

# Natural Selections

Newsletter of the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon



July-September 2016

## On the Road Again...

BY GORDON RUSSELL, PRESIDENT  
PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER OF MAINE AUDUBON

Last month, Jim Zeman and I led what we call the “minivan” birding trip. This all-day outing had been purchased by several chapter members at our annual on-line auction in the fall. We’ve done these trips for the past five years or so, and use my (now) 16-year-old minivan to take a small group of birders wherever they’d like to go, usually not that far afield. We typically go after the Neighborhood Bird Walks are over, which gives us some idea of where we can find birds.

Our trip began at Fields Pond Audubon Center at 8:00 a.m. under overcast skies. (Fortunately the weather improved as the day went on.) Fields Pond is a great birding location, and we enjoyed good views of bluebirds at the nest boxes, along with other birds on the property – cedar waxwings, pine siskins, and rose-breasted grosbeaks, to mention a few. The leaves were out completely at this time, so we had to settle for hearing more than we saw (including the plaintive song of an eastern wood-peewee).

From Fields Pond we headed up the

east side of the Penobscot River, stopping at the Eddington Salmon Club to try and fulfill one of the group’s requests, sighting a male American redstart. We saw a couple of the small black-and-orange warblers in the trees by the river, along with yellow warblers and common yellowthroat. From there we were off to Leonard’s Mills in Bradley, where we spotted a scarlet tanager from the parking lot. We also looked for a few remaining alewives in the stream, swatted more than a few mosquitoes and blackflies, and moved on.

After an enjoyable picnic at the waterfront park in Old Town, including homemade muffins provided by Jim’s wife Kathy, we continued down Route 2, and stopped at the pull-off next to the university fields in Orono. This is where one of the Neighborhood Bird Walks takes place. We succeeded in meeting another request, seeing bobolinks in the fields. However, there were many other treats at this location, including a glimpse of a Virginia rail (does anyone ever get more than a glimpse of a rail?), flyovers by several American bitterns, and a northern

harrier. But perhaps the biggest and most thrilling discovery was spotting a brilliant indigo bunting as we prepared to leave.

From Orono, we continued to the Buck Hill Conservation Area in Veazie, where we got a good look at a chestnut-sided warbler. We also stopped in Veazie to see the bald eagle nest (with chick and adult) near the Graham power station. From there we went to Bangor for a little “urban” birding, including sightings of house finch, mockingbird, and nesting cliff swallows. We ended our adventure with a visit to the marina in Hampden, also the location of a paved walking trail that leads through woods to the Penobscot River. Appropriately, we saw a few more redstarts, before calling it a day and heading back to Fields Pond.

The minivan trip was enjoyed by all. We didn’t cover many miles, but we tallied over 60 species, including the few that the group really wanted to see. We plan to do this trip again next year (assuming the minivan holds out), and look forward to offering Chapter members other interesting programs and outings between now and then. We hope you can join us.



JERRY SMITH PHOTO

# 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:

- \$45 household; \$35 individual
- \$25 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@myfairpoint.net](mailto:kjzeman@myfairpoint.net) to sign up for these services.

### Chapter Officers

- President ..... Gordon Russell
- Vice President ..... Bob Duchesne
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- Chapter Representative, Maine Audubon Board of Trustees ..... Ellen Campbell

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- Membership & Board Development .. David Zelz
- Advocacy ..... Sandi Duchesne, Tim Conmee
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### Natural Selections

- Editor ..... Sandi Duchesne
- Design and Layout ..... Susan Heinonen Pate
- Webmaster ..... Bob Duchesne
- Facebook Coordinator ..... Katelin Craven

### Visit us on the Web

-  [www.maineaudubon.org/pvc](http://www.maineaudubon.org/pvc)
- [www.facebook.com/penobscotvalleyaudubon](http://www.facebook.com/penobscotvalleyaudubon)

## FIELDS POND JOURNAL

**BY STAFF**  
FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER

This column features a seasonal update from Maine Audubon's staff at the Fields Pond Audubon Center. Summer! It's certainly a busy time in Maine and for Mainers. At Fields Pond Audubon Center, we always look forward to our busiest season for programs and visitors. With the National Parks centennial celebration revving up for August at Acadia and elsewhere, it should be a busy summer on Route 1A. Just off that beaten path, Fields Pond awaits with over two hundred acres of pristine habitat and trails that's likewise been permanently conserved for the people of Maine and beyond. Join us for a program, walk or paddle this summer!

The summer camp season is set, the weekly family programs will continue, and varied experts will join us for lectures and field workshops this July, August and September. As always, we're keenly attuned to the season via wildlife and the land, and the programs all capture the best of summer's magic. New programs this summer include a full moon canoe tour with a naturalist and registered Maine guide.

Fields Pond welcomes many new volunteers and guests this summer. In particular, we are pleased to have Jay Berkun as the new seasonal outreach intern. Like Haley and Caroline before him, Jay will direct his attention towards engaging and educating youth in wildlife and habitat conservation.

He'll join a team with a robust service history and network throughout the Bangor region serving hundreds of local youth every season. We're deeply grateful for a great new batch of volunteer naturalists fresh off their seasonal training and looking forward to leading school and community group visits all summer. Please join us in welcoming and thanking these fantastic folks! Visitors will also enjoy our revamped and improved Discovery Room, featuring our all-ages Forest Birds interpretive display.

Lastly, we wish to plug a couple new books of particular interest to Maine Audubon members. For children and families, *A Blanding's Turtle Story* is the latest in the *Wildlife On The Move* series of children's books Maine Audubon produces with author Melissa Kim and Jada Fitch. For adults, we are thrilled to promote *Bogs and Fens: A Guide to the Peatland Plants of the Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada* by local Maine Audubon member and supporter Ronald Davis. Look for these, and other great summer reading list titles at Fields Pond.

You'll find upcoming Fields Pond programs listed here and at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org). Fields Pond's staff, interns and volunteers hope to hear from Maine Audubon members and supporters regarding new program ideas or about schools, programs or facilities that might benefit from Audubon programming.

Hope to see you this summer at Fields Pond!



*Fields Pond beckons*

## Dan Weaver Receives 2016 Inez Boyd Award

The Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon is pleased to announce that Daniel Weaver, a Ph.D. candidate in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Maine, has received the chapter's 2016 Inez Boyd Environmental Science Award (IBERA). Dan will use his IBERA funding to study sea lamprey and its role in transporting essential marine minerals that enrich freshwater stream nurseries for all of Maine's native anadromous fish species, including the federally endangered Atlantic salmon. Dan was nominated for the 2016 award by one of his faculty advisors, Professor Joseph Zydlewski.

The competitive annual award is given to honor the late Inez Boyd, co-founder of the Penobscot Valley Chapter and long-time President of its Board of Directors. Inez was an inspiring mentor to many budding naturalists, with a lifelong passion for wildlife and the natural history of the Bangor region. Enrolled University of Maine students who meet the award criteria are encouraged to consider applying for the 2017 round of IBERA funding, which typically opens in late January or early February with a closing date in March and an award announcement in mid-April. You can review the criteria for the award on the chapter website, [www.maineaudubon.org/pvc](http://www.maineaudubon.org/pvc), under the "Scholarship" tab.

## Thank You All!

- **Jerry Smith** and **John Wyatt** for assembling the canopy in time for Springfest.
- **Maggie Guthrie** for all the help she gives to keep the building neat and clean.
- **Maureen Walsh** for making the best peppermint wasp repellent ever!
- **The Maine Atlantic Salmon Museum** for sponsoring a successful salmon tank! Almost 200 salmon fry were released into the Sedgunkedunk



Students of Nature at FPAC

HOLLY TWINING PHOTO

stream on Wednesday, May 4.

- **Glenice Sibley** for helping to keep the feeders full.
- **Sandy Serpell** for her work setting up two successful tabling events: the HOPE Festival and the Bangor Chamber of Commerce Business Expo, and for helping to keep Fields Pond Audubon Center filled with positive energy.
- **Gladys Ewing** for maintaining our Fields Pond scrapbook, and for answering phones at the front desk.
- Thanks and Welcome to our new Naturalist guides: **Leo Edmister-Cyr**, **Donne Sinderson**, **Patricia Hutchins** and son **Wesley** as well as our beloved returning guides **Sally Jones**, **Clare Cole**, **Grace Bartlett**, **Jackie Hewett**, **the Baron Family** and **John Hunt**.
- **Cat Williams** for painting the new mural in the Discovery Room.
- **Pat Snyder** for her time and hard work keeping our gardens fit for the birds!

## Fields Pond Book Club

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. The Book Group will take a summer break for July and August, then start up again on September 8th. Book Group members had not yet met to finalize a September book selection prior to this issue's press deadline. Please visit [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org) or call FPAC at 989-2591 to get the September book title and read a short synopsis.

## Attention Teachers!

Link your learning with Fields Pond Audubon Center School Programs for the 2016-2017 school year. Offerings include:

- Classroom visits and field trips to Fields Pond for grades K-5.
- Field-based citizen science projects for grades 6-12.
- Professional Development workshops for teachers and community leaders.

Contact Cyndi Kuhn, Lead Educator, at 989-2591 for more information or to schedule a program.

# FIELDS POND CENTER PROGRAMS

## Youth & Family Programs at Fields Pond Audubon Center

Cyndi Kuhn, Maine Audubon Lead Educator

**July Theme: Threatened and Endangered Wildlife: Wild Things**

### Day Camp

For children grades K-5.

July 11-15, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$250 for members; \$300 non-members. Capacity 12. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org).

Scholarships available. Please contact Cyndi Kuhn at 989-2591 to inquire.

### Family Fun

For children ages 2-5 with caregiver, maximum of 3 children per adult please. Each class repeats at 10-11:00 a.m. and 2-3:00 p.m. so you can choose the schedule that works best for you and your family.

July 18- Snakes and Frogs

July 20- Birds

July 22- Insects

Cost: \$10 per family for members; \$15 per family for non-members

### Family Discovery Series

Designed for all families, all ages. Each class repeats at 9-11:00 a.m. and 6-8:00 p.m. so you can choose the schedule that works best for you and your family.

July 26- Snakes and frogs

July 28- Birds

July 30- Insects

Cost: \$25 per family for members; \$35 non-members

**August Theme: Bringing Nature Home/Keeping the Balance**

### Day Camp

for children grades K-5.

August 8-12, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$250 for members; \$300 non-members

Capacity 12. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org). Scholarships

available. Please contact Cyndi Kuhn at 989-2591 to inquire.

### Family Fun

For children ages 2-5 with caregiver, maximum of 3 children per adult please. Each class repeats at 10-11:00 a.m. and 2-3:00 p.m. so you can choose the schedule that works best for you and your family.

August 16- Feeding birds

August 18- Native plants in the garden to attract pollinators

August 20- Dirt and worms

Cost: \$10 per family for members; \$15 per family for non-members

### Family Discovery Series

Designed for all families, all ages. Each class repeats at 9-11 a.m. and 6-8 p.m. so you can choose the schedule that works best for you and your family.

August 22- Feeding birds and Project Feederwatch

August 24- Attracting pollinators with native plants

August 26- Successful composting at home

Cost: \$25 per family for members; \$35 per family for non-members

**September Theme: Healthy Maine Forests**

### Family Fun Fall Frolic

For children ages 2-5 with caregiver, maximum of 3 children per adult please. Program runs for seven consecutive Wednesdays.

September 14 - October 26, 10-11:00 a.m.

Cost: \$70 per family for members; \$105 per family for non-members

Capacity 10 families. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org)

### Family Discovery Series: Secrets of the Forest

Designed for all families, all ages.

Saturday, September 17, 9-11:00 a.m.

Cost: \$25 per family for members; \$35 non-members

Capacity 10 families. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org).

## Adult & Evening Programs at Fields Pond Audubon Center

### Saturday Stewardship Days

July 23 and September 10

10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Cost: Free

### Butterfly Walk

All ages welcome. Anyone interested in counting (and identifying) butterflies on that date elsewhere within the count circle should contact Pat Snyder for details at 567-3137 or [dorine38@aol.com](mailto:dorine38@aol.com).

Saturday, July 2, 1:00 p.m.

Leader: Pat Snyder

Cost: \$3 per person to be donated to the North American Butterfly Count. Children are free.

### Full Moon Canoe Tour

Sunday, July 17, 8:00 p.m. Arrive no later than 7:30 p.m.

Leader: Eric Topper

Cost: \$12 members; \$14 non-members  
Advance registration necessary.  
Call 989-2591, or e-mail [fieldspond@maineaudubon.org](mailto:fieldspond@maineaudubon.org)

### Brook Trout in Maine

Guest speaker from Maine Audubon.

Wednesday, August 31, 7-8:00 p.m.

Cost: \$7 members; \$10 non-members

### Fields Pond Night Hike

Friday, September 9, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Leader: Cyndi Kuhn

Cost: \$7 members; \$10 non-members  
Capacity 20. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org).

### Mushroom Workshop with David Spahr

Saturday, September 17, 1-4:00 p.m.

Leader: David Spahr, author of "Edible and Medicinal Mushrooms of New England and Eastern Canada"

Cost: \$20 members; \$27 non-members  
Capacity 20. Register online at [www.maineaudubon.org](http://www.maineaudubon.org).



# PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS

## Bat Listening & Looking

Friday, July 8

8:00-9:30 p.m.

Leaders: Eric Blomberg and Sabrina

Morano

Cost: Free

A brief indoor presentation will be followed by a very short hike (less than 1/4 mile) to the Curran Homestead for bat observation. Please DO NOT park in the driveway at Curran Homestead. Meet and park at the Fields Pond Audubon Center.

Bat populations in Maine have declined precipitously over the past decade due to white-nose syndrome and other threats, but it's still an exhilarating experience to watch bats stream out from barn roof rafters and flutter across the summer nighttime sky. With the aid of an iPad-assisted acoustic microphone on loan from the University of Maine, we will use both our eyes and our ears to observe bats. The microphone picks up the bats' ultrasonic echolocation calls and translates those calls into a visual display and into a range detectable by the human ear. The linked software identifies the species of bat that is vocalizing. Erik and Sabrina will also describe opportunities for volunteer citizen-scientists to assist in BatME, an ongoing bat monitoring project, either on their own properties or in locations that wildlife researchers want to check for bat activity. Last summer 14 volunteers monitored over 85 nights in 60 different towns across Maine, collecting valuable new information about bat presence. This field trip is co-sponsored by the Curran Homestead, [www.curranhomestead.org](http://www.curranhomestead.org).

## Boat Trip: Puffins and Seabirds and Whales, OH MY!

Sunday, August 14

1:00-9:30 p.m.

Leaders: Sandi and Bob Duchesne

Cost: \$65 member/\$75 non-member

Registration with payment in full required by August 12. NOTE: You will not be placed on the trip list until full payment has been received. Trip fee

is fully refundable if the boat trip is canceled by the Captain, or if you cancel your reservation(s) by August 12.

Contact FPAC at 989-2591 to register and pre-pay. Maximum capacities: van 11, boat 30.

Vanpool from Old Town at 12:30 p.m. or from FPAC at 1:00 p.m. Or travel on your own and meet us at the Stonington Town Pier (end of Seabreeze Avenue) at 2:30 p.m.

Late summer is the perfect time for a five-hour, afternoon-into-evening cruise around Seal Island (20 miles offshore) with Isle Au Haut Boat Services. This is the last trip of the season to visit the island's puffin colony, with excellent opportunities to view other seabirds including razorbills, common murre, gannets, shearwaters, storm petrels, phalaropes, terns...and if we're lucky, the rare red-billed tropicbird that sometimes comes out to forage around 4:00 p.m. Harbor seal, gray seal, and harbor porpoise sightings are almost guaranteed, and we may get even luckier and see a whale or two. Be sure to bring food and beverages to consume on the boat, warm clothing layers, and of course your binoculars and/or camera. Chapter boat trips are VERY popular and are suitable for birders of all ages and ability levels, so be sure to sign up early to reserve your spot!

## Fair-Weather, Semi-Spontaneous Hawk Watch Meet-Up

Sunday, September 11

8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Leaders: Jim & Kathy Zeman, Sandi &

Bob Duchesne

Vanpool from Old Town at 7:30 a.m. from

FPAC at 8:00 a.m. or meet us on

Cadillac mountain summit at 9:00 a.m.

Cost: Free. Donations accepted to benefit FPAC. Pre-registration needed for van passengers; contact Sandi at 827-3782, [smduchesne@roadrunner.com](mailto:smduchesne@roadrunner.com)

Coastal hawk watches are great fun... when the weather is just right. On a clear September day with a steady northerly breeze, hundreds of raptors might pass by the observation point.



Cooper's Hawk

JERRY SMITH PHOTO

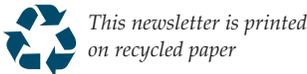
On a less favorable day, you'd be lucky to see ten. So here's the deal: **IF** the weather report looks promising on Saturday night, we'll vanpool to Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, picking up riders in Old Town and at FPAC. We'll meet co-leaders Jim and Kathy on the Cadillac summit at 9:00 a.m., along with any folks who prefer to drive themselves. We'll stick around until the hawk action drops off, until most folks are ready to leave, or until 2:00 p.m., whichever comes first. We expect to return to FPAC by 3:00 p.m., opting for additional sightseeing and birding on the return trip if we end up leaving the hawk watch early.

If on the other hand the weather promises little or no hawk migration activity on Sunday, **we will cancel this trip by 6:00 p.m. on Saturday night.** No harm, no foul (or would that be no fowl...?). Call or e-mail Sandi between 6:00 and 9:00 p.m. to confirm if we're going or not.

Van capacity is limited to 11 passengers, although you'll have the option to caravan with us if we exceed that number. Pre-registration is needed only if you want to be assured of a seat on the van. Otherwise, feel free to simply show up at any of the designated meet-up spots on Sunday morning, no reservations required! Be sure to bring binoculars, a brown-bag lunch to enjoy on the mountain, and a spotting scope if you have one, although leaders will share theirs.

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

*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.*



Maine Audubon

# MEMBERSHIP FORM

Penobscot Valley Chapter

**YES!** I would like to protect and conserve wildlife and habitat in my community and  
 join  renew my membership with Maine Audubon and the Penobscot Valley Chapter.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

I'm enclosing an additional \$10 to receive *Audubon*, National Audubon's magazine  
 (free for Patron members and above)

Check enclosed in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge my monthly Frequent Flyer gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to  Visa  MC  AMEX  Discover

Charge my annual membership of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to  Visa  MC  AMEX  Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_ CSV \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Level

Annual:

\$25 Senior/Volunteer

\$35 Individual

\$45 Household

\$65 Contributing

\$100 Patron

\$250 Sustaining

\$500 Benefactor

Monthly:

Frequent Flyer (\$5 min.)