

**T**he guy who discovered hydrilla on Hobomock Pond, Bill Glover is an active member of the Pembroke Watershed Association and the Weed Watchers, a group of residents who identify problem plant species in local waterways. A sixth grade science teacher in Braintree, Glover hopes to get kids interested in watersheds with a Weed Watchers Rangers program he is offering through the library this summer.

**What is a Weed Watcher?** A Weed Watcher basically goes around the pond, either in a boat or by foot, and documents the weeds you see that are potentially exotic or invasive species. The main thing is to see if it's spreading. We try to do it in the early summer and then again in the fall. This doesn't have to be laborious. It can be fun, and it can include families. This is a great way to introduce youngsters to weeds and the quality of the ponds.

**How do you know what you're looking for?** There are two guidebooks — one put out by the DCR that is probably better for the amateur because of the colored pictures — and one put out by New England Aquarium and the Department of Environmental Management that is more scientific. I didn't go through the training session. I had the science background. But there is training you can do.

**How did you discover the hydrilla?** One of the things we were noticing, especially in Hobomock Pond, was we were getting an excessive amount of a particular weed. Some people were saying that it was probably milfoil, and I said, 'It just doesn't look like that. It's not fitting.' So I did more research, started looking at particulars of that plant — digging it up and looking at the nodules at the bottom of the root system, grabbing a microscope from school and looking at it more closely. I finally was able to say this is what we've got. Then I sent it to the state



**Bill Glover stands near his home at the edge of Hobomock Pond, where he has lived for 16 years.**

Photo by Becca Manning

and the state confirmed that we did in fact have hydrilla. It was lucky that we were able to identify it as soon as we did; otherwise, we would have potentially lost this pond.

**After one year of treatment, do you notice a difference in Hobomock Pond?** I haven't been down there in a couple of weeks, but all last year — toward the end of the year especially — I noticed that it was a lot clearer. We're hoping the treatments this year will help even more. The problem is it's ongoing. We need to also be aware of the fact that there are many other invasives that are hitting all of our ponds, not just the hydrilla in Hobomock. Pretty much every pond in the state has some sort of invasive on it that has been introduced one way or another.

**What is the youth program you're starting this summer?** I got approval from the PWA board and then approached the library about starting a program to teach youngsters about watersheds, weed identification and bugs. The librarians were delighted because this year's summer reading theme is 'Go Green.' I'll be doing an hour program every day the week of July 12-16. I'll have labs set up where the youngsters will get to use microscopes and look at some of the different things. Then I'll be taking them out and showing them what a watershed is. Really what I'm hoping for is to promote awareness but also to promote some

excitement with the younger generation.

**What would you like to see in the future for Pembroke's ponds?** What we need is for the community to see that these are viable resources that really give Pembroke its uniqueness. Without those ponds, we are going to lose so much, not only in loss of wildlife but loss of recreation, loss of — just sitting here, the peacefulness of the water behind you and the reflection of the water and the ripples and watching the water fowl, or going down and seeing the turtles or listening to the frogs croak at dusk. We'd lose a lot.

My other wish is to have the younger generation pick up the flag and continue on. We've got a lot of dedicated people in the Watershed Association, but we're older. We need to bring that younger mix in. I think the easiest way to do that is through the youngest group — a lot of times if you get them involved and get them excited, they'll bring their parents in. I'm hopeful and I'm encouraged by how much we've done in a very short period of time. We've got a strong Watershed Association that has done a tremendous amount of behind-the-scenes work to change the course of the quality of these ponds. Yeah, it's a long road still to go; we've got a lot more obstacles to overcome. But I really am confident that we're going to see positive changes over the next few years.