

Natural Selections

Newsletter of the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon



July-September 2019

What's On Your Bucket List?

BY GORDON RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER OF MAINE AUDUBON

Have you thought about those handful of special locations or activities you'd like to experience before you run out of money or time, or both, aka your bucket list? If you're a birder like me, bucket list destinations like Central America, Africa or the Far East spring to mind, where everything looks and sounds exotic. Talk about opportunities to build your life list.

My wife and I are planning a trip to Alaska this summer – our first. We're hoping to see Orcas, grizzly bears and Tufted Puffins, to name a few. Our sense of urgency not only relates to the size of our bucket list, but also to the increasingly rapid transformation of the Alaskan landscape due to climate change. The same can be said for Antarctica, which is not on our list – yet. As these iconic habitats diminish, the charismatic species associated with them decline and move closer to extinction. It is alarming to think that pursuit of your bucket list destinations is driven by a desire to see these places and creatures before they disappear.

Of course, accomplishing meaningful bucket list goals doesn't have to involve lengthy (and expensive) travel. Becoming a better birder, land steward, or volunteer

are all worthy actions you can take without venturing far from home. These may not be as glamorous as a trip to Costa Rica or Australia, but you can still find fulfillment in what you learn and do in your own neck of the woods. Chances are you'll be doing it with friends, old and new, who make up the community you cherish and rely on.

Ideally you will have the opportunity to achieve your bucket list goals, both locally and far afield. If your pursuits involve improving your birding skills or seeing rare or elusive species in Maine, check out the programs and field trips offered by Penobscot Valley Chapter volunteers. You can also bid on a personal birding trip at our annual auction in November. If you'd like to become more involved in the work we do, we can always use

more volunteers to bring new energy to our organization.

But since we're talking about bucket lists, we also would love to hear about your adventures and interactions with the natural world. We welcome a short piece for a future edition of *Natural Selections*. An evening program on your travels would also be a big hit. Let us know what you've been up to, and we'll share it with others.



Eastern Bluebird by Jerry Smith

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 to sign up for these services.

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 <https://pvc.maineaudubon.org>
www.facebook.com/penobscotvalleyaudubon

Fields Pond Journal

BY DAVID LAMON

FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER MANAGER

New Faces

Greetings from Fields Pond. It's been a busy spring with public programs and school visits. I've enjoyed welcoming the many new faces to Fields Pond over this busy spring - both human and avian! The bird diversity at our feeder stations has been fantastic this year, and I've heard the same from many of you about your home feeders. One new (non-avian) face at Fields Pond Audubon Center is **Sophie DeMaio**, our new Environmental Educator. Sophie is from northern Maine, where she grew up exploring the natural world around her. She earned her B.S. in Environmental Studies from Bates College and her M.S. in Forest Ecosystem Science from the University of Maine. She has worked primarily in land conservation, management, and stewardship for governmental and non-profit organizations. Please make sure to stop by the Center and say hello to Sophie.

As I write this, summer is just around the corner - and that means Audubon Camp. We still have open spaces for campers aged 6 - 12 years. Helping us with Audubon Camp this summer is another new face, **Ariana Chavez**, our summer intern. Ariana is a senior at Unity College, where she is earning her degree in Parks and Forest Resources with a focus on Forestry and a minor in Ecology. Born and raised in southern Maine, she spent the majority of her days outside, exploring what seemed like an endless forest in her backyard. Ariana is looking forward to sharing her passion for the outdoors with all of our Audubon Campers this summer!

Wish List:

Black-oil sunflower seed for our feeding stations. Canoes, paddles and life vests that you no longer use. We can schedule a pickup of these items on request. THANK YOU for your donations!



Scarlet Tanager by Jerry Smith

Penobscot Valley Chapter Field Trips

Penobscot Valley Chapter field trips are fun ways to meet like-minded people, while enjoying the rich natural heritage of our region. We hope you will come outside and join us!

SEAL ISLAND PUFFIN CRUISE

Sunday, July 7, 2:30-8:00 p.m., \$75 adults/\$45 under 12

Leaders: Sandi and Bob Duchesne

Seal Island National Wildlife Refuge, nineteen miles south of Stonington, offers ideal habitat for a large colony of Atlantic puffins. Razorbills, black guillemots, common and Arctic terns, and common eiders also nest here, and it's the southernmost breeding colony in the world for the great cormorant. (Leach's storm petrels nest on Seal Island as well, but they are nocturnal foragers that huddle in underground burrows during daylight hours, so we are unlikely to spot one.) Northern gannets and common murrelets are occasionally seen diving for fish in the rich waters that surround the island. Periodically, a hungry merlin or peregrine falcon will make a pass in search of a seabird meal. Join Sandi and Bob Duchesne for an enchanting afternoon-into-evening sea cruise around Seal Island – and yes, you can expect to see lots of harbor seals and gray seals, in addition to puffins and a wide diversity of other bird species. If we are VERY lucky, we may be able to spot the red-tailed tropicbird, a native of South Pacific waters, that has returned (inexplicably) to Seal Island for the past fourteen summers! Meet your trip leaders at the ferry terminal in Stonington at 2:30 p.m. The boat leaves at 3 p.m., and this will give us all a leisurely time to park, pack our carry-on bags, meet and greet, use the restroom, and scan the harbor before departure. Dress warmly, and please bring your binoculars and/or camera! If you are interested in ride-sharing, please call Sandi at 207-827-3782 and she will try to match you with others from your local area.

Note: Space is limited, and this trip often fills quite early. Please make your reservations directly with the Isle Au Haut Boat Company, 207-367-5193, and tell them you are with the Penobscot Valley Chapter group. If you want more information about the trip, please call Sandi at 207-827-3782. The boat's primary function is daily ferry service to Isle au Haut and it has an enclosed forward cabin with large viewing windows, so poor weather is rarely a factor in determining whether or not the trip will run – and the puffins will be there, rain or shine! However, if the trip is cancelled by the Captain for weather or any other reason, you will receive a full refund.

WATERBIRDS OF ESSEX WOODS

Saturday, August 31, 8:00-11:00 a.m., FREE

Leader: Bob Milardo

Despite its loud and busy location adjacent to Interstate I-95 in the heart of Bangor, Essex Woods is a surprisingly productive marsh. It is used by many bird species for breeding, foraging, and resting during the spring and fall migrations. In late summer, it's not unusual to spot transient great egrets and shorebirds here, in addition to multiple duck species, pied-billed grebes, green herons, and great blue herons. Warblers and various other songbirds line the

Penobscot Valley Chapter Program

The Penobscot Valley Chapter offers monthly programs on natural history and conservation-related topics that reflect the interests of our membership. We hope you will be able to join us each month for an evening of camaraderie, learning, and FUN with like-minded people. All programs are **FREE** and open to the general public, so feel free to bring a friend or an out-of-town guest!

(Please note: PVC board members on the Programs & Field Trips Committee have learned from experience that program attendance drops off sharply during the summer months, particularly on good-weather days, as many in our membership would prefer to be doing something outside. Therefore we do not schedule programs from June through August – nor in January, when history has proven we are quite likely to be snowed out. So for this newsletter issue, September is the only month when we offer a program. Enjoy your summer – and we look forward to seeing you in September.)

Friday, September 20, 7:00 p.m.

FORESTRY FOR MAINE BIRDS

Presented by Maine Audubon staff: Sally Stockwell, Director of Conservation and Annica McGuirk, Conservation Associate

Maine Audubon is working collaboratively with forest landowners and managers, from small woodlot owners to large-scale commercial harvesting enterprises, so they can operate in ways that sustain or even improve breeding and foraging habitat for at-risk bird species and other wildlife. Bird-friendly forestry can still provide a good return on investment, and many landowners and managers have embraced the Forestry for Maine Birds (FFMB) program as a way to profitably harvest timber while retaining their land's value as a bountiful wildlife resource. Maine's working forests serve a dual purpose as highly productive "baby bird factories" and wildlife corridors, and FFMB gives landowners and managers the information they need to protect or enhance significant wildlife habitat as an integrated component in their forestry plans. Sally and Annica will present highlights from Maine Audubon's step-by-step technical handbook for developing a bird-friendly forestry management plan. They will discuss the field workshops offered statewide by Maine Audubon and its partnering organizations to train professional and amateur foresters in FFMB management techniques, and share success stories from people who have adopted FFMB plans to manage their woodlands.

walking path that winds along the edge of the marsh. Bob Milardo will lead a leisurely walk around one of Bangor's best-known birding areas, which nonetheless seems to offer new surprises on every visit. Meet Bob at the entrance to Essex Woods on Garden Way, off Drew Lane in Bangor. Please show consideration for neighborhood residents by parking in the adjacent business lot (largely unoccupied on weekends) at the corner of Stillwater and Drew Lane, and not on the shoulder of Garden Way.

2019 SUMMER PROGRAMS AT FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER

Please call 989-2591 or go to maineaudubon.org to register.

July 8 – August 16

Audubon Nature Camp!

Have fun this summer with Maine Audubon Summer Vacation Camp! Each day highlights a different nature-based theme that campers will explore through a variety of activities, including hikes, creative arts, recreation, and nature study. For more information or to register, go to www.maineaudubon.org.

Friday, July 12, 7pm

A "One Health" Approach to Common Loon Conservation

The concept of One Health recognizes that human, environmental, and animal health are all connected. Join Mark Pokras, Professor Emeritus at Tufts University Center for Conservation Medicine, and Brooke Hafford MacDonald, PhD Student and Research Assistant at the University of Maine, for a discussion of current and future research on loons as "sentinel species" and the implications for environmental conservation.

Members Free, Nonmembers \$8

Space is limited; register online at www.maineaudubon.org or call 989-2591.

Saturday, July 13, 10am – 2pm

Insect Bio Blitz at Fields Pond

Calling all bug catchers! Join in on the fun as we collect data and add to the record of species of insects found at Fields Pond. You may be the one to discover a new insect species! Instruction will be provided, and we will have entomological experts on hand to identify all insects collected. Come for an hour, or stay the whole day. Program is free!

Tuesday, July 16, 7:30pm

Moonlight Canoe Paddle on Fields Pond

Spend the evening in the glow of moonlight along with fellow paddlers on Fields Pond for a guided naturalist paddle. Meet at the Fields Pond Boat Landing with your own watercraft

(canoe or kayak), or reserve a seat on one of our canoes for an extra \$5 rental fee.

Members \$8, Nonmembers \$10

Space is limited, register online at www.maineaudubon.org or call 989-2591.

Saturday, July 20, 10am – 2pm

Celebrate Summer at Fields Pond!

Join us for a day celebrating Fields Pond during the summer season. Activities include events along the Fields Pond waterfront as well as in the Nature Center. A sample of the day's activities will include the Salmon Celebration, a turtle presentation featuring live turtles, hands-on water quality monitoring on the pond, and a lakeshore cleanup. Join the summer fun! Please call ahead or check the website for a detailed schedule. All programs are free!

Thursday, July 25, 7pm

Aquatic Plants of Maine

Aquatic plants are a vital part of any aquatic ecosystem. With thousands of lakes and ponds throughout the state, Maine is home to a wide array of aquatic flora. This program will give you an overview of the role aquatic plants play in their ecosystem, and introduce you to some of Maine's most beautiful and fascinating aquatic flora. Note: This program will be an excellent primer for the aquatic plant paddle on Saturday, July 27.

Members Free, Nonmembers \$8

Saturday, July 27, 10am – Noon

Field Botany: Aquatic Plants Paddle

Pick up a paddle and head out onto Fields Pond to explore the world of aquatic flora. We will get a close-up view of dozens of species, many in bloom, that make their home in Fields Pond. Meet at the Fields Pond Boat Landing with your own water craft (canoe or kayak), or reserve a seat on one of our canoes for an extra \$5 rental fee.

Members \$8, Nonmembers \$10

Friday, August 9, 7pm

Snakes of Maine

Join Derek Yorks, lead biologist on reptile and amphibian issues at the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, as he speaks about the diversity of Maine's snake species. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife keeps track of all Maine snake species and is actively studying populations of Maine's largest and rarest snake, the State Endangered northern black racer.

Members Free, Nonmembers \$8

Friday, August 16, 7pm

Moonlight Canoe Paddle on Fields Pond

Spend the evening in the glow of moonlight along with fellow paddlers on Fields Pond for a guided naturalist paddle. Meet at the Fields Pond Landing with your own water craft (canoe or kayak), or reserve a seat on one of our canoes for an extra \$5 rental fee.

Members \$8, Nonmembers \$10

Sunday, August 18, 10am – 1pm

IPP Plant Paddler Training

The Invasive Plant Patrol (IPP) Paddle is a guided exploration that takes place on shore and on the water. This is a fun, informal way to learn about Maine's native aquatic plants, as well as the invasive aquatic plants that threaten these beautiful and ecologically-important habitats. Participants will each receive a free "Quick Key to Ruling Out Maine's Eleven Most Unwanted Invasive Aquatic Plants," and will the practice skills needed to spot suspicious plants while out recreating on the water. Program is free, but pre-registration is required. (Please indicate whether you are bringing your own boat, or will need to use one of ours.). Space is limited, so please pre-register early!

Saturday, August 24, 9:30 – 11am

Field Botany: Tree Walk

Join us for a walk on the Fields Pond Sanctuary property to identify trees and shrubs by their leaves, branching structure, and bark.

Members \$8, Nonmembers \$10

SUMMER PROGRAMS CONT'D.

Saturday, September 7, 1-4pm

Foraging: Finding Wild Edible and Medicinal Plants with David Sphar

There is an abundance of wild plants, mushrooms and other natural treasures in Maine that can be foraged for food, medicinal use and other purposes. We will learn about what is out there in our local area, how to differentiate the safe from the toxic, and different ways to use what you forage.

Members \$20, Nonmembers \$30

Wednesday, September 18, 4-6pm

Teacher Workshop:

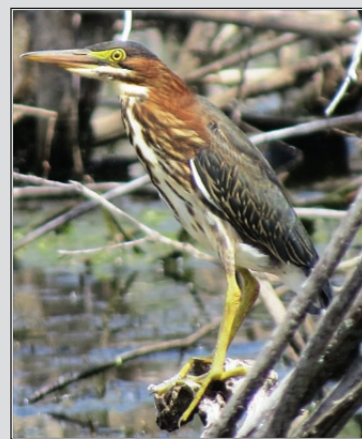
Citizen Science....as easy as 1, 2, 3!

As the world around us shifts and changes, especially in the face of climate change, researchers are depending more and more on citizen science tools and projects to help them answer important research questions.

If you would like to be on the forefront in having your classes contribute to local citizen science projects, Maine Audubon can help! Please join us at Fields Pond to learn how you can incorporate two easy citizen science tools into your classrooms that will enrich the lives of your students, and join the movement of citizen scientists who are contributing directly to research projects around the globe! Space is limited.



by Donne Sinderson



Green Heron by Jerry Smith

Correction

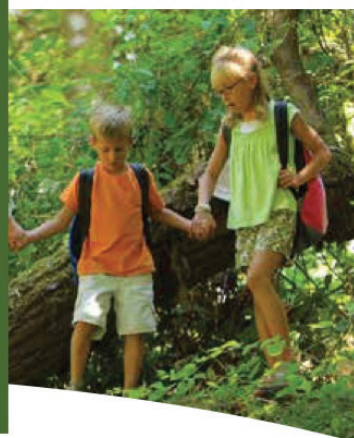
A photo in our Spring 2019 issue was mistakenly attributed to Bob Duchesne. It was actually taken by Jerry Smith, who also contributed several pictures for this issue. We apologize to Jerry for the error, and we have reprinted the photo here with the correct attribution.



Fields Pond Audubon Center

SUMMER CAMPS

Weekly
8:30am - 3pm



Fields Pond Audubon Center's Day Camp provides a unique hands-on, nature-based experience for campers. Sessions are led by experienced leaders with both educational and environmental backgrounds. Each day highlights a different theme that campers will explore through a variety of activities, including: hikes, creative art projects, recreational activities, and nature study.

July 8 – 12: Young Explorers (6-7 yrs.)

July 15 – 19: Explorers (7-9 yrs.)

July 22 – 26: Naturalists (10-12 yrs.)

July 29 – August 2: Young Explorers (6-7 yrs.)

August 5 – 9: Explorers (7-9 yrs.)

August 12 – 16: Naturalists (10-12 yrs.)

Member

\$260/session

Nonmember

\$325/session



Fields Pond Audubon Center

216 Fields Pond Road, Holden, ME
(207) 989-2591 • maineaudubon.org



Penobscot Valley Chapter

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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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MEMBERSHIP FORM

Penobscot Valley Chapter

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

Annually ☐ \$30 Senior/Volunteer/Student | ☐ \$40 Individual | ☐ \$50 Household | ☐ \$100 | ☐ \$Other _____

Monthly ☐ Enroll me in the Frequent Flyer Program and charge my credit card each month:

___ \$5 ___ \$10 ___ \$15 ___ \$25 Other \$ _____

View all member benefits online by visiting maineaudubon.org/memberFAQ

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☐ Check enclosed for \$ _____ ☐ Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card (below)

Card # _____ Exp. date: _____ / _____

Join or renew online:
maineaudubon.org/join

Our community of members is integral to our success on behalf of Maine's diverse wildlife and habitat. When you join or renew your Maine Audubon membership, you ensure that work can continue.

Thank you!

Please make checks payable to Maine Audubon | 20 Gilsland Farm Rd, Falmouth, ME 04105 | 207-781-2330 ext. 230