



Belfast Bay Watershed

BELFAST BAY WATERSHED NEWS

Volume 10 Issue 4

May 2013

May is for the BIRDS

(More info on Bird Week: 338-1147)

- Saturday, May 11, 7:00 am. Bird Walk on Sears Island with Ron Harrell and Cloe Chunn.
- Monday, May 13, 7:00 am. Bird Walk at Cloe and David's farm, Swanville. Call for directions.
- Tuesday, May 14, 7:00 am. Bird Walk with Ron Harrell at Belfast Footbridge.* see below
- Wednesday, May 15, 6:30 am. Bird Walk with Kristen Lindquist and Cloe Chunn at the Ducktrap River Preserve (Coastal Mountains Land Trust) on Rt. 52 in Lincolnville.
- Thursday, May 16, 7:00 am. Bird Walk with Ron Harrell. Meet at Walsh Ball Field on Rt. 52, diagonally across from theYMCA.* see below
- Friday, May 17, 7:00 PM, Woodcock Watch with Mike Shannon at theYMCA lower parking lot.



Bird Walk on Little River Trail

***Bird Research in Belfast** (see page 4)

Local birder Ron Harrell and Crew are conducting research on birds in the Belfast Bay watershed.

Join Ron on Tuesday, May 14 for a birdwalk at the Footbridge in Belfast starting at 7:00 am. This is one of the census points for the Belfast Bay Project. We will look for birds, he will describe the project, and he will show people how to gauge the age of gulls. At 8:30 am the group will move to the Upper Bridge, a second census point for the project, to look for more birds. We will see how the habitat there differs from that of the Footbridge and how this is reflected in the bird species found there. We break up about 9:30 am.

Thursday, May 16: Ron will lead a birdwalk at the Little River Community Trail, Belfast. We meet at the Walsh Field parking lot off Rt.52 at 7:00 am. This area is in the block of territory that Ron is working on for the BBWC Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Besides looking for birds, Ron will give a brief description of the project. When we walk the trail, hopefully we will be able to make some observations that can be used for the atlas. About 3 hours, or leave when you need to.

Check our website at www.belfastbaywatershed.org

We will post programs, activities, and cancellation notices.

An archive of newsletters and photos is also on the website.

Weekly Walkers

Twice per month, on a Tuesday or a Wednesday, a hike will be offered to anyone who'd like to hike 2 to 4 miles in a congenial group. A different leader will be in charge of each hike. Call this leader for details and to sign up to go. Leaders have different ideas about time of day, so be sure to check. We are trying to accommodate people's schedules by offering a Tuesday and a Wednesday each month.

May Walks

Tuesday, May 7. Climb Blue Hill with Mayme Trumble, 603-953-4028. Meet at 9:00 am at Walsh Ball Field on Rt. 52 to carpool, or at 10:00 am at the trailhead.

Wednesday, May 22. Hike Youngs Neck and Fernalds Neck in Camden with Helen Burlingame, 338-2981. Meet at 9:00 am at Walsh Ball Field on Rt. 52 in Belfast, or at 9:30 at Fernalds Neck parking lot in Camden. No dogs are allowed there, not even on leash.

Volunteer hike leaders wanted! If you would like to lead a group of friendly folks on a hike, please contact Janet Williams, 548-2941.

No weekly walks are scheduled for June, July, or August. They will resume in September as Wednesday Walkers.

Invitation from the BBWC Trail Crew

The Trail Crew needs you to help build and maintain trails in the area. Several new lands have opened up with a need for more trails. No expertise is needed. Just a pair of work gloves. We will train you. It's fun! Join us for a good time outdoors. For more information, call Skip Pendleton, 338-4427.

Last Evening Program at the Belfast Library until Fall

Thursday, May 16. 6:30 pm. "The Maine Master Naturalist Program: Results of the Belfast Class." Come learn about a few of the Capstone Projects completed by 18 participants in the Maine Master Naturalist Program this year in Belfast under the direction of Cloe Chunn.

Capstone Projects involve independent research and work outside of class. Some of the topics you will learn briefly about are:

"How did this place come to be? Why the Maine landscape looks how it looks, from deep history to the present day."

"Follow Henry David Thoreau, the naturalist's Naturalist, through Maine's North Woods." An accompanying art exhibit is on display in the Kramer Gallery.

"Declining Migrant Songbirds: Why and what we can do to help."

"Explore bog habitats of Knights Pond."

"The beauty of butterflies: an introduction to butterfly photography."

"Impacts on the health of our local estuaries and the consequences."

"Explore a headland and its marine and terrestrial species."

"Explore the Camden waterfront and Amphitheater, and learn about the marine life and ecosystems of the Megunticook River mouth."

BELFAST BAY WATERSHED COALITION

Membership Form

**BBWC
P.O. Box 152
Belfast ME 04915**

The Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals working to support conservation and stewardship of natural, scenic, historic, and public access resources of the Belfast Bay watershed through research, community-building, and education.

To become a member please make check payable to BBWC and mail to above address. Suggested membership levels:

Dragonfly _____	\$5	Snapping Turtle ___	\$100
Newt _____	\$10	Atlantic Salmon ___	\$250
Salamander ___	\$25	Sturgeon _____	\$500
Wood Frog ___	\$50		

Member (s): _____

Address _____

Town_____ **State**_____ **Zip Code** _____

Phone_____ **Email** _____

Would you like to volunteer for projects or serve on a committee?

Publicity_____ **Programs** _____ **Grant Writing** _____ **Education**_____ **Refreshments** _____ **Organizing**_____

Science & Research_____ **Work on Trails** _____ **Volunteer as Needed** _____ **Other** _____

(For information) Skip Pendleton 338-4427 or
Cloe Chunn 338-1147

BBWC Belfast Bay Birding Project

Ron Harrell has instituted the BBWC Belfast Bay Birding Project, an ongoing project that makes a census of the bird species that use Belfast Bay waters to procure food during the fall, winter, and spring months (September 1 to May 1). The goal is to determine how birds use the various Belfast Bay waters, such as the open bay, shorelines, harbor area, and headwaters. A census is taken about every two weeks, amounting to 17 censuses from seven different vantage points, thus covering the entire bay. Bird species are identified and counted, sex determined (primarily for ducks), as well as age class (primarily gulls, eagles, ospreys, and cormorants).

For the 2012-2013 season a total of 42 bird species were recorded as using various parts of the bay and its shorelines to obtain food. These included loons, cormorants, grebes, ducks, gulls, common terns, black guillemots, bald eagles, osprey, crows, belted kingfishers, wild turkeys, and common grackles. For the 17 censuses the lowest number of individual birds seen was 318 and the highest number was 949 with most censuses falling in the 400-600 range. This census work will be done for at least five winter seasons. A comprehensive description of the results will appear at a later date.



Great black-backed gull

BBWC Breeding Bird Atlas Project

The BBWC Breeding Bird Atlas Project, also Ron Harrell's project, gets underway this spring, with the goal over the next five years of determining which bird species nest in the BBWC watershed area, which consists of the drainages of the Little River, Passagasawakeag River, Goose River, and Wescot Stream. The watershed region has been divided into six blocks, with an observer assigned to work in each block. Observers determine the bird species that use their particular block during the nesting season, which runs roughly from May 15 to August 1. Each species found in a block gets classified as to observed, possible breeder, probable breeder, or confirmed breeder, depending on the breeding behavior the species shows. These are criteria many states use for their breeding bird atlas projects. Our criteria were adapted from those of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

At the end of five breeding seasons, results will be compiled and a final report will be prepared giving a detailed description of the findings. By that time a fairly complete picture of the nesting birds in our area will have been determined.



Black and white warblers are forest nesters



Praying mantis

Insect Safari

Join us for the third annual summer Insect Safari at Head of Tide Preserve, Doak Road, in Belfast, on Friday, July 19, from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm.

Kathy Murray, state entomologist, will be our guide as we seek out insects on the ground, in the air, and along the shore of the Passagassawakeag River.

Kids of all ages are invited, as well as bug loving adults. Bring water, a bag lunch, butterfly net, bug box, or just come as you are.

One bug we do not want to take home is a tick, so dress in long pants, long sleeves, and a hat.

This expedition is cosponsored with Coastal Mountains Land Trust, the owner of Head of Tide Preserve.

Drinkwater Earth Day for Two Schools

On May 30, BBWC volunteers will help teach 8 learning stations to groups of Drinkwater Elementary School students for their annual Drinkwater Earth Day. The rotations include Tide Pool study, Mudflat Museum, Blue Clay modeling, Painting Birds, Skulls and Bones, Soil Dig, Tree identification, and Birding with binoculars. That day culminates with a group sing-along and tree planting.

On May 31, a similar Earth Day experience will be offered at the Drinkwater campus for students from East Belfast Elementary School. They will be bussed for the day to Drinkwater's campus.

Drinkwater School is one of two schools in the state of Maine with shoreline frontage, offering a unique venue for field trips. Combined with the brook, pond, forest, and meadow, the campus affords a variety of habitats for field study.

Sun and Moon in Summer

June 21	Summer Solstice
June 23	Full Moon
July 22	Full Moon
August 20	Full Moon

Salmon Release Day Packed with Activities

On May 24, BBWC volunteers and students from Troy Howard Middle School will teach six learning stations to 80 fifth graders from Camden-Rockport Elementary School when they come to release their salmon fry into Wescot Stream in Swanville. Nature journaling, stream sampling, pond study, eco-games, a nature walk, and a salmon ecology talk will fill the day, with a picnic lunch part way through the day. The Troy Howard students will also release salmon fry they have raised. We hope that some day salmon will again live in our streams and bay.

BBWC Board of Directors

John Langhans, President
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 Cloe Chunn, Secretary
 Debbie Mitchell, Treasurer

Maynard Clemons
 Tom King
 Cathy Morgan
 Skip Pendleton
 Heide Purinton-Brown
 Molly Schaufli
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 Karin Wittmann

BBWC Scholarships 2013

BBWC has donated two scholarships for children to attend a week at summer nature camp, one for Tanglewood 4H Camp, and one for the YMCA summer camp.

2013 Field Trip Calendar

Anyone is welcome on outings. We offer an easy alternative to the more challenging trips. For more information, or in questionable weather, call 338-1147 for details.

Bird Week, May 11-17. See page 3 for details.

June 15, Saturday. 1:00 pm. Paddle the tidal Passagassawakeag from the Belfast Boathouse to Head of Tide, and back. Meet at the Boathouse at 1:00 pm to paddle the rising tide. We'll have "High Tea at High Tide," and then paddle the falling tide back to the Boathouse by 5:00 pm. Bring kayak or canoe, paddle, PFD, water, lunch, sun, rain, and wind protection. If you need (or have extra) space in a canoe, call 338-1147.

July 19, Friday. Insect Safari for all ages. 10:00am-12:30 pm. Head of Tide Preserve, Doak Road, Belfast. Cosponsored with Coastal Mountains Land Trust. Bring water and lunch or snack.

Summer paddling. If you are interested in informal kayak or canoe paddles during the summer, contact Janet Williams, 548-2941, williajanet@gmail.com, with your suggestions or to join an outing.

September 21, Saturday. Celebrate the Equinox with a hike up Hogback Mountain in Montville. Meet at 9:30 at Renys parking lot to carpool, or at the SWLA Bog Brook Trailhead at 10:00. Bring water, lunch, rain gear, binoculars. Cosponsored with Sheepscot Well-spring Land Alliance (SWLA).

Call 338-1147 with your suggestions for outings you'd like to have us offer.

Schedule of Meetings/Events

May 7, Tuesday Walkers, page 2.

May 11-17. Bird Week! See page 1.

May 16, Thurs. 5:00 pm, Board meeting, Library
6:30 pm, Maine Master Naturalist Program, p. 2

May 22, Wednesday Walkers, p. 2.

May 30, Thur. Last day of Penobscot Bay Stewards.

June 15, Sat. 1:00 pm. Paddle the Passagassawakeag tidal section, see left.

July 19, Friday. Insect Safari for all ages. 10:00am-12:30 pm. Head of Tide Preserve, Doak Road, Belfast. See left.

Call Janet for summer paddling, see left.

YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

The Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition invites you to help with our mission of exploring and enjoying our watershed, educating other people about our watershed, and raising community awareness of issues in the watershed.

Please feel free to attend a program and/or field trip and see what we are doing. To subscribe to BBWNews online: fbrown711@roadrunner.com

Contact information:

Cloe Chunn, 338-1147 Skip Pendleton 338-4427

Mission: The Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition is a group of organizations and individuals working to support conservation and stewardship of natural, scenic, historic, and public access resources of the Belfast Bay Watershed through research, community-building, and education.

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