



A frog on a log at the Town Beach pond.

Photos: Kate Goodin



A Beacon reader's game camera snapped this shot of deer grazing at 6 AM on an August morning in Andover.

Wonders Await in Town Beach Pond

Great exploring behind the Town Beach

By Kate Goodin, for the *Beacon*

If you've lived in Andover for very long, you know Highland Lake. You've probably spent time at the Town Beach, gone boating in the summer, or ice fishing in the winter, or even just enjoyed the view while driving by. But I'll bet there are parts to the lake that many of you don't know much about, and I think they are some of the coolest parts.



The Town Beach, as I'm sure you know, separates the main part of the lake from a small pond that sits between the beach and the Rail Trail. The pond attracts the attention of kids because of its easy access to interesting animal life.

While the lake has a few fish which you can see while swimming, the pond has many fish, tadpoles, and turtles right there in the muddy shallows at the edge of the beach. Kids with nets are often

seen pouncing and gleefully holding up a slippery critter for their friends to see.

But few kids venture out into the water, and with good reason. The muck on the bottom is deep and forbidding. Trash blows from the beach across the pond and gets stuck in the pickerel weed on the far side. Bigger trash has fallen, with or without assistance, into the pond, and lumber with rusty hardware lurks in the shallows along the eastern edge. Who wants to go here?

I do! The clear, clean water on the lake side is nice for swimming, but not much for exploring. With the assistance of a rugged kayak, I can sneak across the pond behind the Town Beach and find giant frogs hanging out on logs and lily pads, bumblebees pollinating pickerelweed, herons stalking the shallows, and sundews, one of our native carnivorous plants, patiently waiting for an unlucky bug to stumble onto their sticky leaves.

Dragonflies swarm, spiders lie in wait, water plants squeak on the underside of my boat, whirligig beetles sparkle and spin ... I think this is the best part of Highland Lake!

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- Will Ogmundson Performs for "First Fridays"
- Atlantic Trio Concert to Benefit Scholarship Program



Two loon chicks have arrived on Bradley Lake. Notice that the rightmost chick has its foot out of the water. The folks at the Loon Protection Center over in Moultonborough say scientists think that in adults anyway, the foot wag may be a way to cool themselves off. At least they've found that the higher the temperature, the more wagging occurs. Little ones are probably mimicking their parents.
Photo and caption: Larry Chase

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