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Icecap goes out on Lake Koshkonong

By Christine Spangler
Managing editor

KOSHKONONG - Lake Koshkonong's icecap disappeared Thursday, marking the fourth time since records were first kept in 1920 that it disappeared on March 24.

"The storm we had a few days ago pretty much did in the icecap," a veteran lake watcher reported Thursday.

"The winds were blowing it onto the south end of the lake.

"It's really subjective this year, as the icecap is so broken up, it's piecemeal," he added. "So I'm going to call it as of today."

The other years that the icecap melted on March 24 were 1939, 1945 and 1977.

Until 2001, the Daily Union's records dated back to only 1947. However, in 2002, they were combined with those of three longtime Koshkonong-area families who have been keeping track of the meltdown since the 1920 flood.

Those records show that in the past nine decades, the earliest the icecap has gone out has been on Feb. 25, 1998, and the latest, on April 15, 1972. Last year, it disappeared on March 25.

Not surprisingly, mid-April has seen the most meltdowns since 1920. April 4 is a favorite date, as the icecap has gone out on that day six times: in 1925, 1944, 1950, 1970, 1980 and 1989.

Tied for second with five years each are April 6 in 1920, 1924, 1929, 1935 and 1962, as well as March 27 in 1936, 1941, 1949, 1961 and 1994.

Three other dates tie March 24 to claim third place in the ice-out "race": March 23 in 1953, 1964, 1985 and 2009; March 25 in 1927, 1968, 2007 and 2010; April 1 in 1934, 1943, 1958 and 1984, and April 8 in 1928, 1946, 1959 and 1971.