



Lake George

Oneida County, Wisconsin

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*Michele Sadauskas, County Conservationist
Stephanie Boismenu, AIS Coordinator
Jonna Stephens Jewell, Program Assistant*

*Oneida County Courthouse
P O Box 400, Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501
Phone (715) 369-7835 Fax (715) 369-6268*

George Lake AIS Monitoring and Water Clarity Report

Field Date: July 6, 2022
WBIC: 1569600
Previous AIS Findings: Chinese Mystery Snails, Rusty Crayfish
New AIS Findings: Aquatic Forget-Me-Nots
Field Crew: Aubrey Nycz, AIS Lead Program Assistant, and Madeline Hetland, AIS
Project Assistant, Oneida County Land and Water Conservation
Department
Report By: Madeline Hetland

Purpose: Water is Wisconsin's most precious resource. It provides an essential lifeline between wildlife, recreation, public trust resources, agriculture, industry, health and safety, and environmental, urban and rural interests throughout the state. With a growing population and a treasured supply of fresh water, the protection of water for designated and beneficial uses is of paramount importance.

Each year, the Oneida County Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program staff conducts AIS early detection monitoring and baseline water quality monitoring in Oneida County waterbodies. In addition, staff conducts AIS monitoring at boat landings, rivers, streams, wetlands, roadsides, culverts, and Organisms in Trade. Monitoring takes place from June through September of each year.

AIS early detection monitoring is the most effective approach to locating pioneer populations of WI Chapter NR 40 regulated AIS, species not widely established, and newly introduced species to Wisconsin. Early detection of AIS is crucial for rapid response, containment, management, preventing their spread, and reducing management costs. Implementation of rapid response activities is vital in maintaining the stability of a waterbodies ecosystem services, habitats, fisheries, recreational opportunities, property values, economy, and human health.

Water quality monitoring provides information on the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of water. Monitoring aims at assessing the environmental state, detecting trends, and identifying potential problems in the water or watershed. The state of water quality is the result of complex natural and manmade conditions and the consequent of those interactions over time. Evaluating trends determines whether water quality is changing relative to land use and natural conditions. Water quality data provides important and useful

information to lake groups, local and regional resource managers, community stakeholders, and provides guidance with protecting and enhancing our waters, watersheds and development to new approaches to water quality management.

Our monitoring program is in collaboration with the DNR, UW Extension's Citizens Lake Monitoring Network Program, and Great Lakes Indian Fish Wildlife Commission. All AIS staff are trained in the in the DNR's AIS monitoring, identification, collection, verification, reporting, and decontamination protocols.

Data Collected: AIS identification, live specimens, photos, population densities, distribution, locations and GPS coordinates. Other observations may include species size, characteristics, and impact to native habitat. Water quality data includes Secchi disc, dissolved oxygen, temperature, water characteristics, and GPS coordinates.

Areas Observed: Perimeter of lake's littoral zone, including beaches and boat landings, inlets and outlets, and under and around docks and piers, and other areas identified as most vulnerable to the introduction of AIS.

Methodology: Searching for AIS in the water and along the shoreline is achieved by slowly canoeing around the entire lake's littoral zone, meandering between shallow and maximum rooting depth or 100' from shore (whichever comes first). Additionally, targeted sites considered high risk of invasive species introductions, such as boat landings, access points, parks, beaches, and inlets receive comprehensive AIS monitoring. Several methods and tools are utilized to achieve the survey: survey from the canoe, walking along the shoreline and shallows, using aqua view scopes, snorkeling to examine underwater solid surfaces, sifting through vegetation, and analyzing plant rake samples, veliger tows, and D-net sediment samples.

Targeted Chapter NR40 Invasive Species Include: Asian clams, banded mystery snails, Chinese mystery snails, Faucet Snails, New Zealand mudsnail, quagga mussels, zebra mussels, rusty crayfish, spiny waterfleas, Eurasian watermilfoil, curly leaf pondweed, flowering rush, non-native phragmites, purple loosestrife, yellow iris, and variegated reed manna grass (*Glyceria Maxima* 'Variegated').

Other priority species include: red swamp crayfish, Japanese knotweed, Japanese hops, European frog-bit, yellow floating heart, water chestnut, Brazilian waterweed, Hydrilla, fanwort, parrot feather, water, hyacinth, water lettuce, and rock snot.

Lake George Data: Lake George, located in the Town of Pelican, Oneida County, is a 443-acre drainage lake with a maximum depth of 26 feet (**Figure 1.**). There is one public boat landing on Lake George located on Nostalgia Lane (**Figure 2**). The substrate is 55% sand, 20% gravel, 10% rock, and 15% muck. Along with reporting the depth and substrate, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) reports that the lake has musky, panfish, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and walleye.

Field Notes (weather): The weather while conducting research on Lake George was fair and calm. The air temperature was 73 degrees Fahrenheit, and there was 57% humidity. There was a slight amount of wind blowing at 4 miles per hour from the East.

Field Notes (AIS monitoring): We completed a visual meander survey around the entire lake's perimeter, searching both sides of the canoe, and moving in and out between various water depths. Polarized sunglasses and aquascopes were used to aide in looking at the bottom substrate. Throughout our monitoring, we made note of the plants and animals we observed in the process (see **Table 1**). During our search, we found Aquatic Forget-Me-Nots, which is an invasive species that has not yet been verified in George Lake. We collected specimens, took pictures, and obtained GPS coordinates for where the aquatic forget-me-nots had been found. This information will be sent to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) for proper verification. We also observed Chinese Mystery Snails and Rusty Crayfish. Both of these species are invasive, but they have already been verified by the WDNR. Information on Aquatic Forget-Me-Nots, Chinese Mystery Snails, and Rusty Crayfish can be found in the *AIS Quick Guide* in **Appendix A**.

Field Notes (water quality monitoring): To observe the water clarity and quality on Lake George, we used a depth finder and maps indicating where data had been collected in the past to locate the deep hole. After locating the deep hole, we used a Secchi disk to measure water clarity and a dissolved oxygen meter to measure water quality. Oxygen is needed for a healthy fish population, and also for plants to respire at night. The measurements from the dissolved oxygen meter can tell us if the organisms in the lake are under stress. The dissolved oxygen measurements on Lake George looked healthy. Unfortunately, we were not able to obtain dissolved oxygen measurements past 12 feet due to an increasing amount of boat traffic. The dissolved oxygen meter has difficulties getting readings when water is choppy. The measurements we did obtain can be found in **Table 2**. The Secchi disk reading was at 7 feet out of a maximum depth of 22 feet.

Figure 1. Map of Oneida County, WI with Lake George circled in red.

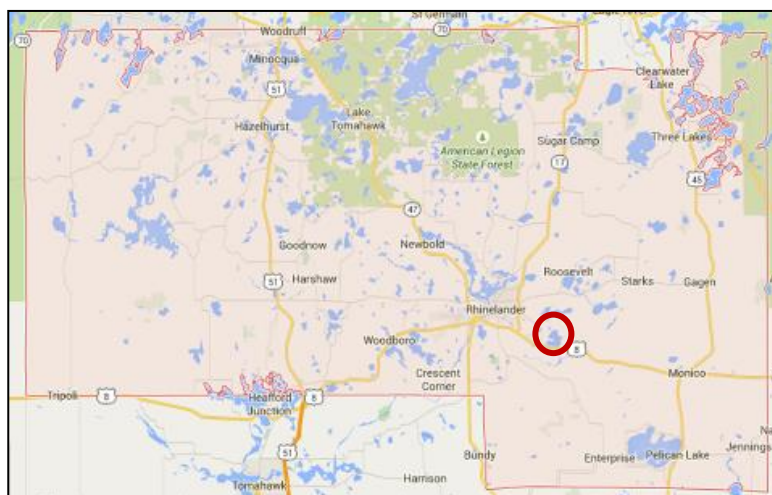


Figure 2. Map of Lake George



Map Key



Boat Landing









Location of dissolved oxygen and Secchi disk reading

Latitude: 45.610464

Longitude: -89.332265

Table 1. Common plants found in George Lake while monitoring.

<p>Aquatic Forget-Me-Not (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>)</p> <p>Description: A perennial plant that is 4-12 inches tall. It has alternate leaves that are oblong to lance-shaped. Flowers are blue with a yellow center and have 5 petals. They bloom from May to September.</p> <p>Status: INVASIVE</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Oneida County AIS</i></p>	
<p>Bullhead Pond Lily (<i>Nuphar variegata</i>)</p> <p>Description: An aquatic plant with heart-shaped leaves that can grow to be 15 inches long. This plant also has a yellow, cup-shaped flower.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Jomegat's Weblog</i></p>	
<p>Clasping-leaf pondweed (<i>Potamogeton richardsonii</i>)</p> <p>Description: A submerged aquatic plant. Leaves are wavy and smooth leaf edges and pointed tips.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Paul Skawinski</i></p>	
<p>Large Leaf Pondweed (<i>Potamogeton amplifolius</i>)</p> <p>Description: A submerged aquatic plant. Submergent leaves are very broad (4-7 cm wide and 8-20 cm long), arched and slightly folded. Floating leaves are 2-23cm long, with a petiole longer than the leaf blade.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Paul Skawinski</i></p>	
<p>Pickereel Weed (<i>Pontederia cordata</i>)</p> <p>Description: An aquatic plant with thin, bright green leaves. Emergent leaves tend to be arrow shaped with 6 parted, blue flowers.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: asapaquatics.com</i></p>	
<p>Soft-stem Bulrush (<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>)</p> <p>Description: An emergent aquatic plant. Spikes have branching lusters at the top of the stem with 15 to 200 spikelets (flower clusters). 3 to 4 leaves at the base of the stem. Plants form colonies from rhizomes.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: minnesotawildflowers.info</i></p>	




<p>Water Shield (<i>Brasenia schreberi</i>)</p> <p>Description: An aquatic plant with stems up to 2 meters long. This plant has small floating leaves and reddish purple flowers that have 6-8 petals.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Shannon Sharp</i></p>	
<p>White Water Lily (<i>Nymphaea odorata</i>)</p> <p>Description: An aquatic plant that has large, round leaves that can grow to be 12 inches in diameter. White water lilies also have large, white flowers with many petals.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Stephanie Boismenue</i></p>	
<p>Wild Celery (<i>Vallisneria americana</i>)</p> <p>Description: An aquatic plant with ribbon-like leaves that are dark-green. This plant grows below the water surface and then blankets the surface. This plant produces small, whitish-yellow flowers.</p> <p>Status: Native</p> <p><i>Photo Credit: Jacqueline Donnelly</i></p>	

Table 2. Dissolved oxygen levels and temperatures at the deep hole.

Depth (Feet)	Temperature (°F)	Percent of Dissolved Oxygen	Dissolved Oxygen Levels (mg/L)
1	73.6	104.7%	8.58
2	73.5	104.9%	8.59
3	73.5	104.9%	8.60
4	73.4	104.6%	8.58
5	73.3	104.3%	8.56
6	73.2	103.3%	8.49
7	72.9	100.6%	8.30
8	72.8	99.7%	8.20
9	72.4	89.1%	7.33
10	71.3	62.7%	5.23
11	70.9	51.4%	4.32
12	70.5	38.0%	3.17

Resources: <https://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=1569600>

Appendix A. AIS Quick Guides



Aquatic Invasive Species Quick Guide

Chinese Mystery Snail (*Cipangopaludina chinensis* Reeve)

Description: Chinese mystery snails are often large, up to nearly 3 inches tall. Shells are typically dark brown, and may have some dark vertical ridges near the opening. The lowermost whorl of the shell is usually much wider than the rest of the shell. At the opening of the shell, a thick, hardened plate called an operculum is able to seal the shell against predators or harmful chemicals in the water. Chinese mystery snails are capable of grazing algae from surfaces and filter-feeding on suspended algae particles.

North American Distribution: Scattered across North America, but they are most abundant in the eastern and central United States.



The Chinese mystery snail can be nearly 3 inches tall.



Chinese mystery snails have a tough plate called an operculum covering the shell opening.

Dispersal Vectors: Native to eastern Asia, Chinese mystery snails were first imported to the U.S. in the late 1800s as a food item in oriental markets. It is believed that some people may have "seeded" these snails into local waterways for later harvest. Chinese mystery snails are also introduced to water gardens for the purpose of clarifying the water and grazing algae from hard surfaces. At any time during summer and fall, each female may contain dozens of small snails at different stages of development. She occasionally gives birth to small batches of live young, complete with shells.

Ecological Impacts: Chinese mystery snails likely compete for food and resources with native snails and other grazers or filter-feeders. Some research studies suggest that impacts to native species may be insignificant. Chinese mystery snails serve as a secondary host for a trematode parasite that has been killing large numbers of waterfowl in the Midwestern U.S. Some larger animals like turtles or muskrats may occasionally feed on Chinese mystery snails.

Control Options: Manual removal of Chinese mystery snails remains the only effective method of control. Of course, the effect on the population depends on the number removed and the total population size. These snails prefer mucky, organic sediments, so manual removal is likely to be a difficult option in many areas.

Chemical control efforts tend to be unsuccessful and have unintended consequences to native snails and/or other animals. Chinese mystery snails can seal up their shells with their operculum, protecting them from unfavorable conditions like chemical pesticides. Most North American snails do not have this ability and would be harmed.



Juvenile Chinese mystery snails, just minutes old.

Additional Information:

Dillon, R. T. Jr., M. Ashton, M. Kohl, W. Reeves, T. Smith, T. Stewart & B. Watson 2013. *The freshwater gastropods of*

North America. <http://www.fwgna.org>.

Global Invasive Species Database. *Bellamya chinensis*.

<http://www.issg.org/database/species/ecology.asp?si=1812&fr=1&sts=sss&lang=EN>

Photo credit: Paul Skawinski

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Developed by Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Council, Inc. as part of an aquatic invasive species (AIS) education program, supported by an AIS grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

CMS-1-14

Aquatic Invasive Species Quick Guide

Developed by Oneida County AIS, 2018

Aquatic Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis scorpioides*)

Aquatic forget-me-not is an herbaceous perennial that grows along streams, rivers, lakeshores, wetlands, marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, springs, ponds, reservoirs, wet soils, moist woodlands, wet meadows, ditches, and gardens. It is a highly competitive plant and reproduces rapidly.



Description:

- Aquatic forget-me-not grows 4-12 inches tall and blooms continuously from May-September.
- Flowers clustered on an inflorescence. Individual flowers are dainty, sky blue and have five jointed petals with a central yellow eye.
- Leaves are alternate leaves and oblong to lance-shaped. The upper leaf surface is either hairless or sparsely covered with hairs, while the lower surface is sparsely to moderately covered with hairs.

Natural History:

Aquatic forget-me-not is native to Europe and Asia and was introduced as an ornamental plant for water gardens and ponds and for medicinal cultivation.

Ecosystem Impacts:

- Thrives in moist locations, crowds out native species and grows in large monocultures.
- Can alter the canopy layer and may reduce nutrients available to native plants.
- Aquatic forget-me-not poses a threat to two threatened and endangered Wisconsin native plants; the threatened intermediate spike sedge (*Eleocharis intermedia*) and the endangered winged monkey flower (*Mimulus alatus*).

Reproduction:

High! It is capable of abundant reproduction through spreading stolons (runners) and abundant seed production.

Management:

Management before seeds set is beneficial to long-term control.

- Mechanical Removal: hand pull or dig out. It is important to remove the root system to prevent new growth. Place in a black plastic bag, close tightly and put in the garbage.
- Chemical: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/fact/AquaticForgetMeNot.html>



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Resource Conservation
& Development Council, Inc.



Aquatic Invasive Species Quick Guide

Rusty Crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus* Girard)

Description: The rusty crayfish is a large crayfish of the family Cambaridae. Adults can reach six inches in length, including the claws. Most of the body is tan to light brown, but each side of the carapace has a rusty brown spot. Claws are large and typically have brightly colored tips above dark bands. Rusty crayfish are omnivores, feeding primarily on aquatic plants, snails, and other small invertebrates. They can commonly be found hiding under rocks, logs, and other debris. Rusty crayfish typically live 3-4 years.

North American Distribution: Rusty crayfish are most abundant in the western Great Lakes states, but have been documented from Minnesota and Iowa eastward to Maine, and in northern New Mexico.



Rusty crayfish are mostly light brown, with bright claw tips.



Each side of the carapace has a rusty brown spot.

Dispersal Vectors: Rusty crayfish are native to the Ohio River Basin, and were likely transported to the Midwest United States as bait by fishermen. Rusty crayfish quickly colonize lakes and streams by producing several hundred eggs per female each season. Eggs are protected under the female's tail until they hatch.

Ecological Impacts: Rusty crayfish are larger and more aggressive than most native crayfish, and are able to outcompete native species for food and habitat. Rusty crayfish consume large amounts of aquatic invertebrates, small fish, fish eggs, tadpoles, native crayfish, plants, and other aquatic life. They can hasten spread of Eurasian watermilfoil and other aggressive plants by cutting the stems, which then take root elsewhere.

Control Options: Manual trapping is effective for rusty crayfish. Always follow local trapping regulations. Modification of size limits of predator fish species can be effective. Walleye, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, and yellow perch will consume young rusties. This strategy combined with trapping of large adults can reduce rusty crayfish populations.

An effective, safe pesticide for rusty crayfish has not been found. Although crayfish-selective pesticides exist, they are also harmful to native crayfish species.

An effective biological control agent has not been found. A parasite called *Microphallus* infects rusty crayfish (and other crayfish species), and is currently being researched. Lakes with abundant rusty crayfish are often found to have no *Microphallus* present.



Eggs and newly hatched young are held under the female's tail for protection.

Additional Information:

Hein, C.L., Roth, B.M., Ives, A.R., and M. Jake Vander Zanden. 2006. Fish predation and trapping for rusty crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*) control: a whole-lake experiment. *Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci.* 63: 383-393.
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Potential impacts to rusty crayfish (*Orconectes rusticus*) populations from a parasite, *Microphallus* sp.

Photo Credit: Paul Skawinski

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Land & Water Conservation Department

*Michele Sadauskas, County Conservationist
Stephanie Boismenu, AIS Coordinator
Jonna Stephens Jewell, Program Assistant*

George Lake AIS Monitoring and Water Quality Report

Oneida County Courthouse
P O Box 400, Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501
Phone (715) 369-7835 Fax (715) 369-6268

WBIC: 1569600
Previous AIS Findings: Banded Mystery Snail (not verified), Chinese Mystery Snail, and Rusty Crayfish
New AIS Findings: Forget-Me-Nots
Field Date: June 30, 2016
Field Crew: Stephanie Boismenu, AIS Coordinator, and Aubrey Nycz, AIS Project Assistant, Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department
Report By: Aubrey Nycz

Stephanie and I monitored half of George Lake on June 30, 2016. George Lake is located South-east of Rhinelander, WI in Oneida County (Figure 1). It is a drainage lake of 443 acres with a maximum depth of 26 feet. The substrate on the lake is 55% sand, 20% gravel, 2% rock, and 15% muck. The lake has musky, panfish, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and walleye. George Lake's trophic state is eutrophic. According to dictionary.com, eutrophic lakes are characterized by an abundant accumulation of nutrients that support a dense growth of algae and other organisms, the decay of which depletes the shallow waters of oxygen in summer. George Lake has many homes around its perimeter and is located on Lake George Road.








Stephanie and I launched the canoe at the public boat landing on East Lake George Road. We only monitored half of the lake because it started to storm, but we were still able to walk in the water using aquascopes to check for invasives. We did come across some invasive Forget-Me-Nots, so I got a GPS reading for their location (Figure 2).

We used a contour map of George Lake to help us locate the deep spot on the lake. We found the deepest point of the lake to be 26 feet. When we found the deep spot, Stephanie anchored the canoe and I took the GPS coordinates of the location. Stephanie and I then measured the

Figure 2. Map of George Lake showing areas of AIS and water quality monitoring activities



Legend

-  Public boat access
-  Secchi Disc (Deep Hole latitude 45.61, longitude -89.33)
-  Littoral zone monitored via canoe on 6/29/16
-  Littoral zone monitored via canoe on 6/30/16
-  Littoral zone monitored via walking on 6/29/16 & 6/30/16
-  Chinese mystery snail
-  Aquatic Forget-me-nots

Map courtesy of Oneida County Land Information Office

Table 1. Dissolved oxygen levels and temperatures at the deep hole.

Depth (Feet)	Dissolved Oxygen Levels (mg/L)	Temperature (F)
3	8.15	72.9
6	7.58	72.4
9	6.35	71.4
12	3.6	69.7
15	0.12	64.8
18	0.07	61.3
21	0.05	58.8
24	0.04	57.2
27	0.03	65.5

Resources:

<https://oneidacounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c0144697a23243d6beb981727c3e6e2b>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=1569600&page=facts>



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*Michele Sadauskas, County Conservationist
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Oneida County Courthouse
P O Box 400, Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501
Phone (715) 369-7835 Fax (715) 369-6268

George Lake AIS Monitoring and Water Clarity Report

WBIC: 1569600
Previous AIS Findings: Banded Mystery Snail (not verified), Chinese Mystery Snail, and Rusty Crayfish
New AIS Findings: Suspected invasive Forget Me Nots
Field Date: June 29, 2016
Field Crew: Stephanie Boismenu, AIS Coordinator, and Abbi Bowman, AIS Project Assistant, Oneida County Land and Water Conservation Department
Report By: Abbi Bowman

Stephanie and I monitored Lake George on June 29, 2016. Lake George is located just outside of Rhinelander, WI on Old Highway 8 heading towards Monico, WI in Oneida County (Figure 1). It is a drainage lake of 443 acres with a maximum depth of 26 feet. The substrate on the lake is 55% sand, 20% gravel, 10% rock, and 15% muck. There are plenty of fish species that dominate this lake which include but is not limited to Musky, Panfish, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, and Walleye. Lake George's trophic state is listed as eutrophic. Eutrophic lakes are characterized by an excessive amount of nutrients, allowing the lake to support an abundance of plants and/or algae. No alga was found on the lake, but the native plants were rather plentiful surrounding the shoreline. Lake George has numerous cabins, homes, resorts, and bars placed around its perimeter and can be a rather busy waterbody; all of which can lead to large amounts of land disruption and human activity.

Since there is only one public boat landing on all of Lake George located on E. Lake George Rd. off of County P, this is the landing we docked off of. We used aqua scopes to observe the boat landing's shoreline for any possible invasives, and then continued to canoe the perimeter of

roughly half the lake. The weather was fairly cooperative in that it was sunny and warm, but it was somewhat windy which may have affected our dissolved oxygen (D.O.) readings. We visually monitored the rest of half of Lake George to the best of our ability in the couple hours we were given to observe and document our findings.

We used an already existing contour map of Lake George to assist us in finding the deep hole, and then further used the depth finder to bring us to the exact point of 26 feet to gather the most accurate data. Stephanie navigated the canoe until we found a good anchoring point. At this anchoring point, we took the GPS coordinates of our deep hole location and did measurements on water clarity using the Secchi disk, dissolved oxygen using the dissolved oxygen meter, and temperature (Table 1).

After data collection, we continued paddling the shoreline of Lake George. The lake itself is rather large in acreage, so we were only able to cover about half of Lake George's perimeter within a few hours. We did visual inspections from the canoe in the time we monitored, in which we spotted Forget Me Nots at several locations. Some of the Forget Me Not colonies were worse than others, but we made sure to mark GPS coordinates of their locations. Although we believe the Forget Me Nots to be the aquatic invasive plant species, they may also be one of the native terrestrial species. We additionally stopped numerous times to get out of the canoe and search along the shore for snails, mussels, crayfish, and any other potential invasives. In addition to finding the Forget Me Not plants, we also found (but does not limit the entire plant/animal species of Lake George to our findings) a very thriving and diverse native plant community spread across the lake's shoreline as well as several invasive Chinese Mystery Snails. Forget Me Nots were the only potentially invasive species we came across in our findings.

Findings: All taken starting at 2:53 p.m.

Aquatic Invasive Species:

Unfortunately, we may have spotted several Forget Me Not patches spread randomly around the perimeter of Lake George.

Secchi:

The Secchi reading on this lake was 5 feet out of a 26 foot max depth. The water color was a medium murky green, so I was surprised we were able to see the Secchi disk that far below the surface.

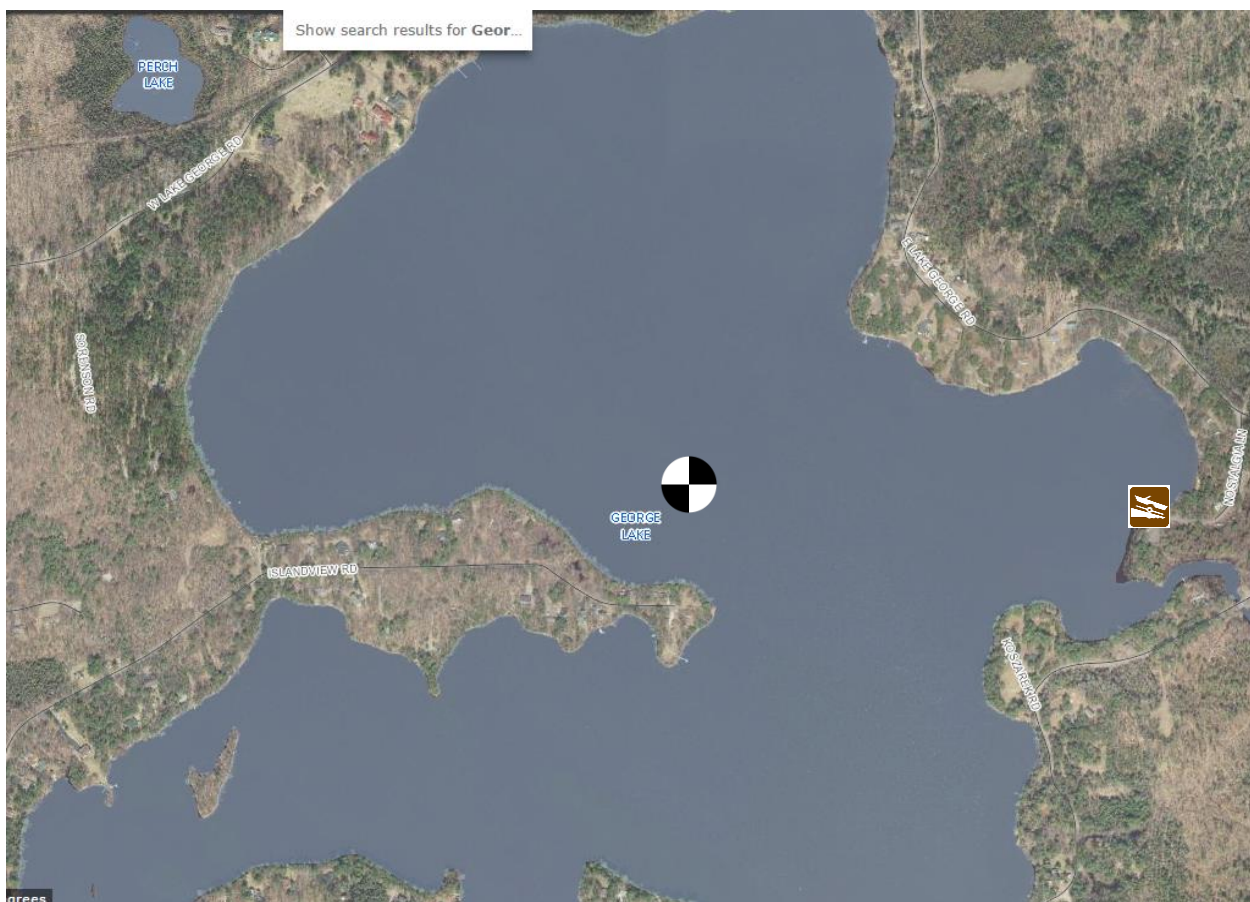
Dissolved Oxygen:

These measurements were taken in three foot increments and can be seen in Table 1.

Figure 1. Map of Oneida County, WI with Lake George circled in red.



Figure 2. Map of Lake George; need to map out possible found invasives' coordinates.



WDNR Secchi Disk Readings: George Lake - Deep Hole LATITUDE 45.62

LONGITUDE -89.33

Table 1. Dissolved oxygen levels and temperatures at the deep hole.

Depth (Feet)	Dissolved Oxygen Levels (mg/L)	Temperature (F)
3	8.01	75.5
6	8.14	74.2
9	8.09	73.6
12	3.32	69.7
15	0.14	64.9
18	0.07	61.6
21	0.05	59.2
24	0.04	57.4

Resources: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/lakepages/LakeDetail.aspx?wbic=1617200&page=facts>