

LEADER OUTDOORS

Clean Boats, Clean Waters on Big Blake Lake

Boat inspections part of DNR 2012 Landing Blitz over the Fourth of July

BALSAM LAKE – Volunteers from the Big Blake Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District will be educating boaters and conducting free boat checks now through Sunday, July 8, as part of the statewide DNR 2012 Landing Blitz. Inspectors work to ensure that boaters do not accidentally spread Eurasian water milfoil, zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species.

The volunteer inspectors will be visible at east and west landings to help boaters understand Wisconsin's invasive species laws and what they must do before leaving.

"Wisconsin lakes are great for fishing and boating. By following simple steps, we can preserve the quality of our lakes for future generations to enjoy," says Peggy Lauritsen, Clean Boats, Clean Water.



Volunteer boat inspectors at the east landing on Big Blake Lake recently included (l to r): Sue Ogren, Peggy Lauritsen, Mike Rogge, Jim Thorn, Sandy Thorn and Jim Maxwell. - Photo submitted

Invasive species crowd out native species, disrupt lake ecosystems and interfere with boating, fishing and other recreation. The main way that invasive species and fish diseases, such as viral hemorrhagic septicemia, spread to new waters is aboard boating and fishing equipment and live fish or water moved from one body of water to another.

The volunteers, who have been trained through Wisconsin's Clean Boats, Clean Waters program, will demonstrate the required prevention steps boaters must take, provide stickers for boaters to place on their trailer posts to remind them of these steps, and will talk about Wisconsin invasive species and VHS laws.

Boaters, anglers and others enjoying Wisconsin waters are required to:

- Inspect boats, trailers and equipment;
- Remove all attached aquatic plants and animals;
- Drain all water from boats, vehicles and equipment;
- Never move plants or live fish away from a body of water. Limited exceptions apply. Visit dnr.wi.gov and search for "bait laws." - submitted

What's happening at Crex Meadows

GRANTSBURG – Explore Crex Meadows Wildlife Area this week, and join them for programs next week. Learn what can be done and how to go about restoring wetlands to attract a variety of wildlife to your property with DNR private lands biologist Brett Olson, along with Caitlin Smith with the USFWS, on Tuesday, July 10 at 6:15 p.m. Meet at the visitor center before heading to a location to see firsthand the benefits. Learn about fireflies on Friday, July 13, beginning at 8:30 p.m.

July is the month of yellow flowers on the prairie. Join Friends of Crex member Dale Bohlke and be amazed at the various yellows and how insects benefit from them. Meet at the visitor center on Wednesday, July 18, at 6 p.m. to caravan to Stolte Road on Fish Lake Wildlife Area. They will take a leisurely walk down Stolte Road and return to the visitor center about 7:30 p.m. No reservations are necessary.

On Thursday, July 19, at 5 p.m. join staff and color. Nature's Little Explorers will continue on Tuesdays from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Explorers learn through hands-on activities. Upcoming topics include birds, bugs, wildflowers, pond study and worms.

Summer Family Wildlife Adventures is a new program series. The idea is to be outside, discovering nature while in it. Meet on Wednesday, July 11, at 6 p.m. to learn about creepy crawly critters, turning over rocks and toad toads that are cool.

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