



## The Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association Bulletin Issue No. 17 – November 2014

### 2014 - One Heck of a Summer

Although not great from a weather perspective, the summer of 2014 was - without question - an exceptionally busy and productive one for the Association. With the outstanding support of our growing network of volunteers, we were able to:

- conduct a watershed-wide door to door information campaign;
- take monthly water samples in Lac Profond and Lac Laverdure;
- effect bimonthly transparency measurements in seven of our lakes - Beaudry (Allard), Grant, Laverdure, Profond, Grenon, Roberge, and Blue Sea;
- measure the growth of periphyton at 15 locations in Blue Sea Lake;
- with the technical support of ABV des 7, take monthly oxygen readings at four sites in Blue Sea Lake; and
- install and retrieve 50 additional yellow buoys to mark Eurasian milfoil beds at various locations in Blue Sea Lake.



In addition to these “operational” activities, we also conducted outreach visits to several lake associations within our watersheds, held a very interesting and well attended Annual General Meeting, and published two editions of Shorelines. All in all, one heck of a summer.

We would not have been able to accomplish any of this without the tremendous effort of our dedicated volunteers, the names of whom are listed on our website (please [click here](#)<sup>1</sup>). On behalf of the Association, we sincerely thank all of them for their contribution and commitment to the protection of our waterways.



### The Association Welcomes a New Director - Robert Duval

Robert Duval grew up in Cap-Rouge, near Quebec City, and studied land surveying at Laval University. Like his father before him, his career took a more scientific turn, and he became a geodesist in the Public Service of Canada. Geodesy, a branch of mathematics, deals with the measurement of the size and form of the earth as well as its rotation in space. It is used to establish reference points which cartographers, professional surveyors, engineers and scientists use to take exact measurements at the surface of the earth. Robert enjoyed a very successful and rewarding career in of the Ministry of Natural Resources until his retirement in 2012.

Fond of nature, Robert loved working in the forests, in the North, and in other remote areas of the country. In 1993, he fell in love with the Upper Gatineau region and found a summer cottage on Lac Profond, which he transformed into a country home and where he has recently decided to live on a permanent basis.

Robert has been an active member of the Lac Profond Association for many years and is now President of that association. He fully understands the fragility of our lakes and will, therefore, be a definite asset to our organization. Welcome aboard, Robert!

## Issues Raised at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting



The questions and concerns raised by members at our annual general meetings play an important role in the development of the Association's priorities. For example, at the 2013 meeting, several members asked questions about the impact of beavers on the local environment. To help answer those questions, this year's AGM featured a presentation on beaver management by subject matter expert Michel Leclair; a synopsis of his presentation can be found

in the last issue of *Shorelines*. (Please [click here](#)<sup>2</sup>)

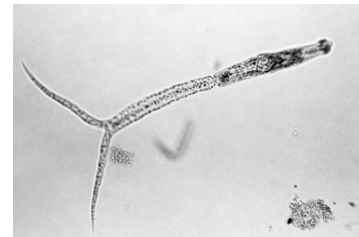
In addition to questions about beavers, members raised several other concerns at, or as a follow-up to, this year's AGM. The following is a short summary of those questions/issues together with the information we have been able to gather since the meeting:



- Does the water in Blue Sea Lake contain bacteria that could cause skin irritations? Like most lakes in Canada, Blue Sea is home to blue green algae (cyanobacteria). Some blue green algae produce toxins that can be harmful to both people and animals when experienced in large enough quantities (eg: during a blue-green algae bloom). Health effects can occur when surface scum or water containing high levels of blue-green algal toxins either contact the skin or are swallowed. They can also occur when airborne droplets containing such toxins are inhaled while swimming, bathing or showering. For more information about blue-green algae, please [click here](#)<sup>3</sup>.



Please note that the skin irritation commonly called "swimmer's itch" is not caused by bacteria but by small worm-like parasites called schistosomes. Schistosomes spend their life cycle as parasites in the bodies of water snails and in the blood stream of aquatic mammals, ducks or other waterfowl. During their life cycle, schistosome larvae leave their snail host and swim near the surface of the water, looking for bird and mammal hosts. Larvae may mistakenly get on your skin if you are swimming or wading in water. The larvae burrow under your skin, however, they cannot survive in humans and will die almost immediately. It is the allergic reaction to these tiny larvae under the skin that causes swimmer's itch.



- Is septic waste on the islands being properly disposed of? At present, there is no system in place to empty the septic tanks on the islands. However, both municipalities are investigating how best to do this. We have been told that a proposal to address this important issue should be tabled within the next few months. We will keep you apprised as more information becomes available.



- Under what circumstances is it permissible to build a bonfire on the beach? As detailed in article 4.2 of the [MRC shoreline regulations](#)<sup>4</sup>, fires are not permitted on the shoreline (ie: within 10 metres of the high water mark) without the prior authorization of municipal or regional officials. Care must be taken to ensure that any fire so authorized is thoroughly extinguished and that all ashes and embers are safely disposed of well away from shoreline.

- Given the apparent success of the ABV des 7 Eurasian milfoil control project on Lac Pemichangan, has the Association considered implementing a similar milfoil abatement program on Blue Sea Lake? The ABV des 7 project involved securing - with the use of divers - large sheets of jute over a number of milfoil beds in Lac Pemichangan. This was done in Spring 2012. Based on follow-on monitoring, it would appear that - when properly secured and maintained - jute sheets do indeed stop the growth of Eurasian milfoil in the areas covered while, at the same time, allowing the growth of indigenous aquatic plants. For this control technique to be successful, entire plant beds must be covered; this can be very expensive given that the estimated cost to cover a 50 sq metres area with jute is \$2,500.



The Association has discussed using jute to control milfoil with ABV des 7 officials and has been briefed on their project. Although the latter is still ongoing (the Pemichangan beds will be monitored for another two years), the Association is currently considering what, if any, action it should take now to prepare for the implementation of such a program should the use of jute sheets prove to be a feasible and affordable way of controlling Eurasian milfoil. As a first step, the Association will likely conduct an extensive survey of milfoil beds around the lake in 2015.

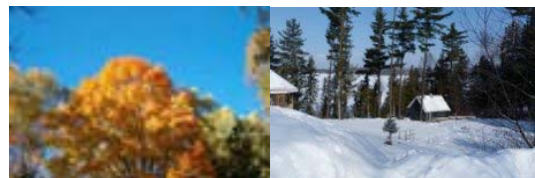


- In 2014 which lakes within the region were the focus of MRC shoreline inspections? Within the Blue Sea sector, the following lakes were subject to shoreline inspections: Blue Sea, Edja, Long and des Iles; within the Messines sector: Big Cedar, Little Cedar, Clément, and Lacroix.
- Given that septic systems are the major source of the phosphorus flowing into our lakes and given that cleaning materials can be a significant source of that phosphorus, which cleaning products does the Association recommend we use? The Association recommends that residents and cottagers use only phosphate free cleaning products. There are many DIY cleaners that fit the bill ([click here](#)<sup>5</sup> for link to website article). However, if you prefer to use commercial products, we recommend that you chose those that are “Ecologo” certified. There are several brands that have earned this certification including “Nature Clean”, “Bio-Vert”, “and “Attitude”. “Ecologo” certified cleaning products can be purchased at various national chains (eg: Loblaws and Jean Coutu) as well as in health food and environmental stores.



## Fall and Winter Tips

As the days start to get shorter, it's time to start preparing our homes/cottages for the cooler weather ahead. For some excellent ideas on how to get your place ready for fall and winter in an environmentally appropriate manner, please check out the “[Seasonal Tips](#)”<sup>6</sup> page of our website.



1. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/members\\_2014#benevoles](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/members_2014#benevoles)
2. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/newsletter\\_14\\_08#beavers](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/newsletter_14_08#beavers)
3. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/blue\\_green\\_algae](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/blue_green_algae)
4. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/regulation](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/regulation)
5. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/earth\\_friendly\\_cleaning](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/earth_friendly_cleaning)
6. [www.associationbluesealake.org/en/tips](http://www.associationbluesealake.org/en/tips)