



Another lake invasion; high hopes for hunting

By now Minnesotans are becoming accustomed to hearing the unwelcome news that another body of water in the state has been invaded by a harmful foreign plant or animal, an "exotic species," as they are known to science.

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Inside the Outdoors



By Mike Rahn
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The latest to earn that distinction is Lake Le Homme Dieu near Alexandria, one of West Central Minnesota's more popular fishing and recreational lakes and connected to several others in a well-known chain, including Lakes Carlos and Darling. Lake Le Homme Dieu is the tenth Minnesota lake where zebra mussels have been found, in addition to the Mississippi, St. Croix and Zumbro rivers.

Zebra mussels are tiny clam-like creatures that came to this country in the ballast water of ships traveling from Eastern Europe and Russia to Great Lakes ports in the 1980s. Pleasure boaters and anglers unknowingly brought the creatures to inland lakes and rivers as stowaways on their boats and trailers, where they established themselves and from there have been transported elsewhere.

The fingernail-size, cream and brown-striped creatures attach themselves in masses to any solid underwater surface. They do damage on a large scale by clogging mechanisms through which water flows, such as water intakes of boats and municipal, industrial and residential water intakes, as well. Scraping the cement-like masses of shells from boat hulls, docks and water toys and being cut by broken mussel shells, are among the unpleasant realities where they've gained a foothold.

But to an angler or an ecologist, that's not the only bad news. Zebra mussels upset the food chain, consuming important microorganisms, called plankton. The water becomes clearer,

but that's because the free-floating plankton needed to support the food pyramid of aquatic insects and ultimately forage fish and game fish, are reduced. In lakes where zebra mussels are well established, you'll see more of the lake bottom and fewer fish.

Alexandria seems a long way from Lake Mille Lacs, one of the other infested lakes and from the Mississippi and the St. Croix. But in this age of great angler and boater mobility, invasive species like zebra mussels, or the Eurasian watermilfoil now choking the shallows of many Minnesota lakes, are as close as the next boat or trailer that arrives from an infected lake without being properly drained and cleaned, or allowed to dry out thoroughly to kill any aquatic hitchhikers.

One would like to think that the spread of these and other harmful invasive species to other Minnesota waters is preventable. But every time another lake "casualty" is announced it gets a little harder to be optimistic.

Upland hunters can be optimistic

If you're an upland hunter who tramps the woodlands for grouse and woodcock in autumn, you have reason for optimism for the season ahead. For two weeks in a row wildlife biologists have issued positive reports on the status of game birds dear to these hunters' hearts. Recently it was woodcock; and before that it was ruffed grouse. The woodcock prediction came from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The ruffed grouse estimate came from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The truth, of course, is that most of the hunters who fall into this category are actually grouse hunters, who may harvest a few woodcock as targets of opportunity where the two birds' habitat preferences overlap. There are relatively few hunters who could be called woodcock specialists and who actually set out to hunt specifically for them.

I consider myself a hybrid of the two. When I owned an English setter, a pointing dog breed, I would sometimes hunt specifically

for woodcock, which tend to be found in the low-lying woodland edges close to swamps or marshes. I now hunt with a golden retriever and focus more on grouse, but expect to encounter the occasional woodcock. When proper weather arrives, typically in late October, flights of migrating woodcock may descend on the local covers where I hunt. At those times I will slip shells with smaller shot into my shotgun and look for evidence that a woodcock flight is in.

The news released declared that woodcock numbers in Minnesota and in the central U.S. in general, are up slightly from 2008; and numbers were higher in 2008 than 2007. Thanks to an early spring, nesting woodcock got a head start this year and there was no significant wintry weather to cause mortality.

Ruffed grouse census numbers recently released by the Minnesota DNR were even more encouraging. The drumming counts that estimate the number of breeding birds were up more than 40 percent from 2008, after several years of modest increases. The northern portions of the state showed the greatest increases, while central and southeast regions were similar to last year, the DNR reported.

Another reason DNR biologists are optimistic is that the period of greatest risk for losing juvenile birds is at an end. Cold wet weather in June can wipe out broods of grouse chicks and this was not a year when that undesirable phenomenon occurred. Biologists expect good survival of young grouse, something that is a "must" for an exceptional hunting season.

While a bird in the bag is worth two in the bush and it's a gamble to lay bets now on this fall's success, the odds of a bumper harvest look better this year than they have for quite some time.

Staples Area Fishing League, Week 7 Wednesday, June 24

Big Birch Lake Results

What the Fish five fish, 16 points, 1st place;
Water Boys & Girls, five fish, 15.5 points, 2nd place;
Carlson Castaway, five fish, 14.5 points, 3rd place;
Team K & D, six fish, 13.5 points, 4th place;
Dishin & Fishin, five fish, 13.5 points, 5th place;
Minnow Masters five fish, 12 points, 6th place;
Leeches, five fish, 11 points, 7th place;
RC & Associates, five fish, 11 points, 7th place;
Top Water Thompson, five fish, 11 points, 7th place;
Hindsight, two fish, 10.5 points, 10th place;
Swamp Frogs, five fish, 10 points, 11th place;
Happy Hookers, three fish, 9 points, 12th place;
Jam Casters, five fish, 5.5 points, 13th place;
Redneck Fishfinderst, five fish, 3 points, 14th place.

Lake survey

Lake Alexander was good to the members of the SAFL. The weather for the evening presented calming south east winds, cool temperatures and clearing skies. All fourteen teams scored points measuring 66 fish for the evening. The most abundant species was largemouth bass as thirteen teams measured forty-nine of them from 12 ½ to 16 ½ inches. Sunfish was the second most abundant species as four teams measured seven of them between 7 ½ and 8 inches. Third most abundant species was walleye three teams measured three between 16 ¾ and 23 inches. One northern pike at 21 ¾ was measured.

SAFL Biggest Fish

Big Northern - 21 ¾ inches Tim Leech, Leeches.

Big Bass - 16 ½ inches 2 lbs. 5 oz. Dan Austad, What the Fish.

Big Walleye - 23 inches 4 lbs, 4 oz. Mike Carlson, Carlson Castaways.

Points Rough Fish (Bonus Points) - (Rock Bass) 14 oz., Jake Knutson, Team K & D.



New dugouts at Pine Grove

A pair of concrete block dugouts are the latest addition to the baseball field at Pine Grove Park, home field for the Staples Lumberbats baseball team. The dugouts were built with concrete block furnished by the W.W. Thompson Concrete firm of Brainerd, with labor supplied mainly by the Todd-Wadena

Sentence to Serve adult crews and also by members of the Lumberbats. Central Building Supply also provided materials such as the roofing, while the Staples Host Lions provided funds to purchase any other needed supplies. (Staples World photo by Tom Crawford)

Lumberbats near end of season

The Staples Lumberbats, playing in the Lakes and Pine (South) League, sent three players to the annual Lake and Pine All Star game played June 20 at Dent.

Dave Anderson, Jason Bachman and Justin Kolling were the Lumberbats representatives on the All Star squad.

Now nearing the end of their summer schedule, the Lumberbats, who play their home games at the Pine Grove Park ball field, have a record of four wins and 12 losses. In their more recent games, the 'Bats lost 6-1 on June 28 to the Sebe-

ka Stingers and on Sunday, June 21, they lost to the Wolf Lake Wolf Pack 11-1.

Their next game is Sunday, July 12, at Verndale, playing the Verndale Bison. Their next (and last) home game will be at 1:30 p.m. July 19 when they host the Nisswa Lightning. After that, the Bats will be into their playoff schedule, which begins July 25.

Shawn Motl and David Anderson share top honors for Lumberbat pitching, each with a 2-3 record. Both have pitched 34 innings, with Motl getting 26 strikeouts and Anderson 30. Motl has a 5.77 earned run aver-

age while Anderson, prior to the last two games, was at 6.23.

At the plate, Motl also carries the team's best batting average at .406, including a double and three runs batted in.

Ryan Klingaman is at .326, with 15 hits including four doubles. Bob Hazuka is batting .292, and has 14 hits including four doubles and the team's only triple.

Other top hitters include Jason Bachman .304; David Anderson .295; Justin Kolling .283 and Buddy Anderson .229. The latter serves as the Lumberbat's 2009 player/coach.

Legion team has first loss, now 8-1

During a very busy week, the Staples Motley American Legion baseball team suffered their first loss in splitting a DH with Nisswa on June 24.

Coach John Riewer's squad lost the opener 2-0, giving themselves a 6-1 record at that time for the season. They got a taste of revenge, getting a 10-8 victory in the second game both were seven inning games.

Gunner Johnson and Nisswa's Zac Voels were locked in a pitcher's duel, Johnson allowing Nisswa just one hit while Voels had five strikeouts and three walks in the first game.

Johnson struck out 12, walked six and allowed two hits.

Voels gave up five hits, but was able to scatter them. Anthony Jenkins doubled for SM, the only extra base hit.

Nisswa's Burrell Flanagan had the game's only RBI in the third inning. Desmond Janousek was hit by a pitch, was bunted to second and eventually scored on a wild pitch.

SM won the second game 10-8 as Jordan Riewer went the distance, striking out eight and walking two.

Alex Jansson was 2-4 and drove in two runs in the top of the SM seventh

and Dylan Shequen was 2-4.

On Thursday, June 25, in a game that should never have happened, the Staples Motley crew devoured a very young Verndale squad 40-1 in five innings.

"We beat a very young baseball team, a team that should be playing Babe Ruth instead of Legion baseball," Coach Riewer said.

"We did whatever we could to keep the score down. We stopped moving up a base and scoring on wild pitches. We bunted every batter in the third and fourth innings, Riewer said.

Staples Motley had 33 hits, scored 40 runs while the two SM pitchers held the Verndale team to just two hits.

The overall Legion record is now 8-1.

Games this week included Tuesday - home vs. Bertha-Hewitt - 6:30 p.m.; Wednesday - Home vs. Cass Lake - 6:30 p.m.; Thursday - at Cross Lake - 6:30 p.m.

Baseball Results

Wednesday, June 24, 2009
Staples-Motley at Nisswa
Game 1
SM 0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0 0 51
N 0-0-1-0-1-0-x-21 0
WP: Zac Voels
LP: Gunner Johnson - 6 IP,
26 BF, 12 K, 6 BB, 1 hit, 2 runs, 2 earned

Leading hitter: Alex Jansson - 23

Also getting hits: Anthony Jenkins - 1-4, double; Jordan Riewer - 1-2; Devin Becker - 1-3

Game 2
SM 4-0-1-0-0-4-10 71
N 6-0-0-0-1-1-8 12 2
WP: Jordan Riewer - 7 IP, 37 BF, 8 K, 2 BB, 12 hits, 8 runs, 6 earned;

LP: Craig McCluney
Leading hitters: Alex Jansson - 2-4, 2 runs, RBI; Dylan Shequen - 2-4, run, RBI

Also getting hits:
Gunner Johnson - 1-2, 2 runs; Devin Becker - 1-3, 2 runs, RBI; Brandon Haglin - 1-4, RBI;

June 25 SM at Verndale
SM 10-16-0-5-9-40 33 1
V 0-0-0-1-0-1-2 9

Winning pitcher: Tyler Jennings - 4 IP, 16 BF, 1 run, 1 earned, 4 K, 0 BB, 2 hits

Trevor Smith - 1 IP, 4 BF, 0 run, 0 earned, 1 K, 1 BB, 0 hits

Leading hitters:
Alex Jansson - 4-7 - 5 runs - 5

RBI's
Anthony Jenkins - 3-5 - 5

runs - 3 RBI's
Gunner Johnson - 3-7 - 3 runs

- 5 RBI's - double - triple
Dylan Shequen - 3-6 - 3 runs - 5

RBI's - 2 doubles
Trevor Smith - 4-5 - 5 runs - 4

RBI's - double
Brandon Haglin - 5-6 - 4 runs

- 4 RBI's
Devin Becker - 5-6 - 5 runs - 3

RBI's
Sam Duberowski - 4-7 - 5

runs - 4 RBI's
Tyler Jennings - 3-6 - 5 runs

- RBI

GARAGE SALES

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Garage Sales

Wed. July 1-Sat. July 4, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. **From Morrison County 1, west on 203 (330th St.) because of road const., From Hwy 10: east on Morrison Cty. 3 (320th St.), left on 36th Ave., right on 330th. 3218 330th St. Follow signs. TOOLS & COLLECTIBLES**, Craftsman, Husky and other U.S. made hand tools, 1" Williams ratchet/torque socket set, 2 lg bench vises, ¾" drive set, camping gear, tents, fishing equipment, O'Briens slalom water ski/case, glassware, clocks and more. 25sswp

ONE DAY ONLY MULTI FAMILY SALE: Thurs. July 2, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. **103 3rd Ave. NW, Staples.** Clothes, toys, furniture, misc. 25sswp

THREE INDIVIDUAL SALES, STETSON MOVING SALE: Fri. July 3-Sat. July 4, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. **620 West 4th St., Pillager.** Watch for signs and pink ribbons. 25sswp

RUMMAGE SALE: Fri. July 3-Sun. July 5 and Fri. July 10-Sun. July 12, both weekends 9 a.m.-5 p.m. **From Staples: f mi. west on Hwy. 10, north on Cty. Rd. 9, ¼ mi.** A lot of baseball and foot ball cards, glassware, clothes, and misc. 25-26sswp

HUGE SALE: Mon. June 29-Fri., July 3, **From Staples: Warner Rd. to Cty. Rd. 32. From Motley: Hwy 64 to Cty. Rd. 33 to Cty. Rd. 32.** Follow signs. **Hope to see you.** Packed with wide variety of marked down decorative and craft items, household storage, carpet remnants, bedding, small furniture, outdoor items, women's and men's clothing, tall bar chairs, much misc. and more. 25-26sswp

THREE FAMILY SALE: Thurs. July 2-Sat. July 4, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. **2163 Pineview Blvd. South side of Lake Shamaineau, 6 mi. south of Motley on Hwy. 10.** Follow signs. 25wp

Fishing after July 1 at state parks

Minnesota residents can fish without a license in most state parks beginning July 1.

The new program is the latest lure in the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) tackle box of ideas to sustain the state's storied fishing tradition. "Minnesota has amazing state parks, most of which are located on lakes and rivers," said Dave Schad, DNR Fish and Wildlife director.

Under Minnesota law, anyone age 16 or older is required to have a state fishing license unless fishing

during the free Take A Kid Fishing weekends or some other exemption.

The Minnesota state parks fishing license exemption allows park visitors to fish without a license when shore fishing or wading on state-owned land within a state park. All limits and special regulations in effect for the body of water being fished apply. When angling from a boat or float, the law applies only to those water bodies that are completely encompassed within the statutory boundary of the

state park.

Anglers must possess a valid license when fishing in Minnesota's six state recreation areas; on waters where a trout stamp is required; and when fishing in any city, county, regional or federal park.

For a list of Minnesota state parks and the water bodies where the new law applies, visit the DNR's Parks and Trails Division online information at http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/state_parks/fishing.html.