



Friends of Green River Reservoir

Spring 2020
Newsletter

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Damselflies of Green River Reservoir

BY RON KELLEY

Damselflies and dragonflies belong to a primitive order of insects (Odonata) that developed about 400 million years ago so have been around four times as long as mammals. They have large compound eyes, chewing mouthparts, two pairs of wings and slender bodies. Damselflies differ from dragonflies in that they hold their wings together behind their body or only slightly apart when perched while dragonfly wings are held horizontally like an airplane. Damselflies are often smaller and more slender as well as being weaker fliers. All have widely separated eyes while most dragonfly eyes meet or come close to meeting at the center of the head. Both groups are voracious predators of small insects. Dragonflies usually chase flying insects while damselflies often capture them from vegetation. You may see Odonates flying around in tandem (joined together in loops) as part of their mating behavior. It is especially common among damselflies, where the male clasps the female by the neck with the end of its abdomen. Look for them in the coves and shallow waters of the reservoir wherever there is emergent vegetation.

Probably the most recognized group of damselflies are the bluets because of the bright blue colors that most of them exhibit. They are commonly seen in early to mid-summer. There are many different spe-

cies of bluets and a few are not even blue but it is very difficult to identify them without close observation. Most bluets lay their eggs in tandem, depositing them on floating or submerged vegetation. All Odonate larvae live in the water where they prey on small aquatic insects and other tiny critters.

The eastern forktail appears to be the most abundant damselfly at the reservoir. Not only that but its season extends the longest, from spring to early fall. Forktails get their name from a small, barely visible projection at the tip of the male's abdomen. They come in a variety of colors but immature females have a bright orange thorax, with most turning a powdery greyish blue at maturity, with blue eyespots. The males are mostly black and green, with small green eyespots. The females lay eggs alone, in emerging or floating vegetation.

The Spreadwings differ from other damselflies in that when at rest, they hold their wings partly spread and roughly at a 45-degree angle from their body. All the males in this family have blue eyes. They also tend to be larger than other damselflies seen at the reservoir. The swamp spreadwing, which is occasionally seen, is a good example of this group. They lay their eggs in tandem but place them above the waterline in emerging vegetation.

more photos next page



eastern forktail immature female



Friends of Green River Reservoir, Inc.

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Green River Reservoir State Park in this time of Covid 19

A Message from the FGRR Board

The FGRR Board members are as grateful as our members must be to be able to get outside into natural surroundings during this difficult and unsettling time. And grateful to live in Vermont where sensible measures are being taken to control the spread of the virus and protect everyone's health. The State Parks have stayed open for walking, hiking, and paddling throughout this time. When they will open for camping remains to be seen – as it depends on the trajectory of this world pandemic. Our best greetings to you all and our wishes that you all stay safe!

Sally Laughlin, President, FGRR Board

Vermont State Park Status Updates as of 5/13/20: (from VFPR website)

May 13 – *While we are planning to open and operate parks this summer, **we will not be able to offer camping at least through June 25, 2020 and will be cancelling all reservations prior to that date.** Refunds will be issued automatically in the form of gift certificates. If you would like additional information, please call our reservation call center at 1-888-409-7579, Monday–Friday 9 AM–4 PM.*

Also, please note that residents and non-residents coming to Vermont will need to quarantine at home (somewhere in Vermont) for 14 days prior to visiting a Vermont State Park.

For more information please visit the Vermont Department of Health's COVID-19 pages: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19>

While Vermont State Parks are free and open for day visits (excluding Seyon Lodge), currently facilities such as restrooms are closed as part of our regular seasonal schedule. Keep in mind this means surfaces are not being cleaned or sanitized. Check out our Off-season Access and Parking. **There is currently no camping in Vermont State Parks per the “Stay Home, Stay Safe Order.”**

bluet



swamp spreadwing



eastern
forktail
male



eastern
forktail
mature
female



PHOTOS BY RON KELLEY



UPDATE – 23 APRIL, 2020

Green River Reservoir Dam Relicensing

BY MICHAEL WICKENDEN

Check the FGRR Website for updates and more detail on this longstanding issue, with the power company which owns and operated the Dam that creates the State Park appealing the new standards for operation. <http://www.fgrrvt.org/news-events>

The Morrisville Water and Light (MWL) Board has not responded to the Friends of Green River Reservoir's offer to participate in the funding of a study to estimate the hydroelectric net annual revenue (annual revenue minus costs) over the 30-year life of the new license. We continue to believe that this study will be a foundational element to inform interested stakeholders, potential investors, the Vermont Public Utility Commission, and the MWL Board and ratepayers. Other than this issue, the Board is not aware of any significant change relative to the Green River Dam Hydro facility operating conditions since our November 2019 update.

VT Supreme Court Rules on Morrisville Hydroelectric Project Water Quality Certification

On November 22, 2019, the Vermont Supreme Court issued its final order concerning Morrisville Water and Light's (MWL) appeal of the Vermont Environmental Court's September 2018 ruling. That ruling affirmed the Environmental Court's determination of the Green River Reservoir hydroelectric dam operating conditions for the next 30 years. The Supreme Court order stated, in part:

"The Environmental Division's summary judgment decision to exclude social and economic factors is affirmed. The conditions related to the winter drawdown and timed releases for the Green River facility are affirmed."

Adaptive Kayaking at GRRSP

BY CATHY WEBSTER, NDAA, PROGRAM MANAGER, ADAPTIVE KAYAKING

The Northeast Disabled Athletic Association's Adaptive Kayakers are always looking for accessible venues for daily outings. Last summer, after some creative planning, four disabled kayakers ventured off the beaten path.

A remote location, away from the sound of roads, construction, or noisy boats welcomed us as we arrived at Green River Reservoir. Here we found calm waters, beautiful views and loons all around. For individuals who rely on power wheelchairs this adventure was the highlight of their summer.

Kayaks equipped with pontoons for stability, a high back seat with side supports and a supported paddle allow participants the ability to glide through the water independently, under their own power. The accessible ramp provided for the day at the launching area allowed participants, with the help of volunteers to get in/out of kayaks using a portable hooyer lift. It was a perfect day.

Later in the season one of the participants and her husband returned with another NDAA kayaker and friends for a fall outing. Green River Reservoir is now on our list

of favorite places, and we look forward to returning this summer. Thank you to The Friends of Green River Reservoir and Vermont State Parks for their support in helping make this happen.





Information from Vermont Department of Parks on 2019 Season

Green River Reservoir State Park 2009–2019					
Finances					
Year	Revenues	Expenses	Expenses Notes	Difference	Difference excluding Infrastructure Expenses
2009	\$33,359.00	\$66,812.47	includes \$14,525.38 infrastructure expenses	\$(33,453.47)	\$(18,928.09)
2010	\$52,561.97	\$88,806.37	includes \$37,015.08 infrastructure expenses	\$(36,244.40)	\$770.68
2011	\$54,193.00	\$63,413.27	no infrastructure expenses	\$(9,220.27)	\$(9,220.27)
2012	\$59,552.00	\$132,105.53	includes \$58,180.46 infrastructure expenses	\$(72,553.53)	\$(14,373.07)
2013	\$63,244.00	\$56,534.05	includes \$1,953.40 infrastructure expenses	\$6,709.95	\$8,663.35
2014	\$69,890.48	\$50,834.58	includes \$883.88 infrastructure expenses	\$19,055.90	\$19,939.78
2015	\$77,723.50	\$64,859.34	no infrastructure expenses	\$12,864.16	\$12,864.16
2016	\$81,974.54	\$74,541.00	no infrastructure expenses	\$7,433.54	\$7,433.54
2017	\$86,534.00	\$85,478.06	includes \$6,921 for generator shed and heat to contact station	\$1,055.94	\$7,976.94
2018	\$88,014.00	\$128,061.50	includes \$41,780.50 infrastructure expenses—foundation of Workshed/Woodshed	\$(40,047.50)	\$1,733.00
2019	\$89,121.00	\$91,475.00	Does not include building construction for Workshed/Woodshed of \$62,500, except \$2313 in electrical supplies*	\$(2,354.00)	\$(41.00)

* Total Workshed/Woodshed Cost = \$106,593.50

GRRSP Attendance			
Year	Campers	Day Use	Total Users
2009	5,975	5,993	11,968
2010	6,701	3,946	10,647
2011	7,161	3,273	10,434
2012	7,438	3,492	10,930
2013	6,956	5,028	11,984
2014	7,342	4,978	12,320
2015	7,679	5,039	12,718
2016	7,912	4,824	12,736
2017	8,224	5,089	13,313
2018	8,435	4,842	13,277
2019	9,198	4,932	14,130
TOTALS	73,823	46,504	107,050

On July 1, 2010, day use fees started



FGRR NEWS

Our Mission, Our Vision, and You!

BY SHEILA GOSS

The Friends of Green River Reservoir is dedicated to protecting the wilderness-like character and wildlife habitat of Green River Reservoir State Park, which offers a unique recreational experience. We seek to accomplish this by providing educational information regarding how GRRSP is understood and experienced, through the sharing of information on “Leave no Trace” and about the flora and fauna of the area. We also are involved in the protection of areas within and adjacent to GRRSP that are of geological, ecological, biological interest or are of a sensitive nature.

When you are paddling or camping on the reservoir, you are fortunate to experience one of the most special places in Vermont, and our efforts are



RON KELLEY

always towards preserving that quiet waters experience. As technology and social norms change, it is incumbent upon us to insure that these changes do not negatively affect the pristine and wilderness-like environment of the reservoir. Our cooperative efforts with Vermont State Parks are part of our en-

during mission to preserve the reservoir as a peaceful getaway for all.

One area in which we have worked with the state parks division is on the regulation and restriction of drone use around the quiet waters of Green River Reservoir. Currently drones cannot be launched or land within the state park; the board has been providing input to the state in an effort to make this, and other policies, supportive of maintaining the quiet waters status of the reservoir.

This spring, the Division of State Parks instituted a new online reservation system for campsites (vtstateparks.com/camping) which includes the option for online reservations for campsite at Green River Reservoir State Park. This new system will also include an online comment/review option, which we hope that paddlers and campers will utilize. Your feedback, both positive and not-so-positive, about your time on the reservoir is important! We also hope you always feel free to contact our FGRR board, or any of the members, with your comments, concerns, or suggestions. Paddle on!

Friends of Green River Reservoir Annual Membership Meeting

Thursday, July 23, 2020 • 6:30 pm

Butternut Mountain Farm
37 Industrial Park Drive, Morrisville

Annual Meeting – to elect Board Members, review the accomplishments of the past year, enjoy good conversation, and conduct any necessary business.

Please check our website closer to the date to see whether we will be able to meet for our usual gathering and bring-a-dish-to-share supper at Butternut Mountain Farms, or if the meeting will need to be by Zoom – a decision we will make and post on the website by 10 July. If you want us to send you the link to the Zoom meeting please email us: webmaster@fgrrvt.org. Either way, members are invited and encouraged to attend.

FGRR NEWS

Spring Nature Notes from Ron Kelley

Loons were back on Zack Woods Pond and Green River Reservoir on April 20, even though there was limited open water on the reservoir then. The ice finally went out on the reservoir on April 25, which was slightly earlier than normal. An immature Bald Eagle was seen at the north end that day. A March check on the two Wood Duck nestboxes on Zack Woods Pond showed that they were used in 2019. There were two unhatched eggs in one box and one in the other.

Fish Stocking

BY ERIC NUSE

After a three-year effort seven ponds adjacent to Green River Reservoir have received an experimental stocking of brook trout fry.

A coordinated effort by the Friends of GRR, VT Fish and Wildlife Department, Lamoille Valley Fish and Game Club and the VT Fish and Wildlife Conservation group has led to the stocking of 4,000 sterile brook trout within the boundary of GRRSP.

Thanks to fisheries biologist Peter Emerson and Matt Breton and his volunteers at the Morgan Hatchery for their support and supplying the fish. Thanks also to Dave Brown and park neighbors Corey Hathaway and Steve Torrey for helping to carry the fish into the remote ponds in the Diggin's area west of the Reservoir.

The plan is to sample the ponds in a year and depending on growth and survival rates to continue the stocking with trout for put and take or a sustaining population. With the lower winter draw down requirements coming in the near future this could become a wonderful backcountry fishery for campers and day use hikers and boaters.



Immature Bald Eagle

RON KELLEY



RON KELLEY



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Memberships run for one year from the month that you join.

Volunteers (Board member Sheila Goss) send electronic reminders followed by a snail mail letter a few months before your renewal is due (and again and again, if members don't respond to the first notice). Renewing immediately saves time, energy, and stamps – we thank those that renew on the first notice! Please renew as soon as you can! Thank you for your support!