



THE PILEATED PRESS

Western Maine Audubon Society

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

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April 2014

Monthly Programs

Wednesday, April 9, 2014

Forestry Practices in Maine's Public Lands

Room C 23, Roberts Learning Center, University of Maine at Farmington, 7PM.

Scattered throughout Maine are over 500,000 acres of Public Land variously managed for wildlife value, recreation, scientific management, historic value and ...state revenue. Optimizing land management practices to accomplish these wide ranging ends is a very complex job with many moving parts. In recent years there has been a great deal of controversy regarding appropriate harvest levels as the state has attempted to maximize revenue from these lands. Is this consistent with good forestry practice?

*To learn the answer to these and other questions join us for a talk by Forester **Bill Haslam**. Bill has been a licensed Maine forester for the past 12 years, and for many years oversaw harvests on public lands in Franklin and Oxford Counties. We will learn about the history of the public lands program, the competing pressures on land management, and his take on balancing multiple objectives in effective forest management.*

This program is free and open to the public.

Wednesday, May 14, Creating Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park

Room C 23, Roberts Learning Center, University of Maine at Farmington, 7PM.

Lucas St. Clair, president of Elliotsville Plantation, Inc., will discuss efforts to conserve land in the North Maine Woods for the recreation, sporting, and conservation pursuits of our future generations.

Wednesday, June 4, 2014 State of the Birds

Room C 23, Roberts Learning Center, University of Maine at Farmington, 7PM,

Rescheduled from March due to weather



Cold and snowy still as I sit down to write this column for the April newsletter. Hopefully, it will be warmer with the feel of spring and the smell of boiling maple sap in the air when you read this!

There are already a few brave Chickadees singing their Fee-Bee-Song. For the most part, however, our winter flock continues to feed all day at our feeder on black oil sunflower seeds. They grab a seed and then sit on a branch of the lilac bush near the house and energetically open the prized seed. The seeds will see them through another freezing night in whatever sheltered niche they have found, somewhere out of our sight and awareness.

In her passing, my wife's mother, an avid birder, left behind a store of bird books including Volumes 1 and 2 of [A Guide to Bird Behavior](#) by Donald Stokes. In Volume 1, he gives the following paraphrased interesting facts on our common Black Capped Chickadee:

At this time of year the males begin to establish their breeding territory and begin by singing their Fee-Bee-Song. Often one male will call and another will answer. Males become increasingly intolerant of other males in their winter flock, and the winter flock begins to break up. Once the breeding phase starts there will be fewer birds at your feeder. The breeding territory is usually about 10 acres, and decreases in size during incubation and nestling, and is no longer defended during the fledgling phase.

Nests are often excavated in soft, partially rotted wood. Birches may be used for the bark remains intact while the inner wood becomes soft. The nest may be in the side of a trunk or down the end of a broken-off limb, and will usually be 4-15 feet off the ground. A nest may be found by seeing small wood chips littering the ground nearby. In mid-summer a soft version of the Fee-Bee-Song is used by adults as they approach the nest.

In the late summer and early fall, after the breeding season, small flocks begin to form, often around the breeding territory of a successful dominant pair. A flock of 6-10 birds may contain some juveniles, some paired adults, and some single adults. An established flock will feed during the winter in an area up to 20 acres in size. The flock may be quiet as it moves about its area feeding, giving only quiet Tseet-Calls to keep in contact with each other. The call is a high, short, single sound, hard to hear at first. The Chickadee-Call might also be heard at this time given by a bird that has become slightly separated from the flock, or by birds in the flock as it reforms if it has been disturbed. Often only a single flock will be seen at your feeder on a regular basis, and signs of social hierarchy can be observed within the flock. Calls of aggression, the Dee-dee-Call or the Chebeche-Call, may be heard if there is territorial conflict with another flock. The Dee-dee-Call has a definite scolding quality and may be several syllables: deedeedeede. The Chebeche-Call is fast with 3 or more syllables with the emphasis on the last syllable: chebechebechebeche.

Within the feeding territory other species of birds are frequently seen with the Chickadees: Downy Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, Kinglets, Brown Creepers, and White-Breasted Nuthatches. Warblers in their fall migration may join the resident Chickadee flock as it feeds.

Many Chickadees remain on or near their breeding grounds throughout the year. There is evidence, however, that some birds migrate. Banding reports show significant north-south movement for some individuals. Much of the increase in local populations during spring and fall however occurs as birds drift to new areas rather than undergoing true north-south migration.

Hopefully these interesting facts will add to your enjoyment of these most common little guests at our feeders.

Join us for our sponsored talks in April and May as our invited speakers discuss some of the controversial uses of our forest land resource here in Maine. The March 12th talk, as you know was cancelled due to the March Blizzard. I sent an e-mail alert to all Western Maine Audubon members for whom Maine Audubon had an e-mail address. I had an address for only 81 of our 200 members and some of those e-mails were returned because the address was no longer active. If you would like to be able to receive e-mail announcements and alerts from us please provide your e-mail address to me. I promise to be sparing in the use of it!

Allow me also to make a brief pitch: please consider giving to the Endangered and Non-game Wildlife Fund when you file your tax return. This is in place of the old "Chickadee Check Off".

Conservation Corner

Photo of Waste Management 's Norridgewock Special waste landfill By Sallie Wilder

REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE

Steve Bien

Like many of you, each week I dutifully portage my recyclables down my driveway, happy to see it on its way. I get the combined satisfactions of divestiture with the pride of good citizenship at work. But, I wondered the other day as I made my trip, how likely is my motley assortment likely to be rejuvenated in real reuse? Or will it spend its millennia landfilled somewhere? Is this a meaningful practice or a sop?

Certainly many of us do it, across the country and across the globe. 77% of Americans participate in some way, although at best we only recycle 34% of our waste. The Swiss recycle over 50% of their waste stream and most of Western Europe is not far behind. It is humbling to know we are only on a par with China, not a country with stellar environmental credentials. It turns out, too, we have a special recycling relationship here since they do much of our recycling for us.



Of course nobody consumes the way we do. We are 4% of the world's population but produce a full 30% of its waste. Does our recycling offset our consumption? How good a job does recycling do in returning materials to the industrial supply stream? Single sort is so convenient, but does it really work? Do its added costs sap the energy and benefit out of the process?

Recycling as an idea came out of the landfill crisis of the 70's and 80's. Many of you may remember how it appeared back then that we were running out of places to store our junk. But while the original impetus was to find ways to reuse more to preserve our landfills the landfill crisis was solved not by recycling but by private enterprise. Once private waste processors figured out what kind of tipping fees they could charge for handling our refuse, it was clear there was gold in those hills. Municipalities got out of managing their dumps and landfill operation became more efficient, environmentally safe, and lucrative. Today we landfill more than ever but we are not running out of space, not yet anyway.

It is hard to imagine how we accommodate this stuff. Per capita we generate 2.36 #/day for the landfill, a little less than the 1960 level of 2.5#/per/day but larger mountains amass because our population has grown by nearly 25% over those 50 years. We certainly consume far more, per capita. Our overall waste generation was 2.6#/person per day in the pre consumer days of 1960 but is about 4.5# today.

Miriam Webster says that to recycle is "to make something new from something that has been used before". So that includes reuse but it also includes reprocessing down to another form entirely. Paper and metals lend themselves to the former but plastics and glass tend to be re processed more fundamentally. Most glass today ends up in road mix and sandblasting, rarely back to a container. Plastic is usually reprocessed to be the raw ingredient for more plastic, or is burned, waste to energy. Only 12% of plastic packaging remains packaging; 27% of plastic bottles are reused as bottles in the US. Electronics are very easy to throw away but hard to truly recycle. Twenty five percent of electronics goods are picked up for recycling but a tiny fraction of that is actually reused; much of it ends up landfilled overseas and after it is picked over. We export much of our waste no matter the process: scrap materials for reprocessing are our largest export to China where the real and dirty work of processing happens. So, with those caveats in mind, the fate of trash is as follows: 32% of all waste is recycled, 12% is burned, and 55% is buried in landfills. —————>

Recycling participation rates in the United States are at an all-time high largely due to the introduction of single sort technology, a kind of recycling for dummies, since everything is dumped in one bin. Single sort gets mixed reviews in most large scale studies because while higher public participation leads to more collection, there are greater processing costs and generally lower quality yields. In most national studies, the discard rate, the amount of stuff landfilled, doubles with single sort to upwards of 15%, and the cost analysis is often deemed a wash. But we live in an area where there is an important exception to that analysis: Eco Maine.

Eco Maine is a public non-profit based in Portland that serves 46 communities including the 21 that own it. Its Director of Communications, Frank Gallagher, is unabashedly enthusiastic about single sort because his organization has remarkable success and is a leader in the field. Eco Maine's 'contamination' or landfill rate is half the national rate at only 7%, and their sale of high quality materials generates enough money to cover costs and rebate money to the participating towns. In addition their waste to energy plant generates enough surplus power to power 14, 000 homes per year. Nationally, very few recycling agencies come close to this track record.

Yet, we should not be deceived to think that recycling is the antidote for our consumption and waste. The costs in terms of landfill waste and greenhouse gas emissions are real and substantial. Almost 10% of my waste bin and yours will end up in a landfill even with careful processing. We owe it to the planet to reduce our consumption and recycle through re use as much as possible. Beyond that, focus on the gnarliest ingredients in your recycling bin: plastics and electronics. Plastics first: inside the recycling triangle you will see a number. Numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are generally the easiest to recycle. Try to avoid 3, 6, and 7.

Electronics: be conservative in your purchasing and try to locate real recyclers.

#1, PET or PETE (polyethylene terephthalate): easily recycled, not found to leach. Used in water, juice and soft drink bottles.

#2, HDPE (high-density polyethylene): easily recycled, not found to leach. Used in milk jugs, detergent and shampoo bottles. Soon to be in a new Nalgene bottle.

#3, PVC or Vinyl (polyvinyl chloride): not recyclable; soft PVC can leach toxic phthalates. Used in some cling wraps, children's toys, fashion accessories, rain gear, detergent and spray bottles.

#4: LDPE (low-density polyethylene): recyclable at recycling centers; not found to leach. Used in most plastic shopping bags, cling wraps, some baby bottles and reusable drink & food containers.

#5: PP (polypropylene): recyclable in some curbside programs, not found to leach. Used in some baby bottles, most yogurt and deli takeout containers, Tupperware- and Rubbermaid-type reusable food and drink containers.

#6: PS (polystyrene): recyclable in some curbside programs, can leach styrene, a neurotoxin. Used in rigid foam drink cups, takeout food containers, egg containers, some plastic cutlery.

#7 – Other (BPA, Polycarbonate and LEXAN)



Mountain Birdwatch Needs YOU!

Do you enjoy hiking? Are you a birder- or would you like to learn more about bird identification to support a conservation effort? Mountain Birdwatch is a long-term monitoring program for Bicknell's Thrush and other high-elevation forest birds. We're looking for beginner to experienced birdwatchers who are strong hikers to conduct a survey in the Adirondacks, Catskills, Green and White Mountains, or Maine. Hike a scenic mountain trail, enjoy the sunrise, and count birds for conservation! To learn more about Mountain Birdwatch protocols, visit <http://www.vtecostudies.org/MBW/prep.html>, or to check out our list of available routes, see <http://www.vtecostudies.org/MBW/availableroutes.html>. Please contact Mountain Birdwatch director Judith Scarl (jscarl "at" vtecostudies.org) if you'd like to learn more about this exciting program!



Nature Watch



Sharp-shinned hawk, Photo by Sallie Wilder



Photo by Kathy McInerney

Was interesting to hear from Marnie Bottesch telling about the Cedar Waxwings she watched for quite some time last week at the Hannaford parking lot in Skowhegan. It was a nice sunny day and one of the little landscape trees was full of berries and also full of waxwings. She said it was magical.

Birds at Nancy and Burt's feeder on Porter Hill this winter: Lots of Chickadees, and Blue Jays. Occasional nuthatch, downy woodpecker, junco. Moderate flock of goldfinches earlier in the season, and recent moderate numbers of mourning doves. Not seen: Redpolls, Crossbills, both of which were seen in flocks the last winter or two.



Photo by Burt Knapp

Also Burt and Nancy saw this deer on the Moose Trail at the Mt Blue State Park this winter.

Steve Bien has been having a nocturnal visitor lately. A cute little Flying Squirrel. He has sent pictures of the little fellow in his basement and some tracks he left behind in the snow. Steve also sent nice pictures of some Pileated Woodpecker dining activities.



Photo by Steve Bien



Photo by Steve Bien

Right after our last newsletter went to press, we got an e mail from Mac Davis from Albany twp. He sent some wonderful owl pictures that I would like to share with you. Here are a couple, and more to come.



Photo by Steve Bien

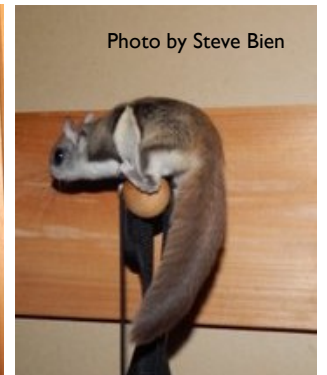


Photo by Steve Bien

Was interesting seeing a Sharp-shinned hawk in our yard on 3/10. Doubt the chickadees were as enthused.

Was good to hear from Dot Haggan this month. She writes; "There has been a flock of Bohemian Waxwings in the Phillips area recently, and Melanie Haggan has been

seeing a Barred Owl regularly at their home for the past month."

And on a non wildlife note; we are sorry to see Forrest Bonnie leave the WMA Board. He will certainly be missed. But we are very happy to be able to welcome Tom Mauzaka. Was good to have him on our recent snowshoe hike.



Barred Owl Photos by Mac Davis



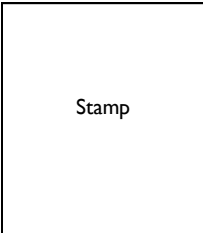
Photo by S. Wilder

We have one more newsletter for this season. If you should have something for the Nature page or 'Letter to the Editor', please e mail me at aewilder@tdstelme.net SW





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Yes, I want to **join** or **renew** my membership with Maine Audubon and the Western Maine Chapter.

I want to help protect and conserve wildlife habitat and promote environmental education and advocacy in Maine.

Please send me Maine Audubon's quarterly newsletter, *Habitat*, and *The Pileated Press*, the Western Maine Audubon chapter newsletter. I understand that if I join at the Patron level or higher or enclose an additional \$10, I will receive *Audubon*, the bimonthly National Audubon magazine. My membership benefits also include discounts on Maine Audubon programs and trips, on products from Maine Audubon's Nature Stores, and at Audubon sanctuaries nationwide.

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