



# *the* ***Pileated Press***

Western Maine Audubon, *a chapter of Maine Audubon*

Box 832, Farmington, ME 04938

## **- Our Spring Talks 2020 -**

All talks take place on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 at C23, Robert's Learning Center, UMF. They are free and open to the public.

### **March 11 - Maine's Wild Mushrooms; Forest Ecology and the World of Mycelium**

Speaker: Greg Marley (Snow date March 18th)

*\*Please check our web page, [western.maineaudubon.org](http://western.maineaudubon.org), or our Facebook page for information in case of snow*

From mid-summer through the fall and the first hard freeze, Maine's forests and fields are a kaleidoscope of mushrooms of every color and shape. We are drawn to their variety of forms and the mystery of edibility and toxicity. The woods are awash in foragers and those drawn by their simple beauty. Yet the mushrooms we see are just the tip of the mycological iceberg. With every step we take along a woodland path and into the deep duff of the forest floor, we tread upon miles of fungal hyphae, interwoven in a complex network we call mycelium. This talk will delve into the role of fungi in forest health and complex interconnected web of life beneath our feet. We will celebrate great edible and medicinal mushrooms and underscore the cautionary tale of poisonous mushrooms. And we will return time and again to the lifeblood of mycelium in every shovelful of soil. Come out in the early spring and enjoy a talk focused in the season ahead.



Photo Credit: Burt Knapp



Photo Credit: Burt Knapp

#### Greg A Marley Bio

Greg Marley has been collecting, studying, eating, growing and teaching mushrooms for more than 45 years. Marley shares his love affair with mushrooms through walks, talks and classes held across New England. The founder of Mushrooms for Health, he oversees a small company providing medicinal mushroom education and products made with Maine medicinal mushrooms. Marley is the author of *Mushrooms for Health; Medicinal Secrets of Northeastern Fungi*, (Downeast Books, 2009) and the award winning *Chanterelle Dreams, Amanita Nightmares; The Love Lore and Mystic of Mushrooms*, (Chelsea Green, 2010). As a volunteer mushroom identification consultant to Poison Control Centers across New England, he provides expertise in mushroom poisoning cases. He lives and mushrooms with his family along the coast of Maine.

Greg Marley, LCSW

[mushroom@midcoast.com](mailto:mushroom@midcoast.com)

207-319-4556



## April 8 - Nightjars in Maine

Speaker: Logan Parker (Snow date: April 15th)

Logan is an assistant ecologist and founder of the Maine Nightjar Monitoring Project. This statewide citizen science project is collecting observations of whip-poor-wills, nighthawks, and other nocturnal birds, some of which are facing widespread declines.

Attendees will learn about the natural history of Maine's nightjars, cryptic and nocturnal birds that are more likely to be heard than seen, and the efforts involved in monitoring these fascinating birds throughout the state, from Eliot to Calais, Kennebunk to Baxter State Park. The project is currently recruiting volunteers to adopt monitoring routes or simply make observations of nightjars in your own backyard.

Logan Parker is an assistant ecologist residing with his wife in their off-grid cabin in the woods of Central Maine. Logan, a life-long Mainer, earned his Master's Degree from Unity College where he studied Sustainable Natural Resource Management with a focus on biodiversity conservation. He is a birder, naturalist, writer, and wildlife photographer. Logan is also currently working to support the 2nd generation of the Maine Bird Atlas as a Special Species and Habitat Technician, conducting nocturnal, alpine, and winter bird surveys. He is also an ecologist for the Maine Natural History Observatory.

(207) 649-4689

[logan@hereinthewild.com](mailto:logan@hereinthewild.com)

## May 12 – What's Happening to Our Birds?

Speaker: Sally Stockwell

The numbers are staggering. A recent article in the journal Science documents declines among 64% of all eastern forest bird species—a loss of 167 million birds—and among 50% of all boreal forest species—a loss of 501 million birds—in North America alone. That means nearly one in four of all eastern forest birds and one in three of all boreal forest birds that were coloring the forest with their flashy feathers and cheerful songs in 1970 are no longer with us.



*Savannah Sparrow* by: Jennifer Brockway

There are many reasons for these declines. Some of the more persistent are habitat loss on both breeding and wintering grounds, loss or degradation of migratory stopovers, decline or contamination of insect food from overuse of pesticides, collisions with windows and other human structures, and predation from cats. Individuals can take simple steps to steward birds and habitat, and every little bit helps. Maine can do more than a little bit; in fact, we can play an outsized role in helping to stem the decline.



*Whip-Poor-Will* by: Logan Parker



*Wood Thrush* by: Doug Hitchcox

Our state has the largest remaining block of forest in the eastern U.S. and these forests are vital to the breeding success of millions of forest songbirds every year. We are the “baby bird factory” for the entire Atlantic Flyway. Because of that, much of northern and western Maine has been designated as a globally significant

Important Bird Area by National Audubon and BirdLife International. We have both an opportunity and a responsibility to help these declining birds.

Come learn more about how the data were gathered, who's at risk and why, and what you can do to help stem the declines. All landowners in the region with grasslands or forestlands can help change that by creating or improving habitat for birds in Maine. Your efforts to care for your woods, fields and waters can make a big difference!

Sally Stockwell is a wildlife ecologist with experience in conservation of nongame, rare, and endangered species in freshwater wetlands, coastal beaches and marshes, and northern forests. She has additional experience as an interpretive naturalist, environmental education instructor, and outdoor adventure leader. Sally holds a Ph.D. in wildlife ecology and an M.S. in wildlife management from the University of Maine and a B.S. in biology from The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington. In 2008, Sally was the recipient of the UMaine Department of Wildlife Ecology Award for Professional Excellence for long-term career service to wildlife conservation. Sally serves on numerous state committees and has been actively involved in town planning, open space planning.

## - President's Column - Nancy Knapp

*Photo Credit: Burt Knapp*

Last September I was contacted by Nick Lund from Maine Audubon requesting a meeting to discuss the Renewable Energy Plan which Maine Audubon was preparing to release to the public. Our discussion was interesting and informative and brought up some of the important issues related to the accelerating push towards renewable energy. In a nutshell their message was: yes, we need to move rapidly towards wind and solar energy production, but, most importantly, we must not put our wildlife and environment at risk in the process. We have included some of their points in the newsletter as well as information about how to find the full report on line. I do think it makes good conservation sense as their goal is to protect both the environment and the creatures there in.

Please note that our 1st “spring” talk will be in MARCH this year (not in February as previously announced), followed by one in April, and one in May. We have an interesting and varied series planned including a talk on fungi/mushrooms from one of the state's premier mushroom authorities, a talk on nocturnal birds or “nightjars”, and Sally Stockwell, a Maine Audubon biologist, about the decline in the bird population. I look forward to seeing you all, fortunately, back in room C23 in the Roberts Learning Center.

*Nancy Knapp*



## - Articles -

### Crossbills, by Nancy Knapp

Have you ever seen a crossbill? I remember the wonder of the first time they came to our window feeder in Gorham. Our kids were young and almost missed the school bus in our excitement. The crossbills bills “are perfectly adapted to pry apart the scales of conifer cones” to extract the seeds, notes Herb Wilson. In a recent Maine Sunday Telegram article he says that the spruce cone crop in the northern boreal forests are so good this year that the crossbills will probably not irrupt very far south. His assessment of the fact we may not see them this winter: bummer for us.



Red Crossbills by: Doug Hitchcox

### Hog Island Audubon Camp, by Will Jones

If you are looking for exceptional educational programs on birdlife or environmental awareness, or if you are looking for a breathtakingly beautiful natural space for birding and hiking, Hog Island Audubon Camp near Bremen, Maine is the ideal place. Hog Island is truly a Maine—and Audubon—treasure, hosting over 200 species of birds in a unique eco-system specifically dedicated towards preservation and environmental education.



Hog Island by: Stephen Kress

Since its launch in 1936, Hog Island has attracted educators, birdwatchers, and ornithologists from across the country. The camp offers stunning natural beauty, a large variety of birds and wildlife, and excellent birding and nature camp programs for teens, adults, families, and educators. Hog Island has the honor of being recognized as the founding center for the U.S. environmental education movement and has deeply influenced countless American environmentalists, including Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*, as well as leading figures in the



Hog Island by: Jean Hall

National Audubon Society and other conservation groups. The quality of the educational experience at Hog Island is so remarkable, some participants have described it as “life changing.”

Located ¼ mile off of the mid-Maine coast in Lincoln County near Bremen, Hog Island is part of the Todd Wildlife Sanctuary. Thirty acres of the sanctuary

is on the mainland where there are interpretive trails and a visitor kiosk, while the island itself houses the camp facilities among a lush 300-acre spruce-fir forest. The island also has many more trails and countless coastline tidepools for exploring. Bird varieties in the sanctuary include: Osprey, Atlantic Puffins, Black Guillemots, Common Loons, Broad-wing Hawks, Common Eiders, Northern Saw-whet Owls, Northern Parulas, etc.

Eric Snyder, Hog Island Facilities and Operations Manager, shares that the southern end of the island is open to the general public for exploration and limited camping on a first-come, first-served basis. Although there is a camp ferry that sails from Audubon Road in the Todd Wildlife Sanctuary above the north end of the island, Mr. Snyder points out that access for the general public is limited to passage via personal kayaks or canoes. These, he suggests, can be launched from the mainland near Round Pond off of Route 32. Mr. Snyder also shares that there will be an Audubon Camp open house for the general public on August 31st from 10 am to 2 pm. At that time, the ferry from Audubon Road will be available for public use.

Please see below for obtaining more detailed information about Hog Island Audubon Camp (educational programs, history, pricing, registration, rentals, schedules, directions, informal visits, open house dates, etc.):

Website: [www.hogisland.audubon.org](http://www.hogisland.audubon.org)

Phone: (843) 340-8673

Summer phone: (207) 529-5140

Email: [hogisland@audubon.org](mailto:hogisland@audubon.org)

### “Renewable Energy and Wildlife in Maine: Avoiding, Minimizing, and Mitigating Impacts to Wildlife and Habitat from Solar, Wind, and Transmission Facilities.”

A report by Maine Audubon, released November 2019.

Briefly, *Renewable Energy and Wildlife in Maine* describes the vulnerability of Maine’s wildlife and habitat to climate change driven by fossil fuel emissions and advocates for swiftly, but thoughtfully, replacing fossil fuels used to generate electricity with renewable energy sources. New laws, supported by Maine Audubon, have committed Maine to aggressively tackling climate change and are already spurring interest and investment in renewable energy projects across the state. The report, researched and written in anticipation of this, includes a look at the potential impacts of solar, onshore and offshore wind, and transmission line facilities on wildlife and habitat.



Solar Panels by: Burt Knapp

The report gives detailed policy considerations and recommendations on ways to site, construct, and operate projects with wildlife in mind. Based on research, Maine Audubon believes that our state can thoughtfully develop projects that avoid, minimize, or compensate for wildlife and habitat impacts and achieve needed renewable energy goals.

Maine Audubon is already working to implement these recommendations and will continue to over the coming months and years. For example, Maine Audubon is leading a coalition of solar developers, environmental NGOs, town planners, and others to educate municipalities and landowners on responsibly siting solar. Maine Audubon has submitted comments to the PUC on creating an incentive program to site solar on landfills, rooftops, and other developed locations. Maine Audubon will also be incorporating this work into its work on the Climate Council.

### 5 Principal Policy Recommendations:

1. Maine must strongly encourage solar in built and disturbed environments. Co-locating solar where it is consumed, in the built environment or in disturbed areas, can remove the threat of habitat loss, as well as the need for extensive

new transmission facilities that can fragment existing habitats. Compared to other renewable energy technologies, solar in the built environment has the fewest negative impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat.

2. New technologies in terrestrial wind must be used to site projects that avoid impacts to wildlife and habitat. A GIS analysis demonstrates that taller wind towers, which are becoming more readily available, mean that commercially-viable wind can be “reached” in more places, providing more opportunities to site wind projects in places that avoid impacts to high-value wildlife and habitat.

3. We must direct resources toward developing offshore wind technology, including understanding how it can coexist with wildlife. Maine has an estimated 156GW of offshore wind potential—65 times greater than the amount of energy Maine people use each year—located in proximity to Maine’s coastal population centers. This capacity, coupled with a reduced need for extensive terrestrial transmission infrastructure, means that the potential for meeting our renewable energy goals while minimizing impacts to wildlife is high. But there are many unknowns. Most of Maine’s potential is in deep water, a new venture in the United States. Maine must direct resources toward understanding how to capture this potential, while evaluating and minimizing impacts to wildlife.

4. Maine and other states in the region must engage together in long-term planning to reduce the prevalence of transmission lines. There are many opportunities for improving the efficient use of our current infrastructure to reduce the need for many, if any, new transmission lines. Where new lines are justified, they should be co-located with existing linear development whenever possible. To avoid lines that crisscross the state, stakeholders must come together to plan how to generate and transmit electricity in a way that maximizes efficiency and minimizes impacts to wildlife and habitat.

5. Mitigation must reflect harm to all impacted species and habitats. Projects must strive to first avoid and then minimize harm to wildlife and wildlife habitats, but where impacts are unavoidable they must be compensated for. Traditionally, compensatory mitigation has been limited to listed species and directly impacted acreage, usually wetland acreage. True compensatory mitigation for the impacts of new development must address all harm to all impacted species and habitats. Renewable energy developers should strive to create projects that provide a net benefit for wildlife. That means addressing cumulative and landscape-scale impacts caused by fragmenting features like transmission lines and accounting for impacts to both common and uncommon species and habitat types.

The full report is available at [maineaudubon.org/energy](http://maineaudubon.org/energy)

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**DON'T FORGET THE**  
**Annual Warbler Walk**

**May 9th, 7:00am, Whistle Stop Trail, Farmington; Rain or shine!**

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**Western Maine Audubon Officers**

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Public Relations, Will Jones 491-2443

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Maine Audubon | Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Rd, Falmouth ME 04105

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**Thank you!**



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