

# Aquatic Invasive Species Update

Washington & Waukesha Counties



August 2018

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## Snapshot Day Success

On August 18th the AIS crew hosted a volunteer Snapshot Day event to monitor rivers and streams in Waukesha and Washington Counties. Snapshot Day was part of a statewide effort to promote citizen science in collaboration with River Alliance of Wisconsin, UW Extension Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN), and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Ten volunteers in Waukesha and Washington County joined over 150 statewide to conduct early detection surveys for aquatic invasive species.

First, volunteers received training on plant identification, safety, and tool use. Next, they dispersed to stream sites selected by the AIS team to collect data and plant specimens. Once at the sites, volunteers chose to enter the stream or monitor from the shore.

To end the day, volunteers met up with the AIS team to exchange plant specimens, data sheets, and stories from the day. If you missed this year's Snapshot Day but are interested in getting involved next year, contact Washington or Waukesha County Parks and save the date for Snapshot Day 2019 on August 17th.



Brad and Maddelin pose with Washington County volunteers.

Thank you to all the volunteers who joined us to make Snapshot Day 2018 a success!

## Clean Boats, Clean Waters Update

If you've launched your boat at a public launch in Waukesha or Washington County this summer, you've probably seen the AIS staff engaging in watercraft inspections. With our blue t-shirts on and clipboards in hand, we've educated nearly 3500 boaters since May about their role in preventing the spread of AIS.

By cleaning plants and animals off watercraft and gear upon entry and exit of a lake, individuals can stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. The Clean Boats, Clean Waters program provides grant funding for paid staff and opportunities for volunteers to spend weekends and holidays at boat launches on water bodies they care about.

This summer the AIS staff spent over 600 hours conducting watercraft inspections at launches all over the two counties. In 600 hours we've encountered a lot of different experiences. For example, one day we might have spoken with 20 boaters and the next 200. We've met many interesting people, and witnessed some entertaining launch attempts. Overall, we have adequately empowered lake users to take action to prevent their lakes from invasive species. We also learned a lot about AIS in the process.

If you'd like to learn more about how to get Clean Boats Clean Waters watercraft inspectors at a launch near you, contact Washington or Waukesha County's AIS representative or consult UW-Extension's [website](#) for more information.



Sara hands out towels at special Clean Boats Clean Waters events over the summer.

## Snorkels, Samples, and Surveys

So far this summer, the AIS team has performed 10 aquatic plant surveys on lakes in Waukesha and Washington County. The surveys use either the point-intercept or meander method and work to determine aquatic plant species presence and abundance.

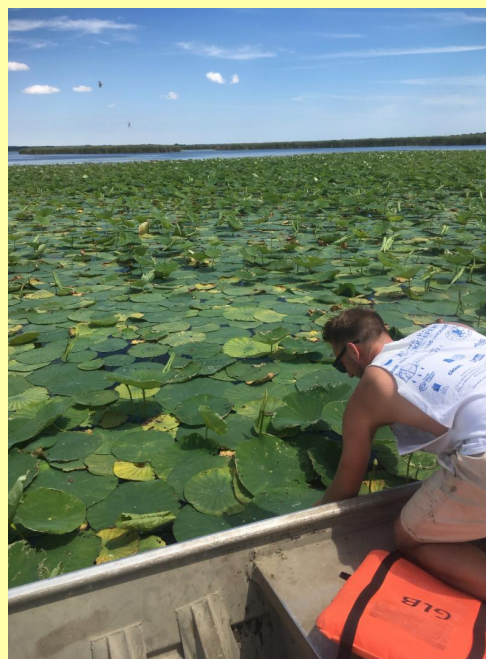
Meander surveys are qualitative and serve to collect data about what aquatic plant species are present in a lake. Surveyors select five random points on a lake, often including boat launches, inlets, and outlets. At each point, surveyors snorkel and collect plants for 20-30 minutes. Specimens are then identified, pressed, and sent to the UW-Stevens Point Freckmann Herbarium for verification and storage. Lakes chosen for meander surveys this summer include: Lac La Belle, Moose, Lower Nemahbin, Upper Kelly, Denoon, Big Cedar, Little Cedar, Beck, Smith, and McConville.

Point-intercept surveys are a bit more comprehensive, addressing both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of plant life within a lake. During point-intercept surveys, GPS coordinates are viewed as grid points across the entire surface of the lake. Surveyors stop at each grid point and record sediment type, water depth, and all the plants present at that point. A double-sided rake is used to collect plant samples from the lake bottom for surveyors to compile.

The collected data is then entered into a GIS map format which provides valuable information to lake users about species present on their lake. Point Intercept surveys are frequently used by aquatic plant managers, DNR staff, and county staff.

GIS grid maps of aquatic invasive species of Waukesha County from previous years can be accessed on the [Waukesha County Map App](#).





Graceanne and Brad collect plants on meander and point-intercept surveys.

## US Army Corps Collaboration on Pike Lake

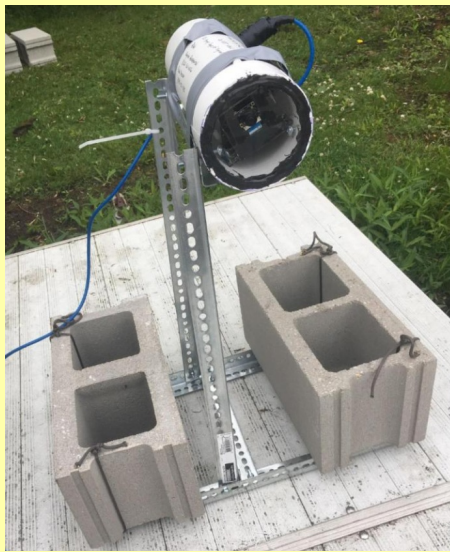
The AIS team is excited to partner with the US Army Corps of Engineers to help monitor growth patterns of starry stonewort on Pike Lake in Washington County. Because of the relatively low number of studies completed on starry stonewort, the USACOE is interested in measuring whether or not its presence may inhibit corps operations. Additionally, the AIS team is interested in measuring its effects on the ecosystems of lakes in Waukesha and Washington County.



AIS Coordinator Brad stands alongside USCOE team to place cameras in the lake.

In June the AIS team helped place two underwater cameras on Pike Lake to watch patches of starry stonewort. The cameras sit at the lake bottom and send us pictures 10 times per day. They will stay in place until the water freezes.

After monitoring the growth of starry stonewort, the USCOE and AIS team hope to make informed decisions about treatment of the invasive macroalgae.



Underwater cameras were placed at the bottom of Pike Lake.

## Lake of the Month - Lake Keesus

The August "Lake of the Month" is Lake Keesus of Merton, Wisconsin in Waukesha County.

Lake Keesus is 235 acres and has a maximum depth of 42 feet. It is moderately clear and home to Panfish, Largemouth Bass, Northern Pike, and Walleye. Anglers can access the lake via the paved public launch off of Woodrest Dr. The lake is part of the Oconomowoc River Watershed via a small unnamed outlet stream on the west side.

On its 5.3 miles of shoreline, Lake Keesus holds 216 homes, all of which are represented by the Lake Keesus Advancement Association (LKAA) which hosts multiple events throughout the year.

This spring fed lake is also home to a number of invasive species including Banded and Chinese Mystery Snails, Curly-Leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Water-Milfoil, and Zebra Mussels.



Boat launch on Keesus Lake located off of Woodrest Dr.

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