



Sturgeon General

Volume

20

Issue

1



Statewide Sturgeon News

Sturgeon in the Classroom SCUTES Program kicks off statewide



Jenny VanDaele,
Inland Lakes
Elementary School

As Sturgeon in the Classroom interests and investments expand across Michigan there has been a joint effort to explore and compile a SCUTES binder of sturgeon related lessons and resources. SCUTES is an acronym for Students Collaborating to Undertake Tracking Efforts for Sturgeon. The goal of this project was to seek out **and adapt existing lessons and educational materials we thought relevant to students' Lake Sturgeon education experience.**

Partners include Sea Grant Center for Great Lakes Literacy, the Great Lakes NOAA B-WET program, Sturgeon for Tomorrow, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Michigan State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, and some amazing teachers, among many more. We also share thanks with Liz Thomson, a high school student from Alpena Public Schools, who spent last summer in a Great Lakes career exploration position with Michigan Sea Grant to develop the SCUTES binder. This year we anticipate uploading digital curriculum for use in all classrooms.

Winter 2019 issue

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Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians stock Black Lake sturgeon in the Sturgeon River

The Little Traverse Bay Bands (LTBB) of Odawa Indians' Fisheries Enhancement Facility (FEF) has been working in cooperation with Michigan State University and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to restore the Lake Sturgeon population in Burt Lake. Since 2013, the LTBB FEF has released 2,226 fingerling sturgeon into the Burt Lake system. Of the 2,226 fingerlings, 853 have been stocked in the Sturgeon River, or upstream of Wolverine in hopes to improve their chances of imprinting and returning to the river when they mature. In 2018, staff expected to release approximately 700 fingerlings into the Sturgeon River. LTBB also facilitates several Sturgeon in the Classroom programs.



Boy Scout Camporee Planned for May 17-19

Volunteers needed to assist program leaders on Saturday May 18

Back by popular demand, we will be co-hosting a Boy Scout Camporee with Boy Scout Troop 2 in Pellston, Northern Trails District. We anticipate 250 Boy Scouts ages 11-17 will be participating in the Camporee.

We will be offering six programs on Saturday, May 18 and we are seeking volunteers to assist program leaders. Programs are: Fly Fishing 101, Sturgeon Biology, Habitat Conservation, Aquatic Macro Invertebrates, Hatchery Tours and Hunters Safety.

Please contact Brenda Archambo at brenda@sturgeonfortomorrow.org if you can assist with programs. To learn how your troop can participate please contact Scout Troop 2 Leader Wayne Aurand at 231-373-6752.



**#Stewardship
#Conservation**



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www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org

Sturgeon General Newsletter

Printed by

Montmorency County Tribune

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From the President...

When we incorporated as a 501c3 non-profit organization back in 1999, our 'mission to assist fisheries managers in the rehabilitation of lake sturgeon' was paramount. Here we are 20 years later and continue to remain true to our mission. Two decades is a long time relatively. Yet lake sturgeon can live 80-150 years, so in terms of our long range strategic plan, we are just nicely getting started, and beginning to see the fruits of our efforts! We are sincerely grateful for our members, event sponsors, supporters, contributors, volunteers, board members, committees, and collaborators.

Here are just a few highlights we have been able to accomplish with your sustained support: Sturgeon Guarding Program, habitat conservation, collaborative research, hatchery rearing investments, stocking throughout the Cheboygan River Watershed, Otsego Lake and now the Saginaw Bay Watershed, Sturgeon in the Classroom statewide including SCUTES curriculum plus sturgeon on loan in museums, education and outreach programming, annual banquet, and the resurrection of the Black



Lake Sturgeon Shivarree. A labor of love I'd say, especially because we have made this possible through volunteerism!

Please join me in welcoming Marty Jones to the Board of Directors (see page 6). We salute James and Mary Paulson our new Sturgeon Guarding Program (SGP) Volunteer Coordinators! And a big shout out to Mark and Ann Feldhauser for coordinating our SGP volunteers for the past 10 years!! Also, we are recruiting members for our Board of Directors that will lead our organization and implement our strategic plan. We do have an orientation program to assist with onboarding new board members.

I was presented the 2018 Person of the Year Award from Michigan

Outdoor News. Oh my goodness, what a surprise and honor!! I have dedicated this award to you, the 'People of the Sturgeon' because of your time, talent and investments that have made our progress possible. Sincere gratitude to you all.

We will be partnering again with Boy Scout Troop 2 to facilitate a Boy Scout Camporee May 17-19 on the Upper Black River for 250 scouts. On Saturday, May 18 we will be offering six programs and are looking for a few assistants. Please contact me if you are available to assist us in these conservation stewardship programs.

Thank you all for your sustained support and enthusiasm.



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 2019.



2019 lake sturgeon season on Black Lake to begin Feb. 2 at 8:00 a.m.



New for 2019! Sign-up for text message alerts during the season. Just provide your cell number at registration and you can get up-to-the-minute harvest updates on your phone.

The Department of Natural Resources has announced the 2019 lake sturgeon fishing season on Black Lake (Cheboygan County) will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 2. All anglers must register to participate in the lake sturgeon season.

The 2019 total harvest limit for Black Lake is seven lake sturgeon. However, to reduce the chance of exceeding this allocation, 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 2:00 p.m. each day of the season. The season will either end at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 6, or when one of the above scenarios is met, at which point 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. Anglers must have this prior to registering for the Black Lake sturgeon season.

The 2019 angler registration process will be similar to what was enacted in the last few years. 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. 1. 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, February 2 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 1.

Anglers will be issued a disposable flag at registration that must be displayed at the entrance of the angler's shanty each day.

Anglers that 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.

Registration logistics were developed in the last decade to allow greater participation by anglers while protecting the population of lake sturgeon in Black Lake from overharvest. In addition, DNR and MSU have been determining annual population estimates of adult fish from the spring spawning run with the assistance of Sturgeon for Tomorrow, which allows officials to set a safe harvest level in cooperation with tribal agencies.

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.

2018 Lake Sturgeon Research and Stocking Summary

By Doug Larson,
Research Assistant I,
Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan State University



The 2018 Black Lake research season began on May 8th when Michigan State University (MSU) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) researchers captured six adult Lake Sturgeon ascending the Upper Black River. This was a very late start compared to previous years, owing to the Late-April snowstorms. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) data suggests that Lake Sturgeon Adults were in the river on May 2nd, 2018, with ~ 40 fish reaching Klieber Dam before the river was accessible. Once the dam was able to lower the spillway, MSU staff was able to sample from May 8th through the end of the run on May 23rd.

A total of 200 adult Lake Sturgeon were captured during the spawning season, of which 34 were captured for the first time (17.00%). Of the first time captures, no fish showed signs of hatchery origin. The largest single day capture was on May 17th, where the crew sampled 31 fish. The largest fish captured this year was a 6.1-foot female that weighed 143 pounds. Gametes were collected from spawning Lake Sturgeon and transported to the Streamside Rearing Facility for fertilization and rearing. In total 1,145 unique individual Lake Sturgeon have been 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 23rd and continued until June 24th. Researchers captured 46,931 wild dispersing larvae at Site D, the most captured in a single season. As part of a graduate project, staff collected larval fish at two additional sites: The historical site for the sawmill and site C. In total researchers caught 103,968 drifting larvae across 32 drift nights.

In 2018, 541 Lake Sturgeon were released into the Black River. All fish



Smallest fish captured in 2018 by
weight 3'5"; 10 lbs



Largest fish captured in 2018 by
weight. 6'1"; 143 lbs

that were stocked into the Black River were implanted with a passive integrated transponder tag, which will aid future management efforts. In addition, 537 Lake Sturgeon were released into Mullet Lake, all of which were implanted with a PIT tag.

At the direction of the Lake Sturgeon committee and in collaboration with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Black Lake Sturgeon for Tomorrow, and Michigan Sea Grant, 139, 136, 133, and 136 fall fingerling Lake Sturgeon were released into the Titabawassee, Flint, Shiawassee and Cass Rivers, respectively as part of an ongoing rehabilitation and research effort. This project will continue at an approximate density of 125 Lake Sturgeon from the Black River Streamside Rearing Facility for the foreseeable future.

The Sturgeon released in 2018 reached an average length of over 7 inches. Increased size at stock out can be attributed to an improved feeding strategy developed and published by John Bauman.

During the fall juvenile Lake Sturgeon assessment, we captured 40 fish across 5 nights. Researchers conducted a mark-recapture assessment across four transects from the mouth of the river to Red Bridge nightly from dusk until completion during the week of July 30th, 2018. This assessment resulted in a calculated population estimate of 41; (95% CI; Lower: 32, Upper: 58) Lake Sturgeon in the lower 4-km of the Upper Black River.

Continued on page 5

Research efforts in 2018 focused on factors contributing to reproductive success; particularly those that can be quantified by data collected from Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) antennas placed throughout the Upper Black River including migratory strategy and sperm quality. Research continues to investigate the downstream passage of juvenile Lake Sturgeon through hydroelectric facilities. Research evaluating the behavioral ecology of Lake Sturgeon in the context of modified stress environments both in the wild and the hatchery will continue in 2019. Continuing research through MSU includes: the selective properties of female lake sturgeon ovarian fluid; downstream outmigration of drifting Lake Sturgeon and the consequences for recruitment; behavioral plasticity as a function of intra-species reproductive competition and its consequences for current and future reproduction; the interaction of predatory and herbaceous macroinvertebrates, fungi, antibiotics and lake sturgeon eggs; and feeding efficiency of Lake Sturgeon in the hatchery. In 2019, MSU will begin project evaluating the timing of natal stream imprinting in Age-0 Lake Sturgeon.



Juvenile sturgeon captured during fall survey.



www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org/shivaree
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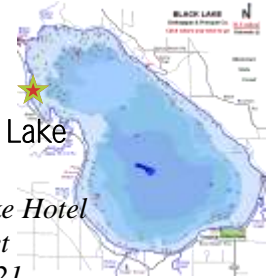
February 1-2, 2019



\$5.00 Entrance

Event Location: Black Lake

Near the former Black Lake Hotel
1701 Winifred Street
Cheboygan, MI 49721



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, February 1

Entertainment tent opens at 3pm

3-6pm: *Acoustic tunes with Billy Jewell*



Register for Ice [Fishing Contest](#) and [Poker Run](#) (tent)

2-7pm: Register for Sturgeon Fishing: 211 DNR Field Station

7pm: Native Water Ceremony



6-10pm: (21+) Live Music: *Remedee*

SATURDAY, February 2

8am-2pm: *Sturgeon Season Opens*

Entertainment-Tent open at 8am: Cabin Fever
Social, Food, Beverages, Raffles, Bonfire—
FUN!!

8am-6pm: [Fishing Contest](#)

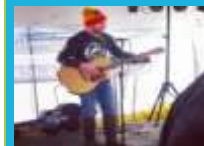
11am-7pm: [Poker Run](#)

10:30am-4:30pm: Entertainment Tent:

Evan Archambo, soloist & DJ Rock'n the tunes...

11am-4pm: Youth Activities [Natureology](#)
Live Sturgeon Exhibit

1-5pm: *Horseshoe Tournament* on the ice

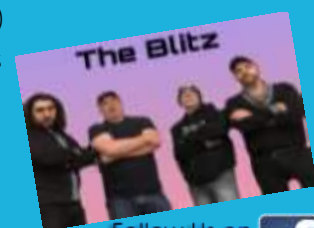


6-10pm: Entertainment Tent: *The Blitz* (21+)

6pm: Announce Ice Fishing Contest Winners

7pm: Announce Poker Run Winners

8-9pm: *Shivaree Raffle Drawing*



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Welcome Martin "Marty" Jones to the Board of Directors



Marty has been coming to Northern Michigan since 1981. He retired as a Dentist five years ago and also spent 25 years selling laboratory equipment to Biotech companies in Greater Boston. Marty has an undergraduate degree in Zoology with emphasis in freshwater biology. He studied Fish Ecology, Limnology, Ichthyology, **and Invertebrate Zoology at Ohio State's F.T. Stone Laboratory on Gibraltar Island in Lake Erie.**

Marty and his family permanently moved to Mullett Lake Village last year, **where his wife's family has been visiting since the tent camping days at the turn of last century.** Marty loves to fish and currently averages 80-90 fishing days per year. He also serves as member of the Mullett Area Preservation Society Board of Directors, responsible for fisheries issues.

He is excited about being involved with Sturgeon For Tomorrow and the strength of the organization's commitment to Lake Sturgeon restoration, involvement in world class research, and collective ability to get things done.

Congratulations to a special Sturgeon For Tomorrow supporter

We want to add our congratulations to the many accolades for Wayne Aurand, Scoutmaster of the Pellston Boy Scout Troop 2. Wayne had been awarded the Eagle Scout Alumni award, one of the highest awards presented by the President Gerald R. Ford Council. Wayne will once again be helping to organize the Boy Scouts Camporee weekend on the Upper Black River during the 2019 spring sturgeon guarding season. Through his dedication, he continues to have a positive impact on the lives of young scouts. Thank you for all your work!!



We accept contributions, memorials and honorariums for special occasions, like birthdays anniversaries and special tributes. THANK YOU on behalf of your loved ones!!

In loving Memory of Ullis Janney
Mary Janney

In loving memory of Richard Lee Shuck
Susan J. Race

In loving memory of Carol Faner
Tom Faner and Alice Gaujanian

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Robert "Bob" Shoemaker
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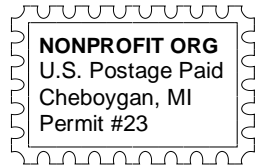
2018 Banquet Big Spenders

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Dedicated to the future of our sturgeon.

Sturgeon General Volume 20 Issue 1 WINTER 2019

Upcoming Events 2019

- February
 - 1-2 Black Lake Sturgeon Shivarree
 - 2 Black Lake Sturgeon Season Opens
 - 21 Sturgeon Advisory Council Meeting
- April Register for Sturgeon Guarding Program
- May Sturgeon Guarding Program—All month
 Guided Sturgeon Viewing Tours
 Boy Scout Camporee
 Research: Netting, tagging and larval sampling
- June-July Hatchery Rearing/Research
- August Sturgeon Hatchery Tours and Release Ceremonies TBD
- September
 - 14 21st Annual SFT Banquet, Cheboygan
- October and November Sturgeon in the Classroom deliveries
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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.

*Mark your calendars!
 21st Annual Banquet
 Saturday, September 14, 2019*