

# RAINY LAKE CONSERVANCY

Preserving the Rainy Lake Watershed



**Spring Newsletter. May, 2019**

**Save the Date! Annual General Meeting of the RLC  
August 11, 2019, 2:00 PM Location: La Place Rendezvous**

## Celebrating the Beauty of Rainy Lake Recent Photos



Sunset  
north of Goose Island  
by Kim Embretson

Sunset on the Water  
east of Lichen Island  
by Kim Embretson



## President's Message



Another spring and summer of anticipation of “ice out”, getting out onto the Lake. Will the fish be biting? Is my dock floating or underwater? Are the White and Red pine trees as majestic as always?

I'm happy to report that our support of science on watershed issues and wildlife and threats to Rainy Lake's sustainability are strong and our conservation efforts continue with another conservation easement that will protect one of the Lake's islands.

In this Spring newsletter you can read about the old times on the Lake, some of the rare species of plants found on the properties we have conserved, news of the annual watershed partner forum that addresses key issues for the Lake, and adieus to those who have passed on.

Look for information on our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on our website: ([www.rainylakeconservancy.org](http://www.rainylakeconservancy.org)). The AGM always gives us a chance to talk about common issues and interests, and see those who have been hibernating all winter. Plans are being made now. Hope to see you there.

Carolyn Wallis, President

## Remembering Lois Nebergall



Lois passed away peacefully in Cincinnati on January 8, 2019, at the age of 92, after a long and rewarding life. She and her husband Jack, with their sons Erik and Peter and their daughter AC Hickox, spent many happy summers at their cottage on Scott Island where they treasured the peace and beauty as well as the challenges of Rainy Lake. They were faithful supporters of the Conservancy from its earliest days. Lois served on RLC's Board of Directors and

Nominating Committee for a number of years. She will be remembered as an important contributor to building a firm foundation for RLC and thus helping to make it into the successful organization it is today. Lois will be greatly missed by her Rainy Lake friends and members of the Conservancy.

## Video Stories from RLC Members

This short YouTube video is about Boats on Rainy Lake. Kurt Lysne talks about the early days of boating on Rainy Lake. He recounts how his Uncle Henry Lysne first bought Copenhagen Island and the boats they used to travel the lake. Images are taken from his family's 16 mm film clips of boats between 1922 - 35.



Boats on Rainy Lake

YouTube link (click or copy to your browser)

[https://youtu.be/jwBt\\_vUSZvQ](https://youtu.be/jwBt_vUSZvQ)

## Conservation Easement News

### Conservation “Values” on our Easement Properties

A key aspect of the mission of the Rainy Lake Conservancy is to protect the conservation values of properties on the Lake and its shores. A property owner cannot just decide to donate an easement on a property and expect to have it pass muster with the Rainy Lake Conservancy or the Canada Revenue Agency for tax considerations. For every property, we conduct a “Baseline Environmental Report” that involves ecologists and biologists coming to the islands and looking for the plants, birds, wildlife, trees, and aquatic species that are of significance in protecting the Rainy Lake Watershed. Many of these species are likely on your properties. Below are listed some of the species found on Midway and Copenhagen Islands:

**Water Pigmy-weed** This small submergent plant is provincially rare, typically found on mudflats and moist sand shores. It is known to have less than 20 Ontario occurrences, with those occurring on Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods. It was found, however, on both Copenhagen and Wilderness islands.



**Laurentian tiger beetles** were observed by Mary Lysne on the bedrock shoreline of Copenhagen Island. This iridescent green beetle species is considered rare in Ontario and is found primarily on rock barrens and rocky shorelines in Northwestern Ontario. (Mary Lysne's photo).

**New England Violets** have been observed by the biologists of Northern Bioscience, the consulting firm which has conducted all of the baseline assessments for Rainy Lake Conservancy, on Echo Island, Midway Island, and Copenhagen Island in mossy cracks in the bedrock near the water's edge. This species is known from less than 100 occurrences in Ontario.



The bracket fungus, **Chicken of the Woods**, was observed growing on a large, decadent, northern pin oak on Copenhagen Island. This species, relatively rare in Northwestern Ontario, is close to the northern limit of its range.



These are a few of the species found on the islands that Rainy Lake Conservancy has protected. If you want to learn more about them, or where you might look for any of these on your properties, please contact us.

## **Research and Conservation News**

### **2019 Water Forum**

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The 2019 Forum was held in March again in International Falls. 160 researchers and resource managers from the United States and Canada attended. This year's program featured 27 oral presentations and 5 poster presentations in themed sessions on:

- IJC updates
- Environment & Climate Change Canada and Trent University Science on Lake of the Woods and the Rainy River
- Experimental Lakes Area Science, including studies of the effects of reservoir drawdown, nano silver, mercury and spills of heavy crude oil and diluted bitumen
- Updates on advanced remote sensing methods
- Minnesota PCA's water quality and fisheries assessment of the Rainy River
- Ecology of beavers, muskrats, sturgeon recovery.

Jesse Anderson, research scientist with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and a RLC member, was the 2019 recipient of the prestigious Kallemeyn Award, recognizing his outstanding professional achievements and contributions to research and resource management in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods watershed.

The Kallemeyn Award is named after biologist Larry Kallemeyn, U.S. Geological Survey, retired, who worked at Voyageurs National Park. It is presented annually to an individual who has demonstrated in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods watershed:

- Outstanding professional achievement in scientific research or resource management.
- Significant contributions to collaborative and cooperative approaches to research or resource management internationally.

The Vermilion Lake Association and the Lake of the Woods District Stewardship Association were each recipients of the 2019 Wilson Stewardship Award, recognizing their outstanding contributions to environmental stewardship in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods watershed. Previously, Dale and Phyllis Callaghan won the award for their contributions to establishing and promoting the Rainy Lake Conservancy.

More information on the Forum can be found at:

<https://lowwsf.com/our-work/watershed-forum>

## ***The Secret Lives of Wolves in Voyageur National Park:***

They Eat Berries and Fish.

The wolf research mentioned in the article linked below has been supported by the RLC for two years.

<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/12/17/the-secret-lives-of-wolves-at-voyageurs-national-park-they-fish-and-eat-berries>

## ***Membership News***

Memberships keep the important work of the Rainy Lake Conservancy on the move. Please renew your membership and invite your friends and family to join the Rainy Lake Conservancy. New members are always welcome. New members are needed in order to continue with this important work.

You may join, renew or donate at <http://www.rainylakeconservancy.org/page-1323796> or by mailing your check to:

Rainy Lake Conservancy, Post Office Box 223,  
Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada P9A 3M6

Annual Dues are \$30 per person or \$40 for a family membership.

*The Mission of the Rainy Lake Conservancy is to work with property owners, governments, and local communities to preserve and protect the natural beauty, historic features, ecological and recreational values for present and future generations within but not restricted to Rainy Lake.*

Please send your ideas for future newsletters to the editors:  
Kim and Deborah Embretson  
embretson@charter.net

## **Resource Links of General Interest**

### **Local event of interest to members:**



If you haven't visited the Fort Frances Museum lately, stop in the next time you're in town. This spring the museum, located at 259 Scott Street, is hosting an exhibit on climate change from April to June. In conjunction with the exhibit, the museum is featuring a number of presenters to speak on issues related to this subject. Part of the presentations will focus on the benefits of keeping cabin grounds and shorelines natural as opposed to concrete retaining walls and manicured lawns. For more information on the exhibit, please contact Sherry George or visit the museum's website.

[www.fortfrances.ca/experience/activities-amenities/museum](http://www.fortfrances.ca/experience/activities-amenities/museum)

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