizer will be banned within 15 feet if any natural body of water and most phosphorus use will be allowed only on golf courses and in agricultural settings.



### *Goose Eggs!*

Canada geese are nesting at Gratiot lake. These graceful and fearless birds often are viewed as nuisances by lake side land-owners. So, if you don't have a dog to chase the geese away and are hoping to discourage geese from coming up on your lawn the solution may be planting a native vegetation buffer strip between your lawn and the lake.

Geese look for nesting spots that allow them a clear goose-eye view of the water from the land. You may be able to discourage geese from coming into your yard by a combination of not mowing within several feet of the lakeshore and planting native shrubs and perennials that grow to at least three feet of height in a strip parallel to the shoreline.

This swath of native shrubs and plants will also buffer runoff from your property. Runoff can bring excessive phosphorus and nutrients into the lake water. These nutrients promote too much algae growth. In addition, the natural buffer will provide habitat for more welcome wildlife.

The eggs we would like to see are loon eggs! A platform has been placed in the lake near GLC land. This nesting platform may attract a breeding pair of loons. Students from Michigan Tech will be monitoring loon activity on a bi-weekly basis in June and July. Boaters are asked to give the platform a wide berth.



*Pictured in this photo taken in early June, an eaglet peers out from a Gratiot Lake nest. Hoping for a food delivery soon, no doubt. View photos and video clips of this year's eagles on the GLC website.*

### ***GLC Fund at KCF***

The *Gratiot Lake Conservancy Fund* managed by the Keweenaw Community Foundation (KCF) is a convenient and tax effective way for Michigan residents to support GLC. The Michigan Tax Credit allows individuals to give up to \$200 (\$400 for couples) to a community foundation, and have half of that gift amount credited against Michigan income taxes. To contribute to the *GLC Fund*, contact:

Barbara Rose, Executive Director  
Keweenaw Community Foundation  
236 Quincy Street  
Hancock, MI 49930.  
906-482-9673 [mail@k-c-f.org](mailto:mail@k-c-f.org) [www.k-c-f.org](http://www.k-c-f.org)

**Whether you donate online through the KCF website or by mail earmark your donation for the *Gratiot Lake Conservancy Fund*.**

## ***Explore the GLC Preserve***

**Saturday, July 23, 10:30 AM**

Environmental educator Brian Rajdl will help you uncover nature's secrets at the GLC Preserve. Look for special plants and animals along the Bear Paw Path, see what lives near beaver dams, hug some old pines and hemlocks, and discover Gratiot Lake shoreline. Adults and children accompanied by adults are invited to this nature hike.

Meet at Brunette Park on the Gay-Lac Labelle Road by 10:30 to carpool (via old logging roads) to the GLC preserve at Gratiot Lake. Or come across the lake from the public boat access to the Noblet Field Station in your canoe, kayak, or small (beachable) boat. Rendezvous at the Noblet Field Station by 11AM. Bring a bag lunch and plenty of water to drink. Stormy weather may cause cancellation. Contact Bonnie at GLC for more details.

### **Tips for Avoiding Swimmer's Itch**

1. Don't feed waterfowl or encourage them to come up to the shore. Ducks and geese are the desired hosts to the swimmer's itch parasite in one stage of its complicated life cycle.
2. When swimming, towel off immediately after you leave the water. The tiny parasite takes time to imbed and toweling off rather than air drying sometimes deters it. Showering after swimming may help too.
3. Don't sit, wade, or swim for long periods in the shallows during a swimmer's itch outbreak—particularly when winds are blowing towards the shore. The parasite inhabits snail territory in shallow water for part of its life and most easily attaches to humans there.

**There were occurrences of swimmer's itch in Gratiot Lake (and some other areas in the Keweenaw) last summer. The parasite can stimulate allergic reactions in people. Infestations come and go and may be very local. Please notify GLC if you notice an outbreak in Gratiot Lake.**

## **Support GLC !**

Gratiot Lake Conservancy members receive a biannual newsletter, notice of special events, and an invitation to the Annual Members Meeting. Some GLC programs that have fees are discounted for members.

**Donations to GLC are always welcome.**

***Download a membership/donation form.***

**The membership year is from January 1st to December 31st, but you may join at any time.**

Donors of \$100 or more will receive a gift of notecards with photos taken at Gratiot Lake.

**[Click here to view Gratiot Lake photos in full color!](#)**

