



THE PILEATED PRESS

Western Maine Audubon Society

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

BOX 832, FARMINGTON, MAINE 04938

Volume XLIV Number 3

November 2014

Monthly Program

Wednesday, November 12 at 7PM

Room 101, Roberts Learning Center, University of Maine, Farmington

Moose and Winter Ticks

Moose are big and ticks are small, but when encumbered with thousands of them, an adult moose can be bled to death by winter ticks over one season. In the mid-West some moose herds have been cut in half by this affliction and are in jeopardy. While the problem is far less severe here, winter tick infestations are seriously hurting moose populations in Maine and New England as well.

Lee Kantar is the Moose Project Leader for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. He has worked for the department for the last 9 years, starting out as the Deer Project Leader. Prior to working for MDIFW, Lee was a District Wildlife Biologist for the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife; he also worked as a Wildlife Area Manager and Wildlife Biologist on the Mt-Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Lee received his Master's Degree in Wildlife Science from New Mexico State University; he received his BS from the University of New Hampshire.

Lee will discuss current research on adult female and calf mortality in Maine moose, the role of the winter tick, and provide an overview of moose management in Maine including aerial surveys, moose harvest, and reproduction.



This program is free and open to the public.



Photos by S. Wilder



They are back! In my last column I complained of the disappearance of the song birds from the farm. Crows, ravens, and blue jays were present but it was otherwise quiet. Perhaps it was the heat and dryness of September. In the garden just yesterday, on an Indian summer morning, it sounded like spring again! Birds were singing and flitting about actively. The sparrows, seed eaters, are especially active now harvesting fall produce- as are we. I take my life in my hands now trying to harvest fall raspberries, competing with lady bugs and hornets!

As fall turns slowly now toward winter, we look forward to Lee Kantar's talk, Nov. 12th, on moose in Maine; discussing, among other things, the effect of winter ticks on the health of individual animals and on the health of the herd. This will also be the night of our annual meeting, a brief affair before the talk with presentation of a proposed slate of officers for Western Maine Audubon for this coming year and a vote by you, our members. A full and impressive bio on Lee Kantar is at: <http://wildlife.unh.edu/alumni-stories/kantar>.

The board is considering reducing the printing of the Pileated Press to just twice a year. Content would remain similar but the late summer edition would list all talks and activities for the fall, and the late winter edition, the same, for the spring. This would save paper, printing costs, and postage as well as work for our small but dedicated board. It will still be a hard copy newsletter as many seem to prefer this to a strictly electronic version. It will continue to be posted on our web page at www.maineaudubon.org with the advantage of full color photos and active web links for those who prefer their news and information online. We anticipate a more active use of our web page on the Maine Audubon web site, and we are considering opening a FaceBook page so that you all can "like us" and we can have an easier flow of ideas back and forth. For now we will rely on phone and e-mail, but hope you will inform us of your ideas about the above proposed changes, or about anything else such as topics for talks, and your interest in events or activities. We also remain open to your participation at the board level or just volunteering for specific tasks, like making a welcoming call to new members.

(Feel free to contact me about any of the above: Burt, by phone at 778-6285 or e-mail at burt@porterhillfarm.com)

This is an exciting time for Maine Audubon with a new director, Charles Gauvin, now at the helm. I was pleased to be able to chat with him over tea and am excited about his ideas for the organization. Maine Audubon will continue to offer solid science and informed opinions about environmental concerns. It needs to readdress, in a comprehensive fashion, concerns about energy generation and usage in Maine. It needs to focus on the reality of Climate Change and the prediction by National Audubon that 50% of our beloved bird species are at risk of extinction as climate changes progress. Four priorities for Maine Audubon stand out:

- Protection of existing wildlife habitat.
- Connection of parcels of existing protected habitat allowing for effectively larger wildlife areas by making passage of animal and fish species more easily possible.
- Restoration of our river and stream corridors. So much terrestrial wildlife depends on healthy waterways and riparian habitat.
- Building the human infrastructure to accomplish the above.

He envisions Gilsland Farm becoming a first class Natural History museum and educational resource for students at all levels. It should also be a showcase for modern technologic solutions to energy and waste problems. As a start, as of 1/1/15 it will be a solar powered building. We will hear much more, I'm sure, from Charles in the coming year.

Lastly, Western Maine Audubon happily announces the addition of Kate Weatherby to our board of directors. Welcome, Kate!

Conservation Corner

Kidney Pond

Photo by Kathy Wilder

Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park

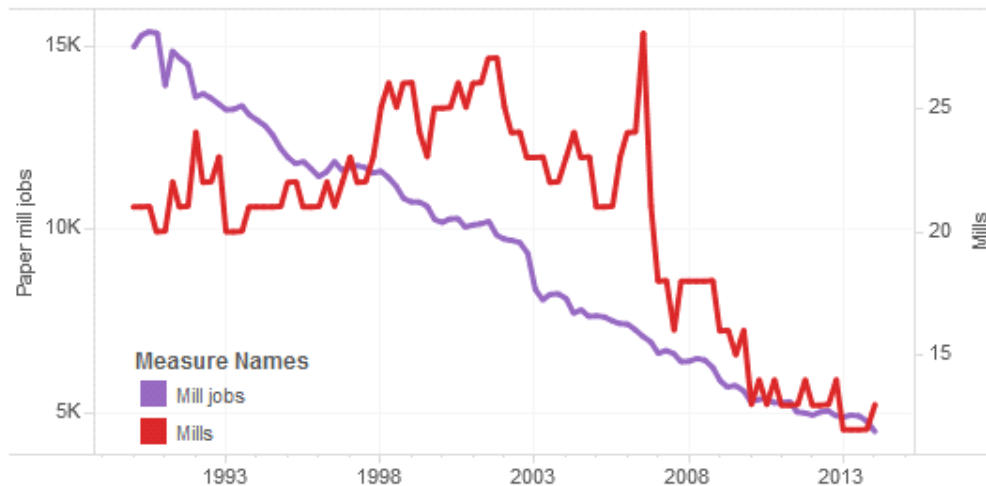
Great Northern Paper's demise was officially declared a month ago with notice of its bankruptcy. What a fall to contemplate! When I was recruited to look at a medical practice in Millinocket in 1981, who would have guessed that the Magic City was at the tail end of its salad days. Back then the Millinocket and East Millinocket mills churned out enough paper to be world leaders in the industry. Together the mills employed over 5000 workers and provided the wharf and woof of town life. Had I taken a position there I would have worked in the hospital Great Northern built, my children would have gone to the schools they funded, and we would have either rented or, if especially lucky, bought a home from Great Northern. At the time GNP owned about 2 million acres which

included the towns and everything around and under them. At one time most phone books *around the world* were printed on paper from those mills along with the majority of our school text books, and many of our magazines.

Great Northern had its start as a water company back in 1897 when Charles Cullen formed the Northern Development Company to harness the Penobscot's falls for power. Dams and hydro power quickly led to paper manufacturing and almost 100 years of high times for the region. Paper would take care of you from the cradle to the grave, and your children after you. This was the magic of Magic City,

Recession hit mills but employment declines have been steady

While employment at paper mills has fallen steadily since 1990, the number of paper mills in the state started to dip only recently, after the recession started in late 2007.



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. Note: Changes could reflect non-economic factors, like changes in classifications, etc. The survey is not designed as a time-series but it is the most accurate data available on payroll jobs. bangordailynews.com

as Millinocket once was called.

How things change. The late 70's, 80's and 90's saw a rapid tumble. The soaring price of land made land ownership a less profitable proposition than selling the holdings and renting. The environmental movement and labor unrest pushed expenses up while globalization and the loss of markets from the coming digital age pushed profits down. A series of hostile and non-hostile takeovers were efforts to squeeze something out of the aging machinery but ultimately nothing could prevent the fire sale today that marks the final liquidation of the mills. A few weeks back the East Millinocket mill was officially shuttered after some sputtering hope with Cate Street Capital, itself now floundering in bankruptcy, and the remaining 250 or so workers have only unemployment benefits and hope to turn to for their future. The net result is the decimation of town budgets and fears the region is entering the death spiral that comes from school cut backs, the exodus of youth, and an unemployment rate of 20%. Most recently Great Northern has filed for bankruptcy, listing 1000 creditors. Its Millinocket mill closed back in 2008.

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Which is why now is the right time for Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park. There is nothing new about the idea of a national park in the Katahdin region. Restore and others have been pushing for same for 30 years; but the size, often cast at millions of acres, and environmental purity of the proposals never got its support beyond the environmental faithful. Enter Lucas St Claire and his colleagues at Elliottsville Plantation Inc. They have done their homework and fashioned a concept that has garnered support from both sides of the aisle. Instead of millions of acres, their national park would be 75 000 acres, paired with another 75000 acre parcel they would offer up as recreational land for the traditional pursuits of snowmobiling, hunting, fishing, as well as non-motorized, non-game recreation. In addition they have put together a financial package that answers the questions of costs and funding.

Studies show that National Parks stimulate economic growth along with community vitality. Acadia NP brought in \$186 million in 2011 and supports 3000 jobs. Nationwide our 59 national parks support 250 000 jobs and 13 billion dollars are spent within 60 miles of them.

Local reluctance, historically the most adamant, is starting to soften as the economic options for the

region shrink. The Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park is essentially a gift Quimby Foundation is willing to give us, and the time has come to accept this gift. There is growing local support among townspeople and local leadership- the area Chamber of Commerce. What remains is to convince our governor and our Congressional delegation that this support is widespread, which is, of course, where you come in. Consider writing to express your views on this. Lucas St Claire has done his homework and so should we.



Annual Farmington Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 20, 2014



This year's annual Farmington Christmas Bird Count will take place on **Saturday, December 20, 2014**. The count encompasses a 15-mile diameter circle centered north of Farmington (near Fairbanks) and includes areas such as Farmington, Farmington Falls, East Wilton, Allens Mills, Weeks Mills, and parts of the towns of Temple, Strong, and New Vineyard. The count officially runs the entire 24-hour day, but most participants will survey a prescribed section of the count circle from about sunrise to sunset. In addition to birders canvassing areas by car or by foot, anyone who wants to take part but would rather stay warm and dry and lives within the official count circle can be a feeder watcher.

Feeder watchers simply keep track of time spent observing their feeders and record the high count of each species seen. **If you would like to participate in this year's count contact compiler Trevor Persons at 634-2280 or by email at Trevor.Persons@nau.edu.**





What a nice Fall this has been. Sure would be easy to take a few more weeks of this!

On 10/14 Nancy Knapp saw a Monarch butterfly in the WalMart parking lot flying south. Have heard of a few others seeing them earlier, but nothing this late. Hope we see many more next year.

Was good to hear from Trevor Persons recently, He wrote; "glad to see you saw the caracara! I've seen a lot of them (AZ, TX, FL, Mexico), but didn't think I'd ever see one in Norridgewock!"

"I saw it twice in Norridgewock, but perched back in the trees both times, never out close to RT. 2 or in with the cows. I saw it much better the week before near Unity, though, both at the farm where Steve Muise found it, then about a mile away where we watched it scavenge a roadkill painted turtle."



He also wrote; "Not a rare Norridgewock sighting, but I enjoyed this bittern out on Sandy River Road recently"

On 9/28 while driving out of the camp near The Forks our daughter spotted this fellow pecking around in a clear grassy area. Not sure I had ever seen a Horned Lark before. They sure blend in well with their surroundings.

Another daughter called this morning to get the Avian Haven phone number. She is in Richmond, VA and called them to get information on who to call for a bird rescue

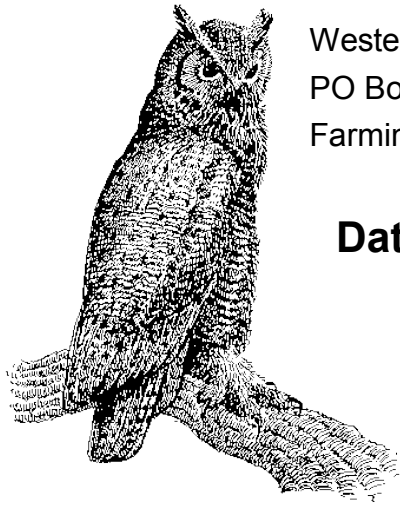
down in Virginia. She found an injured woodpecker/sapsucker (?) on the sidewalk in Richmond; people were walking past it and she wanted to help. At this writing it is in her apartment waiting to go to the wildlife rehabilitating center outside of Richmond. She is following their instructions. In case you find yourself in this predicament it is always good to have the **Avian Haven** number handy. It is: **382-6761**



Paul McGuire just sent us this interesting account of his last canoe outing of the season, 10/19. He writes: "Today was a wild one at Clearwater Lake as a powerful northerly blew the weekend's wet mess away. On my final row of the season (more surfing than rowing) before hauling the Rangeley boat, I got a good look at about two dozen Canada geese rafted up among the whitecaps. About one hundred yards upwind of them was a flock of about fifty Black scoters skipping the crests before putting, settling in the troughs. They are right on time: each year at mid-October they seem to ride in on a weather change, hang around for a couple days or so before heading for the coast. Their wheeling and twisting in tight formation at top speed is fascinating to watch - quite the show! A week from now we'll be headed for north Georgia via the Blue Ridge Parkway. I doubt we'll see scoters on the Appalachian ridgeline, but we'll have binoculars at the ready for whoever flies the high route to southern wintering grounds!"

This will be our last newsletter of the season. We will start again in the spring. Hope you all have an enjoyable Winter, and as always, we like to hear from you, and what you are seeing in the natural world. You can e mail me at: aewilder@somtel.com. Thanks. SW





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Stamp

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Maine Audubon and Western Maine Audubon Membership Form

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

I want to help protect and conserve wildlife habitat and promote environ-
 mental 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.

Please make your check out to Maine Audubon and mail it to Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland
 Farm Road, Falmouth, Maine 04105.

\$25 Senior/Volunteer \$65 Contributing \$500 Benefactor

\$35 Individual \$100 Patron \$1,000 Director's Circle

\$45 Household \$250 Sustaining

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Questions? Call 207/781-2330 x232 or email member@maineaudubon.org.