



# Otter Lake News



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Summer 2018

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We have been very successful in organizing a plan of attack in our ongoing battle with the European Frog-bit. The brush bundles that were placed in the lake last fall seem to be thriving; and we have some video footage of the fish enjoying their new habitat to share with you.

Finally we can't forget that this is an election year for the municipal elections across Ontario to be held on October 22nd. If you are a resident, owner or tenant of property in Ontario, a Canadian citizen and 18 years of age you can vote in the Ontario Municipal election, in any area that you own or reside in. This includes seasonal property owners, you can vote in more than one location within Ontario. For convenience the Township of Rideau Lakes is providing both an internet and phone method for voting purposes; so be sure to exercise your right to vote.

We hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable summer!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

*By Marcia Maxwell*

It seems like it was only a few weeks ago that I was sitting down to prepare for the Spring Newsletter but that was April. Hard to believe it is July already and summer has arrived with an extremely hot Canada Day weekend, and we are fast approaching our 2018 AGM to be held on the 28th at the South Elmsley Hall on Hwy 15. There will be signs posted on all the access roads as a reminder and we hope to see many of you there.

This AGM is going to have a slightly different format than in previous years, we will be covering the usual business portion of the meeting and we are working on some very interesting speakers and topics for the presentation portion of the meeting. This year we are introducing something new in addition to our coffee, tea and Timbits in the morning; we are going to have an opportunity for a social gathering at the end of the meeting with a light lunch provided. It will all be finished by 1 pm so that we can enjoy the rest of our day.

## Bird Nesting Boxes Available at AGM

*Submitted by June Finless*

As part of our fish and wildlife enhancement project for Otter Lake, we will have some tree swallow/bluebird nesting boxes available at the AGM for Otter Lake landowners interested in adding bird nesting areas for these cavity-dwelling birds on their property.

We also plan to expand our bird nesting box initiative to duck boxes and bat boxes soon. If you are interested in installing any of these bird boxes on your Otter Lake property, please contact June Finless at 613-797-4096 or sign up at the AGM.

## European Frogbit Information Table at Boat Launch and Removal Project

*Submitted by Judy Hodgins  
Chair, Aquatic Plants Sub-Committee*

On Saturday, June 16th an information table at the boat launch was set up from 9 am to 2 pm. As this was the opening day for bass fishing we were able to speak with quite a few fishermen/women who launched on Otter Lake for the day. We also spoke to several residents who were launching their boats for the season. Pamphlets were handed out and samples of European Frogbit were shown. The need to protect all lakes and waterways to avoid the transfer of all invasive species was stressed.



OLLA was successful in partnering with RVCA in a joint grant application to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters for 140 hours of summer student time to help with our European Frogbit 2018 Summer Project. One of the students helped man the information table on June 16 as well as doing some frogbit removal in and around the boat launch shoreline. We have scheduled two days for our European Frogbit removal blitz beginning at 9 am on: Thursday, July 12th (bad weather date – July 13th) and Tuesday, July 24th (bad weather date – July 25th). We are still looking for volunteers so if you can give some time on any of these dates please send an email to [frogbithelp@bell.net](mailto:frogbithelp@bell.net).

## Otter Creek Engineering Analysis Update

*Submitted by Karl Fiander  
OLLA Government Liaison*

In the Spring newsletter, it was indicated that Coldwater Consulting was appointed by the Township to perform an analysis on the hydrology of Otter Creek and the effect of the culvert under Otter Lake Road. Since then it has been determined that Coldwater Consulting cannot undertake this work in a timely fashion so the Rideau Lakes Township CAO Mike Dwyer recommended to Council in June that a 'Request For Proposal' be submitted to other consulting firms. The non-performance by Coldwater will result in a delay that will probably mean that nothing will materialize in the way of field-work before the spring of 2019.

To recap where we are on this topic:

- A study was completed in 2010 by Ferdous Ahmed, P Eng, of the RVCA which identified a 1:100 year flood level of 125.5 MASL (meters above sea level). This dictates to the local development authorities where waterfront development can occur. The report also indicates that the culvert restricts flow and increases water levels in the lake when levels are relatively high such as during the spring freshet. Flow restriction at lower levels is negligible.
- RVCA water shed reports have found less-than-ideal biological indicators in Otter Creek with no suggested causes or solutions.
- OLLA has conducted surveys of members and non-members to determine the opinions on spring flooding, trapping of beavers in the upper reaches of Otter Creek, and the possible replacement of the culvert. The results of these surveys have been communicated to RVCA and Rideau Lakes Township.
- CAO Mike Dwyer asked for representatives of OLLA to join a working group which was struck to steer the engineering investigation and help with consultation with Otter Lake

residents when the time comes to review results and recommendations. To this end, Lake Steward Doug Franks and Government Liaison Karl Fiander were appointed by President Marcia Maxwell.

It is unfortunate that the investigation is delayed but in 2019 it is expected to be included in the operational budget for the Township (estimated at a cost of \$65,000) and hopefully the consultants will be early out of the gates in the spring. If you are interested to review the extensive 2010 RVCA report, please contact me at [klfiander@gmail.com](mailto:klfiander@gmail.com) and I will email a copy.

## MEMBERSHIP

*Submitted by Shelley Dunlop  
OLLA Treasurer & Membership*

OLLA is looking forward to the continued support of everyone having a cottage or home on Otter Lake. In past years we have had membership from as many as 45% of landowners. A broad representation of property owners increases our voice when lobbying government agencies such as the Township of Rideau Lakes.

Your membership has allowed us to continue with such items as monitoring our water quality. Otter Lake has been confirmed as having one of the best water results in the area. As of today, we have 55 members paid up for 2018, 10 for 2019, 3 for 2020 and 1 for 2021. We have also collected \$265.00 going towards the Frog-bit & Invasive Species Eradication Project.

If you have not already renewed your membership for this year please complete the form included in this newsletter to renew your membership for 2018. At the request of our members, we have modified the form to include the ability for an individual to pay their membership for several years as well as making a donation to other projects.



## Social & Recreational Events

*Submitted by Judy Hodgins  
Chair, Social & Recreation Sub-Committee*

Remember to mark your calendar for Saturday, August 11th for the Otter Lake Dock Sale, from 9 am to 3 pm. If you have items you'd like to sell bring them down to your dock or have pictures of large items available. Fly a white flag (piece of fabric or plastic will do) to indicate to boaters that you have items for sale. If you are in the market to purchase items, here is your chance to find some treasures.



Signs advertising the dock sale will be put up at the beginning of all Otter Lake private roads. Rain date will be Sunday, August 12th.

## Lake Steward's Report - 2017

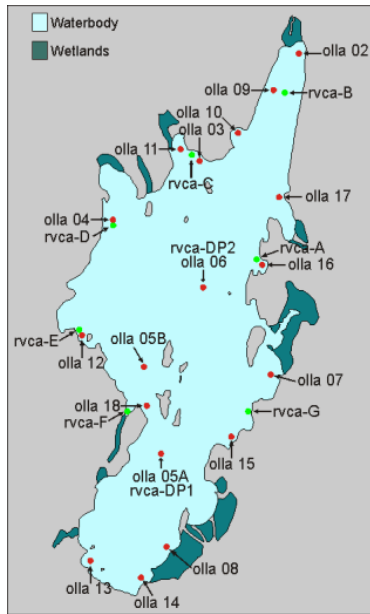
*Submitted by Doug Franks  
OLLA Lake Steward*

Water quality testing is an important diagnostic tool to help residents of Otter Lake determine the health of the lake. We need early warnings to predict important changes in the lake's ecological process. By systematic testing and monitoring over time, it is possible to evaluate if water quality is improving or declining. By selective testing at strategic sites, water quality indicators can help determine the source or cause of contamination. The ecological and trophic status of a lake is generally determined by the levels of nutrients it contains.

As in previous years OLLA was fortunate to have the assistance of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) in testing the water quality of Otter Lake. Thanks are due to Sarah MacLeod,

Kaitlin Brady and their qualified team of technologists for allowing us to include their data in this report. Both RVCA and OLLA test at least 3 times per year but at different sites.

The map on the right indicates the location of all the current OLLA and RVCA test sites. These sites have been chosen to be representative of the whole lake. Sites 05A, 05B and 06 represent the 3 deepest water sites (more than 90ft). Sites 04, 07, 08, 11 and 18 are in areas where there are known inflows from streams and wetlands into the lake. Other sites are in shallow bays where there is an increased tendency for weed and algae growth.



## NUTRIENTS & BACTERIA

Recreational water quality can often be expressed in terms of how clear the water appears. Water clarity is influenced by the amount of soil sediment and phytoplankton, or microscopic algae, present in the water. Clarity is measured by a simple visual test using a Secchi Disk, a 20 centimeter black and white disk attached to a measured line. The disk is then lowered into the lake until it is no longer visible and the depth recorded. Additional information on water quality is gained through analysis of samples for nutrients, specifically phosphorus and nitrogen, which gives an indication of how much nutrient and energy is available for the growth of algae and aquatic plants

Nitrogen in various forms is an abundant and essential nutrient in aquatic ecosystems. In addition to fertilizers, agricultural waste and wastewater contribute nitrogen into lakes. In large amounts, ammonia and nitrates can be toxic to aquatic organisms. Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN) which is

what we and RVCA measure, determines the concentration of all forms of nitrogen in the lake. While there are no precise guidelines for acceptable levels of TKN, according to RVCA, TKN in water bodies not influenced by excessive organic inputs such as Otter Lake typically range from 100 to 500 µg/L.

Phosphorous is generally recognized as the limiting nutrient in freshwater ecosystems and the major nutrient contributing to eutrophication in lakes. Since phosphorous is the principal source of energy for all living organisms the amount of phosphorous in the environment will determine how fast an organism grows and proliferates. Phosphorus is therefore the principal limiting factor in the growth of algae, meaning that algae growth will occur in greater amounts as more phosphorus is added to a lake. Most of the phosphorous that enters a septic system from phosphorous containing detergents will emerge intact, enter the water table and eventually the lake. Phosphorus levels below 5 µg/L are typical of oligotrophic lakes that generally are clear and deep with few nutrients. Such lakes are typically found in the northern regions of Ontario. Phosphorous levels above 20 µg/L are typical of eutrophic lakes that are laden with nutrients which lead to excessive algae and plant growth. Mesotrophic lakes have phosphorous concentrations between these two extremes and are typical of the lakes found in our region of Ontario

Bacteria are present in all lakes, they will be found in the faeces of the wildlife (fish, waterfowl, beavers, etc.) that inhabit the lake. Coliforms are bacteria found in the large intestine of humans and other mammals and are usually present in soil. While some strains of coliforms do produce toxins, most are not harmful to humans. Some such as *Escherichia coli* (*E. Coli*) do produce pathogenic toxins. Therefore levels of *E. Coli* are often used as indicators of possible contamination by fecal matter. Thus high *E. Coli* levels in lakes or rivers can be an indication of septic pollution. The recommended safety level of *E. Coli* in a lake for recreational safety is not more than 100 colony-forming units (cfu) per 100ml of water. *E. Coli* at any level is

unacceptable for drinking water, therefore some form of treatment and purification is necessary for anyone who draws water from the lake for drinking purposes.

## RESULTS FOR 2017

The results of water testing in 2017 are shown below.

WATER QUALITY DATA - 2017															
RVCA ID	OLLA ID	E. Coli (cfu/100 ml)			Total Kjeldahl nitrogen (µg/l)				Total Phosphorous (µg/l)				Secchi Disk (meters)		
		May	Jul	Aug	May	Jul	Aug	Oct	May	Jul	Aug	Oct	May	Aug	Oct
RVL-26C	OLLA 03		2	2											
RVL-26DP1	OLLA 05A				350	330	490	300	7	7	10	7	6.50	5.00	7.0
RVL-26DP3	OLLA 06				410	310	480	300	8	6	12	7	6.00	5.50	7.0
RVL-26B	OLLA 09		4	2		360	390			7	10				
RVL-26F	OLLA 18		2	2		370	460			7	18				
<b>Average</b>		2.33			392.86				8.77				6.17		
<b>Std. Error</b>		0.31			15.00				0.87				0.31		

They indicate that the trend seen in 2016 is continuing despite the higher than normal water levels that resulted from our very wet Spring and Summer last year. Low levels of E. coli were detected at all sites tested, likely the result of increased runoff, however a value of 2 cfu/100ml is the minimum detection limit for E. coli by the testing laboratory and in Ontario public beaches are closed when E. coli levels exceed 100 cfu/100ml

Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen levels were generally in the acceptable range of between 300 - 500 µg/L which is within the acceptable range for a lake such as ours.

Total phosphorous was generally low with the exception of one site (OLLA 03 a shoreline test site between Roads O3 and O4) in August at which a value of 77 µg/L was obtained. This result was not used in the calculation of the average total phosphorous value and this site will be retested in 2018. Secchi depth readings were about 6 metres indicating that the lake remains very clear and as a result there were some significant algae blooms last Summer, especially in September when we had some very hot temperatures.



As noted in the European Frogbit article on page 2, a European Frogbit removal blitz has been scheduled for Thursday, July 12th (bad weather date – July 13th) and Tuesday, July 24th (bad weather date – July 25th).

If you are able to assist in any way please contact [frogbithelp@bell.net](mailto:frogbithelp@bell.net).

## Nesting Success!

We are happy to share with you a picture of our first reported "successful nesting" in one of our tree sparrow /bluebird nesting boxes. Thank you to Randy and Judy Hodgins for sharing the success story!



## Our Corporate Sponsors

These commercial enterprises have supported the publication of our Newsletter.  
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# Otter Lake Landowners' Association

## 2018 Membership Form

This is an invitation to all landowners on Otter Lake to become members, or to renew their YEARLY membership in the Association. Your membership is important and helps meet the cost of monitoring the water quality, associated laboratory fees, as well as other water quality-related concerns. Membership also provides access to all the resources of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA).

Our annual membership fee remains at \$30.

This is a New Membership..... or renewal.....(2018)

Name(s) of Owner(s):.....

Mailing address:.....

.....

Road and Cottage/House number: .....

Telephone: Lake:..... Residence: .....

**E-mail address:**.....

Please send me the OLLA Newsletter by email: Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Please send me the FOCA Newsletter by email: Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Some members have requested to pay their dues for more than one year at a time:

Number of years:..... Amount enclosed @ \$30/year:.....

I would like to make an additional donation to OLLA! For 2018, donations we receive will go towards the Sustainable Lake Plan project to eradicate invasive aquatic plants, like Frog-bit.

Donation to Frog-bit & Invasive Species Eradication Project: \$.....

Please return to the address below or give directly to one of the OLLA executive:

**Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA)**

**#32 - O10, R.R. # 1, Lombardy, ON K0G 1L0**

Thank you for your support

**Otter Lake Landowners' Association**  
**Annual General Meeting: Saturday July 28, 2018**

South Elmsley Hall  
441 Highway 15 (Adjacent to the OPP station)

Registration, coffee, tea and timbits 9:00 a.m.  
MEETING WILL COMMENCE AT 9:30

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If you are unable to attend the AGM and would like someone to represent you, please complete the section below and provide it to your delegate. She/he must bring this form to the AGM in order to be recognized as your designate.

**VOTING BY PROXY FORM**

My First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Cottage Number and Road: \_\_\_\_\_

I designate: \_\_\_\_\_ to cast a vote on my behalf at the OLLA AGM on July 28, 2018.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_