

Barkmere, August 2 2016

Dear Citizens,

What was bound to happen, just did. Like over 40 others lakes in the Laurentians, it has now been confirmed that Bark Lake has Eurasian Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum Spicatum*). This plant is probably the worst environmental disaster that has attacked lakes, surpassing the blue-green algae in damages. Some lakes, like Trout Lake in Ste-Agathe, are now irremediably condemned: it is impossible to swim, natural life has disappeared, the surface of the water resembles an impenetrable carpet.

A concerned resident sent us pictures of a suspicious plant last week.



We took samples and had them identified positively by three different biologists. The Town administration has started marking out sectors that are infested with ropes and buoys. Until now, areas of Silver Bay have been identified, and most of the lake inlet. The biologist and professor of the University of Montreal, Mr. Richard Carignan, who visited the area Tuesday morning, believes the milfoil entered from upstream lakes at the inlet. The only other source, other than the water basin, are visiting boats and sea planes.



This plant reproduces mostly by cuttings, parts of the stems that, once cut, fall elsewhere to the bottom and take root. Like most aquatic plants, the leaves and stems are soft and fragile.

DO NOT TRY TO REMOVE THE PLANTS if you see some. Simply advise the Town Hall, by calling 819-687-3373 or one of our e-mail addresses: dg@barkmere.ca, Inspecteur@barkmere.ca or maire@barkmere.ca.

DO NOT NAVIGATE in the infested areas: NO MOTOR BOATS, NO CANOES, NO KAYAKS. Even paddles will cut the stems, and the infestation will spread more. And you can imagine what propellers will do...

I implore you, please contain your curiosity! **Do not visit the infested areas**. The plant grows in shallow areas but can also live in 20 feet of water. Cuttings can attach themselves to parts of your boats. So please stop navigating close to shore, as you will just contribute to the proliferation. If your property is located in one of these areas, please contact the Town Hall, our employees will help you find a solution to reach your cottage by boat and limit further damage. We also insist that all residents **stay well away from the inlet** until further notice. Milfoil could be spread throughout the lake very, very fast.

The Town is taking measures and has consulted experts in order to take the appropriate actions. According to Professor Carignan, the infestation in Bark Lake is relatively recent, two to three years at most. This means that we can hopefully still control it, if we take immediate action.

We will continue issuing bulletins as more actions are in place, like a lake-wide scientific survey to identify all areas, and diving specialists who can start safely removing the existing plants. Once again, unless you are trained, you cannot safely remove the plants.

We are working with CRÉ Laurentides, an environmental defense organization who have been studying the phenomena and helping municipalities and citizens take actions. If you read French, you can find this detailed documents on our website at www.barkmere.ca

We need to spread the information, not the milfoil.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Luc.

Luc Trépanier
Maire / Mayor
Ville de Barkmere / Town of Barkmere