

Natural Selections

Newsletter of the Penobscot Valley Chapter of Maine Audubon



October-December 2016

Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument

BY GORDON RUSSELL, PRESIDENT
PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER OF MAINE AUDUBON

On August 24, 2016 President Obama issued an executive order creating the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. The national monument includes approximately 87,500 acres along the East Branch of the Penobscot River, east of Baxter State Park. Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. (EPI), founded by Burt's Bees entrepreneur Roxanne Quimby, donated the land to the federal government, making the national monument designation possible. The National Park Service will manage the national monument, using an endowment provided by EPI.

The national monument was designated based on its historic and scientific values. Lands and waters in the monument area have been used for sustenance by Wabanaki Native Americans, in particular the Penobscot Indian Nation, for thousands of years. Historic log drives also occurred on the East Branch of the Penobscot River and its tributaries. Luminaries such as Henry David Thoreau and Teddy Roosevelt visited the area, which provided an access route to nearby Mt. Katahdin.

Katahdin Woods and Waters is rich in its biodiversity, providing a transition between northern boreal and southern deciduous forests. Its varied topography includes mountains, ravines and riparian zones along the river and tributaries. While much of the area has been logged in the past, forest regeneration has preserved many of the area's biological values. Many wildlife species can be found here,

including ruffed grouse, moose, black bear, white-tailed deer, snowshoe hare, American bobcat, bald eagle, northern goshawk, and the federally threatened Canada lynx. A variety of resident and migratory birds are also present. The East Branch of the Penobscot and its tributaries are not dammed, and provide important habitat for native brook trout and federally endangered Atlantic salmon. Given the area's transitional nature between northern and southern ecotones, there will be opportunities for scientific research on the effects of climate change and other issues.

The National Park Service will be developing a management plan for the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument over the next three years to identify how best to provide for public recreation and other uses. The public will be invited to participate in this process. We are fortunate to have this national monument in the Penobscot watershed, essentially in our own back yard. We should all take advantage of this opportunity, not only to get to know the area a little better, but to help chart the course for its future.



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 to sign up for these services.

Chapter Officers

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Visit us on the Web

 www.maineaudubon.org/pvc
www.facebook.com/penobscotvalleyaudubon

FIELDS POND JOURNAL

BY MAINE AUDUBON STAFF
FIELDS POND AUDUBON CENTER

Fall is a busy and important season for both wildlife and people in Maine. After the past summer's historic heat and drought, many of us welcome the lower sun, shorter days, and crisp fall air. Animals and people alike can be observed heading south, bundling up and decreasing activity levels. All around us, both our natural and cultivated landscapes are producing fruit, dispersing seeds, and storing energy to last through the long Maine winter.

Few places provide more direct evidence of (and access to!) nature's seasonal magic and transition than destinations like Fields Pond Audubon Center. For people in particular, fall at Fields Pond means the return of school and community group visits, renewed seasonal family programs, and collaborative efforts with our friends in the Penobscot Valley Chapter. The pages that follow, as well as the Maine Audubon website, convey the season's numerous program offerings for people of all ages, interests, and abilities. Our Fields Pond staff also look forward to hosting new groups and the fall installments of our growing partnership programs with the Bangor YMCA and city after school programs. Visitors to our center will also enjoy the Forest Birds interpretive display featured in the *Fall Habitat* magazine.

As far as the statewide organization, Maine Audubon has undergone significant leadership transition over the past year. Our new Executive, Development, and

Properties Directors have all been visiting and hearing from many stakeholders and supporters, including in the Bangor area and Fields Pond community where expanding our base of support – membership, collaboration, and funding -- is a top priority. Everyone they've met has extolled Fields Pond Audubon Center's unique assets, which include 212 beautiful acres, a robust program menu, and accessibility to broader recreation and stewardship resources. Many have also shared their passion and perspective for expanding the potential of the center, for both wildlife and people. We welcome suggestions from you regarding what programs you'd like to see offered, what conservation issues you'd like Maine Audubon to tackle, and/or where we might find additional support to help us better meet the needs and interests of an even broader audience.

Lastly, speaking of broad and enduring impact: the establishment of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument in northern Maine has created a host of new opportunities and new promise for wildlife and people alike. Wherever you may stand regarding the designation – and our members bring a range of perspectives to the table – it protects valuable habitat and establishes connectivity for migrating species critical to Maine's heritage. Now more than ever, our state, the nation, and the world will have new chances to interact with Maine's unique natural environment. Maine Audubon's mission remains as vibrant and relevant as ever.

Thank you for your support for Maine Audubon and Fields Pond!



FPAC in fall

SHORT TAKES

PVC Annual Benefit Auction, November 1 To December 2

It is almost time for the Penobscot Valley Chapter's Annual Benefit Auction! Bidding will be conducted online at www.maineaudubon.org/pvc, starting on Tuesday, November 1, and continuing through 12:00 p.m. EST on Friday, December 2 (this is also the date of the annual PVC Holiday Party). A few items will also be offered for silent auction during the Holiday Party, which starts at 6:00 p.m. Please share the auction website link with family and friends far and near, so they can join in the fun!

Chapter board members are currently soliciting auction donations from local merchants, artisans, and nature lovers in our community. If you have items or services you would like to contribute to help promote grassroots environmental outreach and

programming in eastern Maine, please call Auction Chair Ellen Campbell at 843-5858 or e-mail her at ellenrc@myfairpoint.net. Your donations are fully tax-deductible, and we will provide you with a receipt so you can document the estimated value. Thank you for your support!

FPAC Thank You!

- **Sally Jones, Grace Bartlett, Trish and Wes Hutchins, Danielle D'Auria, and Clare Cole** for volunteering their time to be Guest Naturalists at FPAC nature camps this summer.
- **Tanner Smith, Nick Baron and Isaac Renshaw-Sirimoglu** for their hard work and dedicated efforts as Junior Naturalists this summer season.
- **Sandy Serpell** for donating a kayak to Fields Pond Audubon Center.
- **Maggie Guthrie** for purchasing a brand-new bird feeder for our feeding station and for keeping the bird baths clean and filled.

- **Catherine Williams** for completing the new mural in the Discovery Room.
- Intern **Jay Berkun** for the countless improvements to our trail system and signage.

FPAC School Programs 2016-2017

We are currently booking fall field trips for our *Secrets of the Forest* and *Nature in Winter* sequences. Please call to reserve your classroom, afterschool, scouting, and homeschooling visits and field trip dates as soon as possible!

Call Cyndi Kuhn at 989-2591 for pricing and more information.



PENOBSCOT VALLEY CHAPTER PROGRAMS

All programs take place at Fields Pond Nature Center.

Time For A Tick Talk!

*Friday, October 21, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
FREE and open to the public*

Various species of ticks abound in the grasses and forests of eastern Maine, and they're carrying more diseases. Dr. Jim Dill is a pest management specialist for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service. As a state senator, he has also led the fight to improve Maine's ability to identify ticks and tick-borne diseases. It's time to update what we know, counter the myths, and learn how to fight back.

Seals In The Gulf Of Maine

*Friday, November 18, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
FREE and open to the public*

Jim Gilbert, retired wildlife professor at the University of Maine, will speak

and show examples of the seals that live and breed in the Gulf of Maine. He will describe the current status, numbers, and future prospects for our native seal species, and discuss how the seal population affects lobstering and other fisheries. He will also touch upon the effects of climate change on seal numbers along the Maine coast.



Annual Holiday Party & Nature Photo Expo

*Friday, December 2, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
FREE and open to the public*

Tis the season for PVC's annual Holiday Party! "Heavy" (supper-worthy) hors d'oeuvres will be served, along with an assortment of party beverages to put everyone in the holiday spirit. Winning bidders in

PVC's Online Auction can pick up and pay for their items, and additional items will be available at the party for silent and active auction bidding. Early birds can visit the Fields Pond Nature Store from 4-6 p.m. for Double Discount Day, when Maine Audubon members get a double discount (20 percent!) off normal retail prices for unique gift items, including many specialty items brought up from the larger Falmouth store just for this event. The evening's highlight will be a nature photography expo. Amateur and professional photographers will have the opportunity to showcase and describe 10-15 of their favorite wildlife and outdoor travel photos from 2015. Bring along your own digital photo files on a thumb drive or laptop if you'd like to participate in the expo, or just come to appreciate the natural wonders captured on camera by your fellow PVC members.

FIELDS POND CENTER PROGRAMS

Film & Discussion

Thursday, October 6, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

\$5 members/\$7 non-members

Bringing Meadows to Big and Small Spaces.

FPAC Boundary Hike

Friday, October 14, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

FREE, donations welcome

Moderately paced hike around FPAC property boundaries to ensure all posted signs are in good condition prior to the start of deer hunting season.

Hunter's Moon Evening Hike

Sunday, October 16, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Adults: \$7/members/\$10 non-members

Children: \$5 members/\$7 non-members

Children under 5 free

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Family Discovery Series: Reading Ramble

Saturday, October 22, 10-11 a.m.

\$15 family admission for members

\$20 for non-members

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Family Fun Preschool

November 2 - December 21

Wednesday morning series, 10-11 a.m.

\$70 family admission for entire session of 7

Wednesdays for members; \$105 for non-members.

Nature-based programming for parents with children ages 2 to 5.

FPAC Stewardship Day

Saturday, November 5, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

FREE, donations welcome.

Indoor and outdoor chores to help button up the center for winter. Bring your own work gloves and box lunch.

Volunteer Appreciation Gathering

Thursday, November 10, 7-9 p.m.

FREE, RSVP at 989-2591

All FPAC volunteers are invited to attend, with a guest if you wish.

Beaver Moon Evening Hike

Monday, November 14, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Adults: \$7/members/\$10 non-members

Children: \$5 members/\$7 non-members

Children under 5 free

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Family Discovery Series: Reading Ramble

Saturday, November 19, 10-11 a.m.

\$15 family admission for members

\$20 for non-members.

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Annual Holiday Double-Discount Day

Friday, December 2, 4-6 p.m.

Members get 20% off all Nature Store purchases instead of the usual 10%, plus complimentary gift-wrapping. Precedes the PVC Holiday Auction and Party, which starts at 6 p.m.

Cold Moon Evening Hike

Tuesday, December 13, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Adults: \$7/members/\$10 non-members.

Children: \$5 members/\$7 non-members.

Children under 5 free

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Family Discovery Series: Reading Ramble

Saturday, December 17, 10-11 a.m.

\$15 family admission for members

\$20 for non-members

Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

Winter Solstice Celebration

Wednesday, December 21, 4-5:30 p.m.

\$15 family admission for members

\$20 for non-member

Advance registration is recommended.

Drop-ins welcome if space is available.

Family-oriented program will recreate Eve Bunting's *The Night Tree*, decorating living trees with treats for winter wildlife. Warm cider awaits! Please note that peanut products will be used as decorations. Refer to Maine Audubon website for details.

2016 Christmas Bird Counts

Orono-Old Town Count: December 17

Bangor-Bucksport Count: December 31

Be a field birder, covering an assigned territory within the Orono-Old Town or Bangor-Bucksport Bird Count Circle.

Or, be a feeder-watcher. If you live within one of these Bird Count Circles and you maintain a bird feeder, you can count your birds for about an hour. Then simply email or call the count leader to report how many of each species you saw. Please refer to the Maine Audubon website for count leader contact information and dates.



Join the 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 October and November. There will be no book group meeting in December. Please visit www.maineaudubon.org or call FPAC at 989-2591 to read a short overview of each book.

October 13, 2016

Thoreau, Henry David; *The Maine Woods*; 1864; Page count varies by edition.

November 17, 2016

Gilbert, Avery; *What the Nose Knows: The Science of Scent in Everyday Life*; 2015; 306 pages.

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!

Nature Talk and Walk Bogs and Fens: The Northeast's Most Pristine Ecosystems

Bogs and fens are underlain by deep water-saturated peat. They are rarely visited except in places where there are boardwalks. Demand for fuel peat has been minimal in North America, and the difficulties and restrictions against developing these wetlands have allowed them to persist as our most extensive pristine ecosystems. These unique systems contain carnivorous plants, orchids, and uncommon bird species. Program leader Ron Davis will illustrate his indoor presentation with outstanding photographs, and describe the ecological features that characterize these beautiful and fascinating places. He will then lead a slow-paced walk along the Orono Bog Boardwalk to

point out features that characterize bogs and fens.

Dr. Ronald B. Davis is an emeritus professor in the School of Biology and Ecology, and the Climate Change Institute of University of Maine. He is an ecologist and naturalist who has taught about, researched, and published on the ecology and paleoecology of several of Maine's major ecosystem types including peatlands. He is the founder of the Orono Bog Boardwalk, and is author of *Bogs and Fens: A Guide to the Peatland Plants of the Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada*. Copies of Ron's book will be available for sale at the Fields Pond Nature Store, where Maine Audubon members get a 10% discount on the retail price.

Sunday, October 9

Lecture: 8:30-10:15 a.m. at Fields Pond Audubon Center. Indoor program will take place rain or shine (barring a hurricane). No pre-registration required.

Field Trip: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at



Rose Pogonia orchid commonly occurs in New England bogs and fens RON DAVIS PHOTO

Orono Bog Boardwalk in the Bangor City Forest. Meet at the cabin at the start of the boardwalk. Bring drinking water, snack (optional), and clothing suitable for the weather. If rain is predicted, please telephone Ron Davis on Saturday evening, October 8, 6-8 p.m. at 866-4785 to find out if field trip has been cancelled. Field trip is limited to 11 participants due to boardwalk rules. Please pre-register by calling FPAC at 989-2591.

Cost: FREE. Donations to Fields Pond Audubon Center and Orono Bog Boardwalk welcome.

Westside Waterbirds

Saturday, November 19, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Cost: FREE

Join trip leaders Jerry Smith and John Wyatt for a six-hour round trip from Bangor to Belfast, with stops in Hampden, Winterport, Frankfort, Stockton Springs, Searsport, and Belfast, checking for waterfowl in open water and later autumn passerines throughout. Meet at the Bangor Waterfront parking lot on Front Street at 8:00 a.m. Leave your vehicle and ride with Jerry or John. We'll stop to stretch our legs, but little or no walking involved. Bring beverage and snacks/ lunch, or eat at the Belfast Food Co-op. Call the Fields Pond Audubon Center at 989-2591 to let us know you are coming.



Orono Bog Boardwalk, Maine in early morning fog, where it passes through a grove of black spruces.

RON DAVIS PHOTO

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.



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper

Graphic Design Volunteer Needed for Newsletter

BY SANDI DUCHESNE
NATURAL SELECTIONS EDITOR

For over a decade, Sue Heinonen Pate has volunteered her superb professional skills to manage the design and layout of this newsletter. As you can see, she does a great job! But all good things must come to an end, and Sue is embarking on travel adventures that will take her far from the Penobscot Valley. We will all miss her artistic eye, her technical expertise, and her unfailingly cheerful attitude even when faced with last-minute additions and changes. Thank you, Sue, for your many years of work behind the scenes to promote environmental education and outreach in our region!

We are currently seeking another fine graphic artist in our membership who can take over Sue's responsibilities. We put out four issues a year, so the position entails deadline-driven work during the month preceding publication, but little to no time otherwise. Sue uses Quark Xpress publishing software, and she will provide the new layout volunteer with copies of the previous four

newsletters and graphics files on a USB or CD, along with a marked-up hard-copy showing fonts and margin controls. However, you are welcome to use whatever publishing program you prefer. This is an excellent opportunity to develop your professional graphic arts

portfolio, while flexing your volunteer schedule to fit around your other work and life commitments. If interested, please contact Sue at 207-825-4143 or me (Sandi) at 207-827-3782 or email smduchesne@roadrunner.com for more information.



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.)

Checks payable to Maine Audubon, 20 Gislard Farm Rd., Falmouth, ME 04105. Join/renew online at maineaudubon.org/join or call 207-781-2330 ext. 232