



## Summer 2021

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# Cordova Lake Cottage Association



## Message from the President...

Dear friends,

It has been a joy to serve as the president of the CLCA for the last four years. Our members are wonderful people and it has been a pleasure to help to form a community here at the lake. It is amazing for me to look back and realize it's been over fifteen years since we purchased a home on Cordova Lake. At my first AGM, I agreed to become the lake secretary, a position I held for ten years or so. At that time, internet was in its infancy and newsletters and other communication all went by 'snail mail'. Nowadays, we are blessed to send our communications so speedily and people who don't have internet are truly the exception to the norm.

My mother who has neither a cell phone nor internet, was recently chatting with friends of her grandson. They were aghast that she has lived happily for 89 years without such things! It seems that the idea is spreading. I was talking with a cottager recently who tells me that their family has adopted an internet free zone at the lake. For one day a week at their cottage, no-one may use any 'connected' device. This has brought about some wonderful results: more time to chat with each other, more time having family board game nights and fewer frayed tempers with a corresponding reduction in stress. They are considering expanding their time without internet.

Whilst many of us have had both Covid vaccinations, it still behooves us to maintain the same safety precautions we adopted at the beginning of the pandemic. As a result, we cannot gather this year for our Annual General Meeting. We will meet via Zoom at 10:00a.m. on July 11 for the AGM. Clare will send the invitation to you to join us in the days to come.

The Regatta is yet another casualty of the pandemic. Hopefully, this event will be able to be held next year. Nancy and Clare have done a wonderful job organizing the regatta in years past and we are hopeful that someone else will step forward to take their turn doing this. It's not too early to let us know if you are willing to do this.

We will still be able to hold our annual boat parade. Please consider how you might decorate your craft and join us for this fun, daytime event. Cottagers told us that they could not always view the wonderfully decorated boats once darkness fell, so the flotilla will parade around the lake earlier in the day for maximum viewing opportunities. Details to follow.

One of our first purchases, when we moved here, was a twenty foot pontoon with lots of room for family and friends. We find it an ideal way to comfortably mosey around the lake and in retrospective realize we've had a front row seat to many changes through the years. So many of our members have chosen to build permanent homes with a view to retiring here when the time

comes. For many of us, that time has come and we now have an active group living here twelve months a year. Many cottagers have been renovating and adding on to their abodes. We have been somewhat aghast at the price of wood but since one can't travel it seems a reasonable tradeoff.

Ongoing efforts from many but especially, Juanita, Sandy and Clare have wrought many improvements through the years. Thanks too to Chris and Dan Lamers for taking care of the buoys and Sommer Gettins for her newsletters. I am proud of the work we have all done and wish the next executive well in their endeavours.





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## Don't overlook Summer Swimming Lessons – Canada Safety Council

In the summer months, especially as the heat rises across the country, there's not much more tantalizing than the call of a cool, crisp body of water. Whether it's swimming, boating, fishing or any number of other recreational activities, the common denominator is a desire to be in the water and cool down.

To mark this year's National Summer Safety Week, May 1 – 7, the Canada Safety Council and [Lifesaving Society Canada](#) would like to bring awareness to the other side of water safety – those who end up in the water despite having no intention to do so.

"Being near or in the water is great way to enjoy the summer months and when we think about those enjoyable moments we naturally associate getting in the water with a conscious decision to do so," said Gareth Jones, President and CEO of the Canada Safety Council. "But too frequently, we see people drown without intending on even dipping their toe in the water, and these types of tragedies are entirely avoidable."

According to statistics from the [Drowning Prevention Research Centre](#), slightly fewer than 500 Canadians drown every year on average — a disproportionate amount of which are northern, Indigenous, new Canadians or a combination thereof. Of these, more than 900 Canadians drowned between 2008 and 2017 due to unintentional water entry.

"Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in the country and sadly many of those who did drown never intended to go into the water and were often found within 15 metres of safety," said Wendy Schultenkamper, Director of Operations at Lifesaving Society Canada. "Learning to swim, swimming in lifeguard supervised settings and effective supervision of children around the water can have the biggest impact on drowning statistics."

Whether you intend to be in the water or not, one precautionary step that can be lifesaving — in a very literal sense — is to take swimming lessons. A proper education in the basics can result in a more instinctual response when hitting the water. The Lifesaving Society also administers the Swim to Survive program, which teaches skills required specifically to survive a fall into deep water and is available across Canada.



Here are a few more tips on keeping your water and water-adjacent activities safe and enjoyable this summer!

- If you are planning on being around water, bring someone with you. A whopping 74 per cent of unintentional water entry deaths occurred when the victim was alone.
- For the same reason, ensure that children are adequately supervised around water, and especially when around barrier-free bodies of water.
- When out on a boat, wear your lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD)! It is not enough to have it accessible — you might not have the time to locate it and put it on before an incident occurs.

The Canada Safety Council and Lifesaving Society Canada wish you a happy and safe summer on the water!

**For more information, please contact:**

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Director of Operations, Lifesaving Society Canada

[wschultenkamper@lifesaving.ca](mailto:wschultenkamper@lifesaving.ca)



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# How to rent out your cottage in a post-COVID world

Published: August 12, 2020 · Updated: August 14, 2020

We're all eager for some good news right now. So if you're a cottage owner, here's something to smile about: there's never been a better time to earn some extra income by renting out your cottage. Since travel to the States has stalled, and long-term vacation plans are out of the question at the moment, many families are looking for weekend accommodations within driving distance of the city. And the fact that cottages have so much privacy and so many outdoor amenities makes them one of the most attractive travel options right now.

But that doesn't mean it's easy to let someone else stay in your beloved cottage—and renters are just as wary of visiting a new place that might pose a risk to them and their families. So here's what you can do to make the process easier and safer for everyone.

## **Be careful about calling your cottage an “escape”**

Your cottage is an escape from the nine-to-five grind of city life, from the light pollution of streetlights, and from the all-hours din of city intersections—but not from coronavirus and the social-distancing measures we've adopted in recent months. So be careful about using phrases like “quarantine getaway” or “escape the coronavirus” in your listing. Because for now, we still need to practice precautions—even at the cottage—and we still need to respect cottage-country residents who are concerned about outsiders coming to town.

## **If your cottage has wifi, give it top billing in your listing**

Spending time at the cottage is all about disconnecting, but now that a lot of Canadians are working from home, their travel plans aren't relegated to long weekends. That means that, on the off-chance your cottage is wifi-equipped, it could be the perfect week-long rental for people who are still stuck in Zoom meetings. And the thought of

having a lake in the background during their next company check-in just might seal the deal.

### **Post updated cottage rules**

Guest etiquette is a hot topic in cottage country, where nobody wants noisy neighbours to drown out the sounds of nature. And even though you already have guest expectations about smoking, visitors, and stereos, you'll need to add any cleaning guidelines you'd like them to follow to keep everyone safe.

### **Have extra cleaning supplies on hand**

Packing for the cottage is stressful enough, even if you're a lifetime cottager. But it can be overwhelming for renters who don't know what to expect. To remove the stress, let them know up front that there's no need to pack extra cleaning and sanitizing supplies. Give your guests some extra peace of mind by providing plenty of paper towels, disposable gloves, environmentally friendly spray cleaners, hand sanitizer, and plenty of antibacterial soap. Having extra masks on hand for any trips into town will also be appreciated—especially by those who live year-round in your cottage community.

### **Make healthcare easy to find**

As if the winding, nameless back roads weren't hard enough to navigate, the lack of a walk-in clinic every few blocks might be a concern for renters from big cities. So be sure to post essential healthcare phone numbers and directions to the nearest hospital in a prominent place in your cottage.

### **Loosen your cancellation policy**

No one's making long-term vacation plans right now, and we're all sensitive to the fact that fortunes can quickly change. To put prospective renters at ease, update your cancellation policy to let them know that they can cancel for any reason, and make it easier for them to rent with short notice if they feel the sudden urge to get away for a weekend. To sweeten the deal even further, you might consider reducing your minimum stay requirements and offering discounts for long-term stays.

### **Highlight outdoor amenities and destinations in your listing**

Nearly everyone has been stuck indoors for months on end, so renters will want to get outside as much as possible. And while that mostly means sunny days on the dock, give them the chance to explore even more of your area while still practicing social distancing. Include extra pics of outdoor areas in your listing, and be sure to mention nearby nature trails, waterfalls, lookout points, or other natural areas of interest.



## Do a thorough cleaning between guests

Always use proper protective equipment, including a face mask and gloves, when cleaning your space after renters leave. And spend extra time sanitizing the commonly touched places that we don't often think about cleaning. That includes coffee maker buttons, toaster levers, door handles and locks, and even the knobs on your barbecue and gas line. You should also avoid touching your face during cleaning. For a deeper dive into proper cleaning procedures, follow the most [up-to-date guidelines](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or check out these [rental-specific cleaning guidelines](#). Also, don't forget to update your listing and let prospective renters know about the extra cleaning measures you're taking.

*Ready to rent out your cottage this season? Vrbo Canada is the largest local player in the Canadian vacation rental space, with a marketplace model that lets you securely manage your rentals. As part of Expedia Group, Vrbo has access to millions of travellers. That means they can point more of the right people to your cottage. With its secure payment system and an in-house support team, Vrbo is ready to help you get set up and get the most out of your listing. Find out how much you could earn. Visit [vrbo.com](https://www.vrbo.com) to enter basic information about your cottage's size and location, and you'll receive an instant estimate of your rental potential based on nearby comparable rentals.*

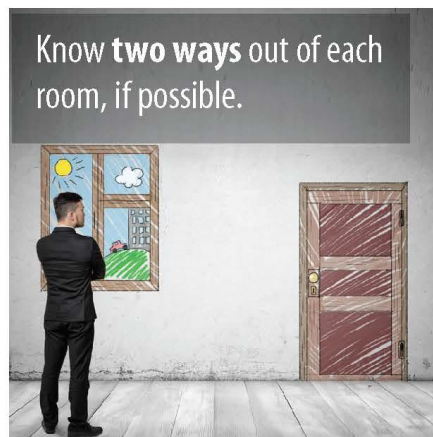


# EVERY SECOND COUNTS! **PLAN** 2 WAYS OUT!

**If a fire occurred in your home tonight would your family get out safely?**

A fast, pre-planned escape is critical to survival.  
There are **no second chances** in a fire.

**Follow these simple steps:**



**For more information, contact your local fire department.**

Office of the Fire Marshal  
and Emergency Management  
[ontario.ca/firemarshal](http://ontario.ca/firemarshal)





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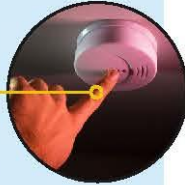




# Home Fire Safety Checklist

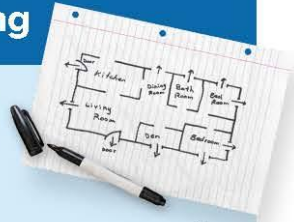
## Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- ☐ Install working smoke alarms on **every storey of the home** and outside **all sleeping areas**. Install carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas. **It's the law.**
- ☐ For extra protection, install a smoke alarm in every bedroom and a carbon monoxide alarm on **every storey**.
- ☐ Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms **once a month**.
- ☐ Change alarm batteries annually or whenever the low-battery warning sounds.
- ☐ Always **follow the manufacturer's instructions** for installing, testing, maintaining and replacing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.



## Home Fire Escape Planning

- ☐ Develop a **home fire escape plan** and practice it with the entire family.
- ☐ Make sure everyone knows **two ways out** of each room, if possible.
- ☐ Determine who will be responsible for helping young children, older adults or anyone else that may need assistance when escaping.
- ☐ Choose a **meeting place** outside, such as a tree or lamp post, where everyone can be accounted for.
- ☐ Call the fire department from outside the home, from a cell phone or neighbour's home.
- ☐ **Once out, stay out.** *Never* re-enter a burning building.
- ☐ Make sure exit doors and windows open easily and are kept clear of obstructions.



## Cooking Fire Safety

- ☐ **Always stay in the kitchen** and stay alert when cooking.
- ☐ Keep anything that can catch fire—*oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains*—away from your stovetop.
- ☐ Keep a proper fitting pot lid near the stove when cooking. If a pot catches fire slide the lid over the pot and turn off the stove. **Do not move the pot.**
- ☐ Wear tight-fitting or rolled up sleeves when using the stove. Loose dangling clothing can easily catch fire. If your clothing catches fire, stop, drop to the ground and roll over and over to put out the fire.



## Other Things to Consider to Prevent Fire in Your Home

- ☐ Keep matches and lighters out of the sight and reach of children.
- ☐ Always **blow out candles** before leaving the room.
- ☐ If anyone in the home smokes, **smoke outside**.
- ☐ Ensure items that can burn are **one metre away** from space heaters.
- ☐ **Avoid overloading the electrical outlets.** Extension cords should be used only as a temporary connection.



For more information contact your **local fire department**.



Office of the Fire Marshal and  
Emergency Management  
[ontario.ca/firemarshal](http://ontario.ca/firemarshal)

# **Happy Canada Day!**

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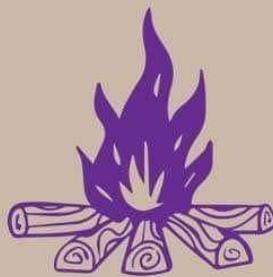
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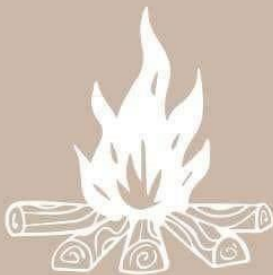
**Water Softener  
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Flames**



**Table Salt for  
Deeper ORANGE  
Flames**



**Epsom Salt for  
WHITE Flames**



**Add Flour for  
More Flareups**



**Add Sugar  
for Sparks**







# Personal Watercraft (PWC) Safety Guide

**Personal watercrafts (PWCs)**, also commonly referred to as their brand names like Jet Ski, WaveRunner or Sea-Doo, have evolved from unique, niche vehicles to one of the most popular categories of boats currently on the water. But while the fun factor is high, and cost and hassles comparatively low, PWC should never be dismissed as a big kid's toy. Their unique design, propulsion, and maneuverability demand that operators both understand and respect the craft's abilities.

Here's how to have a fun—and safe—PWC experience.

## Before You Ride

- Familiarize yourself with the owners' manual and all safety warnings, paying particular attention to the operation of the jet pump.
- **PWC manufacturers** recommend neoprene shorts or wetsuits to protect lower-body openings from impact with the water during a high-speed fall or the powerful thrust produced by the pump.
- Never attempt to board when the engine is running, and keep loose clothing and long hair clear of the pump intake.
- As with any type of boating, thoroughly understand boating laws and the rules of the road. Many states impose stricter age restrictions on personal watercraft use. Check local boating laws for the specifics in your area.
- Different size PWC have different passenger and weight capacities; exceeding either could negatively affect the handling of the craft.
- Familiarize yourself with the handlebar steering, throttle control and safety lanyard. Never operate a PWC without the safety lanyard attached to both craft and driver's wrist or life jacket. Remove the lanyard whenever the craft is unattended to prevent unauthorized use.
- Driver and passengers should always wear a **Coast Guard-approved life jacket**.
- Eyewear will block the force of wind and water spray that could impair vision.
- Gloves and footwear offer welcome additional grip and traction.
- Wetsuits or windbreaker-style jacket/pant combos are advisable for cooler weather because PWC riders are far more exposed to the elements than the typical boater.



# Familiarizing Yourself with Your Personal Watercraft

Take time to familiarize yourself with a PWC's unique handling. Choose a quiet area and practice using the throttle, carving through turns, and coming to a stop. If equipped, put the craft into reverse and note how it steers when backing.

Understand that throttle is required to make a turn. Rather than a rudder, personal watercraft use directed thrust produced by the jet pump to steer. If you stop that thrust by releasing the throttle or stopping the engine, the driver will lose directional control over the craft. Because releasing the throttle and turning the handlebars fully to one side is a common reaction in a collision-avoidance situation, manufacturers long ago addressed this scenario by having craft automatically apply a small amount of thrust should the driver perform those actions. That minimal amount of thrust is enough to initiate a turn in the direction the driver intended and possibly avoid an obstacle, but manual throttle input is essential for true directional control.

Like any boat, a PWC will not rapidly slow but rather will coast to a gradual stop when the throttle is released. In the case of a fast-moving PWC, that distance can be 250 feet or more. Many newer models provide stopping power by electronically linking the reverse bucket to a handlebar-mounted control lever. Applying the lever at higher speeds drops that bucket partially into the flow of water exiting the craft's jet pump, redirecting thrust forward and to the sides to rapidly slow forward motion.

## Safely Riding Your PWC, Jet Ski, WaveRunner or Sea-Doo

- Pay close attention to nearby boat traffic, remembering that other boaters might not be prepared for a PWC's quick response and short turning radius.
- Before initiating a turn, look to both sides, as well as behind, to make sure no boats are overtaking your craft.
- Always give other boaters ample space, as well as stay a safe distance from shore.
- Never follow directly behind another watercraft, jump boat wakes, or attempt to spray other boaters, swimmers or beachgoers. Falls can and will happen, especially during the learning process. Should you start to fall, don't be tempted to hang on. It's safer to get clear of the watercraft. Re-board only with the engine off, with the driver boarding first and then passengers.
- In the event the craft flips, look for a sticker on the stern detailing the proper way to flip the craft upright to avoid engine damage.
- Though a PWC might be able to operate in shallow conditions, avoid environmentally sensitive areas. While PWC might not have any rudder or propeller extending below the hull bottom, the extreme pressure of water exiting the jet pump can still do damage in shallow conditions. Riding in shallow waters can also cause damage to your craft because the suction of the pump can draw in sand, rocks and other debris in waters less than 3 feet deep.

Finally, never operate a personal watercraft at night. Not only are personal watercraft not equipped with navigation lights, their unique design exposes riders to a greater chance of falling off the craft, a situation that could be dangerous in low visibility.

## Required Safety Equipment for a PWC

- A **life jacket** for each operating passenger, and person being towed
- A Coast Guard-approved B-1 fire extinguisher
- An approved sound-signaling device such as a whistle or horn
- An emergency engine cutoff lanyard attached to the operator
- Proper display of registration numbers, letters and validation decals
- Vessel registration, to be displayed when requested
- A functioning backfire flame arrestor and passive ventilation system

## Recommended Safety Equipment

- **Hand-held VHF radio**, and a cell phone as a backup
- A basic first-aid kit, sunscreen, and burn cream
- A dewatering device such as a hand operated bilge pump
- An anchor and enough anchor line for your area
- If pulling a skier or other tow-sport participant, a skier-down flag, and a server over a certain age, and rear-view mirrors may also be required. Even if they're not required, they're good to have.
- And finally, when operating on inland waters, it's recommended you have a suitable, daytime distress signal such as flares, an orange flag, or signal mirror.



**EVERY HOME  
SHOULD HAVE A  
MULTI-PURPOSE  
FIRE EXTINGUISHER.**

A public safety message from the International  
Association of Fire Fighters



## **HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER**

**P**PULL THE PIN

**A**AIM AT THE BASE OF FIRE

**S**SQUEEZE THE LEVER

**S**WEEP SIDE TO SIDE





## **Fireworks Safety Tips**

### **Home & Community Safety**

Canada Safety Council believes that the safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend an exhibition fireworks show handled by professionals. There might be an event hosted by your community, overseen by a trained, certified professional. If you choose to hold a family fireworks show with “common fireworks” sold to consumers, remember that injuries almost always result from improper handling and a disregard to safety.

Canada Safety Council would like to share some fireworks safety tips from purchasing and setting up, to the fireworks show and proper disposal. Regulation alone cannot protect the public. It must be combined with personal responsibility and awareness.

#### **Purchasing:**

- Follow the laws and regulations regarding the use of fireworks.
- Purchase your fireworks from a reliable source that sells products meeting safety standards.
- Stay away from illegal explosives or firecrackers and do not improvise and make your own fireworks.

#### **Setting Up:**

- Read the Instructions, this is worth repeating: read the instructions, cautions and warnings on each firework item.
- Store unused fireworks in a closed box away from the firework being lit and do not smoke around the fireworks.
- Set up outdoors in a clear, open space. Light fireworks on a hard, flat and level surface to insure stability.
- Check the wind and have the wind blowing away from the spectators.

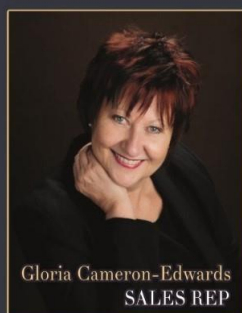
- Spectators should be at least the safety distance written on the fireworks label away from the display, keeping special supervision on children.
- Have a bucket of sand, supply of water and a working fire extinguisher on hand.

### Fireworks Show:

- Only adults (18 years or over) should handle the fireworks. If you are impaired (alcohol or drugs) do not handle the fireworks.
- Light only one firework item at a time.
- Wear protective eye glasses and gloves. Light at arm's length and then stand back.
- Never lean over the fireworks and keep hair and clothes away from fire sources.
- Never attempt to re-light a "dud" or defective firework.
- Never hold a lighted firework item in your hand.

### Proper Disposal:

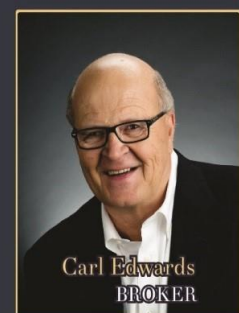
- Sparklers should be immersed in a bucket of sand to cool down after burning out, as they remain very hot for some time.
  - Fireworks should be disposed of safely and properly.
- Canada Safety Council knows that fireworks are popular, impressive and fun. Know the safety rules and respect the firework's firepower.



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13. And in a pinch, it can even be used for self defense :)



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# THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF CAST IRON CARE

Forget all the myths. Follow these tips and your skillet will last forever. Yes, forever.

1

## ...RESPECT IT.

You are its steward, and it's your duty to pass it on to the next generation.

2

## ...USE IT OFTEN.

The more you use your cast-iron skillet, the better it will work, and the more you'll care for it.

3

## ...SAVE THIS PAGE.

Tear it out and tape it to the inside of your pantry door.

4

## ...CLEAN CAST IRON AFTER EACH USE.

Wash with hot water while pan is still warm.

5

## ...DON'T USE SOAP. EVER.

And no matter what, don't ever put cast iron in the dishwasher.

7

## ...DRY IT IMMEDIATELY.

Wipe dry after washing and heat over low flame for 2 minutes to open the pores of the iron. Use a paper towel and tongs to apply an even, light film of vegetable oil or flaxseed oil on the inside of the pan.



8

## ...STORE IT IN A COOL, DRY PLACE.

For pans with lids, add a paper towel wad, and keep ajar to let air flow.



9

## ...UNDERSTAND "SEASONING."

For cast-iron cookware, this is the polymerization of fat bonded to the surface of the pan. In layman's terms, seasoning is the glossy sheen that gives cast-iron cookware its nonstick properties and keeps it from rusting. Protect and maintain the seasoning and your skillet will last forever. See below to learn how.

10

## ...BUST THE RUST.

Rub cast iron with steel wool. For the seriously stubborn rust on old, neglected pans, take the cast iron to a machine shop and ask someone to pressure blast it with air or sand. Then start the seasoning process (see below) to build a protective coat.



*Fry an egg on this surface and it won't stick!*

6

## ...SCOUR SMARTLY.

Use coarse salt like Morton's Kosher Salt for scouring stubborn bits of food without damaging the seasoning. Use a paper towel to rub the salt into the bottom and around the inside edges of the pan. A stiff bristle brush also works well. Still sticking? Loosen residue such as caramel by boiling water in the pan.



11

## ...RE-SEASON IT.

Here's the best way to rebuild the seasoning and bring your skillet back to life.

### WASH VIGOROUSLY

After busting the rust, wash cast iron with warm and—just this once—soapy water. Dry well.

### RUB WITH VEGETABLE OIL

Use a paper towel to rub oil inside, outside, and on skillet handle. Wipe away any excess.

### BAKE AT 400° FOR AN HOUR

Place upside down on oven rack; line bottom rack with foil. Bake. Repeat oiling and baking until seasoned. ●





# Cordova Lake Community News

## Cordova Lake Cookbook Fundraiser Update

Thank you to all of the outstanding “Cordova Lake Chef’s” for submitting your favourite recipes to be included in the new, soon to be released, Cordova Lake Cookbook. The response to the call for recipes was fantastic and the recipes we received all sound truly amazing and delicious!

We’re hoping that the cookbook will be available for purchase within the next few weeks. Once we have received them a notification will be sent out with information about the cost and how to get your copies.

Here’s to a scrumptious summer for all!

Allyson Gubb and Janet Gammon

**Wonderful Sunset from the Maker cottage at the south end of the lake!**

**Thank you, Betty for providing the photo!**





# Fireflies need dark nights for their summer light shows—here’s how you can help

By Avalon C.S. Owens And Sara Lewis

Published: June 14, 2021

Before humans invented fire, the only things that lit up the night were the moon, the stars and **bioluminescent** creatures—including fireflies. These ambassadors of natural wonder are soft-bodied beetles that emit “cold light,” using a **biochemical reaction** housed in their abdominal lanterns.

In recent decades, fireflies have vanished from many places where they were once found. Like other insects, fireflies are **threatened by habitat loss and pesticide use**. They are also uniquely vulnerable to the harmful effects of **light pollution**.

As scientists who study **fireflies** and how they are **affected by artificial light**, we want to make sure that future generations can continue to enjoy one of nature’s greatest wonders.

## A life in the dark

Fireflies evolved some **100 million years ago** and have blossomed into more than 2,200 species that are found on every continent except Antarctica. Here in North America, nearly 150 different species of flashing firefly light up our summer nights.

Most North American species have a two- to four-week mating season. Each evening, males and females engage in a dash of light flirtation. The males fly around, producing a species-specific pattern of flashes. Females, perched in the undergrowth, discreetly respond when they are interested with flashes of their own.

For the vast majority of evolutionary history, nighttime light sources were predictable and short-lived: The sun set, and the moon waned. But as advances in technology made it cheaper and easier for humans to light up their environment, light pollution has become a constant presence in urban, suburban and rural habitats.

Human-caused light sources—house lights, path lights, streetlights—often shine all night, year-round. Humans can use curtains to block out a neighbor’s annoying LED floodlight, but nocturnal animals aren’t so fortunate. The more we light up the night, the less space we leave for the firefly flash dance.

## Blinded by the light

We and **other firefly researchers** have become increasingly worried about the future of these remarkable insects. More than a decade of **scientific research** offers ample evidence that light pollution is a threat to firefly reproduction.

The fundamental problem is visibility: Fireflies use their bioluminescence to flirt in the dark. It doesn’t work so well with the lights on.

Scientists have known for some time that direct illumination from a nearby streetlight **makes male fireflies flash less**, but that is only half the story. As with most animals that engage in complex courtship rituals, female fireflies are the choosy ones—and they are watching the show with the rest of us. When a female sees a male she likes, she flashes back. He zips over, and that’s when the magic happens.

Our **recent lab study** shows that females of a common New England firefly species are even more sensitive to direct illumination than their male counterparts. Under artificial light, males flash about half as often, while females rarely, if ever, flash back.

It may be that female fireflies are quite literally blinded by the light shining down into their eyes. Or even if they do manage to pick out a male flash pattern here and there, they might not think it worth a reply. Previous research shows that **female fireflies prefer bright flashes over dim ones**, and background light can turn an otherwise bright flash into one that is dull and unimpressive.

The brightness of the artificial light source makes a big difference, but its dominant colour is also a factor. Fireflies don’t see blue or red light very well because they have evolved to focus in on the **particular yellow-green hue that they use to communicate**. Amber light, which has a yellow-orange hue, is most disruptive to firefly courtship—even more so than white light—because it approaches the colour of firefly bioluminescence.

## Help fireflies reclaim the night

Current research supports a few simple **firefly-friendly lighting guidelines** that can help protect both fireflies and **other animals** that need the dark.

First, remove unnecessary light. Lights left on in the middle of the night—especially in natural habitats like backyards, parks, and reserves—too often go unused by anyone. Install motion detectors, timers and shielding to ensure that light goes only where people need it, when they need it. These devices can **pay for themselves** over the long term.





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## A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO YELLOW STRIPEY THINGS



### CARPENTER BEE

- ACTS LIKE IT'S TOUGH, BUT CAN'T ACTUALLY HURT YOU
- HAS NO CONCEPT OF WHAT GLASS IS
- LIVES IN YOUR FENCE
- FLIES AGGRESSIVELY TO TRY AND SCARE YOU AWAY



### HONEYBEE

- IS THE BEE THAT NEEDS HELP THE MOST
- EXCELLENT POLLINATOR
- VERY FRIENDLY
- CAN ONLY STING ONCE



### BUMBLEBEE

- ALSO POLLINATES STUFF VERY WELL
- SO FAT IT SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FLY
- WILL LET YOU PET IT WITHOUT GETTING AGITATED
- ACTUALLY A FLYING PANDA



### HOVERFLY

- WEARS YELLOW STRIPEY UNIFORM TO SCARE YOU
- ACTUALLY CAN'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU
- HANGS OUT IN FIELDS
- FOLLOWS YOU IF IT LIKES YOU



### PAPER WASP

- LOOKS SCARY, BUT WILL ONLY ATTACK IF PROVOKED
- STING HURTS LIKE THE DEVIL
- WILL CHASE YOU IF YOU SWAT AT IT
- HAS NO CONCEPT OF PERSONAL SPACE



### YELLOW JACKET

- WANTS YOUR FOOD AND WILL FIGHT YOU FOR IT
- NEVER LEAVES YOU ALONE
- WILL STING YOU JUST FOR THE HECK OF IT
- IS JUST A JERK



### CICADA KILLER

- LOOKS LIKE SATAN'S NIGHTMARES
- EXCLUSIVELY EATS CICADAS
- CAN STING YOU, BUT USUALLY WON'T
- STILL PRETTY TERRIFYING



### DIRT DAUBER

- ALMOST NEVER STINGS ANYTHING EXCEPT SPIDERS
- BUILDS NEST IN THE GROUND
- HOARDS SPIDERS IN SAID NEST
- COOLEST LOOKING OF THE WASPS







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