

Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership



HOME PROPERTY OWNERS SHORELINE EDUCATORS CONTRACTORS EVENTS SHORELINE RESOURCES RESEARCH

*Promoting Natural Shoreline
Landscaping to Protect Michigan's
Inland Lakes*

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MNSP

www.mishorelinepartnership.org

Vol. VI Issue 1

The Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership Newsletter

January 2016

News and Notes...

Compiled by Julia Kirkwood, MNSP Chair
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Water Resources Division-Nonpoint Source Program

Receiving and Giving Recognition

Each year the [North American Lake Management Society](#) (NALMS) recognizes individuals, organizations, and programs, corporations and projects that have contributed to NALMS and to the science of lake and watershed management. Presented at the annual NALMS international symposium banquet, these awards were established to encourage the advancement of NALMS' goals by recognizing outstanding efforts of their colleagues and to encourage similar activities. In 2015 the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership (MNSP) was awarded a **Leadership and Service Award** in the **Education and Outreach** category. This award is a tribute to all of the people who contributed an incredible amount of time and effort to create and implement the MNSP programs. All of the accomplishments since 2008 could not have been achieved without this dedication.



A long term goal of the MNSP is to recognize property owners for their efforts to protect their lakes through best management practices. I am excited to say that this goal is very close to being accomplished. Over the past couple of years the MNSP Partners have been working to develop the **MI Shoreland Stewards Program**. This will be a web-based program that has a survey for property owners to see how well they are doing on their management practices or where they can improve. We still have a few months of work but we are in the final stages of building the website and identifying glitches.



Come to the [Michigan Inland Lake Convention](#) (April 28th-30th 2016) to find out more about the **Michigan Shoreland Stewards Program**. See page four of this newsletter for more information regarding the 2016 lakes convention.

The Search for Sirens: Seeking out Michigan's Most Elusive Amphibians

By Nick Meekhof
DEQ Intern

Photo: Jim Harding, MI DNR



Wearied sailors crossing the high seas used to come back with stories of sirens - entrancing maidens who lured them in with captivating beauty and song. While never caught or classified, sirens were considered one of the great mysteries of the water, and spotting one was certainly an extraordinary occasion.

Today, sirens of a different kind are living quiet lives on the water, though you won't have to travel to the ancient Mediterranean if you intend to go looking for them. They could be hiding in your own local lake, just waiting to be discovered again.

Distinct from their salamander cousins, sirens have tiny front legs and no hind legs at all. They have long, slender bodies that end in a flattened, rudder-like tail, similar to an eel. The Western Lesser Siren (*Siren intermedia nettingi*), native to Allegan and Van Buren counties, can grow to nearly twenty inches long, but their dark, muddy-brown complexion makes them difficult to spot in the murky ponds where they reside.

As far as Michigan goes, sirens have kept up their elusive reputation well. Unlike their mythical namesakes, sirens draw little, if any, attention to themselves. Sticking mostly to shallow lake edges, sirens prefer muddy waters with lots of plant life where they can feed, breed, and proceed undisturbed. They eat small, water-dwelling invertebrates like insects, crayfish, and snails. Their breeding habits are also mostly unknown, but the females can lay upwards of two hundred eggs at a time, which then take three years to reach maturity.

A siren's discreet lifestyle is indicative of the type of habitat it requires to survive. Sirens need lots of plant life at the water's edge as habitat for their food sources. They need shallow, lake-bottom depressions to provide safe coves where their eggs might hatch. Sirens have been known to crawl overland during damp weather conditions in search of new habitats, though it's been a while since anyone's seen it. Natural shorelines are crucial to the siren's livelihood, and it's worth noting that sirens haven't been spotted in Michigan in quite a few years.

So the question remains: have the sirens gone away, or have they simply retreated further into their underwater lairs? While much of their original habitat has been converted into seawalls or beaches, they are, at heart, secretive and easily overlooked creatures. So next time you are out enjoying one of Michigan's inland lakes, take some time to explore the shoreline. You just might get lucky and spot one of Michigan's most fascinating and elusive creatures.

Source:

"Western Lesser Siren (*Siren intermedia nettingi*)."
www.michigan.gov/dnr. Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2015. Web. 18 February 2015.



Hold the dates!

2016 Certified Natural Shoreline Professional Training

Classroom Sessions

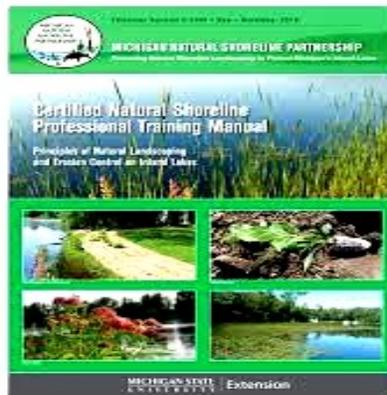
**Tuesday & Wednesday
March 8th & 9th**

**Kellogg Conference Center
East Lansing**

Field/Exam Day: June TBD – location: Paw Paw, MI – Maple Lake

**Please check the [MNSP website](#)
for updated information on registration**

[Click here](#) for more information regarding the CNSP program



2016 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention



"Science & Leadership - A Formula for Successful Lake Protection and Management"

Plenary Session
(Friday AM, April 29th, 2016)

Keynote Speakers:

David Mifsud

Herpetological Resource and Management
Herpetologist/Wetland Ecologist

Rebecca Williams

Michigan Radio

(WUOM - WVGR - WFUM)

Reporter/Producer - "The Environment Report"

Thursday, Friday & Saturday
April 28th - 30th, 2016

Boyne Mountain Resort, Boyne Falls, MI

The Convention will educate, engage, and empower the individuals who work, live and play on Michigan inland lakes.

The three day conference will include educational presentations, in-depth workshops, plenary addresses, receptions, door prizes, and plenty of networking opportunities focused exclusively on Michigan's 11,000 inland lakes with dozens of non-profit and business exhibitors showcasing their projects, resources and services.

To download an event flyer, [click here...](#)

Visit the convention web page for more information

or to register for the event:

michiganlakes.msue.msu.edu/convention

Register Now for the 26th Annual Great Lakes Conference



The 26th annual Great Lakes conference is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 8, 2016** at the Kellogg Center on the Michigan State University campus in East Lansing, MI from **9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**. This year's conference, *The Great Lakes: Michigan's Water Heritage*, will feature presentations that relate to the goals of the Michigan's Draft Water Strategy, a 30-year strategy to ensure Michigan's water resources support healthy ecosystems, citizens, communities, and economies. The conference is **free** and open to the public; however, **advanced registration** is requested.

Visit: www.iwr.msu.edu/events/ANRWeek to see a complete agenda and link to the registration page.

Presentations and speakers will include:

- ◆ **Michigan's 30 - Year Water Strategy – Jon Allan, Director, Office of the Great Lakes, MDEQ**
- ◆ **Ecosystem-level changes in the Great Lakes and Effects on Fisheries -Bo Bunnell, USGS Great Lakes Science Center**
- ◆ **Lake Sturgeon Restoration in the Great Lakes- Jim Boase, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
- ◆ **Targets for Lake Erie for HAB Reduction – Craig Stow, NOAA and Great Lakes Environmental Research Lab**
- ◆ **Net-Pen Aquaculture in the Great Lakes – Jim Diana, Michigan Sea Grant**
- ◆ **Monitoring for Beach Pathogens – Molly Rippke, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality**
- ◆ **Great Lakes Adventures – Stephen Brede, Great Lakes Canoe, Petoskey**
- ◆ **Water Use and Beer Breweries: Minimizing Impacts – Kris Spaulding, Brewery Vivant**

The conference is sponsored by Michigan State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, MSU Institute of Water Research, Michigan Sea Grant Extension, and the Office of the Great Lakes, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. For further information, contact: **Lois Wolfson** at wolfsonl@msu.edu or call **(517) 353-3742**.

Michigan's Aquatic Invasive Plant Watch List

Aquatic invasive species on the watch list have been identified as being an immediate and significant threat to Michigan's natural resources. These species either have never been confirmed in the wild in Michigan or have a limited known distribution. Early detection and timely reporting are crucial for preventing establishment and limiting impacts. For more information on these plants, visit: www.misin.msu.edu

Be on the lookout for these invasive species!

<p>Yellow Floating Heart <i>Nymphoides peltata</i></p>	<p>Water-chestnut <i>Trapa natans</i></p>	<p>Parrot Feather Water-milfoil <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i></p>	<p>Water Soldier <i>Stratiotes aloides</i></p>	<p>Hydrilla <i>Hydrilla verticillata</i></p>
		 <p>www.invasive.org</p>	 <p>Leif Willey, UFL</p>	 <p>www.invasive.org</p>
<p>Brazilian Water-weed <i>Egeria densa</i></p>	<p>European Frog-bit <i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i></p>	<p>Water Lettuce <i>Pistia stratiotes</i></p>	<p>Water Hyacinth <i>Eichhornia crassipes</i></p>	<p>European Water-clover <i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i></p>
 <p>www.graysharbor.wsu</p>	 <p>www.dnr.wi.gov</p>	 <p>www.invasive.org</p>	 <p>www.invasive.org</p>	

These species are currently allowable for sale and possession. Please contact the DNR if these plants are observed outside of cultivation.

If you have seen any of these aquatic invaders, note their location and contact:

Michigan DNR Wildlife Division
Phone: (517) 641- 4903 ext. 260
www.mi.gov/invasivespecies



Questions about other aquatic invasive plants? Contact the DEQ Aquatic Nuisance Control Program at 517-284-5593, www.mi.gov/anc

Revised: June 2015



“Be Careful My Friend, About What You Wish For!”

Article and Photo by Scott Brown
Michigan Lake & Stream Associations Executive Director

Representing the most biologically productive and diverse areas on earth, native aquatic plant communities serve to foster and sustain healthy inland lakes by stabilizing sediments, promoting water clarity, establishing and maintaining moderate productivity levels, and protecting shorelines from wave energy induced erosion. Aquatic plant communities also provide critical nesting areas and vegetative building materials as well as food for an abundance of fish, amphibians, reptiles, and birds. The exceptional water clarity and good fishing experienced in most of Michigan’s moderately productive inland lakes are an often overlooked and under-appreciated benefit derived from healthy native aquatic plants. Many folks living on inland lakes in Michigan are not aware of the important role that aquatic plants play in maintaining the health and quality of their lake. Lakefront property owners often ask, “how do we get rid of those darn lily pads, pondweeds, wild celery and/or musk grass that grow around our dock or near our shoreline(?)”, and my first response is, “be careful my friend, about what you wish for”! As Certified Natural Shoreline Professionals, lake management practitioners, resource managers, and/or lake stewards, one of the most important things we can do to help preserve the health of our inland lakes is to help educate people about the important ecological services provided by native aquatic plant communities.

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Promoting natural shoreline landscaping to protect Michigan's inland lakes...

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