



Sturgeon in the Classroom

In 2013, Sturgeon For Tomorrow (SFT), accepted responsibility as a “cooperator” for Sturgeon In The Classroom (SITC) and has been coordinating this statewide K-12 classroom program including individual classroom education plans. The St. Clair-Detroit River Chapter of Sturgeon For Tomorrow (SCDR-SFT) has also participated in the program by delivering sturgeon to the participating classrooms and serving as a source for support to the classrooms.



Students and teacher from Inland Lakes Schools release “Ace II” May 19, 2016.

Gil Archambo, a member of the SFT Board of Directors, has delivered sturgeon to several of the classrooms and says that there is a noticeable excitement in the classroom and, in many cases the whole school.

This project aims to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation for Michigan’s state threatened

lake sturgeon, and the ecology of the Great Lakes eco-region through hands on, place-based education, engagement, mobilization, stewardship and advocacy, to develop long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes Fisheries.

In the spring, the fish are returned to the Upper Black River where they are released. This year, the young sturgeon were large enough to already have their Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags implanted.

Eleven classrooms have been selected to participate in SITC for 2016-2017 school year. This year, the program is expected to reach 800 to 900 students from 3rd to 12th grade.

Cheboygan Middle School, Cheboygan
 Ella White Elementary, Alpena
 Holt High School, Holt
 Inland Lakes Schools, Indian River

Lottie M Schmidt Elementary, New Baltimore
 Olivet Middle School, Olivet
 Onaway High School, Onaway
 Roberts Elementary, Shelby Twp

Shumate Middle School, Gibraltar
 Quincy Elementary, Zeeland
 Waldon Middle School, Lake Orion

We are in the process of developing a standardized application and selection process for future years’ participants.

Outdoor Channel and the series “Wardens”

The Outdoor channel series “Wardens” is being filmed in Michigan this year. While typical “Wardens” episodes heavily rely on conservation officer stories, the DNR worked out an agreement with the producers to shift the focus on telling conservation stories and fisheries issues are well placed in the series set to air in 2017.

In May 2016, producers joined us on the Upper Black River to highlight the Sturgeon Guarding Program. The segment spotlights the collaboration among DNR conservation officers and hundreds of volunteers remaining vigilant to protect spawning lake sturgeon. The film crew also captures the research team in the river and the streamside sturgeon hatchery.

Work has also been completed on lake sturgeon activities in Lake St. Clair River and muskie egg-take efforts on the Detroit River. The film crew loved working with the fisheries staff! They have received comments regarding staffs’ passion, knowledge AND their ability to speak to the public to make their points understood without using science jargon that is over everyone else’s head. The film crews have seriously enjoyed working with fisheries division staff.

We will post an update on Facebook when we learn of the date and time the segment will air.



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Students at Ella White School in Alpena observe their sturgeon on October 19, 2016.

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Sturgeon For Tomorrow
Black Lake Chapter
1604 N. Black River Road
Cheboygan, MI 49721
231-625-2776



www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org



Letter from the Sturgeon General

Hello from the shores of Beautiful Black Lake!

Together, we continue to make great strides toward lake sturgeon rehabilitation and recovery throughout the Cheboygan River Watershed. It is with sincere gratitude that we thank all of you who have contributed to Sturgeon For Tomorrow and have made our programming possible.

Highlights from 2016:

- The Outdoor Channel spent a day with us on the river during "Sturgeon Guard" and filmed a segment for WardenTV. The segment will air in the Spring of 2017.
- Boy Scout Troop 37 from Grawn, Michigan partnered with us and Huron Pines on Memorial Day weekend to plant native plants along the streambank at site C to protect lake sturgeon spawning habitat in the Upper Black River.
- The Black Lake Sturgeon Management Plan has been in the works for several years, and was published in December 2016. Please be sure to go to our website and read this to understand specific objectives, assessment plans, prescribed management actions, including public involvement in management actions.
- Sturgeon in the Classroom is growing in popularity and scope. This school year the St. Clair Detroit River Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow collaborated in adopting several south east Michigan Classrooms.
- The Black Lake Sturgeon Shivaree and our Annual Banquet have become wildly successful. These are our signature events which proceeds fund our programming. Please be sure to mark your calendars for the first weekend in February for the Shivaree and the second Saturday in September for the banquet.

As we continue our journey into 2017 and beyond, please know we appreciate you, our supporters and collaborators, for your sustained support. We will remain steadfast in working toward sustainable lake sturgeon stocks for Black Lake, Mullett Lake and Burt Lake. Together, our work will leave a lasting legacy to future generations.

For the sturgeon,

Brenda Archambo



Annual Membership Renewal

Please join us in our efforts to secure a brighter future for the majestic lake Sturgeon.

Your membership investment and contribution is the lifeblood of this organization and aids in the implementation of the many important programs initiated through Sturgeon For Tomorrow.

Meaningful work is ongoing through the Sturgeon Guarding Program, Guided Tours, Outreach and Education, Collaborative Research and Hatchery Operations, Habitat Improvements and monitoring, advocacy as well as supporting the development of the highly successful Sturgeon in the Classroom.

Use the included green membership renewal envelope or you can renew online using PayPal at:

www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org/membership.php

If your address is printed on a green label on this newsletter, your membership is valid through December 2017.





Sturgeon For Tomorrow will be hosting the Black Lake Sturgeon Shivaree February 3-4, 2017.



Proceeds from the Shivaree will fund lake sturgeon hatchery, research, habitat conservation, and outreach programs.

Activities for Shivaree will again be in the entertainment tent on Black Lake in front of the former Black Lake Hotel. The Shivaree will coincide with the opening of the Black Lake Sturgeon season which opens on Saturday, February 4.

Sponsors and Volunteers are needed. You can register on-line for events, volunteer and sponsorships: www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org/shivaree or call: 231-625-2776.

Shivaree Collector Buttons \$5
All volunteers and sponsors receive
FREE Shivaree buttons

Calendar of Events – Subject to change.

FRIDAY, February 3

Entertainment tent opens at 3pm

Register for Ice Fishing Contest and Poker Run (tent)

1pm Grandmother Moon Drum Ceremony

2pm-7pm: Register for Sturgeon Fishing:

211 DNR Field Station

2pm-5pm: Bill Oeming jammin' his guitar

6pm-10pm: Little Big Band w/CHIP STEAD (21+)

SATURDAY, February 4

Grandmother Moon Sunrise Drum Ceremony

8am-2pm: **Sturgeon Season Opening Day**

Entertainment tent: Open at 8:00am

6am-7:15pm: Fishing Contest: Sturgeon, Muskie, Pike, Walleye and Perc

9am-7pm: Poker Run

11am-6pm: Entertainment Tent Music: Evan Archambo, soloist and DJ

11am-4pm: Kids Games & Prizes with Nautreology

2:30pm: **Horseshoe Tournament** on the ice

50/50 Raffles, Bonfire

6pm-10pm: Entertainment Tent: The Blitz (21+)

8pm: Announce Ice Fishing Contest

8:30pm: Announce Poker Run Winners

9pm: Shivaree Raffle Drawing

2017 lake sturgeon season on Black Lake to begin Feb. 4 at 8:00 a.m.

The 2017 lake sturgeon fishing season on Black Lake (Cheboygan County) will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4. All anglers must register to participate in the lake sturgeon season.

The 2017 total recreational harvest limit for Black Lake is seven lake sturgeon. However, to reduce the chance of exceeding the harvest limit, officials will close the season when one of two scenarios occurs:

- 1) **Once the sixth fish is harvested**, or; 2) **If five fish have been harvested at the end of any fishing day.**

Fishing hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day of the season. The season will either end at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 8, or when one of the above scenarios is met. Anglers will be notified on the ice by DNR personnel that they must immediately stop fishing for lake sturgeon.

Anglers 17 years of age or older must possess a valid Michigan fishing license. In addition, all anglers must possess a lake sturgeon tag, available for free from all license vendors. Anglers must have both of these prior to registering for the Black Lake sturgeon season. Anglers will be issued a disposable flag at registration that must be displayed at the entrance of the angler's shanty each day.

Anglers need to only register once for the entire season. **An early registration will be held at the DNR Onaway Field Station from 2 to 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 3.** This station is located approximately five miles north of Onaway on Route 211. Anglers can pick up their fishing identification flags at this time and learn more about season logistics and sturgeon populations from the DNR.

Anglers unable to participate in the Friday registration may register Saturday only at the registration trailer at Zolner Road ending on Black Lake. Morning registration begins at 7 a.m. each day of the season. Anglers are highly encouraged to register on Friday, February 3.

Anglers who harvest a lake sturgeon must tag the fish immediately and contact an on-ice DNR employee and register the fish at the Zolner Road trailer registration site on Black Lake. Registration may include an examination of internal organs and removal of a piece of fin tissue for DNA analysis and aging.

Rehabilitation of lake sturgeon in the Cheboygan River watershed is a cooperative effort involving the DNR, the Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow, Michigan State University, various tribal agencies, and Tower-Kleber Limited Partnership.

For more details, anglers may call the Gaylord Customer Service Center at 989-732-3541 or visit: www.michigan.gov/fishing.

2017 Lake Sturgeon Research and Stocking Summary

By Doug Larson, Research Technologist, Michigan State University



2016 MSU research team: top to bottom; Ryan Walquist, Shaley Valentine, Andrew Lockwood, Rebecca Colby, Zack Witzel, Danielle Blumstein, Justin Waraniak. Not Pictured: Stefan Tucker, Jonathan Hegna, Lydia Wassink, Jason Lyons

The 2016 Black Lake research season began on April 22nd when Michigan State University (MSU) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) researchers captured eleven adult Lake Sturgeon ascending the Upper Black River. This was an early start compared to previous years, though the early captures did not appear to reach spawning ripeness before a string of cold weather pushed them out of the river.

A total of 198 adult Lake Sturgeon were captured through the spawning season, of which 41 were captured for the first time. The largest single day capture fell on May 3rd, where the crew sampled 34 fish. The largest fish captured this year was a 6-foot 4-inch female that weighed 112 pounds. Gamete were collected from spawning Lake Sturgeon and were transported to the Stream Side Rearing Facility for fertilization and rearing. In total, there have been 1,078 unique individual Lake Sturgeon captured in the Upper Black River since 2001.

In addition to raising eggs in the hatchery, wild larval Lake Sturgeon were captured as they drifted downstream. Previous research conducted by MSU and MDNR found that wild larvae represent the highest quality genetic source stock, so MSU and MDNR make an effort to fulfil all stocking quotas with fish captured in the wild, where possible. This year, larval drift sampling began on May 18th and continued until there were three consecutive unsuccessful capture nights, which fell on July 1st. In total, researchers captured 4,053 wild dispersing larvae.

In 2016, 500 Lake Sturgeon were released into the Black River. All fish that were stocked into the Black River were implanted with a passive integrated transponder tag, which will aid future management efforts. In addition, 503 Lake Sturgeon were released into Mullett Lake, all of which were implanted with a coded wire tag.

The Sturgeon released into Black River and Mullett Lake reached an average length of over 8 inches. Increased size at stock out can be attributed to both an improved feeding strategy developed and published by John Bauman, MDNR as well as longer residency time, as fish were held until mid-September in 2016.



Smallest fish captured in 2016, by SFT member Gary Stranally: 4-feet 0.5-inches; 23 lbs. Also pictured: Andrew Lockwood



Photo Credit: Rebecca

Research efforts in 2016 focused on early mortality in larvae, largely attributed to early life predation. In addition, researchers continue to investigate the downstream passage of juvenile Lake Sturgeon through hydroelectric facilities. The research crew also began a pilot investigation into the effects of temperature and cortisol on eggs spawned in both match and mismatch conditions. Smaller projects included an ongoing evaluation of sturgeon feeding rates in the hatchery, an evaluation of alternative foods on body size and survival of lake sturgeon, and the effect of aquatic macro-invertebrates on Lake Sturgeon Eggs and free embryos.

Lake sturgeon management plan for northern Michigan's Black Lake completed

For several years, Sturgeon For Tomorrow (SFT) has advocated a Lake Sturgeon Management Plan be developed for the Cheboygan River Watershed which includes Black Lake, Burt Lake and Mullett Lake. In December 2016, after a collective effort among agencies dedicated to the restoration of lake sturgeon populations, the Management Plan for Lake Sturgeon in Black Lake was published.



Biologists from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Bay Mills Indian Community, the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians worked together to write the plan that will guide management efforts to ensure the lake sturgeon population in Black Lake will thrive well into the future. The Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon For Tomorrow also had input to the plan.

The plan outlines objectives to achieve the goal of attaining a population of naturally produced lake sturgeon capable of producing a sustained fishery.

“The level of collaboration between the biologists of the tribes and the DNR was incredible,” said Dave Borgeson, DNR unit supervisor for the Black Lake watershed. “The commitment of all the writers of the plan to lake sturgeon rehabilitation was evident, and made this group a joy to work with.”

The Black Lake document is the first of a series of lake sturgeon management plans the DNR hopes to complete for priority waters across the state. The plan is based on goals and objectives identified in the DNR’s Lake Sturgeon Rehabilitation Strategy. Prior to drafting the plan, tribal and state biologists sought input from their respective constituents, including Sturgeon For Tomorrow, to make sure the plan would contain all essential components important to the growing number of people who are interested in this iconic native species.

Rehabilitation efforts in the Black Lake system have been ongoing since a survey in 1997 indicated a decline in the lake sturgeon population relative to the mid-1970s. These efforts have been successful in large part because of the assistance provided by the Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon for Tomorrow and Tower-Kleber Limited Partnership who, in coordination with the DNR, built a streamside rearing facility to bolster the population until sufficient natural reproduction occurs. The facility also provides Michigan State University researchers a venue to conduct groundbreaking research that is helping managers better understand the factors currently limiting the population and identify strategies to address them.

“Now that we have a mutual framework we can all draw from, the hard work of implementing the plan’s ultimate goal begins,” said Brett Fessell, the Restoration Section leader for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. “A goal that very likely none of the authors may witness - but that we now have confidence will materialize in form and function - is a naturally self-sustaining lake sturgeon fishery for many generations to come.”

The management plan is available on the DNR website at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/ManagmentPlan-LakeSturgeon-FINAL_543754_7.pdf



*Mark your calendars!
19th Annual Banquet
Saturday, September 9, 2017*

Follow Us on
FaceBook 

Each year we receive many congratulatory notes from friends and members of Sturgeon For Tomorrow. They inspire us to continue to work on behalf of the wonderful Lake Sturgeon and we really appreciate all the folks who encourage us every day. Here is a sample of the notes we have received in the past year.

My daughter and I stopped at the SFT site on our way back from the U.P. We were fortunate in seeing several sturgeon and watched the MSU crew collecting data from tagged fish. Thank you for ensuring that sturgeon will be a part of Michigan for years to come.

Sincerely
Donald B.

HAD A WONDERFUL TIME
AT THE SHIVAREE
CANNOT WAIT FOR THE
NEXT ONE 😊

Date: May 16, 2016
To: Sturgeon For Tomorrow
Subject: Sturgeon Release

Name: Rita P.

Message:

Bradley P. and parents had the best time releasing "Mickey" this past weekend after raising him in Mr. Braymer's 5th grade class at Quincy Elementary in Zeeland, Michigan. It was a trip of a life time to be a part of the sturgeon revitalization efforts and learn along with the kids who knew so much already but put it into real life learning on the riverbank and hatchery sites. We appreciate you letting us be responsible for a sturgeon. The enthusiasm this project brings to our school building is amazing! I am excited to see who becomes a professional in a field related to this learning opportunity. Thank you so very much, Rita and Chris P.

Keep up the
Great work!
Chris and Joni K.

Memorials and Honorariums

In loving Memory of Ullis Janney

Mary Janney

In loving memory of Don Snyder

Mary Janney

In loving memory of all members lost in the past year including:

Carol Faner

Don Parsell

From Barbara Tyger

In loving memory of Kenneth Hanchett

James Hanchett, DDS

In loving memory of Bob Tomlinson

John Tomlinson

In loving memory of James and Maureen Rentz

Joseph T. Rentz

In loving memory of family Birthdays:

Harry L. Karr

Roger B. Karr

Michael D. Nodine

From Karen L Karr

In loving memory of Robert "Bob" Shoemaker

William and Beverly Worden

Patrick and Bridget Huver

We accept contributions, memorials and honorariums for special occasions, like birthdays, anniversaries, and special tributes.

Thank you to the following individuals and families who have contributed to lake sturgeon recovery in 2016.

Sustainer

Amy Roy Ferneding
Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society

Leaders

Cannon Cottage
Steve and Pam Cassin
Doug and Marleen Frens
Robert Gielegem
Patrick and Bridget Huver
Michael Hyland
Fred Hynick
Christopher and Joni Kallgren
Karen Karr
Bradley and Susan Moffatt
Jeff Morrell
Karla and Mike Passalacqua
Jeffery R. Patt
Joseph T. Rentz
Dan and Karen Stroup
Lori Sutton
Terry M. Watts
Frank Wheatlake
Ralph and Hazel Williams

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Donald Bessey
Don and Nan Blasy
Ben Braymer Quincy Elementary School
James and Kimberly Chiavaras
Pete and Judi Chimner
Janet M. Clarke
John Dempsey and Margo Lakin
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Charlie and Trish Moyer

Larry Pedersen
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Kevin and Dee Prediger
Mary Pynnonen-Rocco
James L. Ribby
Gary and Jane Roe
Shumate Middle School / Jeff Bouwman
Mike Smyczynski
Indian River Sportsman Club
Timothy Stanke
Michael and Janice Tripp
Constance and George Warner
Kevin and Jackie Winkle

Contributions

Jon Rose
Patricia Kozal
Drew "Duke" Kosak
Barbara LaHaie
Boy Scouts of America, Pellston Troop 2

2016 Banquet Sponsors

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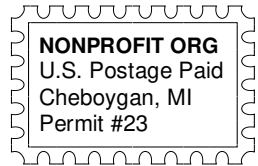
2016 Banquet Big Spenders

Art Archambo
Bob Armstrong
Citizens National Bank
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Ann Douglas
Jeffrey Fossmo
Denise Lange
Randy Lee
Lyle and Lynne Lippard
Damon and Darlene Marsh
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Alan R. and Diane Thompson
Rick Tulgestke
Beth and Steve Worden
Carl Yost





1604 North Black River Road
Cheboygan, MI 49721
231-625-2776
www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org



Dedicated to the future of our sturgeon.

Sturgeon General Volume 18 Issue 1 WINTER 2017

Upcoming Events 2017

February

- 3-4 Black Lake Sturgeon Shivaree
- 4 Black Lake Sturgeon Season Opens
- 16 Sturgeon Advisory Council Meeting

April

Register for Sturgeon Guarding Program

May

Sturgeon Guarding Program—All month
Guided Sturgeon Viewing Tours
Research: Netting, tagging and larval sampling

June-July

Hatchery Rearing/Research

August

Sturgeon Hatchery Tours and Release Ceremony TBD

September

- 9 19th Annual SFT Banquet, Cheboygan

October and November

Sturgeon in the Classroom deliveries

www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org

Follow Us on
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Your Sturgeon For Tomorrow Board of Directors meets at the Black Lake Sportsman's Club on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm from March through October.