

# 2024 Invasive Species Report

By Mike Gately

**W**ith support of the pond association funds, along with our annual grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the expanded days and hours of our Courtesy Boat Inspection (CBI) program at the public boat launch was a great success.

The expansion started in 2022 and continued in 2023 with an increase from three days to four days on all three holiday weekends, and expansion of eight-hour days to ten-hour days. This will continue in 2024. We also plan to expand paid CBI coverage in the fall on Saturdays and Sundays through mid-October.

In 2023 the CBI program inspected 521 boats at the public boat launch. This was an increase of 35 boats over the 486 inspected in 2022. No plant fragments were found in 2023.

Although pond association members have requested increased inspections, our attempts to attract volunteers from Labor Day through mid-October has been limited.

If you know of anyone looking for a part-time job over the summer that gives you some time to soak up the sun and keep your feet in the water when not inspecting boats, please have them submit an application directly to the Lakes Environmental Association (LEA). The application can be found on the LEA website, [Mainelakes.org](http://Mainelakes.org).

Dave Rogers will be coordinating our volunteer efforts for both pond watching and boat inspections. We hope to have sign-up sheets for pond watchers at the July annual meeting.

The danger of invasive species entering our ponds is very real and our pond continues to be on the high-risk listing for the state. Shown above is a photo of Brittle Naiad, which was found in 2022 at Sokokis Lake (Limerick) and is of particular concern, as it is new in Maine and can spread quickly.

I'm pleased to report that the Maine DEP increased our grant this year from \$2,530 to \$3,000. I think the DEP is supporting our efforts for several reasons. Our ponds are at high risk based on other area lakes having milfoil already. Also, we have an active association that is engaged with LEA to monitor and prevent invasive species from

entering our ponds. Finally, we are actively trying to expand monitoring through paid inspectors and volunteer monitoring.

We ask for your financial support of the inspection program to help keep our ponds free of invasive species. Donating is quick and easy and can be done electronically by clicking on the link in the pond association website or by mailing a check made payable to Hancock Sand Pond Association, attention Ben Peierls, Treasurer, PO Box 856, Denmark ME 04022.

Please let Dave Rogers or me know if you spend time pond watching checking for milfoil and other invasive species. This information is needed for my mid-summer and end-of-season reports to Maine DEP.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to email, text or call:

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