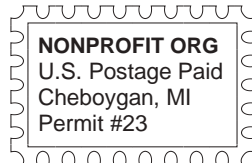




1604 N. Black River Road
 Cheboygan, MI 49721
 231-625-2776
 www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org



Dedicated to the future of our sturgeon.

Sturgeon General Volume 23 Issue 1 WINTER 2022

Upcoming Events 2022

February	
5	Black Lake Sturgeon Season Opens
18	Sturgeon Advisory Council Meeting
March	
15	Scholarship Application Deadline
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 Ceremonies TBD
September	
10	23 rd Annual SFT Banquet—TBD
October - November	Sturgeon in the Classroom deliveries

Your Sturgeon For Tomorrow Board of Directors meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm from March through October. We usually meet at the Black Lake Sportsman's Club, however due to COVID 19, we are Zoom meeting.

Winter 2022 issue

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Thanks/Scholarships/News	P.4
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The 2022 sturgeon season on Black Lake is set to begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, February 5.

As of this writing we have not received official specifics on the 2022 fishing season. Below are likely guidelines.



- In order to participate in the season, anglers must register online by Friday, February 4.
- Participating anglers age 17 or older must have a valid Michigan fishing license.
- Fishing Season starts Saturday, February 5, 2022 @ 8am
- Fishing hours are 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day of the season
- Season will end either at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9 or when
 - > the sixth fish is harvested,
 - > or when five fish have been harvested at the end of any fishing day
- Seven (7) lake sturgeon are allowed in total (State recreational anglers)
- Those who harvest a lake sturgeon must immediately contact DNR personnel on the ice to register the lake sturgeon harvest.
- All anglers will be notified when season is over by text message and on the ice by Michigan DNR personnel that they must immediately stop fishing for lake sturgeon.
- Michigan.gov/fishing

Shivaree Weekend put on hold

We have made the difficult decision to not host Shivaree Weekend February 4-5, 2022. There is just too much uncertainty with covid, liability, permits, weather, logistics...



From start to finish, we need 100 volunteers to pull off this event.

We do anticipate hosting this event at some point going forward. **We need COMMITTED LEADERS to work along side the Board of Directors to plan, coordinate and facilitate each of the events.**

If you want to be a part of sustaining Shivaree Weekend—step up and help. Contact any board member—THANK YOU!!

Not hosting the Shivaree will have major negative impact on our fund development potential. We hope you will consider a tax-deductible contribution to assist in facilitating our planned programs. We are sincerely grateful for your past support and we look forward to connecting with you going forward. Until then, stay safe and healthy!

Kathy Bezotte retires after 20 years of exemplary volunteer service



In Recognition of 20 years of exemplary volunteer Service, Kathy Bezotte was presented with this certificate in high honor and distinction for her loyalty, commitment, leadership, and outstanding contributions to Sturgeon For Tomorrow.

Kathy's dedicated service in supporting our mission is recognized and sincerely appreciated.

Thank you, Kathy!!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Brenda Archambo
231-625-2776

Vice President

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231-420-7853

Secretary/Treasurer

Marty Jones
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989-763-7568

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Pete and Judy Chimner
Bill and Sharon Church
Doug and Treisha Larson
George and Connie Warner
Keith and Karen Abrahamson

Sturgeon For Tomorrow
Black Lake Chapter
1604 N. Black River Road
Cheboygan, MI 49721
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President's message...

In this celebratory time of the New Year, I look back upon 2021 with gratitude for our members, supporters, volunteers, and the difference you're making in lake sturgeon recovery. The New Year is a wonderful time to reflect on the successes of the past, and vision our future work to scale our impact.

We know our work is relevant, meaningful, and valuable. Last summer while reviewing our strategic plan and logic model, I realized we have accomplished what we initially set out to do in 1999, and then some. What an awakening!!

This year, we will be updating our strategic plan for the next 3 to 5 years. As part of the process we will also be delving into succession planning. Succession Planning is the process of identifying the critical positions within our organization and developing action plans for individuals to assume those positions. Taking a holistic view of current and future goals, this type of preparation ensures that we have the right people in the right jobs today and in the years to come. In the long term, succession planning will strengthen the overall capability of our organization by: 1) Identifying critical positions and highlighting potential vacancies; 2) Selecting key competencies and skills necessary for business continuity; and 3) Focusing development of individuals to meet future organization needs.

We are identifying areas that need to be strengthened, including work with the board and committees and ensuring that financial, human resources, program operations, and data management systems remain in place. We will keep you informed as we progress.

Last September we began our on-boarding process and those of you who expressed interest in serving on the leadership team will be engaged in the process. If you are reading this and feel lead to serve, we want to hear from you.

This year will certainly be transformative and exciting. I hope to see many of you whether it is on the lake, during Sturgeon Guard (register now), releasing Sturgeon in the Classroom yearlings, the banquet or wherever our paths cross. Just know we appreciate all you have done and continue to do for our beloved lake sturgeon.



Brenda Archambo

January is Membership Renewal Month—PLEASE RENEW TODAY!

We need you now, more than ever, to sustain our work in lake sturgeon rehabilitation and recovery.

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 Sturgeon in the Classroom, investing funds in the hatchery for rearing and stocking lake sturgeon throughout the Cheboygan River Watershed, Sturgeon Guarding Program, Guided Tours, Outreach and Education, Scholarships, Collaborative Research, Habitat improvements/monitoring, advocacy as well as supporting the development of the highly successful Sturgeon on Loan program.

Please use the enclosed blue membership renewal envelope or renew online using PayPal at www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org/membership.php



Your investments are sincerely appreciated. Thank you!!

Sustainers (\$500+)

Don and Nan Blasy
Amy Roy Ferneding
Amanda Johnson
Marty and Ellen Jones
Bradley and Susan Moffatt
Kris and John Parrottino
Timothy Schacht
Tina Shepard
The Conservation Fund
Water Wonderland Board of Realtors

Leaders (\$100-\$499)

Keith and Karen Abrahamson
Kathy Bezotte and Rick Ackerman
John Adamo
Milus Allison
Jeff Arch
Archambo Electric
Art and Patty Archambo
Gil and Brenda Archambo
John and Barb Archambo
Scott and Beth Archambo
Roy Berry
Black River Sand and Gravel
Jim and Gina Burke
Kenny and Cathy Borowicz
Donald Bessey
Gordon and Tracey Bird
Willis Brown
Thomas and Marilou Capo
Charboneau Builders
Pete and Judi Chimner
Bill and Sharon Church
Citizens National Bank
I. Crooks
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Rich Krentz
Denise Lange
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Ann Minock
Jeff Morrell
Lyle and Lynne Lippard
Paul and Bren Maenle
Tom and Kim Martin
Deb McCall and Craig Gronda
Rick Marshall and Jane Smalla
Merchant Excavating
Jeff Morrell
Fred and Linda Moulder
Alice and Curt Mushlock
Jim and Nancy Norton
Karla and Mike Passalacqua
James and Mary Paulson
James R. Pedersen
Kira Poncin
Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op
Ed Ptasznik
Susan J. Race
Helen Robbins
Steven and Elizabeth Scarlett
Pete and Megan Secrest
Michael Sheehan
Steven Showalter
Carla Skuse
Roy and Peg Sjoberg
Carla Skuse
Michael Smalla
David and Linda Steenstra
Joyce Stokes
Straits Area Federal Credit Union
Ressie Stranally and Darin Wallis
Dan and Karen Stroup
Jim and Anne Sturgeon
Sunrise Communications
Dean Tebo
William Thompson
John Tomlinson
Gary Voltz
George and Connie Warner
Jeff and Buffy Weldon
Mic Wirgau
Frank Wheatlake
Nick and Heidi Whitehead

Bob and Jackie Williams
Scott and Kim Williams
Kevin and Jackie Winkle
Corey Wischmeyer
Jason and Stacey Woiderski
Jay and Mary Kay Woiderski
Carl and Sally Yost
Thomas and Patricia Zuhl



Partners (\$50-\$99)

John and Barb Archambo
Glenn and Marianne Belyea
Roy Berry
Black Lake Preservation Society
Racquel Dobry
Doug and Marleen Frens
Ronald Funke
Mullett Lake General Store
Mary Ann Heidemann
Don Inman and Virginia Pierce
Amanda Johnson
Mary and Jim Knight
Douglas Koster
Vickie Lyon
Ronald J. Maka
Dan Manning
Stan and Mary Neff
Nicholas Posak
William Posak
Kevin and Dee Prediger
James L. Ribby
Michael and Peggy Supernault
Timothy Sutton
Nicholas Thiede
Dustin Tiemeyer
Christopher Tracy
Barbara Tyger
Connie and George Warner
Cynthia A. Watson
Bob and Jackie Williams
Ralph and Hazel Williams
Michael and Elisabeth Worzniak

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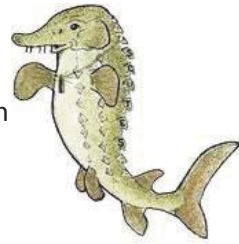
Sturgeon in the Classroom (SITC) celebrates nine years

The goal of the Sturgeon in the Classroom program is to instill conservation stewardship. Schools are selected to raise a juvenile sturgeon during the school year, while incorporating hands-on, place-based education to enlighten youth on the importance of environmental conservation and stewardship. This program is a perfect example of place-based stewardship education since students are learning about their local watershed, recovery of threatened species while improving local fisheries with the fish's release. Students also learn strategies and tactics on how to keep the Great Lakes, Great!

Acknowledgements: We are grateful to Michigan State University and Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odowa Indians

2021-2022 SITC Participating Schools

- Alcona Elementary School
- Besser Elementary, Alpena
- Cheboygan Middle School, Cheboygan
- Holt High School, Holt
- Inland Lakes Schools, Indian River
- Lakeville Middle School, Otisville
- Onaway High School, Onaway
- Quincy Elementary, Zeeland
- St. Lorenz Lutheran School, Frankenmuth



Sturgeon on Loan

- Belle Isle Aquarium, Detroit
- Chippewa Nature Center (exhibit), Midland
- DNR Outdoor Adventure Center, Detroit
- DNR Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery & Visitor Center, Mattawan
- Grand Rapids Museum, Grand Rapids



Planned Lake sturgeon assessments in the Inland Waterway

The purpose of these lake assessments is to assess stocking efforts, growth and survival, and development of future management plans (Burt-Mullett).

Burt Lake: 2022	Past evaluations 2011, 2015
Black Lake: 2023	Past evaluations 2002, 2007, 2013
Mullett Lake: 2024	Past evaluations 2009, 2010

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

In Memory of Mr. Ed Clark
Mr. Ed. Clark, Jr.
Duperon Corporation

In Memory of Joseph Maka
Joseph Maka

In Memory of Timothy Sutton
Steve and Christine Greve
Joel Helmer
Jeff and Monica Hughes
Mike and Gwen Sutton

In Memory of Jim Engel
John E. Engel

In Memory of Bob Minock
Ann Minock

In Memory of Kerry Haas
Randall Haas

In Memory of Thomas and John Hentry Schell
Stan Grzemkowski

In Memory of Bob Tomlinson
John Tomlinson

In Memory of Dwight L. Havens
Lynette Doe

In Memory of Bob Shoemaker
Steve and Beth Worden

In Memory of Madeline Worzniak
Michael and Elisabeth Worzniak

In Memory of Ulis Janney
Mary Janney

In Memory of Dawn Showalter
Steven Showalter



2021 Lake Sturgeon Research and Stocking Summary

**By Doug Larson, Research Assistant I
Michigan DNR - Michigan State University**

The 2021 Black Lake research season began on April 12th when Michigan State University (MSU) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) researchers captured 2 adult Lake Sturgeon ascending the Upper Black River. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) data indicated the first sturgeon entered the river on April 7th, 2021 with the first fish reaching the spawning grounds on April 11th.

A total of 351 adult Lake Sturgeon were captured during the spawning season, of which 64 were captured for the first time (18.23%). Of the first time captures, three fish were confirmed to be of hatchery origin. The largest single day capture was on May 4th, where the crew sampled 56 fish. The largest fish captured this year was a 6.1-foot female that weighed 131.62 pounds. Gametes were collected from spawning Lake Sturgeon and transported to the Streamside Rearing Facility for fertilization and rearing. In total



University of Manitoba Graduate Student, Alaina Taylor, holds an adult lake sturgeon in 2021

1,189 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 21st and continued sparsely until June 14th. At the historical drift site, MSU personnel captured 31,303 larvae across 23 drift nights.

In 2021, 494 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, 489 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, fall fingerling Lake Sturgeon were released into the Tita-bawassee (n = 117), Flint (n = 122), Shiawassee (n = 115), and Cass Rivers (n = 114), 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.

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 August 1st, 2021. 26 fish were recaptured across three recapture nights. Efforts to derive a population estimate for 2021 are ongoing.

Research efforts in 2021 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, inter-annual migratory trade-offs and sperm quality. This work resulted in a publication in the

Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences.

Additionally, 2021 marked the final year of a project evaluating the factors contributing to olfactory imprinting by age-0 Lake Sturgeon. Graduate Student Jake Kimmel raised a small number of Lake Sturgeon under differing water combinations (ground water, Black River Water) to differentiate when Age-0 Lake Sturgeon imprint on their natal water. Additionally, Jake monitored the changes in amino

acid consistency in the Upper Black River as this has shown to differentiate imprinting in salmonid smolts. Analysis of that data is ongoing.

Finally, Michigan State University collaborated with Dr. Gary Anderson and graduate student Alaina Taylor to collect fin ray samples from adult lake sturgeon for elemental signature analysis. Elemental signatures in fin rays have been used to predict past life history events in fish, such as migration, habitat use, and exposure to pollutants. This study aimed to compare fin rays to known life history events (i.e. point of first known spawn) to determine if onset of sexual maturity can be identified based on elemental composition and/or morphology of the fin ray. Pectoral fin clips were collected from the Black Lake sturgeon population because it has been closely monitored since 2001. Individuals inter-spawning intervals were available from fish tagged with Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags and monitoring with Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) antennas (established 2016).

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 total, Michigan State University published 11 papers related to lake sturgeon in Black Lake in 2021. Additionally, six manuscripts are in revision or review.

A simple note of thanks

Dave Borgeson, Northern Lake Huron Unit Manager, Fisheries Division, Michigan DNR



I grew up in a house filled with books. Some of my earliest memories are of my parents constantly reading to my sisters and me. Some books had a lesson, like the “Story of the Little Red Hen,” and some stirred my imagination like “The Flying Hockey Stick.” As I began to write this article, for some reason these books (I’ll let you google the themes) came to my mind. I thought this was odd, but then I began to wonder if it really was so strange?

I had thought about detailing the journey we have taken together and write about all the management actions, the streamside hatcheries, and the groundbreaking research conducted in our little corner of the world. Perhaps because I plan to retire in the not-too-distant future and therefore I’m more often in a reflective mood, after a short period of reflection, I decided to just write you a simple note of thanks.

The unrelenting commitment you have demonstrated to bring back a resource and a fishery that many of us may never see fully realized, is nothing short of remarkable.

In an era of the apparent rise in the need for instant gratification and often a “what’s in it for me?” attitude, it has been extremely gratifying to know that those attitudes aren’t universal, and certainly not pervasive among the people of the sturgeon. In my business, sturgeon rehabilitation is about as far as you can get from instant gratification and “what’s in it for me?” Unlike the barnyard animals in the “Story of the Little Red Hen,” all of you stepped up and said, “What can we do to help?” unconcerned whether you would benefit. The unrelenting commitment you have demonstrated to bring back a resource and a fishery that many of us may never see fully realized, is nothing short of remarkable.

Similar to the story in “The Flying Hockey Stick,” we had to be extremely imaginative and resourceful. You dared to dream, to take a leap of faith, and gather enough resources from amazingly generous people that allowed us to take this wonderful journey together. It is incredible how far you can go when propelled by a vision shared by a community of people who care.



Thank you all for bringing these warm memories of family, the benefits of dreaming big, working hard, and being selfless into such sharp focus for me. It has been a wild, fun, and extremely rewarding ride. I am eternally grateful to you for allowing me to share the journey with you.

Sturgeon For Tomorrow Scholarships Available to Area Graduates

The Sturgeon For Tomorrow (SFT) Fisheries, Wildlife or Natural Resources Scholarships in the amount of \$1000 each is being offered to 2022 high school graduates at Cheboygan Area High School, Inland Lakes High School and Onaway High School. Students may contact their school guidance office for an application. **The application deadline is March 15.** For more information and to download a scholarship application, log onto www.sturgeonfortomorrow.org

In the news

I Speak for the Fish is a new monthly column written by Great Lakes Now Contributor Kathy Johnson. Kathy invested several weeks with us this spring and published several sturgeon stories. Check it out.

<https://www.greatlakesnow.org/i-speak-for-the-fish-setting-sturgeon-free/>

Great Lakes Now Episode 1027

BOOK: In *The Accidental Reef and Other Ecological Odysseys in the Great Lakes*, Lynne Heasley illuminates an underwater world that, despite a ferocious industrial history, remains wondrous and worthy of care. From its first scene in a benighted Great Lakes river, *where lake sturgeon thrash and spawn*, this powerful book takes readers on journeys through the Great Lakes, alongside fish and fishers, scuba divers and scientists...Amazon



Water Wonderland Board of REALTORS presents Patty Archambo with Good Neighbor Award and \$500 to Sturgeon For Tomorrow.

The Water Wonderland Board of Realtors awarded Patty Archambo as their 2021 Good Neighbor Award Honoree.



The award recognizes a Realtor who has made an extraordinary commitment to community service on the local level. Candidates are judged based on their contribution, the impact of their work, and their leadership skills. The winner receives a grant of \$500 for the charity organization in their name.

Patty, a realtor with Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Michigan Real Estate office in Cheboygan was recognized and awarded this prestigious award for all her extraordinary commitment to Sturgeon For Tomorrow – Black Lake Chapter. Through her volunteerism she has assisted with the Black Lake Sturgeon Shivaree, Annual Banquet, organizational programming and more.

“The Good Neighbor Awards celebrate Realtors dedication to bettering their communities,” said 2021 Water Wonderland Board of Realtors president, Denise Tryban. “Patty deserves an extra round of applause for continuing her efforts over 15 years volunteering for this organization and helping make Sturgeon For Tomorrow one of the premier organizations in the State of Michigan caring for the lake sturgeon populations throughout the Cheboygan River Watershed.”

Saginaw Bay Sturgeon restoration receives investment grant to stock iconic lake sturgeon

The Conservation Fund and the Bay Area Community Foundation presented Sturgeon For Tomorrow Black Lake Chapter with an \$8,000.00 grant for the purposes of purchasing food for lake sturgeon at the Black River Sturgeon Facility and associated expenses with raising lake sturgeon in preparation for release into the Saginaw Bay Watershed rivers : Cass, Tittabawassee, Shiawassee, and Flint. “The efforts to restore the Saginaw Bay lake sturgeon population began in the 1990s with habitat restoration efforts, dam removals, and education. Beginning in 2018, a broad partnership of agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools and more, took the first step of releasing juvenile lake sturgeon”, said Michael Kelly, Director of the Great Lakes Office of The Conservation Fund and the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN).

“Ensuring the diversity of animal life and protecting water quality are important issues to the Bay Area Community Foundation. Seeing the population of this historic creature rebounding in our river system is especially gratifying. We are proud to support the efforts of The Conservation Fund and all of the partners that are working to bring lake sturgeon back home”, said Diane Fong, CEO of the Bay Area Community Foundation.

For decades the Black Lake Chapter of Sturgeon For Tomorrow have invested in lake sturgeon recovery. “This grant will assist us with off-setting costs of food for rearing the sturgeon to be stocked in the Saginaw Bay Watershed”, said Brenda Archambo President of Sturgeon For Tomorrow Black Lake Chapter. “The goal for this grant is to stock out 500 fall fingerling lake sturgeon per year in the Saginaw Bay Watershed over the next three years”, Archambo said.

After studies in Black, Burt, and Mullett lakes showed that the sturgeon reared in the MSU operated Black River streamside hatchery and stocked in those lakes had higher than expected survival, stocking rates were decreased in those waters. This action made some fish available for sturgeon rehabilitation efforts elsewhere. “We chose to prioritize the Saginaw River system for the next sturgeon rehabilitation effort because it historically had a sturgeon population, and there was tremendous local interest in rebuilding that population,” said Dave Borgeson DNR Fisheries manager for the Northern Lake Huron Management Unit.

For more information visit saginawbaysturgeon.org

