



THE PILEATED PRESS

Western Maine Audubon Society

A CHAPTER OF THE MAINE AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 832, FARMINGTON, MAINE 04938

Volume XLI Number 5

April 2012

Monthly Programs

Allagash Tails

Wednesday, April 11 at 7PM

Thomas Auditorium, Preble Hall University of Maine at Farmington

Join us for an evening of Allagash Tails. Author and former Park Ranger Tim Caverly has spent his life in the Maine woods, mostly in and around the Allagash region. His Allagash Tails is a collection of books drawn from his experiences in the north woods. Through music, as well as scenic and historic pictures, the former Allagash Waterway Supervisor and author shares north woods anecdotes from his personal experiences. His stories will guide the audience on a trip so we will experience the Allagash River in a whole new way.

Free and open to the public.

Coming attractions

Wednesday, May 9, Monthly Program: Professor Herb Wilson will talk to us about butterflies and dragonflies.

Saturday, May 12, Field Trip: Warbler walk on the West Farmington Whistle Stop Trail

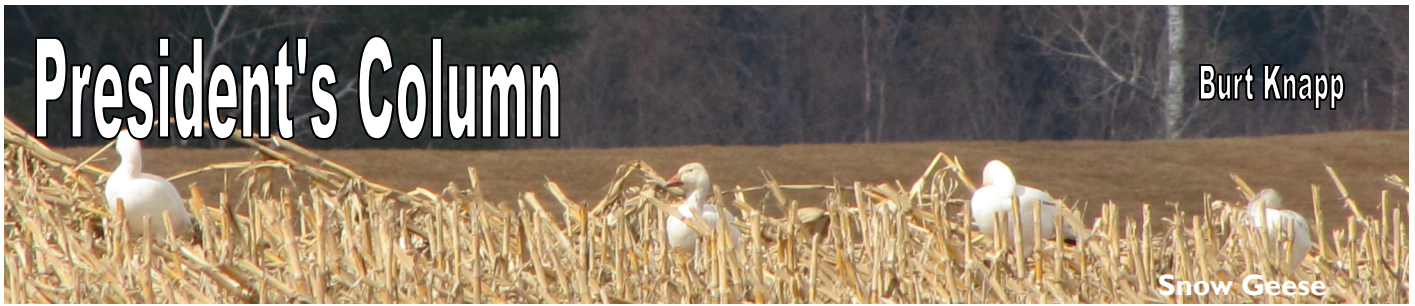
Saturday, May 26, Field Trip: Orbeton Stream Warbler walk, guided bird walk up the Orbeton Stream Valley

Androscoggin River Events: A Two Part Series to be held in the community space at the old Otis Mill Complex Part 1. **Wed. May 2nd**, 2012 at 6 :30 PM , Part 2. **Wed. May 16th** at 6:30 PM More information on pg. 4.



President's Column

Burt Knapp



Snow Geese

What a delight to feel the warmth of the sun now as we approach the spring equinox. The birds seem to respond similarly; the air was filled with their chirpings as I stepped outside this morning to fetch the morning paper. It was a coincidence that the Arts Institute of Western Maine presented a piano concert in Nordica Hall last night showcasing a work by Messiaen. **Olivier Messiaen** was a French organist and composer who lived from 1908 to 1992. Before the concert I knew little of him or of his works, but, it turns out, he was an ornithologist as well as a musician. His musical interpretations of bird songs were incorporated into many of his works, including *Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jésus* which was presented in Nordica. For fun, go to YouTube and search on “Messiaen and birds”.

What better way is there to start the day than to the full throated song of a robin perched at the top of the tallest nearby tree? And what more soothing way is there to end the day than with the melodic song of the hermit thrush floating out from the woods as evening descends? What a powerful message it was, then, that Rachael Carson delivered with the release of her book, *Silent Spring*, 50 years ago. A “silent spring” would be the heritage of continued widespread use of DDT; fortunately her message was heard and the environmental movement was begun.

On Thursday, April 26th at 7 PM at Gilsland Farm Audubon Center, the Maine Audubon Speaker Series will feature a special program, “50 Years since *Silent Spring*.” There will be a short film about Rachel Carson’s life, followed by a panel discussion with Maine CDC Toxicologist Deborah Rice, **Environmental Health Strategy Center** Co-Founder Amanda Sears, and Maine legislator and Minority Lead on the House Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources, Bob Duchesne.

While DDT was banned and bird populations were saved from its toxic effects, we live in an increasingly complex world in which a host of man-made substances have found their way insidiously into our food chain and our bodies. We need to be alert to new threats of a “silent spring” and continue to question the widespread use of synthetic herbicides and pesticides. Many modern compounds used in agriculture but also in industry are “endocrine disruptors”. BPA is an example. They are hormonally active and may induce epigenetic changes which become indelibly part of our destiny. As an example, some can act as obesogens, and may be factors in our current obesity epidemic. Find out more at <http://www.preventharm.org/Programs/Healthy-People/>, the web site of the **Environmental Health Strategy Center**.

To your good health!
Burt Knapp MD
Pres. Western Maine Audubon

Down East Maine Hosts Ninth Annual Birding Festival This Memorial Day Weekend

Jeanne Guisinger

Festival Coordinator

The [Down East Spring Birding Festival](#), in Maine’s Cobscook Bay area, is accepting registrations for its ninth event on May 25-- 28, 2012. Guided bird walks, boat rides, and presentations will be available for advanced, intermediate, and beginning birders alike. Over two hundred different bird species have been spotted during the festival’s first nine years. Join us and see how many different birds you find! This year, the festival is being organized and administrated by the [Cobscook Community Learning Center](#) in Trescott, Maine.

Conservation Corner



A Stake in the Heart of Maine- the East West Highway

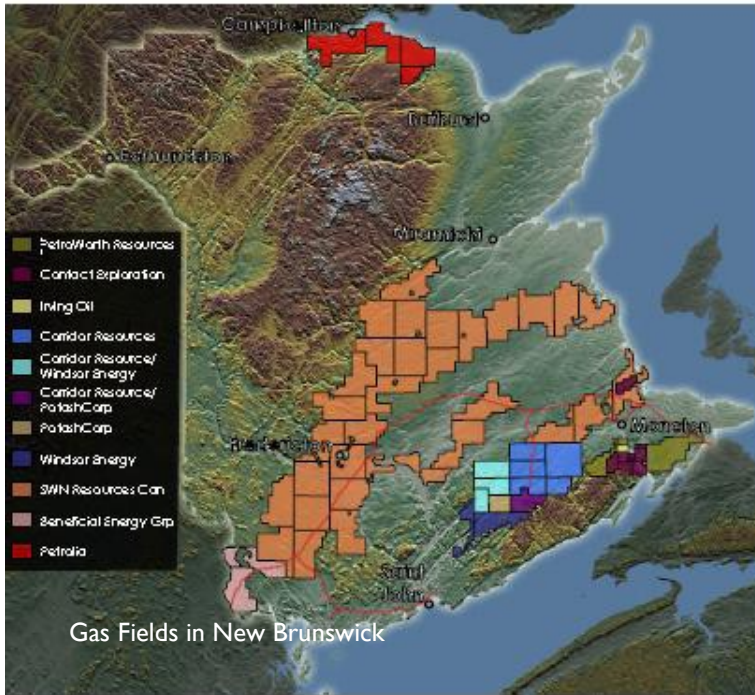
Twenty eight years ago, not long after first coming to here, I set out on my first Maine wilderness canoe trip here down the Machias River. The Machias is and was the perfect canoe trip in many ways. Big water, small water; flat water, white water, and all the while driving to the sea. The trip begins on Fifth Machias Lake, a small jewel of a pond just north of the Stud Mill Road and runs first north for a white water warm up before it bends south for its sprint to the coast. Our shuttle driver dropped Tom and me and our kit in a thicket on the side of the road at the verge of a faint clearing, where we commenced our portage to the headwater and this wonderful lake.

Now, the Stud Mill Road is in no way pristine. Rather it is one of those private working roads that cross the state through timber country, then and now roughly at the north edge of settlement. For me then and still it carries the enchantment and excitement of what lies beyond in the Maine north woods. However, if the developers have their way it and it's related network of roads may well be in for an awakening, as they are the focus of the latest iteration of the East West Highway, another bad idea that never dies. This time the project will connect New Brunswick to Quebec with a 230 mile toll road that will run from Calais to Coburn Gore, transecting on its way, the Grand Lake region, Machias watershed, the Moxie Pond area, Moosehead Lake region, and finishing with its stab through the Boundary Mountains. The Machias and Naraguagus, both salmon streams, would be crossed along with the Penobscot and Kennebec rivers and the Appalachian Trail.

Those of us who have lived here for a while have seen various iterations of the E W Highway come and go. The route 2 corridor, Rt 27, and Rt 9 have all figured into proposals that ultimately died for lack of federal money. But the current proposal, championed by Senator Doug Thomas (R- Ripley) would use state money, \$300, 000 of it, for a feasibility study only. Thence the project would turn private, funded as a private toll road.

At a time of tight money, it is hard at first glance to see why or how this \$1-2 billion proposal will fly but it has powerful backing, most especially by Peter Vigue of Cianbro. Significantly Vigue describes the road as a "utilities corridor" rather than simply a road. This corridor idea has not been spelled out as yet but connect these dots: the proposed Natural gas terminal in Searsport and extensive plans to develop natural gas in New Brunswick.

The vision seems to be a 'utility corridor' of pipe lines and perhaps major powerlines paralleling a 4 lane private road and it will go through some of Maine's important wild and scenic lands. Superimpose on this



vision that of the proposed electric power grid upgrade and continued proliferation of wind farms and you may have the next Maine.

Senator Thomas' bill LD1671 An Act To Provide Funding to the Department of Transportation for a Feasibility Study of an East-west Highway has been set up as an emergency proposal, which means it is enacted immediately after passage through the legislature. Both of the relevant House and Senate committees have blessed this, and it has passed its Senate vote. At the time of this writing (3/15) it was on its way to the last stop in the House. Hopefully there is enough will and time to stop this. Waste no time in expressing your opinion on this legislation. If the plan goes forward, hopefully a big 'if', the Maine woods will be hit with a perfect storm. Right now is the time to contact legislators

about your thoughts.

For more information and background go to www.defendingwater.net/maine/east-west-highway/



Cindy Rehagen Langewisch sent in this link.

I am always searching for good quality books for our grandchildren. I am also a photographer and recently I was reviewing an environmental photography workshop being offered at the Maine Media Workshops. I came upon a photographer/author, Gary Braasch who is the instructor for one such course. He has authored a book for middle school aged children, 'Earth under Fire: How Global Warming Is Changing the World, Updated edition.

Gary Braasch (Author),
Bill McKibben (Afterword) which led me to this resource. I felt the website was worthwhile to pass along.

<http://www.dawnpub.com/2DetailLinks/EducatorTools/Changing%20Climate%20Sampler%20w-sales%20page.pdf>

WMA and the Otis Mill Complex(Livermore Falls, Maine) Owners present:

Androscoggin River Events: A Two Part Series to be held in the community space at the old Otis Mill Complex

Part 1. Wed. May 2nd, 2012 at 6 :30 PM featuring Gail Wippelhauser, Ph.D. and David S. Cook

The presentation: Diadromous fish restoration in the Androscoggin watershed – past – present – future.

Will answer these questions and more:

What are diadromous fishes?

What parts of the watershed did they use historically?

Why don't they use these places now?

What has the Department of Marine Resources been doing to restore them to the river?

David S. Cook, author of "Beyond the Gravel Bar: The Native Canoe Routes of Maine". David's presentation will show his love and fascination of canoeing Maine's interconnected waterways. David will present the ancestral landscape and how Native people utilized their watercraft not only on a single river but beyond to the remotest corners of Maine.

Part 2. Wed. May 16th at 6:30 PM featuring "A River Lost and Found: The Androscoggin River in Time and Place".



For those of you who have been thinking about it, but just needed a nudge, NOW is the time to get those bluebird houses out!! We are seeing new arrivals of all kinds every day. A very exciting time of year. We were talking to a friend recently and he was telling us about seeing bluebirds every day all winter long at his house. Seems they were eating berries, and in patches of bare ground they would scratch for small worms. He thought the same worms they feed their young in the spring. Probably not as tender though.

One interesting sight this Spring was a very light colored goldfinch. Saw this bird first on March 1 and several times since, along with other normal birds. This little guy was almost white. Also we ran across an old birds nest from last summer, looks like mice used it this winter, it had a nice down comforter of milkweed silk. We have also been enjoying a small flock of Snow Geese that spent a few days in an old corn field near by. The snow is gone now in that field, and so are they. SW

Maine Master Naturalist Program Offers Training

The Maine Master Naturalist Program is accepting applications for its 2012-13 year course taking place at Bates College in Lewiston, and in partnership with the Stanton Bird Club and the Androscoggin Land Trust. The training, which includes ten Wednesday evening classes and five Saturday field trips, costs \$300. Upon enrollment, participants agree to give forty hours of service to conservation nonprofits or schools during the year following certification, and must continue to volunteer to remain active Maine Master Naturalists. The organization's goal is to develop a statewide network of volunteers to teach Maine natural history at parks, conservation organizations and schools throughout Maine.

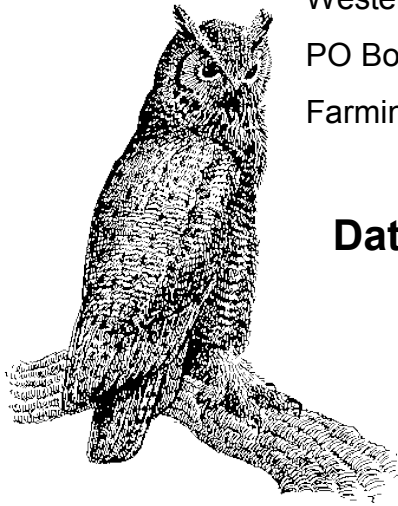
"The Lewiston course will provide participants with over sixty hours of classroom and field experience focusing on ecological principles, wetland and upland ecology, identification of Maine's flora and fauna, geology, soil science, and teaching skills" says Susan Hayward, course coordinator and faculty member. "By the end of the program, participants will have developed the skills to lead an informative walk, present talks and slide shows, provide outreach to children in schools or on land trust/park property, and teach people how to identify common trees, wildflowers, birds, and other plants and animals."

For more information and an application form, please visit the website at:

www.mainemasternaturalist.org

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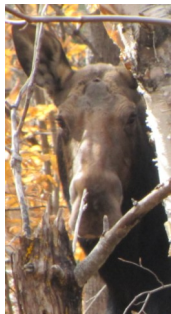
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New Members

Maine Audubon

Chapter Membership Application

Yes! I'd like to join!

Please enroll me as a member of Maine Audubon and Western Maine Audubon.

Please send *Habitat* magazine and my membership card to the address below.

My Check for (\$35 Individual level or up through \$1,000 Director's Circle) is enclosed. Please check the Audubon web site for details.

www.maineaudubon.org

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Please make checks payable to: **Maine Audubon**. Send this application and your check to:



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