

Indian & Little Indian Ponds

St. Albans

Description

The shores and waters of Indian Pond and Little Indian Pond provide a diversity of habitats for plants and animals, including a rare wetland community (called a circumneutral fen), two rare plant species, and one rare animal species. The wetlands east of Little Indian Pond, with an outlying area to the west along the south shore of Indian Pond, are not the typical lakeside wetlands in this part of Maine, but instead have unusual characteristics suggesting a more alkaline substrate. These circumneutral fens (wetlands that have developed on peat and retain contact with surface waters) include wooded portions with northern white cedar, and open portions with shrubs including the uncommon shrubby cinquefoil, an indicator for this type of wetland. Sparse-flowered sedge, a very rare plant in Maine, has been found in this fen. Fewer than a dozen examples of this type of wetland are currently documented in the state, despite fairly extensive surveys; most are in eastern Aroostook County.



The open waters provide habitat for two other rare species. A few individuals of the Tidewater Mucket, a rare mussel, were seen near the Indian Pond boat launch in 1997. Vasey's Pondweed, a rare aquatic plant, has been known from this lake since 1940, and was confirmed as recently as 1990. This is one of only five locations known in the state for this plant. Both species may occur in the northeastern half of the lake as well as in the more heavily developed southwestern portion where they were collected.

Rare Species and Natural Communities Summary Table

Common Name	Latin Name	EO Rank	Global Rank	State Rank
Tidewater Mucket	<i>Leptodea ochracea</i>	--		
Vasey's Pondweed	<i>Potamogeton vaseyi</i>	--		
Sparse-flowered Sedge	<i>Carex tenuiflora</i>	C	G5	S2
Shrubby Cinquefoil – Sedge Circumneutral Fen		B	--	S2

Other Resources Mapped by MDIFW

Most of the perimeter of Little Indian Pond, and some shore areas of Indian Ponds, are mapped as Wading Bird – Waterfowl Habitat. A Deer Wintering Areas is mapped northeast of Little Indian Pond.

Protection Status

None of the land is in conservation ownership.

Conservation Considerations

Timber harvest should be avoided in the wooded portion of the circumneutral fen. For lands where timber harvest or development continues, buffers should be maintained around all wetlands and pondshores. While different species can have different buffering requirements, wider buffers provide better protection for riparian and wetland-dependent species. The state minimum shoreland zoning standards specify a minimum 75' buffer in which very little harvest or clearing is allowed, with less stringent restrictions within 250' of the wetland border. Better protection will be afforded to the wetlands and ponds if as little alteration as possible occurs within 250' of the wetland/upland border. Any timber harvesting within and adjacent to wetlands or adjacent to ponds should be implemented with strict adherence to Shoreland Zoning guidelines and Maine Forest Service Best Management Practices.

Conservation easements and/or fee acquisition would be appropriate land protection vehicles here. Also important is maintaining or improving the water quality within the watershed.