

# Milfoil hot spots

BY RICK CHARMOLI  
CADILLAC NEWS

**T**here were a few surprises this year when it came to the treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil on lakes Cadillac and Mitchell.

For the past couple of years, both lakes have been battling Eurasian watermilfoil. Eurasian watermilfoil is a submersed aquatic plant native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa. The Eurasian variety has slender stems whorled by submersed feathery leaves and tiny flowers produced above the water surface.

It is an invasive aquatic plant that reached the Great Lakes states between the 1950s and 1980s, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. In shallow areas, the plant can interfere with boating, fishing and swimming. The plant's floating canopy also can crowd out native water plants.

Since the problem of the invasive plant was brought to light, both lakes have been treated through chemical applications as well as with milfoil weevils.

While it appeared the milfoil problem seemed to be lessening as a result of the treatment, this spring there was an increase on both lakes in the acres infested with the invasive species.



Eurasian watermilfoil has washed up ashore in various place along the Keith McKellop Walkway but that has not stopped people from fishing the waters of Lake Cadillac. Shown from left are Deb Yonkman and Roshanna Russell.

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Learn about milfoil treatment for area lakes on page A2.

# How is milfoil being treated in Lakes Cadillac, Mitchell?

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**CADILLAC** — Dave Foley was expecting the worst, and he was right.

As a member of the Lake Mitchell Improvement Board, Foley said his goal this summer was not to have a repeat of last summer's vegetation explosion. During the summer of 2008, a stormy June as well as the boom of another plant species helped fill the lake with vegetation.

After the summer season, the board entertained thoughts of using the aquatic herbicide fluridone.

In the end, however, the board decided to use the services of Lakeshore Environmental Inc. out of Grand Haven instead.

In addition to continued use of the aquatic herbicide 2,4-D, Foley said Lakeshore presented a more in-depth survey of the lake as well as the use of milfoil weevils as part of the treatment.

As a result of that new survey, Foley said, 412 acres on Lake Mitchell recently were found to have milfoil as opposed to the 200-plus acres treated last summer.

"It's not surprising, since we were working with more grid points. I think we had that much before but it wasn't detected," he said. "The survey last year was less comprehensive."

While earlier in the season Foley said he believed the highest concentrations of milfoil were out



This sign located at the Selma Township Park on Lake Mitchell warns people about various invasive species such as Eurasian watermilfoil.

from the canal and slightly north as well as straight out from the canal about a mile near the sand bar on Blind Island, he has changed his answer since the survey.

"It's kind of everywhere, almost. If I had to pick an area I would be hard-pressed. I would say every homeowner on the lake was within a quarter mile of some sort of treatment," he said.

Although the milfoil is wide-spread, Foley said there also was another issue this spring — an algae bloom. This is a natural phenomena and should dissipate in the near future. It also was noted these algae blooms are occurring in many lakes

south of U.S. 10 at this time.

"This should clear up. Then the lake will return to its natural clarity," he said.

Foley also said that harvesting is on the horizon. Harvesting, which will be done mainly in the coves, will begin June 22 or shortly thereafter, and finish by July 2 in time for the holiday.

With the application of the chemicals occurring in the early part of June, it is only a matter of time before the effects are known.

"What we are all looking for is by the first of July, we should see if this treatment worked," he said. "This will be the proof in

the pudding."

Lake Mitchell was not the only one with an increase in milfoil this year. Lake Cadillac also saw its acreage treated increase over last year, according to Cadillac Community Development Coordinator Jerry Adams.

Adams said 132 acres were treated chemically earlier this month, compared to 47 acres treated last year. Adams also said the traditional hot spots have continued to be the same this year. "It is located like it has been in the past. It follows the perimeter of the lake. Five to 15 feet out you are bound to find milfoil," he said. "The largest areas or most dense would

be the area off Kenwood Park east of the park, and around the Clam River inlet there is a good concentration. The other significant area is the southwest portion of the lake."

Adams said milfoil weevils are scheduled to be stocked this week, and 6,000 are to be placed on the far west end of the lake while another 6,000 will be placed in the Clam River inlet. Last year, a total of 6,000 weevils were placed.

Money raised through an assessment has been paying for treatment. No additional assessments have been collected because there was a fund balance of about \$150,000. Adams said the plan is to spend between \$80,000 to \$85,000 on treatment, leaving about \$70,000 in the fund balance. As far as a new assessment being sought, Adams said it is too early to tell, but the Milfoil sub-committee will have discussions later this year.

"If things go as they have in the past, then the level of the milfoil will be reduced, which means less cost, but you never know," he said.

For more information about Lake Cadillac and its milfoil problem or to join the milfoil subcommittee, contact Adams at 775-0181 ext. 101. For more information about the Lake Mitchell board, go to [www.lakemitchell.org](http://www.lakemitchell.org) or contact the board by e-mailing [info@lakemitchell.org](mailto:info@lakemitchell.org).

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