



June 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We trust that you and your families are staying healthy and safe. Summer is here! The water temperature is over 77 degrees and heading up.

We want to bring you up to date on several items of interest to the Bolton Lakes community.

Spring Seminar

Due to the continuing Covid-19 crisis there will be no spring seminar. We hope that by the fall we will be able to have our usual meeting. We will let you know as the date gets closer.

Cyanobacteria Bloom This May

This spring (starting around May 19th) the lakes had an unusually high amount of visible algae, including significant cyanobacteria. Several submissions came in through the FBL Invasive Plant Reporting Tool (<https://www.friendsofboltonlakes.org/report-a-suspicious-plant.html>) reporting cyanobacteria blooms on both lakes. Some cyanobacteria can produce toxins that are harmful to pets and people. Last year FBL got a grant from the Connecticut Federation of Lakes to purchase a Cyanoscope testing kit. This spring Paul Weisser used the microscope and software to determine that the cyanobacteria in our lakes is primarily *Dolichospermum*. These cyanobacteria **do** produce harmful toxins. Other algae tests that FBL conducted showed the presence of *Chlorella* and *Chlamydomonas*; these are non-toxic green algae.

A dog playing in Middle Bolton Lake became sick and, after a blood test by a local vet, it was determined the dog had microcystin toxins, the toxin produced by cyanobacteria. The dog has recovered at home. The owner contacted the DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) and the district health department. The water was tested, and the level of cyanobacteria was below the level that the state uses to determine if public advisory signs are needed. But, out of an abundance of caution, the state did post signs warning that people should be aware that there are cyanobacteria in the water, and they should not swim in ugly water. After the posting of the signs, the water was tested over a two-week period and each time the level of cyanobacteria was significantly below the level that is considered harmful. The signs were taken down.

The bottom line is that cyanobacteria are always in the lake. In the spring there is a combination of an increase in nutrients through over fertilizing, pollen and runoff from spring rains; the heating of the lake water causing a uniform water temperature distribution; high winds that cause the water in the lake to mix; and warmer weather. These create good conditions for bacteria to grow and when they grow exponentially there is a bloom. Don't swim or let your pets play in water that looks green.

Since this algae problem has subsided both lakes have shown a remarkable increase in clarity. Secchi depth (the deeper the clearer) has been in the 4-meter range on the lower lake and 3.5 meters on the middle lake. Several residents have reported easily seeing both bluegills and bass forming spawning pools in the shallows off their docks. The channel catfish are still around, but our older fish populations may be making a comeback. While we

enjoy the clear water, we must remember that aquatic plants respond to the increased light and will grow well. These plants produce oxygen, which is essential for the lake, but we must remain vigilant for the invasive species that clog the water and force out the good plants. Of high concern among these problem plants is curly leaf pondweed with its lasagna noodle leaves. Please keep an eye out for this one (as well as other suspicious plants) and report them as soon as you see them.

Semi-monthly Monitoring

FBL is once again doing semi-monthly monitoring of the lakes. If you are interested in joining us on the water to do testing, drop an email to us at fbl@friendsofboltonlakes.org and we'll include you on our mailing list.

Article in the *Boston Globe Magazine*

On May 28th the Boston Globe Magazine published a wonderful article titled "Escape to these hidden lakes of New England" that included our Bolton Lakes. Jeff Harder's article was well received; thank you to all the FBL members that provided information for the article.

Membership Drive

Our membership drive is ongoing. So far approximately 50% of our membership from 2019 has rejoined in 2020; we also have some new members who joined this year. If you have rejoined, thank you. If you have not yet rejoined, we encourage you to do so using either our online form or by downloading, printing and mailing a membership form. Both options are available here:

<https://www.friendsofboltonlakes.org/become-an-fbl-member.html>

Change of address

FBL changed its email address to fbl@friendsofboltonlakes.org . If you have us in your contact list under the old email, please update the listing.

Welcome Brochure

We have updated the welcome brochure that we leave with the towns. It can also be found on our website. There is information about the lakes and how to be a good watershed citizen; it is informative reading even for long time lake residents. The link to the brochure is:

[https://www.friendsofboltonlakes.org/uploads/3/0/0/0/30007939/welcome_bolton_lakes_062020u .pdf](https://www.friendsofboltonlakes.org/uploads/3/0/0/0/30007939/welcome_bolton_lakes_062020u.pdf)

Monthly Board Meeting

Again, the FBL board urges each and every member to join the conversation at a monthly board meeting, held at 6:30 PM on the third Wednesday of each month. Currently we are convening the meeting online using ZOOM until the COVID19 crisis passes. Please let us know your interest and we will send you an invitation to the meeting.

Thank you,

The Friends of Bolton Lakes