

# Shore to Shore News



Swartswood Lakes & Watershed Association, Inc., PO Box 44, Swartswood, NJ 07877

March 2009

## President's Message:

I hope you all are enjoying your winter. The New Year appears to be bringing a few good things in the direction of Swartswood Lakes.

First, there is good reason to be optimistic about the probable effectiveness of the Swartswood Lake winter drawdown. Mid-December to early-January were not kind to the process because unusually heavy rainfall brought the lake to normal summer levels. However, the lake level finally receded, which coincided with the mid-January severe cold weather. Nighttime temperatures during that time period were sub-zero for several consecutive days, which resulted in over one foot of ice. This should equate to a good kill of the invasive aquatic plants. The proof of the effectiveness will not be known until the summer.

Second, SLWA met with NJDEP on October 20, 2008 and February 23, 2009. Both meetings were very productive with good exchange of information. The meetings addressed both short term and long term goals for Swartswood Lakes and the NJDEP Lake Management Plan. SLWA and NJDEP are simultaneously developing a master Lake Management Plan, i.e. applicable as a guide for any lake, and the Swartswood Lakes specific Lake Management Plan. Three short term items SLWA is pursuing are:

1. Upgrading the lake monitoring program to assist in long term decision making for lake water quality improvements.
2. More frequent lowering of Swartswood Lake, as this is the least expensive approach to invasive weed control. Our lake consultants have recommended lowering as frequent as every two years.
3. Allowing controlled use of herbicides by homeowners for waterfront weed control. Herbicide usage for 2009 should not be needed because of the lake lowering. The target is to have an herbicide program in place for 2010, and to cooperatively manage the program with the park.

Many other issues were discussed. We will provide more detail at the SLWA June 6, 2009 Membership Meeting which will be held at Camp Hoover.

For those taking advantage of the winter weather, the ice was as thick as 14 inches. Despite the February thaw, the ice is still about 8 inches thick, but you must be careful where you enter the ice. There are areas where there is separation between the shore and the ice, and in areas where there are streams or aerators the ice may be thin. Remember that the lake level will begin to rise March 1, 2009, which will cause a larger separation of the ice from the shore.

Paradise Fishing Club hosted an ice fishing contest every Sunday in February, which was well attended. Ed Szabo will have comments in the ice fishing report.

I will continue to enjoy the winter conditions while they last, but look forward to the spring and summer activities.

Best Regards,  
Randy Sprague

## **Paradise Fishing Club**

By Ed Szabo

We are happy to report the Paradise Fishing Club is alive and well! For years we depended on our ice fishing contests to raise money to purchase and stock in the early spring. With no ice last winter and little the year before, our budget and membership was seriously down. So we counted on global cooling, blew our budget and stocked over 100 big (16 inch) trout in May and another 100 in November. *Viola!* We increased our membership, held a Trout and Walleye Derby in May, with 3 winning trout just under 2 pounds and 3 winning walleyes over 4 pounds.

Last fall Paradise President, Joe Boltzer and Secretary-Treasurer, Scott Cooper spearheaded a joint venture with newly elected Trustee Ken Snyder and his wife Kathy, owners of the Boathouse Restaurant. It involved ice fishing contests on each of the 4 Sundays in February. Lots of ice, 3 sunny Sundays and one light snow flurry day brought out a lot of cabin-fevered anglers. We had great turnouts, caught lots of crappies, pickerel, trout and walleyes as well as some perch, large and small mouth bass, one over 5 pounds, and a big catfish.

The Boathouse headquartered the events and served all who signed up a complimentary bowl of chili and a beverage. We picked up at least 15 new members. Thanks to the officers and members who helped with signs, publicity, bait, certifying the scale, registering, weighting-in, photographs etc. P.S. The hunting contingent of the club accounted for 24 Canada geese resulting in 256 hotdogs and 136 sausages.

## **Swartswood State Park**

The good news from the Park is that the public boat ramp on Route 619 has been redone. If you used the ramp in the past you would be aware that some of the concrete slabs comprising the ramp were disintegrating. The old slabs were removed and new ones installed. More good news is that about half the concrete slabs removed from the launch area were able to be recycled. Bill Jackman, who did the work, was able to successfully remove about half the slabs without damaging them. The usable slabs were then installed at the Hendershot launch area, making a major improvement to that location. While the Hendershot area is not suitable to launch large fishing boats, it will accommodate small sailboats, such as those in the Sunfish Regatta hosted annually by SYC.

Yet more good news is that the eagles are once again nesting at Little Swartswood. They have built a new nest to replace the one destroyed by the wind last season in relatively the same location. It is believed that the eagles began incubating eggs around February 22nd. If successfully hatched, this should be the third set of eaglets born at Swartswood. In past years the hatchlings were banded for identification, and immature eagles have been sighted in the area, indicating that our eagle population is on the increase. More eagles in the area may help control the Canada geese population. Park Superintendent Blanca Chevrestt reports that the campground will reopen for the season on April 1, 2009

## **Dues reminder**

Have you paid your dues yet! If not, why not make out at check today. Just \$35 for family membership made out to SLWA. And remember, it is tax deductible.

**Mail to SLWA, P.O. Box 44, Swartswood, N. J. 07877**

## Water Chestnuts The Next Potential Invasion?

SLWA has received reports of problems with water chestnuts invading some lakes in the northeast. The most recent invasions occurred at Lake Musconetcong and at Wawayanda State Park. Lake Musconetcong tells us that water chestnuts are more invasive than milfoil, and their program is to use herbicides in the area where the water chestnuts are identified for the next three consecutive years. The herbicides need to be applied during the spring months. As with milfoil, mechanical harvesting can be used, but uncollected cuttings can result in spreading the plant.

You do not want to step on the spine of the water chestnut.

What this means to Swartswood Lakes is that we must all be aware of what water chestnuts look like, so that we can immediately initiate a program should they become present.

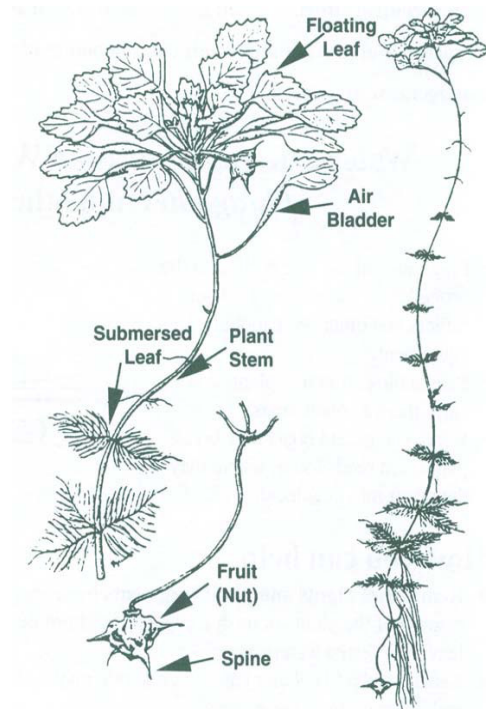
For more information on water chestnuts, see the following web pages:

<http://www.invasive.org/eastern/biocontrol/3WaterChestnut.html>

<http://www.anstaskforce.gov/Species%20plans/Water%20Chestnut%20Mgt%20Plan.pdf>

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/trna.htm>

<http://www.co.cayuga.ny.us/wqma/weedswatchout/documents/waterchestnutalert.pdf>



## Help Protect Our Lakes

Use non-phosphorous fertilizer. Phosphorous, when it runs into the lake, stimulates invasive weed growth. Non-phosphorous fertilizer is readily available at your garden nursery. Check the label.

## SLWA Web Page

Jim Stark has taken the lead and developed a SWLA web page which can be found at the address listed below. Our thanks to Jim! Expect the web page to continue to evolve with new information

<http://www.geocities.com/slwainc/home.html>

## SLWA Spring Public Meeting (Save the date!)

10 AM Saturday June 6, 2009 at Townley Hall, Camp Lou Henry Hoover, Swartswood Lake. Townley Hall is the first right immediately after you enter the camp.

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Camp Lou Henry Hoover  
Swartswood Lake

Townley Hall is the first right immediately after you enter the camp

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**P. O. Box 44**  
**Swartswood, N. J. 07877**