



VOLUNTEER GROUP SEEKS SERIOUS ANGLERS TO SPOT LAKEMAIDS

Minneapolis (April 14, 2008) -- Alerting all anglers in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska and North and South Dakota: If you've detected any large, unexplained shapes on your fish finder electronic equipment or have seen mysteriously large fins while fishing a north country lake or river, a group of lakemaid spotters wants to hear from you.

The National Lakemaid Reporting Center (NLRC), a Minneapolis-based volunteer group, is seeking serious anglers to help spot lakemaids, a freshwater mermaid.

"Many reports are not brought forward because those who have a story to tell do not want to be ridiculed," said Stephen Dupont, a spokesperson for the volunteer group. "Lakemaids are the freshwater cousins of saltwater mermaids or seamaids. They're beautiful and mysterious creatures roaming the cold, clear depths of our lakes and rivers throughout the North Country."

As potential evidence of the existence of lakemaids, the National Lakemaid Reporting Center points to two recent images – a photo of a very large tail from an unidentified North Country lake, possibly Lake Superior, and a fish finder image showing an image that looks mysteriously like a half fish-half human form. Unfortunately, the NLRC cannot verify the authenticity of these images. And, that's why it is seeking the assistance of anglers who regularly fish the Great Lakes and lakes and rivers throughout the Upper Midwest.

The NLRC intends to incorporate sighting techniques that researchers have used for other mysterious creatures, such as Champ, the sea monster that reportedly inhabits the waters of New York's Lake Champlain. These techniques range from enlisting the help of volunteer spotters to the use of technology such as web cams and on-the-water sonar searches.

By establishing and training a network of dedicated lakemaid spotters, the NLRC believes it will significantly enhance the chance of a lakemaid sighting. The volunteer group has established official spotters at Lake Minnetonka, Lake Mille Lacs and the Chippewa Flowage. It is initially seeking volunteer spotters for other lakes throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska.

The group would like to establish chapters of dedicated lakemaid spotters throughout the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes, which would meet regularly to share information about spotting techniques and plan lakemaid spotting outings.

While the volunteer group admits it doesn't have any concrete evidence now, it hopes, with the assistance of anglers and others who enjoy our lakes and rivers, that proof of the existence of lakemaids isn't that far off.

To support its efforts, the NLRC is relying on professional anglers and guides, such as Larry Dahlberg, host of the TV program, "Hunt for Big Fish," who claims to have had several real-life encounters with lakemaids, as well as corporate support. Rapala, maker of the legendary Rapala fishing lure, is encouraging anglers to assist the NLRC in its quest to spot lakemaids. Lakemaid Beer, which has provided a home for the NLRC on its web site, and supports the NLRC's effort to obtain physical evidence about lakemaids.

"Rapala is helping us connect with thousands of Rapala anglers who fish the North Country – that's a lot of eyeballs on the water," said Dupont.

"This is serious business. Lakemaid spotting is still very much in its infancy. It's where spotting Sasquatch or UFOs was 20 or 30 years ago," said Dupont. "Back then, the ridicule could devastate your personal life and career. Through the efforts of professional spotters, it's okay for people to come forward with stories about Sasquatch or UFOs. We hope we can do the same for those with lakemaid encounters."

To join the National Lakemaid Reporting Center as a volunteer spotter or to sign up for free reports about lakemaid sightings, visit lakemaidbeer.com.

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