

# Natural Selections

Newsletter of the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon



April-June 2019

## Spring Birding is Just Around the Corner

BY GORDON RUSSELL, PRESIDENT  
PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER OF MAINE AUDUBON

I know it's said you should live in the moment, enjoying the season and opportunities around you. But as winter drags on, it's hard not to shift your thoughts to the warmer months, when the marshes will be teeming with waterfowl and the tree tops will be ringing with the sounds of warblers and other migratory birds. Perhaps by the time you read this, you will have already heard or seen your first Red-winged Blackbirds or American Woodcock of the season, and realize that the rest of the pack will soon be on its way. I don't know about you, but after a long winter, spring birding season cannot get here soon enough for me.

Fortunately, volunteers from the Penobscot Valley Chapter are again poised to bring you a variety of bird-watching opportunities and experiences through our Neighborhood Bird Walks, which take place throughout May. The full schedule of walks is included in this issue of *Natural Selections*. We're offering 10 bird walks in the greater Bangor area this time, visiting familiar locales like Essex Woods and Fields Pond. As always, the bird walks are free and open to all levels of experience. We are fortunate to have nearby places to bird, and experienced leaders who can gladly help with identification. These guided bird walks have been going on for over a dozen years, allowing us a chance to track species occurrence at each location. We hope to bring you a summary of these results in a future edition of *Natural Selections*.

Speaking of trends in bird occurrence, this is the second year of a five-year effort to update Maine's bird atlas. The first survey was done from 1978-83, and it critically needs to be updated to

help inform biologists and others on the status and needs of Maine's birds. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife heads up this current bird assessment, aided by Maine Audubon and other organizations. The survey basically will determine how many breeding and wintering birds there are in Maine, and where they are located in the state. The bulk of the data collection is being carried out by volunteers, working as citizen-scientists to help observe and record bird breeding and other activity in as much of the state as possible. More information on the project, including how you can get

involved, can be found at: <https://www.maine.gov/birdatlas>. We hope that some of the results from our Neighborhood Bird Walks can be incorporated into the larger Maine Bird Atlas project.

May is one of the most enjoyable times to bird in Maine. We hope you can join us on a bird walk or two. We are always looking for suggestions for new birding venues. We also welcome your involvement if you'd like to lead a bird walk, or volunteer with the Penobscot Valley Chapter in other ways. As always, let us know how we can better serve you.

### A Day On the Pond

By Sean Trahan

Finally the days are getting a bit longer. I feel the sun and its warmth against my skin as I crack open the empty bird feeder. The ice on the pond is attempting, with Old Man Winter, to make one last stand; however the surface echoes with the unique sound ice makes as the days grow warmer, right before it breaks up. The crocuses shiver as they shed the cold snow from their petals. The deer in the backwoods appear tired, yet relieved that fresh sprouts of grass are starting to show. The snow melts, as does the frost-laden ground. Paw prints of my many nature-bound neighbors can be seen embedded in the soft mushy ground. The thin grey squirrels can be seen in the trees, cleaning the mud from their furry coats. The chickadees can be heard as they hop tree to tree, waiting to have fresh seed available so they can take one seed at a time to a local branch. A chipmunk, an early riser I might add, with fat cheeks from the morning's find, scurries along the old moss-covered rocks once used as a land barrier, dodging the patches of white snow. He disappears into a crack, now his abode. Above, an eagle glides low to the treetops, and the only sound that can be heard is the gentle air beneath its wings as it lands on the branch in the pine tree. It cocks its head to the side as if to say "Hello," and then appears to ruffle its feathers, shaking off the chill of the morning air. Like me, it's basking in the warmth of this fine spring day. With the bird feeder now full, in a futile attempt to keep four-legged creatures at bay, I pull the rope to hoist it far off the forest floor. Within seconds, the patiently waiting birds dive onto the feeder. They sing away in joy, as there is bountiful seed and warmth in the air. They have confidence that in the days to come, it will only get warmer. Spring is here!

# MAINE AUDUBON

Penobscot Valley Chapter

## Natural Selections

*Natural Selections* is published four times a year by the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon. Maine Audubon members living in the Penobscot Valley region automatically become chapter members and receive *Natural Selections* at no additional charge. Membership in Maine Audubon costs per year:

\$50 household; \$40 individual

\$30 senior/volunteer

Membership benefits include a discount on programs and purchases at all Maine Audubon stores as well as a subscription to the quarterly periodical *Habitat*.

The chapter offers a weekly email service to remind members about upcoming events in our region plus electronic delivery of this newsletter upon request. Please email Jim Zeman, [kjzeman@hotmail.com](mailto:kjzeman@hotmail.com) to sign up for these services.

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## FIELDS POND JOURNAL

BY DAVID LAMON

FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER MANAGER

### Year of the Salmon

I overheard a young student who recently wandered through the Fields Pond Audubon Center comment on our aquarium tank, saying, "There's nothing in there." As she proceeded to walk on I replied back, "Are you sure there's nothing in there?" She stopped, somewhat startled that someone had heard her comment. I invited her to take a closer look as I explained that the tank was set up to replicate the bottom of our local stream (including the water in the aquarium that came from Sedgeunkedunk Stream). After looking again, she still insisted that nothing was in there. When I asked her what she expected to see she replied, "fish!"

Historically hundreds of thousand wild Atlantic salmon used Maine's waterways to spawn and complete their life cycle. Salmon were an important species to the ecology of the Gulf of Maine and helped shape the lives of the people who lived here. Each fall these anadromous fish would migrate upstream to deposit and fertilize their eggs in reds (gravel nests) on the stream bottom. By February, the eyes and spine of the developing salmon can be seen through the translucent eggs which are well camouflaged on the gravelly stream bottom.

"See the eyes inside the eggs?" I say as I point to the translucent pinkish orbs, well-tucked into their reds. "Whoa, cool! I've never seen a fish egg. When will they hatch?" asked the wide-eyed student. I explained, "Just like chicken eggs depend on temperature to incubate and hatch, salmon eggs depend on temperature too. Triggered by warmer spring water temperatures, salmon eggs will begin to hatch in April.

Our artificial water chiller will do its best to keep pace with nature."

"Will you keep the fish when they hatch?" she asked. One simple question often has a way of leading us to more questions and to a more complex understanding. This student's question of "Will we keep the fish?" allowed me to explain more details about the salmon's lifecycle, what makes them an endangered species, and what is being done to restore their habitat. Salmon depend on a healthy ecosystem to survive and complete their lifecycle, moving between the ocean and freshwater rivers and streams. They are highly sensitive to changes in their environment, which makes them a good indicator species for overall environmental health. When salmon restoration efforts began in Maine over twenty years ago, things seemed much less complicated than today. Research and restoration efforts over the past couple of decades have given us a more complex understanding of both salmon and our environment.

I tell this student that "no," we won't be keeping the baby salmon, we will be releasing them into Sedgeunkedunk stream; adding, that she's welcome to come back to the Center later in the spring to help us let them go. Her excitement at the prospect of this was inspiring. Before leaving she makes a count of how many eggs are in our tank so she can, in her words, "know how many fish will make it back to the ocean." Her comment makes me smile. I know that the research tells us that we'd be lucky if one or two percent of our hatched salmon make it back to the ocean. But each one of those salmon eggs waiting to hatch doesn't know that. It's spring...and it's a season of hope.

# MAINE AUDUBON

## Penobscot Valley Chapter, Fields Pond Audubon Center

# Neighborhood Bird Walks

**May 2019**

*Unless otherwise indicated, all walks are from 7:00 – 8:30 AM. Rubber boots or waterproof shoes are recommended due to wet grass and occasional muddy conditions. In consideration of wildlife and fellow birders, no pets please on the bird walks.*

*Tuesday, May 6:* **Indian Trail and Penobscot County Conservation Association, Brewer**

Leaders: Gordon Russell, Jane Rosinski

Meet at Penobscot County Conservation Association, North Main St.

*Wednesday, May 8:* **Kenduskeag Stream Trail, Bangor**

Leaders: Hope Brogunier, Gordon Russell, Jane Rosinski

Meet in the 2nd parking lot upstream of the intersection of Valley Ave. and Bruce Rd.

*Saturday, May 11:* (World Migratory Bird Day): **Fields Pond Audubon Center, Holden**

Leaders: Nick Lund, David Lamon

Meet in Fields Pond Audubon Center parking lot for a Birding Blitz to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day! **Please note that this walk will start at 8:30 rather than 7 a.m., and it will run for approximately two hours. Refer to FPAC program listing in this newsletter for more details.**

*Wednesday, May 15:* **Mt. Hope Cemetery, Bangor**

Leaders: Jim and Kathy Zeman

Meet in the parking area inside the State St. entrance.

*Friday, May 17:* **Saxl Park, Bangor**

Leaders: Laura Levinson, Elizabeth Payne

Meet in Cascade Park parking lot, just off State St.

*Monday, May 20:* **Leonard's Mills, Bradley**

Leaders: Bob Duchesne

Meet at the junction of Government Rd. and Rt. 178

*Wednesday, May 23:* **Essex Woods, Bangor**

Leaders: Robert Ostrowski, Steve Mierzykowski

Meet in the parking lot at the end of Watchmaker Rd.

*Friday, May 25:* **West Penjajawoc Preserve, Bangor**

Co-sponsored by Bangor Land Trust

Leaders: Elizabeth Payne, Lucy Quimby

Meet at the dead end of Fox Hollow Lane, off Essex St.

*Saturday, May 26:* **Technology Park, Orono**

Leaders: Jerry Longcore, Jim Bird

Take Godfrey Drive in Orono. Meet in the parking lot behind the building (formerly Nexx-Linx call center) across the road from Black Bear Inn.

*Friday, May 31:* **Bangor City Forest, Bangor**

Leaders: Paul Markson, Gloria Vollmers

Meet at parking lot in Bangor City Forest at end of Kittredge Rd.



## 2019 SPRING PROGRAMS AT FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER

Please call 989-2591 or go to [maineaudubon.org](http://maineaudubon.org) to register.

April 2nd, 6:30 pm

### Tracking Maine's Great Blue Herons Beyond State Lines

Did you ever wonder where Maine's Great Blue Herons go in winter? In 2016, five adult Great Blue Herons were outfitted with lightweight GPS tracking devices, then released to allow researchers to follow their movements during nesting, migration, and wintering. Two of the five Maine birds migrated to Florida, one to the Bahamas, one to Cuba, and one flew all the way to Haiti! Hear all about these majestic birds, how over 100 volunteers have been monitoring their colonies for the past 10 years, and how students are integral to tracking their movements within and beyond state lines. \$8 Members; \$10 Non-Members.

April 6th, 9am – 12:30 pm

### Maine Turtle Roadkill Survey

Roadkill is one of the biggest threats to turtle populations in Maine, so Maine Audubon is looking for volunteers to help identify where they are most at risk from traffic as they move across the landscape. Your help is essential to the success of this project! Training is free, but pre-registration is required.

April 9th, 6:30 pm

### Conserving vernal pools in Maine's towns using a locally driven, collaborative approach: The Maine Vernal Pool Special Area Management Plan

Towns in Maine now have access to an innovative, locally driven vernal pool conservation tool that addresses both the conservation of vernal pools in towns rural areas while supporting development in town's growth zones. This voluntary tool is being implemented in Orono and Topsham, Maine and may open the door to fostering both economic and ecological health in our towns. Arum Calhoun, our speaker, is a wetland ecologist and faculty member at the

University of Maine. Her work stresses the importance of conserving natural resources (wetlands and vernal pools) and/or target species (wood frogs, spotted salamanders, and blue-spotted salamanders) on private lands by addressing both human and ecological dimensions. \$8 Members; \$10 Non-Members.

April 13th, 8:45 am – 1 pm

### Growing Up WILD!

#### Educator Workshop

The award-winning education program, Growing Up WILD, is designed for early childhood educators (Grades preK-2). Building on children's sense of wonder through a wide range of activities and experiences, Growing Up WILD provides positive impressions about the natural world, as well as lifelong social and academic skills. Participants will receive the activity guide, "Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children," and 4 contact hours. \$25 Maine Audubon Members; \$27 Non-Members.

April 15 -19

### April Vacation Camp, grades 3-5

Member: \$40/session, Nonmember: \$50/session (scholarship assistance is available) Register for single days or the whole week.

Discover the wonders of Spring at Fields Pond vacation camp! Learn about our local plants, insects, amphibians, birds, mammals, and how they make Fields Pond's wetlands, forests and fields their home. Fun-packed days will include scientific explorations, active games, outdoor explorations, and crafts that tie into daily themes. Dress and pack for outdoor exploration. Bring indoor shoes and waterproof boots, 2 snacks, a lunch and water bottle. Sign up for single sessions or the entire week.

Saturday, April 20th, 9 – 11 am

### Maine Bird Atlas Training w/ Doug Hitchcock

The Maine Bird Atlas is a project to survey and map the distribution and abundance of breeding and wintering birds in Maine. It is a joint effort

between the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Maine Natural History Observatory, Maine Audubon, the Biodiversity Research Institute and the public. The project will run from 2018-2022 to enable conservationists and researchers to track changes in bird populations.

Birds are an excellent indicator of environmental health, allowing for an overall understanding of the environmental health of the State of Maine. This workshop will explain the importance of understanding bird populations, what bird populations indicate and how YOU as a citizen scientist can play role in this effort. Program is free, but pre-registration is required.

April 25 – May 30, Thursday mornings, 9:30-10:30 am

### Family Fun Series

Ages 2-5, siblings under 2 free

Young children and their grown-ups are invited to spend an hour exploring nature together through stories, songs, art, and play. Each week will include both indoor activities and outdoor adventures designed to foster a connection to nature, encourage stewardship, and provide an introduction to group learning settings. Advanced registration is encouraged! Drop-ins are welcome if space is available (10 spots per class).

Non-Member: \$80 (\$14 drop-in); Member: \$60 (\$10 drop-in)



Indigo Bunting by Ron Logan

## 2019 SPRING PROGRAMS AT FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER

*April 26th – May 31st, 8:30 am*

### **Weekly Guided Nature Walks at Fields Pond**

Join us on Friday morning's this spring for an easy walk along the Sanctuary trails. We'll be sure to see plenty of birds, so bring your binoculars and dress to be comfortable outdoors. We meet at the kiosk in front of the Nature Center. Walks typically last approximately 1 ½ hours.

*Free for Members. Non-Members, \$5.*

*April 26th, 7 pm*

### **Woodcock Watch**

Learn about the wonders of the American Woodcock in a presentation revealing secrets of our weirdest shorebird. After the program we will check out the fields around Fields Pond to experience one of spring's delights—the dazzling displays of courting woodcocks! Hear the "peents" and twittering of the wings while watching the amazing spiral sky dance. Dress warm and bring binoculars. *Non-member: \$10; Member: \$8*

*April 27th, 10 am – 2 pm*

### **Spring Nature Journaling ~ Birds!**

In this workshop we'll use our nature journals to learn more about the birds that populate our fields and forests. Maine Master Naturalist, Andrea Lani, will lead participants through a variety of nature journaling techniques—from field sketching to detailed drawings, note-taking to poetry-writing—that will help you become acquainted with our feathered friends. The workshop is suitable for both beginners and experienced journal keepers. We'll start with an introduction to nature journaling during which participants will learn a variety of drawing techniques designed to help even the most reluctant artist overcome their fears. From there we'll explore a different aspect of the natural world using a variety of journaling techniques specific to bird-watching. NOTE: We will spend time both outdoors and inside, so please dress accordingly. Bring a blank book, notebook, or journal and your preferred writing and

drawing tools (a # 2 pencil is sufficient, but a drawing pen and colored pencils are welcome, if desired), and something to sit on outdoors (lightweight camp chair, sit mat, extra jacket, etc.). If you have binoculars and/or a field guide to birds, please bring them as well. *Non Member: \$40; Member: \$30*

*May 3rd, 8:45 am - 1 pm*

### **Aquatic Project WILD Educator Workshop**

Aquatic WILD is an invitation to explore, understand and share the fascinating world of water and the aquatic habitats it supports. You will experience engaging NGSS-aligned activities while networking with other educators. Participants receive the Aquatic WILD K-12 guide and 4 contact hours.

*\$25 Maine Audubon Members; \$27 Non-Members.*

*May 4th, 10am – 1pm*

### **Year of the Salmon Event**

Join us as we celebrate the International Year of the Salmon, and the restoration of the historic Penobscot River watershed. Thanks to these efforts, it is again possible for endangered Atlantic salmon to migrate to and spawn in Fields Pond.

Grown-ups and children are invited to visit our live salmon before they are released, and to enjoy activities, refreshments, and education related to salmon and their direct links to inland Maine's forests and people.

The growing list of activities includes:

- Live baby salmon (to be released into the wild this spring)
- Games & activities
- Guided nature walks
- Information tables
- Refreshments

*May 6th, 7 pm*

### **Maine's Great Migration**

Each spring millions of adult alewives make their way up Maine's rivers and streams and into their natal lakes to spawn. Along the way, these determined members of the herring family attract the attention of a wide range of wildlife. Join Maine Audubon's David Lamon as

he leads you through one of Maine's great natural history events. We'll discuss the conservation successes and challenges of restoring Maine's migratory waterways. *\$8, Members; \$10 Non-Members.*

*May 11th, 8:30 a.m.*

### **Fields Pond Birding Blitz!**

Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day at Fields Pond by gathering together with fellow birders for a morning "birding blitz" at Fields Pond. We'll review how to use the popular bird apps "Merlin" and "eBird," as well as reviewing the protocols for the Maine Bird Atlas. The Fields Pond Nature Store will be offering 10% off all newly-stocked binoculars and 15% off all older-stock bins.

*May 17th, 7pm*

### **Bringing Nature Home**

Wherever you are in Maine, the smallest planting and maintenance choices you make can have a profound impact on your local food web. In addition to our yards and local green spaces becoming opportunities to recruit and train new naturalists, they become refuges for species of plants and trees facing real challenges across broader landscapes. "Bringing Nature Home" has also been a rich opportunity for Maine Audubon to engage with key partners, including with the innovative Wild Seed Project.

*May 18th, 10am – 2pm*

### **Native Plant Sale at Fields Pond**

Help wildlife and improve your home landscape! Join us for our spring retail plant sale designed to help gardeners and homeowners integrate native species in yards, gardens and even containers. We work with state and regional vendors to source material that is naturally propagated and easily adaptable to a variety of landscape uses. In addition to the festive atmosphere, experts and resources will be on hand to help both new and experienced gardeners and growers select plants and improve their habitats.

## Birder in... Paradise? (NOT)

BY GLORIA VOLLMERS

Notes from my trip to Kauai and Oahu, from January 23 to February 4, 2019.

It's been four years since I last visited Hawaii when we went to Maui, Hawaii and Oahu. However, this time I stayed with friends who are Hawaii lovers but not interested in active birding. As a consequence, all my birding was accidental, though I carried binocs and a laminated "Birds of Hawaii" card with me at all times.

Hawaii is NOT, at least to me, an amateur, a birding paradise. You might think it would be given the miles of oceanfront and the greenery and the flowers, you might think there must be tons of birds here wherever one might look but you'd be wrong. I was right on a beach in Kauai on the dry side of the island – town called Kekaha. There are practically no birds. It was a bit scary in a way – why are there so few seabirds, given that there is not much land for birds to use for a thousand miles in any direction. The ONLY species I saw on or over the water here was the Laysan Albatross – a new bird for me. I saw quite a few of those either skimming above the water at about 2-3 yards or on rocks grooming. I came across one standing and grooming not 10 feet from me and he allowed me to stay there as long as I wanted – I lost interest before he left.

On the grass part of a local beach (Salt Pond Beach), I daily found a Semipalmated Sandpiper. They are common but loners. I never saw more than one at a time but I saw one at many different locations around the island (golf courses and other hotel environs) and they also were not shy. Never near the water, preferring grass. Sharing space with the sandpiper were many Zebra Doves which you will find everywhere. Also at the beach and everywhere else are the prolific Jungle Fowl which most of us would call roosters. Mynas are also abundant and loud.

Walking to the Sand Ponds (dry now) where salt is collected, I found a flock of African Silverbills



Laysan Albatross by Gloria Vollmers

(at least I think so!). They are nondescript small finches with a bluish/silver beak. I hoped other birds might have been there but no.

We drove out to the Kilauea Lighthouse and National Wildlife Refuge, the latter, sadly, was disappointingly closed. However you could look down over the fence into the gorge, on the left is the lighthouse on a cliff and to the right another cliff. I was able to see many Red-Footed Boobies in the trees on the cliffs. Laysan Albatrosses were there, and I saw a Frigate Bird and White-tailed and Red-Tailed Tropicbirds. I almost fell over a couple of Nenes – the Hawaiian goose – in the parking lot. No wonder it's nearly extinct. Some other people claimed to see Shearwaters, but I can't confirm it.

Birds that I saw that you know well: Northern Cardinals, House Sparrows, Cattle Egrets. A friend was confident he saw a Mockingbird – it's within the realm of possibility, but I suspect he saw a myna flying overhead. I did see a couple of Sanderlings at another beach but they were the sole birds there.

Slightly more exotic but not indigenous to Hawaii were the Red Crested Cardinals, the Japanese White-eyes and the White-rumped Shamas. Last two birds I saw were a Hawaiian Stilt and a Black-crowned Night Heron.

The main story to be told is that it is not easy to see birds on a casual basis. In addition, except for the Nene and the Hawaiian Stilt, none of the birds I saw were indigenous. If you want to bird in Hawaii – be sure to find a guide to help you, because it is unlikely you'll find unique birds on your own.

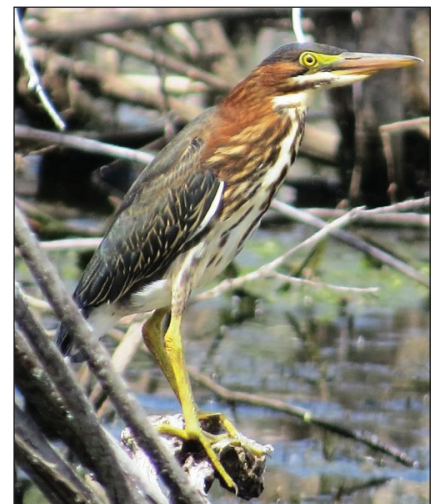
## FIELDS POND BOOK GROUP

The Fields Pond Book Group meets monthly on Thursday nights at 6:30 p.m. at the Orono Public Library, facilitated by professional librarian Joyce Rumery. Here are the titles that the group will read and discuss in April, May, and June. Please visit [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org) or call FPAC at 989-2591 to read a short overview of each book.

April 11, 2019 - Goldfarb, Ben. **Eager: The Surprising Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter.** July 2018. 304pp.

May 9, 2019 - Wilcox, Christie. **Venomous: How Earth's Deadliest Creatures Mastered Biochemistry.** 2016. 256pp.

June 13, 2019 - Jasanoff, Alan. **The Biological Mind: How Brain, Body, and Environment Collaborate to Make Us Who We Are.** 2018. 304 pp.



Green Heron by Bob Duchesne



# Birdathon 101: Join the Fun!

BY BOB DUCHESNE



photo by Bob Duchesne

Birdathon is my favorite day of the year. My team is called “The Cardinal Sins.” Sometime in late May, four of us will gather at 2 a.m. and start looking for owls. Or, to put it more precisely, listening for owls. Over the next 20 hours or so, we hope to encounter up to 130 different species.

The attempt to find as many birds as possible within 24 hours is also called a Big Day. They’re popular all over the country. Usually a birdathon is an effort to raise money for a nature-oriented non-profit, by soliciting sponsors who pledge donations to the team for each species tallied. In past years, there has been a spirited competition between several teams in the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon, with all pledges donated to benefit the Fields Pond Audubon Center. In recent years, teams have become more focused on beating their own previous scores. It’s a hoot, literally.

That’s really the thrill of it. Birdathons are an exhilarating way to exercise your birding skills, finding birds by sight, sound, habitat, and past experience, while sharing your adventure with others. There’s an adrenaline rush that comes from charging around all day, searching for birds. Elation follows each new species

sighting. Despair accompanies each big miss.

And anybody can do it, regardless of their level of birding expertise. Common birds count just as much as rare ones. Each bird is worth one point, making a robin as valuable as a waterthrush. Over the years, we’ve had teams of mothers and children, teens on bikes, and one team that strove to find the most birds over the fewest miles. Some teams go out for only a few hours. Some go all day. The adventure is supposed to be fun, not grueling...unless grueling is part of the fun.

Maybe this is your year to give it a try. It starts by acknowledging to yourself that a day of charging around looking for birds might be fun, and then trying to figure out which friends and family members might not think you’re crazy. There are rules, but don’t worry, they’re made to be broken. Don’t worry about misidentifications, either. Nobody’s checking. Besides, as a team, you can all experience the thrill of misidentifying a bird together.

We’ve put a complete birdathon guide on the chapter website at [www.pvc.maineaudubon.org](http://www.pvc.maineaudubon.org). For more information, or to join the fun, contact Bob Duchesne at 827-3782.

## Where Did the Feeder Birds Go this Winter? My Yard!

BY GLORIA VOLLMERS

In contrast to Bob’s February 2019 column in the *Bangor Daily News* regarding the absence of birds at feeders, we have been having a totally different experience. All winter we’ve had an unending supply of chickadees, white- and red-breasted nuthatches, titmouses (titmice?), hairy and downy woodpeckers, goldfinches, mourning doves and some pigeons. On March 1, a real bonanza - there appeared a handful of redpolls and a group of pine grosbeaks. Then on March 3, a male and female house finch - and the redpolls were back again.



photos by Bob Duchesne

# MAINE AUDUBON

Penobscot Valley Chapter

c/o Fields Pond Audubon Center  
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*Mission of the Penobscot Valley Chapter:  
Conserving wildlife and wildlife habitat by  
connecting people to our regional natural heritage,  
through enjoyable and meaningful activities  
that educate and promote greater environmental  
awareness.*



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## MAINE AUDUBON

# MEMBERSHIP FORM

Penobscot Valley Chapter

**YES!** I want to protect and conserve wildlife and habitat in Maine as a ☐ **new** ☐ **renewing** member.

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Seasonal Address: \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you!

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# Natural Selections

Newsletter of the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon



Spring 2019  
Supplemental Issue

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*Natural Selections* is published four times a year by the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon. Maine Audubon members living in the Penobscot Valley region automatically become chapter members and receive *Natural Selections* at no additional charge. Membership in Maine Audubon costs per year:

\$50 household; \$40 individual  
\$30 senior/volunteer

Membership benefits include a discount on programs and purchases at all Maine Audubon stores as well as a subscription to the quarterly periodical *Habitat*.

The chapter offers a weekly email service to remind members about upcoming events in our region plus electronic delivery of this newsletter upon request. Please email Jim Zeman, [kjzeman@hotmail.com](mailto:kjzeman@hotmail.com) to sign up for these services.

#### CHAPTER OFFICERS

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Vice President.....Ellen Campbell  
Secretary.....Sean Trahan  
Treasurer.....Jim Zeman  
Chapter Representative, Maine Audubon Board of Trustees.....Sandi McRae Duchesne

#### AT-LARGE CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

Bruce Bowden, Timothy Conmee, Bob Duchesne, Gloria Vollmers, and ex-officio board member David Lamon.


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Communications & Education.....Gloria Vollmers  
Advocacy.....Sandi Duchesne, Tim Conmee  
Stewardship.....Tim Conmee

#### *Natural Selections*

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## PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER PROGRAMS

*With so many exciting activities planned for this spring, there wasn't enough room in the newsletter to list them all! We invite you to join your fellow chapter members to explore Maine's natural history, discuss key environmental concerns, and celebrate the abundant wildlife and diverse ecosystems within the Penobscot Valley region. Free monthly programs that follow the school year calendar (September through May, no January) are one of the many benefits of your membership in the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon. All chapter programs are open to the general public, so feel free to bring a friend or an out-of-town guest!*

Friday, April 19, 7:00 p.m.

**BASICS OF BIRDING BEHAVIOR**  
Fields Pond Audubon Center

On a typical birding expedition, you might only spend a few seconds observing an individual bird. This program by Maine Audubon's Staff Naturalist, Doug Hitchcox, will help you understand what a bird may be doing during that short window into its life. Doug will cover topics such as bird song (including female vocalizations), roosting and where birds choose to sleep, the marvelous feats of migration, and many other surprising behaviors by our feathered friends.



American Woodcock by Bob Duchesne

Friday, May 10

**PVC ANNUAL MEETING and  
STUDENT PRESENTATION:  
"TRACKING THE  
TIMBERDOODLE"**

Fields Pond Audubon Center  
6:00 p.m. potluck supper/7:00 p.m.  
meeting and program

Calling all woodcock fanciers – we know you're out there! Please join us for a potluck supper to celebrate spring and conduct the PVC Annual Meeting. Following the election of officers and board members for 2019, we will hear a presentation from Alexander Fish, a doctoral candidate in Wildlife Biology at University of Maine and PVC's Inez Boyd Environmental Research Award (IBERA) winner for 2018. Alex will describe his ongoing research project, partially funded by PVC, that uses GPS tracking to study the migratory patterns and year-round field ecology of the American woodcock. He hopes through his research to be able to identify some of the causes for recent population declines in this enigmatic shorebird species.

c/o Fields Pond Audubon Center  
216 Fields Pond Road  
Holden, Maine 04429

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**Mission of the Penobscot Valley Chapter:**  
*Conserving wildlife and wildlife habitat by  
connecting people to our regional natural heritage,  
through enjoyable and meaningful activities  
that educate and promote greater environmental  
awareness.*

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



## Neighborhood Bird Walks May 2019

**SPECIAL SPRING SUPPLEMENT ISSUE! Four of the Neighborhood Bird Walk dates were listed incorrectly in the spring issue of Natural Selections. Please use this list with corrected dates.**

*Unless otherwise indicated, all walks are from 7:00 – 8:30 AM. Rubber boots or waterproof shoes are recommended due to wet grass and occasional muddy conditions. In consideration of wildlife and fellow birders, no pets please on the bird walks.*

*Monday, May 6:* **Indian Trail and Penobscot County Conservation Association, Brewer**

Leaders: Gordon Russell, Jane Rosinski

Meet at Penobscot County Conservation Association, North Main St.

*Wednesday, May 8:* **Kenduskeag Stream Trail, Bangor**

Leaders: Hope Brogunier, Gordon Russell, Jane Rosinski

Meet in the 2nd parking lot upstream of the intersection of Valley Ave. and Bruce Rd.

*Saturday, May 11:* (World Migratory Bird Day): **Fields Pond Audubon Center, Holden**

Leaders: Nick Lund, David Lamon

Meet in Fields Pond Audubon Center parking lot for a Birding Blitz to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day!

**Please note that this walk will start at 8:30 rather than 7 a.m., and it will run for approximately two hours.**

**Refer to FPAC program listing in this newsletter for more details.**

*Wednesday, May 15:* **Mt. Hope Cemetery, Bangor**

Leaders: Jim and Kathy Zeman

Meet in the parking area inside the State St. entrance.

*Friday, May 17:* **Saxl Park, Bangor**

Leaders: Laura Levinson, Elizabeth Payne

Meet in Cascade Park parking lot, just off State St.

*Monday, May 20:* **Leonard's Mills, Bradley**

Leaders: Bob Duchesne

Meet at the junction of Government Rd. and Rt. 178

*Tuesday, May 21:* **Essex Woods, Bangor**

Leaders: Robert Ostrowski, Steve Mierzykowski

Meet in the parking lot at the end of Watchmaker Rd.

*Wednesday, May 22:* **University of Maine, Orono**

Leader: Sandi McRae Duchesne

Meet near the Arboretum, in the parking lot between Emera Astronomy Center and Jordan Observatory.

*Thursday, May 23:* **West Penjajawoc Preserve, Bangor**

Co-sponsored by Bangor Land Trust

Leaders: Elizabeth Payne, Lucy Quimby

Meet at the dead end of Fox Hollow Lane, off Essex St.

*Saturday, May 25:* **Technology Park, Orono**

Leaders: Jerry Longcore, Jim Bird

Take Godfrey Drive in Orono. Meet in the parking lot behind the building (formerly Nexx-Linx call center) across the road from Black Bear Inn.

*Friday, May 31:* **Bangor City Forest, Bangor**

Leaders: Paul Markson, Gloria Vollmers

Meet at parking lot in Bangor City Forest at end of Kittredge Rd.