

Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association  
 University of Wisconsin-Extension/Burnett County

## Firewise

*Will 2011 windstorms bring storms of a different kind in 2012?*

*by James Gobel, WI Department of Natural Resources*

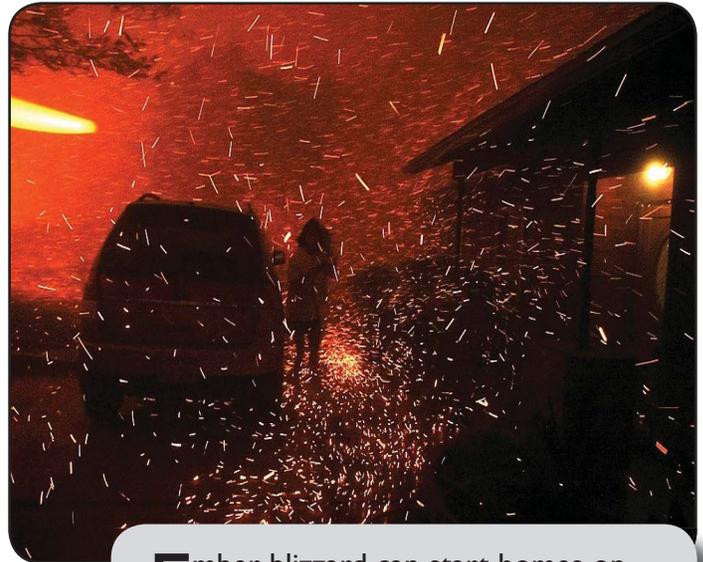
**T**he violent storms during the summer of 2011 devastated forest land and personal property across northwest Wisconsin. While repair and clean up of personal property is well underway if not complete, the salvage or clean up of damaged or blown down forest land will continue throughout 2012 and most likely beyond.

Even before the storms, we in northwestern Wisconsin live in one of the most volatile areas of the state in regards to wildfires. The addition of thousands of acres of dead, dying and down trees has tremendously increased this threat from wildfires in several ways. Fires will be much harder for firefighters to control. The fires will burn much hotter and for longer periods in a given area as the fire consumes the entire extra dead and down vegetation. The normal spring fire season which ends as grasses green up and trees leaf out will be extended right through the summer months as the volume of dead and down forest fuels are more than enough to carry fire through the green growing vegetation which normally limits fire spread during our summer months.

### Firefighters prepare

State and local firefighters are preparing for this increased threat by arranging for additional staff and equipment including heavy dozers and infra-red

**S**mokey Bear's old adage to douse your fire and stir it with water to make sure it is dead was never more important than now.



**E**MBER blizzard can start homes on fire miles from the wildfire.

capability for aircraft to detect hot spots from the air. Additional training in safety and fire ground tactics related to the blowdown conditions is being given to all state fire department firefighters as well as DNR firefighters across the state. The DNR is also launching a public awareness and prevention campaign to educate the public.

Debris burning is already the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin and the current blowdown issue has only elevated this risk. Embers or coals from a burn pile can "holdover" or remain hot for a very long time

*(continued on page 4)*



## Message from the President

by Roger Noe

### Burnett County Lakes and Rivers Association

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#### Wisconsin Winter?

It is mid-February and still barely enough snow to cover the ground. What a winter it has been (or lack of). To say the least, Burnett County did not need the lack of snow. After the July 1 storm, we will take any moisture we can get.

A positive piece to the 2011-2012 winter has been the ice fishing. What great conditions! Enough ice to travel on, very little snow and wonderful warm temperatures have made for very positive ice fishing experiences. Traveling throughout the county from Lipsett Lake to Rice, Bashaw, North Sand, Mudhen, Yellow, Little Bass, etc., the lakes of Burnett County are truly a blessing. Winter time lends itself to gathering in the beauty in abundance. Early morning on a frozen Burnett County Lake reminds me of this Sigurd Olson quote: "I think the loss of quiet in our lives is one of the great tragedies of civilization, and to have known even for a moment the silence of the wilderness is one of our most precious memories."

What a wonderful place it is in which we live!! As winter closes rapidly let's all of us remember to hang in there as all those July 1, 2011 issues begin to surface again. Much work has been accomplished but lots remains to be done. Burnett County is strong with strong individuals. The resources are vast, unique and beautiful. Our forests have been thinned a bit but maybe it was time. Hang in there and enjoy your time on the lake or river this recreation season.

#### Burnett County Lakes & Rivers to Host Annual Meeting

As our mild winter fades, let's talk about summer. On Saturday June 30 at 9:00 a.m., in conjunction with Fort Folle Avoine, the Burnett County Lakes & Rivers Association will host its annual meeting at the Fort. Along with the annual 30 minute business meeting, the BCLRA and the Fort Folle Avoine group will sponsor an educational session for all participants but with a focus on children ages 6-12. The session will feature wildlife technician Chris W. Cold who is employed by the Wisconsin DNR. Chris travels extensively throughout Wisconsin offering programs on wildlife and related topics. He is a licensed falconer and bird bander. Without question this is a session you will not want to miss with your children or your grandchildren. Chris always brings live critters to his sessions. Along with these he brings a very enthusiastic and inviting personality. This is a great summer learning opportunity for you and your family - don't miss it!!

Following Chris's presentation all participants are invited to enjoy a small lunch – brats, pop and chips sponsored by the BCLRA and Fort Folle Avoine. Please mark your calendar and join us for the morning of June 30 and enjoy a great learning experience followed by a good old fashion Wisconsin brat.

## Is Your Lake Well-Endowed?

*By Charles Luthin, Executive Director and  
Camille Zaroni, Director of Member Relations -  
Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin. Originally printed in Lake Tides.*

**Y**ou love your lake! Wouldn't you like to ensure that there will be perpetual revenue to adequately care for and manage your lake into the future? An endowment can help. Many lake organizations work hard year after year to raise funds in order to meet the pressing needs of their lake, like the removal of invasive species or restoration of shorelands and fish habitat. Lake grants are competitive, and there's always concern that these grants may not be as readily available in the future. An endowment provides permanent, predictable funding that lake organizations can rely on to meet these needs into the future. Some lake organization members have established endowments in support of their organization or lake, and many more are considering "endowing their lake" to provide a secure and guaranteed source of funding.

In 2005, the Natural Resources Foundation created the Wisconsin Conservation Endowment to provide individuals and organizations the opportunity to create endowed funds for the conservation issue of their choosing, such as a lake, river, waterway or lake organization, as well as parks, wildlife species and scholarships. The Foundation serves as a "community foundation" for conservation needs throughout Wisconsin. The Foundation currently manages 54 separate endowed funds, including several

for lakes, flowages, and riverways: the Chippewa Flowage, Turtle Flambeau Flowage, Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, Lower Chippewa River, and Upper Sugar River, among others.

**C**hurches do it. So do universities... and also hospitals. Why can't lake organizations? These groups build endowments to provide a permanent source of funding in support of their mission. The Wisconsin Conservation Endowment provides this role for lake organizations.

Chris and Patricia Jeffords of Couderay are members of the Chippewa Flowage Area Property Owners Organization. Once they learned of the opportunity to establish an endowment, they created the Hughes Jeffords Chippewa Flowage Fund to provide a permanent source of funding for the preservation, protection, and enhancement

of the Flowage's natural resources. "Over the past 30 years, our families have experienced and appreciated Wisconsin's largest wilderness lake, the Chippewa Flowage" explain Chris and Patti. "It is our intent to perpetuate this legacy, not only for our family, but for the many visitors that come here so they can continue to enjoy the character of what we feel is one of the last unique jewels of the north." An anonymous donor created an endowment to support the Turtle Flambeau Flowage, which supports a wide variety of activities including educational activities and the construction of fish cribs for the Flowage. Other donors have made additional contributions to this growing endowed fund.

*(continued on page 5)*





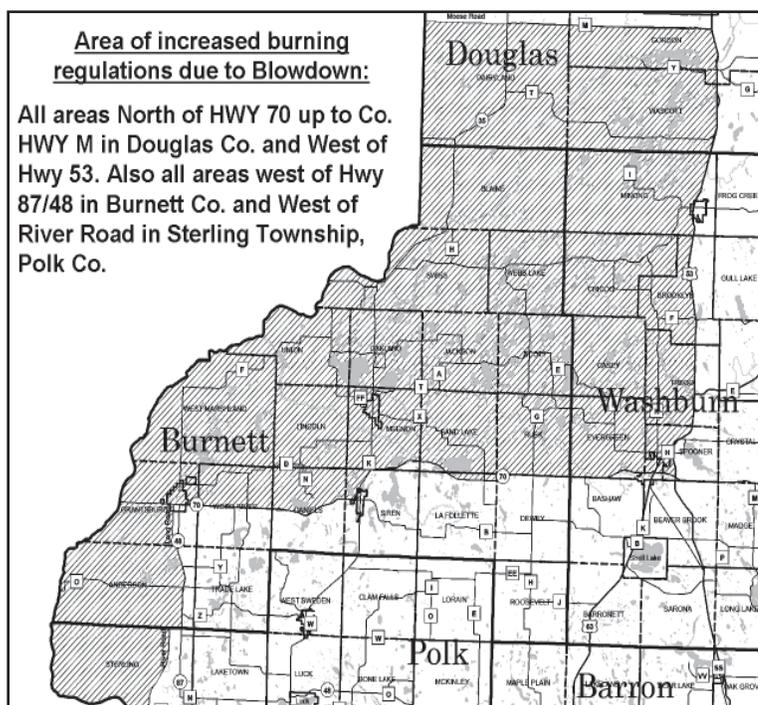
# Firewise

*continued from page 1*

in an ash pile, even weeks or months depending on the size of the pile. It is imperative that land owners in the blowdown who have burned debris piles this winter check them several times to be sure they are dead out. With the volumes of woody debris out there, landowners should not forget that there are other alternatives to burning such as having debris chipped and used for mulch (away from the house) or fuel pellets.

Once the snow leaves in the spring, debris burning will be prohibited. As fire danger begins to rise, it is anticipated that Emergency Burning Restrictions will be enacted. This means no debris burning of any kind including charcoal grills and smoking outside. Campfires in established campgrounds are an exception.

The area included in prohibited debris burning and Emergency Burning Restrictions is shown in the map. **(see map below).**



## The risk to homes from embers?

We as humans have a natural fear or respect for fire due to the physical harm it can do to us. If your home or cabin could talk, it would profess a much greater fear from embers or fire brands thrown at it from a wildfire. As humans, we tend to ignore these embers as they pose very little risk of harm. To your house these embers provide the spark that can cause significant damage or burn your home to the ground.

During a wildfire your home may be showered by thousands of embers. These embers can be lofted high into the air and rain down, driven by high winds and pelt the side of your home like hail in a storm, or carried by mini- tornado like fire whirls. Similar to how fallen leaves in autumn or snow during winter tends to accumulate at certain spots on your property, embers can pile up in the exact same places or other horizontal surfaces such as roofs, decks, window ledges or the ground on or around your house. They can also become lodged in small gaps and cracks in materials on or near your home. If these embers land on something easy to ignite, a new fire can start. These little fires can grow into big fires and destroy homes.

Where do the embers come from? Embers can be as small as a grain of sand or as big as a piece of plywood from a burning roof. Common plant materials that become embers during a wildfire include pine cones, branches, leaves and bark. Burning houses typically generate great volumes of embers and hasten the spread of wildfire onto other homes or adjoining areas of wild vegetation. Depending on fire intensity, wind speed and the size of materials that are burning, embers can travel a few feet to more than a mile ahead of the main fire. Even homes quite a distance away from the wildfire can be threatened from these flying embers. Consequently, it is critical that homeowners living in areas with a potential for wildfires understand this and be proactive to eliminate the conditions that

## Firewise

*continued from page 4*

will allow embers to start small fires that could jeopardize their homes. Most often it only takes a few hours and a bit of physical labor to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire by removing accumulations of fine dead flammable vegetation (leaves, pine needles and dead grass) and other materials around your home.

Other actions can be accomplished to reduce a fire's intensity and lessen the chance of home ignition. Use the keyword search "Firewise" on the WI DNR Internet home page for additional information. Complete the "Home Ignition Zone Self-Assessment" located there and identify the steps you need to take to have a firewise property.

### Additional Firewise Information

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestFire/property.html>

- Firewise info from WI DNR

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/stormRecovery/burning.html>

- Fire prevention issues related to the July 2011 storms

<http://www.firewise.org> - National Firewise site

[http://www.extension.org/surviving\\_wildfire](http://www.extension.org/surviving_wildfire)  
- Surviving Wildfire information from the Cooperative Extension system.

<http://firecenter.berkeley.edu>

- Research on wildfire susceptibility of various building materials and landscape materials.

## Is Your Lake Well Endowed? *continued from page 3*

Through the Natural Resources Foundation, numerous conservation organizations have created what is known as an "agency fund" endowment to support the mission of their organization with perpetual annual support. These agency funds are popular amongst the all-volunteer organizations that lack the financial expertise to manage their own endowment. The Foundation holds, invests, and manages endowments on an organization's behalf. Endowment can also attract major gifts to lake organizations from individual property owners and through estate gifts. Donors like the assurance that their gift will be managed wisely, and they find it appealing that an endowment will provide support in perpetuity. In one instance, Paul Brandt, a conservation donor made a 1,000-fold increase in his annual membership contribution to create an endowment. What had been a regular \$25 annual donor gave a \$25,000 contribution to build an endowment for the Lower Wisconsin Riverway once he became aware of the opportunity. When Paul passed away, he left a \$600,000 gift to the Foundation through his estate to be put into the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Fund that he had created several years earlier. Wow, what one individual can do! Paul has left a lasting legacy for the waterway he loved.

The Natural Resources Foundation is a statewide organization dedicated to helping find sustainable solutions for conservation. The Foundation can help your lake organization create and build an endowment. Its staff can give a presentation about endowment to your board of directors and/or membership, provide fundraising advice and guidance for building an endowment, and guarantee professional financial investment and management of your endowment funds. If the prospect of building an endowed fund for your lake organization and/or the lake or waterway you love appeals to you, attend my session on April 10th at the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention (held in Green Bay). Contact the Natural Resources Foundation at (866) 264-4096 or [info@wisconservation.org](mailto:info@wisconservation.org) or find out more at [www.wisconservation.org](http://www.wisconservation.org).



## Keeping Invasives Out of Aquascapes

by *Chrystal Schreck, Invasive Species Education & Outreach Specialist - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*

Spring is right around the corner and thoughts of new garden beds, landscape designs and other plantings are beginning to sprout. A growing number of plant lovers are embarking on a new journey into the world of water gardens. Ponds, fountains, and aquascapes can provide tranquil settings for humans while adding extra benefits for native wildlife that may visit a newly created oasis.

Whether you are a veteran water gardener or new on the scene, make sure to prevent your aquascape from spreading invasive species – non-native species that spread rapidly and take over native ecosystems.

### The Invasives Law & Water Gardens

Wisconsin's Invasive Species Rule (Wis.Admin. code Ch. NR 40) went into effect in September 2009, and now classifies and regulates the invasive species that threaten Wisconsin most. The rule is helping us maintain a consistent statewide approach to control and prevent the spread of invasive species. A key goal of NR 40 is to educate people in Wisconsin about invasive species and encourage actions that minimize the spread of these invasives and the damage they cause. NR 40 regulates some of the worst aquatic and wetland species, and it is important to avoid these species in water gardens and elsewhere.

Of course NR 40 doesn't just impact water gardeners. The rule covers plants, animals and microorganisms, and it affects everyone in Wisconsin. Over 128 invasive species are included and classified as either "Prohibited" or "Restricted" in Wisconsin. The rule regulates the transportation, possession, transfer, and introduction of those species. To learn more about the rule, visit the DNR's invasives site at <http://dnr.wi.gov> and type in the keyword: invasives. Under "Laws and Policies" you'll find information about the Invasives Rule. Here you can also learn more about individual species, identification and control.

### What Can You Do?

Luckily, with a little information and some preventive actions, water gardens can remain beautiful outdoor spaces without becoming invasive vectors. Water gardeners have the opportunity to help slow the spread of invasives just by knowing what species to avoid and choosing to use native or non-invasive alternatives. With limited exceptions, NR 40 makes it illegal to transport, introduce, buy, sell, or give away any NR 40 species without a permit. This includes any viable part of the species, such as seeds or eggs.

Many resources, including lists of all the invasive species covered under NR 40 and color photos of the regulated plants, can be found on the WDNR website. DNR staff is also available for identification assistance and to answer questions about prevention and control. Great resources specific to water gardening can also be found from Sea Grant's website:

<http://www.seagrant.umn.edu/ais/watergardening>.

Keep a watch out for invasive species, and together we can help our gardens and our native ecosystems thrive.

### There are several things water gardeners can do:

- Learn to identify invasive aquatic plants and animals.
- Do not use invasive plants, fish or invertebrates such as crayfish in your garden.
- Plant and promote beautiful non-invasive alternatives.
- Check your plant orders for unwanted invasive hitchhikers.
- Do not release any water garden plants, fish, or invertebrates into natural waters.
- Understand the laws, get to know the species and spread the word!

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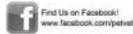
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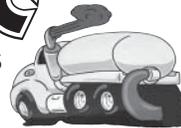
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# 2012 Northwest Lakes Conference

## 2012 Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference

Friday, June 22, 2012 – Spooner High School, Spooner, WI

### DRAFT AGENDA

- 7:30 ..... Registration, Continental Breakfast and Exhibits
- 7:30 ..... NW Wisconsin Waters Consortium Annual Meeting – Waldo Asp
- 8:45 ..... Welcome, Opening Remarks and Recognition – John Haack, UWEX
- 9:00 ..... Citizen Conservation During Decisive Political Times – Dave Zentner, Two-time National Conservationist of the Year
- 10:00 ..... BREAK
- 10:15 ..... SESSION I
- Messaging in Action: Framing the Issue and Reaching Your Target* - Mike Engleson, Wisconsin Lakes
- Eau Claire Lakes Youth Project* -
- Lake Science 101 and State of Our Lakes* - Tim Asplund, WDNR and Pamela Toshner, WDNR
- Aquatic Plants of Northwest Wisconsin* – Matt Berg, Endangered Resources Services and Noah Berg
- 11:15 ..... BREAK
- 11:30 ..... SESSION II
- Effective Coalition and Collaboration Building* – Karen von Hurme, Wisconsin Lakes
- Charter School and Hunt Hill Youth Lake Projects* -
- Understanding Impacts of Development on Water Quality* – Paul McGinley, UWEX
- Invasive Aquatic Management Plans – Are They Working?* – Kevin Gauthier, WDNR
- 12:30 ..... LUNCHEON and EXHIBITS
- 1:30 ..... *Down the Drain* – Cassie Hoyer, Three Lakes High School
- 1:45 ..... *Fascinating Loons* – Stan Tekela, Author/Naturalist/Wildlife Photographer
- 2:45 ..... BREAK
- 3:00 ..... SESSION III
- State Legislative and Budget Updates* – John Keckhaver, Wisconsin Lakes
- Youth Environmental Project Posters* –
- How to Motivate and Keep Your Lake Volunteers Engaged* – Beverly Sencel, UWEX
- Wild Rice – Nature's Bounty* – John Haack, UWEX
- 4:00 ..... ADJOURN



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### 2012 NWLC Registration Form

Name(s) \* \_\_\_\_\_  
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 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lake Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 or School \_\_\_\_\_

\* Submit names and addresses for each registrant.

**Conference Registration Fee:**  
 The conference registration fee is **\$40.00** per person (free for students) and includes continental breakfast, lunch and materials.

Vegetarian Meal

No. Attending: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$40 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 No. of Students Attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Return registration form and check made payable to Wisconsin Lakes to: Wisconsin Lakes  
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**Credit Card Payment:**

Method of Payment:  VISA  Discover  MasterCard

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You may also register:

online at: [www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org)  
 by fax (credit card only): (608) 661-4314  
 by calling (credit card only): 1-800-542-5253

**Registration Deadline: Saturday, June 16, 2012**

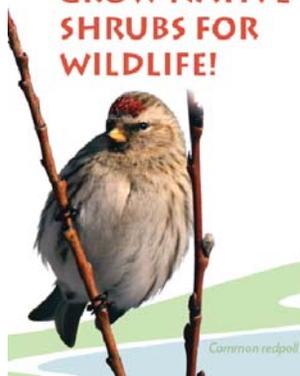
For more information contact Wisconsin Lakes at  
 1-800-542-5253 in Wis. or (608) 661-4313 or  
[www.wisconsinlakes.org](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org)  
 Planning Committee contact: John Haack,  
[john.haack@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:john.haack@ces.uwex.edu) or (715) 635-7406.

# Odds and Ends

## GRAB A FRIEND AND PLANT A NATIVE SHRUB!

Interested in beautifying your property and helping wildlife around your lake?

### GROW NATIVE SHRUBS FOR WILDLIFE!



Common redbird

Even better, grab a kid, and teach them the value of native plants for wildlife along with the value of saving a dollar! Our native shrub promotion offers free shrubs (up to a \$7 value) at the Burnett County greenhouses listed on the coupon.

Native shrubs are important components of a waterfront landscape. They provide food, cover, and nesting places for birds, and help to reduce erosion and runoff from lakeshores. Their beautiful spring flowers, summer

berries, and colorful fall foliage add interest to waterfront landscapes. Unfortunately, shrubs are frequently cleared to make way for lawns, and the benefits native shrubs provide are lost. Here is another chance to put those benefits back!

Not sure which native shrub to choose? More information is available in the booklet Top Ten Native Shrubs for Wildlife. You can find copies at participating greenhouses and at the Burnett County Land and Water Conservation Department in the Government Center north of Siren on

Highway 35. OR go to [burnettcounty.com/toptenshrubs](http://burnettcounty.com/toptenshrubs) to view a copy. You will also find lists of native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees along with the wildlife they attract in the Burnett County Native Plant Lists.

### Discouraging Deer

Deer are unfortunately among the wildlife that enjoy newly planted shrubs. We recommend protecting your shrubs with netting or fencing that is higher than the shrub you planted. Landscape products are also available to discourage deer from nibbling on your shrubs. These need to be re-applied frequently - especially after it rains. You may need to vary the products you use as your visitors get used to the smell and taste.

## BASS REGULATIONS TO CHANGE IN BURNETT COUNTY IN 2012

The Burnett County specific fishing regulations are as follows according to the 2012 Wisconsin DNR fishing regulations. See the entire set of fishing regulations on the WI DNR web site at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov).

**With the exceptions below, there is no minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass in all waters of Burnett County. Other restrictions apply in Burnett County. See 2012 Fishing Regulations.**

- **Namekagon River:** The minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass is 14".
- **St. Croix River (including flowages):** Where the St. Croix River forms the boundary between Wisconsin and Minnesota, boundary water regulations apply. See those regulations on page 60. The minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass is 14".
- **Totagatic River:** The minimum length limit on largemouth and smallmouth bass is 14".
- **Webb Lake:** Is included in the Southern Bass Management Zone.



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  - Pagoda dogwood
  - Snowberry
  - Dwarf bush honeysuckle
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  - Chokecherry

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# Critters for Kids - River Otter

by Christian W. Cold - Wildlife Technician, WI DNR - Ladysmith

## What is an otter?

An otter is a large, semi-aquatic member of the weasel family. It has a long body and tail, short legs with fully webbed feet, and a broad, flat head with little ears. Its short, dense fur provides insulation and sheds water while swimming.

## Where do otters live?

Otters are found in a wide variety of wetland habitats, including lakes, rivers, marshes and coastal areas. They are especially fond of lakes which are part of a river system (drainage lakes).

## What do they eat?

A typical adult otter eats 2 to 3 pounds of fish per day. Most fish taken are slow-moving species like suckers, sunfish, bass, bullheads, and shiners. Fast-swimming fish like trout and pike are (usually) taken less-often. Crayfish and frogs are favorite snacks. Sometimes a duck finds itself on the otter menu. Aquatic insects too!

## How many otters live in Wisconsin?

There are estimated to be almost 13,000 otters in Wisconsin as of winter, 2011 - 2012. Most of these animals live in the northern third of the state.

## Are there any threats to otter?

Otters have very few natural enemies. Although many are taken for their valuable fur by licensed trappers, the harvest is closely regulated to protect and preserve healthy otter populations.

Habitat loss due to intense development limits otter numbers. Pollution may cause very serious problems. Otters are sensitive to mercury, organochlorine compounds and other chemicals. These things either make them sick directly (or

reduce their ability to avoid diseases from other sources. Good water quality is important for all animals (including us).



## Did You Know?

River otters have special lenses on their eyes that enable them to see clearly underwater. They are typically “near-sighted” out of the water.

When you are out in a boat and an otter lifts its head, with “grunts and sneezes” it is simply curious and excited as it tries to figure out what (or who) you are!

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 SPRING/SUMMER 2012  
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 A small graphic of the state of Wisconsin. Inside the outline of the state, there is a stylized illustration of a lake with a swan swimming in it. The lake and swan are rendered in shades of blue and black.