



Belfast Bay
Watershed
Coalition

WATERSHED NEWS

*Mark your
Calendar:*



**Earth Day is
April 22**

BBWC and other local organizations have organized activities to commemorate the day and remind us how precious our earth is and what we can do to preserve its great beauty and resources:

All April: April Poetry Contest for Children and Teens – Earth Day Theme

April is *National Poetry Month*. The Belfast Free Library invites children and teens to write an earth-inspired poem in any format. Entries will be judged by former Belfast Poet Laureate Judy Kaber. Drop off or email sholman@belfastlibrary.org by April 25th. Prizes for children up to age 10 and prizes for teens 11-17.

Thursday, April 20th 2023 - Outdoor Fun in Waldo County: What to Do and Where to Go

Cloe will highlight adventures on foot, two wheels, and on water in the many and varied regions of Waldo County, suggesting low budget trips that have a low carbon impact. Cloe Chunn, former high school and college teacher, is a naturalist, outdoor writer, and Registered Maine Guide. (See page 7 for more details.)

Friday, April 21, 10:00-11:00am Storytime at the Belfast Free Library - Abbott Room

Storytime for preschool audiences and their families will be on the subject of Earth Day and celebrating our natural world. Stories will be told and read aloud, puppetry will bring stories to life and songs will be about our planet earth. A film and a craft will follow.

Saturday, April 22, 10:00am - 12:00 or 2:00pm - Sears Island Hike

Join Greg Biddinger and Cloe Chunn to explore Sears Island, a gem of the Mid-coast. We will hike one half of the Island from 10:00 - 12:00. You can call it a day or continue on to hike the rest of the island. Meet at the Sears Island causeway gate. Bring water, lunch, weather and tick protection. FMI: 338-1147

Wednesday, April 26, 4-5pm - Sears Island Science Squad Program for Kids

Friends of Sears Island will be hosting an Earth-Day themed Science Squad afterschool program for kids ages 6-12 and an accompanying adult. The program will take place on Sears Island, and will include a short children's nature-themed yoga program on the beach, led by yoga instructor Natasha Aston Hill. Carver Memorial Library will also join us to read aloud some Earth Day themed books, and if time allows, participants can help with a beach clean-up at the end of the program. Pre-registration is required as space is limited. Sign-up by emailing outreach@friendsofsearsisland.org

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

BBWC Works with Area Schools

Natural Literacy 2022

I really like outdoor science because we do outdoor activities. My favorite was when we did moon phrases. Using our bodies to act it out helped put a picture in my mind - MM



Learning about the Earth's timeline was interesting. The rope was really long and helped me envision the timeframes. - C.A.



Each year, Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition's Natural Literacy Educator, Jenni Judkins, introduces students in Waldo County schools to the beauty and wonder of the environment that surrounds them.

This year, she taught more classes than ever before and returned to schools that hadn't been visited in years. In 2022, Jenni taught 397 students from 6 area schools – Ames Elementary, CASS Elementary, Searsport Elementary, Searsport Middle, Nickerson Elementary, Troy Howard Middle and the Ecology Learning Center.

Jenni spent 162 hours wandering with students through forests, wetlands and tidal zones. Using songs, games and role-playing, she brought the life of these important habitats into their young lives.



I liked sitting on the stumps in our outdoor classroom and passing the cocoon around. I thought it was kind of freaky when they were vibrating in my hands. - M.B.



We learned all the stages of the insect life cycle. I loved how you turned this into the Metamorphosis Croquet game - E.S

BBWC to Assist Local Teachers Teaching Wabanaki History



A fabric map used in the program.

Jenni Judkins, Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition's (BBWC) Natural Literacy Educator, and BBWC volunteers who extend her teaching, have sometimes been asked for help teaching Wabanaki history. In 2001, the Maine State Legislature passed LD 291 which requires teaching Wabanaki history in all Maine schools, K-12. However, the Legislature did not offer funding, curriculum, or training.

With a grant from the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund, the Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition is collaborating with Wabanaki REACH and Waldo County schools to offer a 2-hour virtual presentation of "Interacting with "Wabanaki History" to any teacher who wishes to participate. This virtual presentation gives teachers the opportunity to interact with Wabanaki presenters to gain a better understanding of how to teach Wabanaki history from contact with Europeans to the present.

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

BBWC Trailblazer:**Jenni Judkins, Award Winning Environmental Educator**

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition's Natural Literacy Educator Jenni Judkins began making friends with nature with her mother, who loved to spend at least one day a week at the beach during the summer. And then she fell in love with New England spaces while visiting her aunt in rural Vermont. "The woods and vistas are beautiful means, always leading to water, where I find myself immersed in my most powerful connection to Nature," says Jenni.

As Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition's Natural Literacy Educator, Jenni has worked with local schools to awaken students to the beauty of the natural world that surrounds them. Her ability to engage students and work cooperatively with teachers resulted in her being honored with the Philip Marcoux Award in 2020. And for the 2022-2023 school year, Jenni has been nominated for Maine Education Association's Eberhard Thiele Environmental Educator of the Year. Glen Widmer, Principal of Ames and Weymouth Schools, describes Jenni's gifts as an educator of young children:

Even though Jenni only works with children in each class once a week, she gets to know each individual child and figures out ways to reach each one. She is both creative and passionate, which helps her reach all students. Not only does Miss Jenni understand students, she understands teachers as well. She is a partner with each teacher to figure out ways to connect to the learning standards for which they are responsible. She is holistic in her approach, finding a theme that excites the students, and which stands as the foundation to support the learning.

Jenni's connection to the outdoors and nature were deepened as she ran cross country in elementary and high school and backpacked in the foothills and mountains of California. Jenni earned a degree in Biology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and then, in 1998, entered the education world as a teacher's assistant at a residential school on the California coast. In 2002 she moved to New Hampshire and began her career as an Environmental Educator at Stone Environmental School. In 2009, she moved to Midcoast Maine with her husband, Norm, and began leading the afterschool programs at the Nickerson and East Belfast Schools.

Jenni began her work with BBWC in 2018. She says that getting this job was like "finding the Golden Fleece" and that her work nurtures in her a "childlike wonder and joy." The birth of her daughter, Avi, in 2011, profoundly deepened Jenni's commitment and motivation to "honor Nature's space in our development as people." Jenni enjoys "most every part of my classes from greetings to closing circles" and notes that her work is made possible by "teachers who are willing to bring their students 'out of the box' into excitable and informal teachable moments on the trails."

This year, Jenni and her students have been investigating arthropods; they began with insects and are now learning about crustaceans. Jenni's creative approach to teaching children about nature includes making up games and songs, which, she says, are "the biggest tools in my bag next to the species and natural systems who are the foundation and main attraction." Thank you, Jenni, for all you do for young Midcoast Mainers!

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

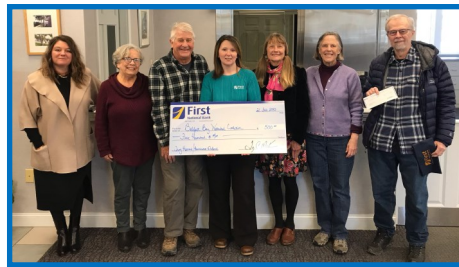
Find us on Facebook

Troy Howard Middle Schoolers To Spend A Week on Hurricane Island

Regular readers of our newsletter will likely remember last fall’s delightful article by middle school teacher David Wessels, who describes his field trip to Hurricane Island with 14 middle schoolers in June 2022. On that day trip, Hurricane Island staff led students as they explored the coast, observed coastal creatures, and participated in research and aquaculture activities.

Inspired by that day at Hurricane Island, BBWC and Wessels are aiming higher this year. Thanks to First National Bank, BBWC, and a generous donor identified by the Hurricane Island Center, Wessels and fourteen qualifying middle-schoolers from Troy Howard Middle School will spend one week at Hurricane Island this summer, researching the marine environment, participating in leadership training, rowing to nearby islands, rock climbing, and enjoying island life.

A small island two miles southwest of Vinalhaven, Hurricane Island was once a working quarry with a town of quarry workers. In 1964, the island became the first site of Outward Bound. Today, Hurricane Island is a research and environmental leadership training center, and the island’s Center for Leadership currently trains and educates environmental leaders from around the world.



First National Bank employees Michelle Mackey and Niki Janczura present a \$500 donation to BBWC Board members.

Students Steward Salmon in BBWC’s Fish Friends Program

Maine’s sea-run Atlantic Salmon population is the last in the United States, so keeping this endangered population alive—and helping it to grow—is important work. And this work is too important not to include kids! Every year, Maine students at ten area schools, guided by Tom King, Vice President of Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, participate in the Fish Friends program.

Sponsored by the Maine Council of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Fish Friends program provides students with hands-on learning about the Atlantic Salmon’s biology, life cycle, and habitats. Starting in late February, students incubate Atlantic Salmon eggs in artificial incubators in their classrooms, monitor water quality and temperature, adjust water temperature so that it mimics water temperatures in the wild, observe embryo development, and, in May, release the salmon fry into local streams. Students also learn that “life cycle” means they’re not saying goodbye to the salmon they’ve helped to raise.

*Left to Right:
Students get a close look at salmon eggs.
Tom King puts the salmon eggs into an incubator.
Salmon fry are ready for the stream.*



www.belfastbaywatershed.org

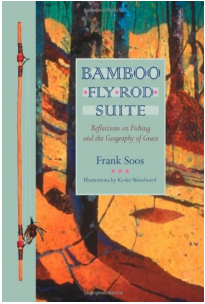
Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

What We're Reading Now:

Bamboo Fly Rod Suite by Frank Soos



Frank Soos wanted a bamboo fly rod as he grew up in a poor family in a coal town in Virginia. Those rods were things of beauty, he thought, but he had to content himself with cheap fiberglass rods until years later when a friend stopped by his office with the offer an old bamboo rod. The owner of the fishing shop in his Alaskan town tells Soos that it's a *production* rod. It's *slow, worth nothing*, but Soos is a thrifty man, and he believes in the power of a gift, so he decides to refurbish the old rod. In his mending of the rod and his use of it, he sees that that the rod's value differs from what others think of as worth. In a reflection on desire and the false promises of consumerism, Soos realizes that the value of the rod is that it brings him to a place on a river with a fish in his hand, a *miracle of spotted blue with rays of turquoise and orange in its fins*.

Soos (1950 - 2021) was a Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks and a well-known and published author. Before his untimely death, he spent summers in Corea, Maine, with his wife, Margo Klass, a multi-media artist. In this collection of essays, Soos reflects on the ways in which people can make themselves unhappy by wanting too much and going too fast. Soos confesses that he has always been slow, as slow as the old bamboo rod that he adopted. He describes himself as clumsy, too, and he realizes that the imperfection of the old rod is a perfect match for him. He makes mistakes as he restores the rod, and while he is frustrated with those mistakes, what he learns by that process and by fly fishing is a willingness to put up with imperfection, to recognize his limits, and to work with them.

In *Bamboo Fly Rod Suite*, Soos uses stories about family and friends to explore some of what he calls *difficult questions*. But his essays aren't memoirs; instead they are reflections on topics that interest Soos. His prose is down-to-earth, often sounding like a conversation he might have with a friend, riding home from the river in the front seat of his old truck. Soos reflects on the difference between worth and value, on being slow, clumsy, and imperfect, and on the frustration of loss. Yet despite the seriousness of these questions, the merit of these essays is that in them, we hear the voice of a man who is puzzling out the complications of human life but at the same time, awake to the beauty of the natural world and content to be standing in a wild river with a fly rod in his hand.

Review by Jennifer Craig

BBWC Reads Through a Maine Winter



In addition to cross country skiing and birding on the bridge, this year the Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition offered a series of book discussion groups to keep its members active during Maine's long, dark winter. The book group was developed and led by 2022 Penobscot Bay Stewards. In January, Jennifer Craig led a discussion of *The Weir*, a classic novel by Maine's own Ruth Moore. In February, Kathleen Reilly facilitated a lively exchange about Colin Woodard's history of Maine, *The Lobster Coast: Rebels, Rusticators, and the Struggle for a Forgotten Frontier* and how the coastal communities of Maine have developed over the centuries. Kate Hanson concluded the discussion series in March with *Mill Town: Reckoning with What Remains*, a close look Mexico Maine and the realities of living in a community that was economically dependent on the paper mill and also sickened by the toxic fumes of that industry. Each book gave the discussion group a chance to reflect on the history, economics, and culture and the impact of human choices in Maine and on the natural world. The series was supported by the Belfast Free Library and Left Bank Books offered a generous discount to readers.

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

Mark Your Calendar - Cathy Morgan Bird Week Begins May 13

Join the Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition in celebrating BIRDS!

Saturday, May 13. Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day by welcoming migratory birds to Sears Island. Meet at the causeway gate in Searsport.

Sunday, May 14. Celebrate Mother's Day by bringing your mother to watch birds in various environments at the farm of Cloe and David, 210 Oak Hill Road in Swanville.

Monday, May 15. Bird the Belfast Rail Trail. Meet at the Train Station on Oak Hill Road.

Wednesday, May 17. Bird the Ducktrap River Trail, a Coastal Mountain Land Trust Preserve, with Kristen Lindquist and Gary Gulezian. Meet at the trailhead on Rt. 52 in Lincolnville, six miles south of Rt. 1.

Friday, May 19. Bird the Rocky Knolls Trail of Meadow Brook Preserve, a Coastal Mountain Land Trust Preserve. Meet at the parking lot at 397 Oak Hill Road, Swanville.

Saturday, May 20. Celebrating Trees and Birds - 10:00 am for birding. 11:00 am for trees. Tour the Arboretum at Belfast City Park with its creator, Aleta McKeage. After the tour, bring a dish and join us for a potluck lunch and Ice Cream Social in the Pavilion down by the water.



All walks begin at 7:00 am, except for Saturday, May 20. All ages welcome. Dress to protect against ticks. Bring binoculars. FMI: 338-1147

Belfast Harbor Bird Watch Celebrates 11 Years Birding on the Bridge



March 11 marked the 5-Year Anniversary of "Birding from the Foot-bridge" with Ron Harrell and Gary Gulezian. It was a mild day for winter, and lots of folks came and went, enjoying coffee and donuts to celebrate the occasion, and viewing old and new feathered friends. One highlight was watching a loon wrestle a large green crab into position in its beak, and then swallow it down, neck muscles rippling.

This was the last Winter Bird Watch scheduled for the year, but keep checking the BBWC website. Ron and Gary might go for one more in April!



www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

Spring & Summer Outings

Saturday, April 8, 10:00am - 12:00 - Moss and Lichen walk at Stephenson Preserve, Belfast

Join moss lover Cloe Chunn and make friends with mosses and lichens you can greet on a first name basis. These loyal friends stay visible and growing all winter, giving the forest floor its emerald carpet. This is a slow walk. Meet at 10:00 am at the center parking lot of the Belfast Rail Trail on outer High Street. Binoculars and a hand lens are helpful. FMI: 338-1147

Saturday, April 22, 10:00am - 12:00 or 2:00pm - Sears Island Hike

Join Greg Biddinger and Cloe Chunn to explore Sears Island, a gem of the Mid-coast. We will hike one half of the Island from 10:00 - 12:00. You can call it a day or join us for lunch and hike the rest of the island. Meet at the Sears Island causeway gate. Bring water, lunch, weather and tick protection. Binoculars optional. FMI: 338-1147

Saturday, May 13, 9:00am - Keep Belfast Maine Beautiful Clean-up

Join the BBWC Team to spend a morning giving Belfast a Spring cleaning. Meet at the Head of Tide parking lot on Doak Road at 9:00am. Then, after finishing our task, join other volunteers for a cook-out in the waterfront parking lot south of Front Street Shipyard. And, as a bonus to the food, comradery and the satisfaction of giving back, all participants get a free T-shirt! FMI: David Bond - 781-264-8652 or bondappr@gmail.com

Saturday, May 20, 9:00 or 10:00am - 2:00pm - Bird Walk and Tree Tour of the Belfast City Park Arboretum (9:00 for Birds; 10:00 for Trees)

Celebrate Spring by joining Aleta McKeage, City Park Planner and Steward, on a tour of the many varieties of trees that inhabit Belfast City Park. The Bird Walk begins at 9; the Arboretum tour begins at 10:00. Then meet new and old friends at a potluck lunch and ice cream social at the City Park Pavilion. FMI: 338-1147

Saturday, June 24, 2:30 - 5:30 pm - Paddle the Passagassawakeag with the Tide

With the help of the rising tide of the Passagassawakeag, paddle your canoe or kayak past an eagle nest to the Head of Tide.. When the tide turns, it will take you back to Belfast. Meet your trip guides, Debbie and Tom Murphy at the Belfast Boathouse at 2:30pm. Bring your boat, paddles, PFD, water, a snack, weather and sun protection. Binoculars are optional. Trip is weather dependent and limited to 12 participants. For a longer ride, we'll paddle to Young's Lobster Pound for dinner (BYOB). FMI: Tom - 603-528-4777

For summer paddling on the Penobscot River, visit www.penobscotriverspaddlingtrail.org

Spring Programs



Thursday, April 20th 2023 - 6:30pm - *Outdoor Fun in Waldo County: What to Do and Where to Go* - Cloe Chunn

Cloe will highlight adventures on foot, two wheels, and on water in the many and varied regions of Waldo County. Cloe Chunn, former high school and college teacher, is a naturalist, outdoor writer, and Registered Maine Guide. She is a cofounder of the Maine Master Naturalist Program, the Penobscot River Paddling Trail, and an early board member of BBWC. Her book, *Fifty Hikes in the Maine Mountains* (W.W. Norton), has been a standard hiking guide for over 30 years.

This program will be held in the Abbott Room of the Belfast Free Library

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook

Volunteer Opportunities Available

The Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition is looking for committed individuals who are interested in the health of the Belfast Bay watershed and have time and energy to donate. Work with a great group of people, have fun, and make a positive impact on our environment. At this time, we are looking for:

Water Quality Volunteers: Help monitor the quality of water in Belfast Bay. Learn how to take and assess samples of bay water and how to interpret results.

Trail Crew and Organizer for Little River Trail: Trail Crews maintain the Little River Community Trail in Belfast and the Davis Bog Trail in Morrill. Crew members take a stretch of trail to hike and assess. The Trail Crew Organizer calls the crew together when work is needed on the trail. This work is fun, friendly, and very important to our community.

BBWC Board of Directors

Greg Biddinger, President

Ann Kennedy, VP

Kate Hanson, Secretary

Gene Randall, Treasurer

David Bond

Cloe Chunn

Noah Gilchrist

Pat Gladding

Marjie Gormley

Tom King

Dave Thomas

John Tipping

Staff

Jenni Judkins,

Natural Literacy Educator

Nicolle Littrell,

Publicity and Website

Ann Kennedy,

Newsletter Editor



New Members Invited!

Jump on board and help expand and strengthen our work in the community and watershed.

Visit our website or email us at info@belfastbaywatershed.org.

Mission: *The Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition works to support conservation and stewardship of natural, scenic and public access resources of the Belfast Bay watershed through research, community building and education.*

Subscribe on-line to this newsletter and receive monthly reminders of our activities.

Subscribe at www.belfastbaywatershed.org or send an email to info@belfastbaywatershed.org.

Please visit our website Calendar for updates on outings and programs

BBWC wishes to thank all our individual members, community partners and supporting businesses including the Front Street Pub and Front Street Shipyard, First National Bank, Left Bank Books and the Belfast Free Library. Many thanks to our granting organizations: Leonard C. and Mildred F. Ferguson Foundation, Maine Community Foundation, New England Grassroots Environmental Fund, and the Onion Foundation.

www.belfastbaywatershed.org

Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition, PO Box 152, Belfast, Maine 04915

info@belfastbaywatershed.org

Find us on Facebook