

The Reservoir Review

A Newsletter About Life on Neponset Reservoir

FIRST SET OF BUOYS INSTALLED

IF YOU'VE BEEN BOATING AROUND BLUEBERRY ISLAND recently, you've no doubt noticed that the first set of No-Wake Zone buoys have been placed and secured to the lake bottom on either side of Blueberry Island.



As described in our last newsletter, “no wake” means no waves. And a no wake speed means 6 mph or less within 150 feet of a shoreline, swimmer, water-skier, boat launch, private dock, raft, float or a moored or docked boat.

There are many places on the Reservoir where the islands and coves are close to the shoreline. The buoys will serve to remind watercraft to be aware of their speed and proceed with caution through these areas.

There are still additional buoys to be added in other key areas of the lake and around the islands. Those will be done in the near future. However, whether buoys are present or not, the 150 ft. law still applies.

To help you know where those areas are, we are again including, below, the map of the lake and those areas where caution must be used and a headway speed of 6 mph or less maintained.



You can find this map by scanning the QR code, at Kersey Point and at Edwards Road Boat Launch.



Some places on Reservoir where boats must operate at 6 mph within 150 ft of a shoreline (300 ft between 2 shorelines).



FLOATING ISLANDS

OVER THE YEARS, you may have been on the lake and noticed, at different times, these floating islands in places where, previously, there had been nothing.

What's a floating island, you ask? A floating island is a suspended mass of organic deposits, such as peat and mud, that vary from a few inches to a few feet thick.



One of several floating islands in past years that came up between Snake Island and Bourne Rd.

Floating islands are a product of the natural aging process of water bodies. The old bog sediments on the bottom of the lake bio-degrade and the methane and phosphorus gasses that release are trapped by recent sediments such as leaves and dead plants, forcing the bottom sediments to rise to the surface.

They are comprised of aquatic and sometimes upland plants, as well as herbaceous and woody plants. In some cases, the sediments are compact or fibrous enough that the emergent plants, whose roots are interwoven into the sediments, pull as much as several feet of organic material with them to the surface as lakes refill after a prolonged drought.

Simply killing the vegetation on these floating islands will not eliminate them. The mud, peat, and woody material continue to float, they recolonize with emergent plants, and the cycle repeats.



Floating island found near Pumping Station. While very extensive, this area, luckily, does not get much traffic due to stumps. (Above two photos courtesy of Dr. Ken Wagner)

Water and air temperatures, sunlight, and water levels are also factors in floating island formation. Gradually, these islands will sink back to earth.

(Thanks to Hydrologist Rick Lewis of NRRC and Lewis Groundwater Consulting; The Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants; and Floating Island International for their help putting this story together).



Canadian Geese basking in the sun on an existing floating island located off Bear Island. (Courtesy of David Roome)



SPOTLIGHT ON...



The Rat Snake

This non-poisonous species of snake can be found in and around Neponset Reservoir, and in fact, at this author's shoreline.

Named for their favorite food, rats, this non-poisonous species is a constrictor, meaning they squeeze their prey to death with their bodies, then swallow it whole.

Besides rats, they eat everything from small mammals like chipmunks, mice, and other rodents to small fish, frogs, and lizards.

Rat snakes can be found on land, in trees and in water. Many species are great swimmers and will hunt fish, frogs, and tadpoles in bodies of fresh water. They are often found basking near the edge of the water here on our Reservoir while they wait for prey.

The female will lay her eggs in a hollowed-out tree trunk or under a rock and go about her business, leaving the hatchlings to fend for themselves.

Instead of rearing up and trying to fight off a much larger predator, rat snakes will produce a foul-smelling musk. This behavior, called musking, tries to mimic a poisonous flavor and convince the attacker to drop its would-be prey. Similar to a skunk, however, the musk is completely harmless apart from being distasteful.

A nickname for many rat snake species is simply "chicken snake" because they are known to steal chicken eggs.



SIGHTINGS....

SUMMER SOLSTICE PADDLE TOUR



Summer Solstice Paddle Tour participants entering at Edwards Rd (Courtesy of NepRWA)

On June 21 at 6:00 PM, a group of kayakers paddled out from Edwards Road Boat Launch for the annual Summer Solstice Paddle around Neponset Reservoir. Hosted by the Neponset River Watershed Association (NepRWA), and its Environmental Scientist, Declan Devine, the group enjoyed one another's company as well as the islands, coves and beauty of the Neponset Reservoir. What better way to celebrate the longest day of the year?

SHORELINE VISITORS



WHERE DID YOU GET THAT?

EVER THINK it might be fun to have some merchandise depicting the name of our lake on them? Maybe some coasters or a coffee mug, perhaps a floor mat, pillow or tee shirt, proudly displaying our lake name?

We have worked with LakeHouse Lifestyle to have Neponset Reservoir, as well as all coordinates and depths according to our map, added to the list of lakes they have in their system. This will make a number of items available for purchase with the design as seen below.

Should you be interested in purchasing something from their website, [click here](#) and you'll get to the page with items suitable for branding and purchase. Questions? Contact Brian at sales@lakehouselifestyle.com.



LAKE LIFE



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