

# Crescent Lake Reflections



2025

**Lake:** Spring ice out: – April 19, 2025

Winter first ice over: December 5, 2025

**Weather:** An ice storm followed by wet, heavy snow hit the area on March 30, 2025. It caused major tree damage all around the lake. Red Pines, White Pines and Birch trees were especially susceptible to the heavy snow accumulation on their branches. The power was out for two and half days for some lake residents. Those returning to their homes on the lake in April and May were welcomed back with much to cleanup before getting back on the lake.



Jim Gehrke

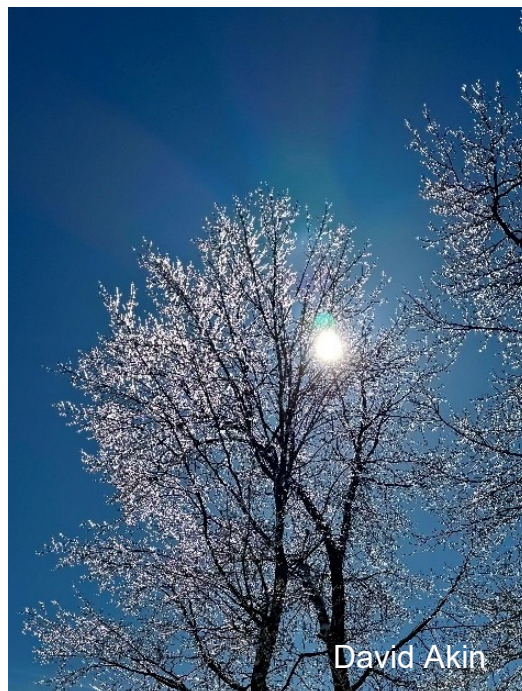


Sandy McKittrick

The ice storm did provide some interesting photos:



David Akin



David Akin

Near the end of the year another winter storm with wet, heavy snow hit the area. Once again, it caused significant tree damage.



Some significant drifting of snow was witnessed around the lake during the winter.



**Fish:** The Native American Mole Lake Band harvested 26 walleyes and 6 muskies in the Spring of 2025. The spearfishing harvest was affected by an issue with one of the boats being used and was also intentionally reduced from their declared allotment amount due to the low population of walleyes in Crescent Lake.

As an interim step in the “Walleye Lake of Concern” project the DNR implemented the ceded territory regulation for walleye fishing on Crescent Lake in May of 2025. The intention was to better protect immature walleyes less than 15 inches from being harvested. This was in addition to the voluntary catch-and-release of walleyes approved by the Crescent Lake Association in late 2024. In the Spring of 2025, the DNR proposed to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress two new special regulations for Crescent Lake. These were later approved and are scheduled to be implemented in May of 2026. One regulation reduced the daily bag limit to one walleye with an 18-inch minimum and a 22-28-inch

protected slot length. The other change is to the daily bag limit for largemouth and smallmouth bass to five fish in combination with no size restrictions.

The DNR conducted a nearshore substrate study in the summer to document the lake bottom composition and its location around the lake. This will be used to evaluate the potential for spawning of different fish species. Volunteers from on the lake participated in the survey.

The Mole Lake Band conducted a crayfish survey during the summer. However, only one rusty crayfish and one native crayfish were trapped.

The DNR conducted an electrofishing survey in the Fall. The survey showed again this year that a low number of walleyes were naturally reproduced in the lake. However, it did find that a significant number of walleyes stocked in 2023 are still surviving.

**Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM):** After two years of denial of the Crescent Lake District's plans for control of EWM with a herbicide, the DNR approved use of herbicide in the northern lobe of the lake. Results of this application on the affected areas were considered effective.

The Crescent Lake District residents approved the 2026 budget with a reduced levy to taxpayers for the second straight year.

## Crescent Lake Association Member Meetings



**Spring Meeting:** The lake association's May member meeting featured John Richter, Director, Last Wilderness Alliance and Chairman, Plum Lake Association and Mary Jung, Board of Directors, Last Wilderness Alliance. John and Mary talked about the impact of inadequate wake surfing regulations on our lakes. The Last Wilderness Alliance works with local lake associations and town boards to protect their lakes from the damaging effects of enhanced wake boating through the enactment of local ordinances. Since Wisconsin state law does not regulate the minimum depth for wake-enhanced boating, it is left up to local ordinances to regulate this activity.

The Crescent Town Board did form a committee to study this issue and make a recommendation. At the July meeting the town board passed an ordinance to restrict enhanced wake boating to no closer than 300 feet from shore and in a water depth of at least 15-20 feet. This ordinance is much less restrictive than the recommendation from the Last Wilderness Alliance of 700 feet from shore and minimum depth of 30 feet.



**Annual Meeting:** The annual member meeting in July featured speaker Dean Premo, White Water Associates. White Water Associates has partnered with Crescent Lake since 2021 to provide data and plant mapping associated with Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) control. White Water conducts aquatic plant surveys to provide information on how much herbicide should be applied to control the

EWM. Surveys conducted since 2006 have shown aquatic plants are becoming more widespread and denser in Crescent Lake. This may be partly due to the die-off of rusty crayfish which consumed plants. Other factors such as warmer water temperatures and increased boat traffic stirring up nutrients on the lake bottom may also be contributing.

**Fall Meeting:** The Fall member meeting recognized the many volunteers that helped with Clean Boats/Clean Waters boat landing inspections, monitoring for EWM, fireworks and the boat parade. The featured speaker was Nathan Lederman, DNR Fisheries Biologist, who provided an update on the Crescent Lake Fishery. Nathan talked about the various surveys conducted on the lake (near shore substrate, crayfish and electrofishing mentioned previously). The largemouth bass electrofishing survey showed a higher-than-average population compared to other Oneida County lakes. Unfortunately, largemouth bass are likely out-competing walleyes for food resulting in fewer walleyes.

**July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks and Boat Parade:** The boat parade and fireworks were held on July 4th. The weather was great for both events.



Twelve boats participated in the boat parade organized by Donna Stone. The Stone Family's "Fire Safety" boat received top honors. The Tesch's boat took "Most Patriotic" and the Markwardt family's boat received the "Most Creative" award. Spectators along the parade route make it a fun event for all those participating.

**Fireworks:** Mark Mergenthaler and Jack Geisel coordinated the fireworks show. The 25-minute show was a mixture of mid and high-height level fireworks. The weather was quite warm and the rain went north and south of Crescent Lake during the day. All went well thanks to the many volunteers that helped with setup of the mortars, loading and wiring the shells and cleanup after the show.



Sue Binder



Cheryl Edwards



Sue Binder



**Friend of the Lake Award:** Jim Gehrke presented the “Friend of the Lake” award to Dennis Southworth for his years of service to the Crescent Lake Association. Dennis served on the lake association board of directors from 2016 to 2020 including as President. He currently serves as a Commissioner for the Crescent Lake District. Dennis received a trophy and his name will be placed on the “Friend of the Lake” plaque at the Crescent Town Hall.

**Summer on the Lake:** Summer on the lake is for family, friends, and creating memories. Here are a few examples:



**Northwoods Scenery:** Here are some interesting photos of sunrises, sunsets, Fall colors, Northern Lights and nature on the lake.



Rare sighting of a Kerner Blue Butterfly – David Akin



Sue Binder



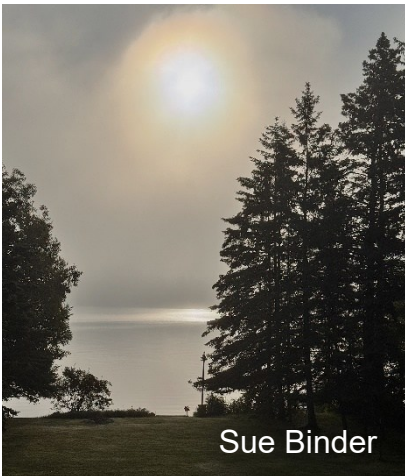
David Akin



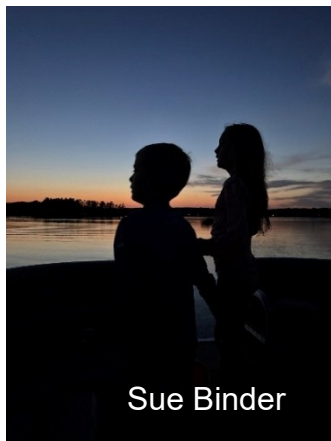
David Akin & Tim Kilgore



Carol Hitchcock



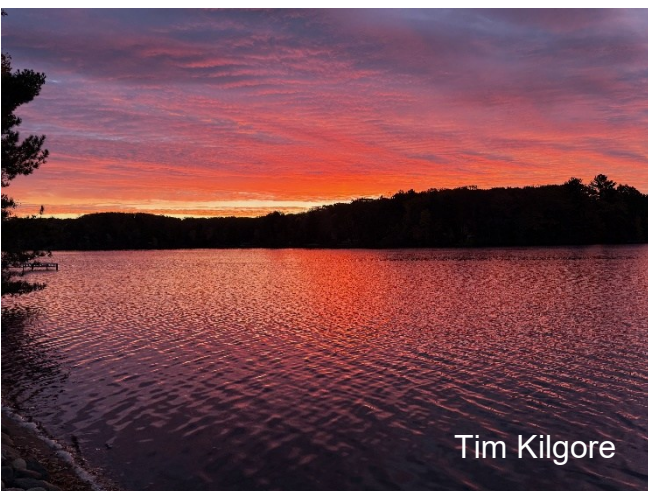
Sue Binder



Sue Binder



Tim Kilgore



Tim Kilgore

**Acknowledgement:** The Crescent Lake Association Board of Directors would like to thank all those that contributed photos to the Crescent Lake Reflections.