



Bulletin

Mid-Coast
Audubon



Mid-Coast Audubon's mission is to promote long-term responsible use of natural resources through an informed membership, education, and community awareness

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 38, No. 4 - November 2014

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Wild Thing . . .

I was on my way to Wiscasset the other day, deep in thought and admiring the autumn colors., when I heard the words "Wild thing, you make my heart sing" emanate from the radio. You may recognize these lyrics from the mid-1960's hit by the English band The Troggs. Then some, may not! It was their biggest hit.

How things have changed, I thought to myself. Back then, when I heard that song, I thought of a love interest and how my heart pounded at the thought of them. Today, 40 odd years later, my heart still pounds but at another love interest, the wild things that inhabit my property and our community.

For example, while walking through the uncut meadow overflowing with goldenrod and aster seedheads, I noticed a lot of movement. Standing still, the scene finally came into focus - about a hundred birds were feasting on what the seedheads had to offer - seeds and insects. White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow,

Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch and Hermit Thrush, to name a few, were intent on gleaning all they could. The air was filled with little chips and chucks. Music indeed that made my heart sing.

Another time, while looking out the window at day's end, expecting to see the usual Blue Jays, Mourning Doves and Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers feeding, there in all its wild

glory was a kit Grey Fox. I froze. My heart pounded. How could I be this close. I didn't bat an eye, for fear it would notice the movement. I stood immobilized for what seemed like an hour as I watched it repeatedly raise its head, sniff the ground, nibble on something under the feeder, then at some sound run off with ears and tail in the air. My heart surely sang.

Two years ago, on a bitterly cold morning with the wind howling, I was snug in my pajamas enjoying my morning coffee. The phone rang. "There's a Snowy at Clarry Hill.

Leave now and we'll stay until you arrive!" A Snowy Owl. I had never seen a Snowy Owl. I grabbed clothes, dashed out the door with scope, binoculars, and camera in hand.

Continued on page 3



A Downy Woodpecker and Pine Warbler share food on a winter day. How often does that happen?



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

SUE SCHUBEL

I love how Mother Nature gives us a warning shot over the bow.

This year it came in

September, when we had a spell of sufficiently cold weather to wake us up to the impending winter. Then so sweetly she pulled back, giving us a few more weeks of warmth to gather our wood and our wits. This year I'm re-insulating part of my roof, in serious competition with the squirrels who live in this nuthouse. They have, over the years, nestled in over our heads and beat the fiberglass into submission, so that basically the R value is equal to that of sheetrock. Not comfortable to live this way, and not ecologically sound either.

In the "wild," squirrels usually have several nests, so they can move around to avoid fleas and mites. In the summer,



Ayla Liss

they have leaf nests called "dreys" that are made 30 feet up in a tree, of small branches woven together and lined with leaves, pine needles, grass and moss. Usually each squirrel has its own nest, though young stay with their mothers for about 3 months, or until she has another litter. Better,

warmer nests are built in tree cavities for the winter. Again, there are several nests per squirrel, and the best, warmest nests are built in people's attics! Who can blame them really?

But I am booting them out, adding inches of rock wool and rigid foam to keep the heat inside my building. Using less fuel, creating less pollution, and feeling more snug - it's a good thing to do. Mother Nature is always giving us information, and warning shots - paying attention and taking action is of course the tricky part. She tells us with serious storms, droughts, and rising seas that we need to clean up our act. We need to take

big steps, but you can always start with something small - like changing a light bulb, cleaning out your dryer vent, or tearing off your metal roof to add insulation....

CRITTER CORNER - DON REIMER

Characterized by multifaceted eyes, two pairs of strong, transparent wings and an aerodynamically elongated body, dragonflies are among the most fascinating of insect creatures. Here in Maine, 158 different dragonfly species are found, roughly one-third of the total number for North America. The word Dragonfly has mythological origins that dragonflies were once Dragons. Other mythological beliefs include the notion that Darner dragonflies will sew shut the lips of people that swear, lie or constantly talk. Indeed, the insect's slim tapered torso reasonably resembles a long darning needle.

While dragonflies come in a variety of colors and sizes, Darners are among the largest and fastest fliers (up to 4 ¾ inches long, with a nearly 6-inch wingspan) attaining top speeds of 45 miles an hour. They are persistent predators of airborne mosquitos, flies and flying ants, swiftly overpowering and capturing their prey in mid-air. Like hummingbirds, they can maneuver in six different directions and hover motionless like a helicopter.

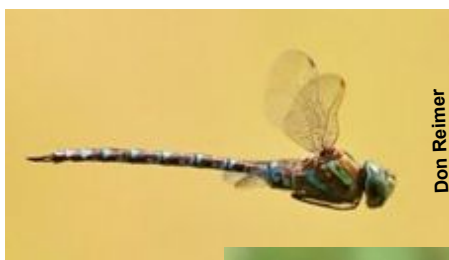
With compound eyes merging on top of the head, adult

dragonflies communicate more visually than most other insects. Males engage in competitive aerial duels for territory, displaying their size and speed to each other. Researchers state that mating pairs probably communicate by touch, and possibly chemically.

Darners are brilliant blue, green or brown insects that are found near fresh water, where their larvae spend an aquatic existence for several months or longer. Male dragonflies guard the females during the egg-laying process. The females hover above water and use their well-developed ovipositor to deposit single eggs in emergent plant stems. The hatched larvae grow by shedding their skin many times. Once mature, the larvae crawl out of the water and the adult stage emerges from the skin of the nymph (*see next page*).

Most dragonfly species spend the winter as nymphs in the water, but some adults migrate south to pass the winter. In a few

species that lay their eggs in the late summer or fall, the eggs don't hatch until spring. We can anticipate a new generation of dragonflies next spring.



Don Reimer

Canada Darner



Juanita Roushdy

Halloween Pennant



Juanita Roushdy

Twelve-spotted Skimmer

Wild Thing . . . *continued*

and arrived at Clarry Hill 20 minutes later; my friends were there frozen. They showed me where the owl was and left.

Despite a bitter wind, freezing fingers and feet, I stayed for over an hour glued to the scope staring into the golden eyes of this marvellous northern visitor. It's white plumage fluffing in the blustery wind. My heart burst with song.

Then there was the time, I stepped into the midnight inkiness to fetch the feeders. Something moved in my peripheral vision - about six feet behind me - a black and white furry creature - a skunk. Again I froze. Please don't spray me. We shared a few moments looking at each other, then it ambled off into the underbrush - a gentle creature. I came into the house my heart pounding, my heart singing.

Moments in nature that make your heart sing abound. I'm sure that after 2013 when nary a Monarch butterfly was seen that the sight this year of one wafting on a summer breeze made you ecstatic! They live! Your heart sang.

It's hard to imagine, nature bereft of wildlife and birdsong, bereft of spring peepers and the hum and drone of bees and insects

*Wild
thing,
you
make my
heart
sing!*

across the meadows and fields. We're fortunate to live in a place teeming with wildlife. No matter the season, nature will make our hearts sing, as she reveals herself to us. Take a moment to stop, take a deep breath, listen, and watch.

Although the leaves have fallen and most birds have flown south, we still have enough to make our hearts sing.

From the comfort and warmth of your home you can watch birds at your feeder and report their numbers to Project Feeder Watch. Help the Cornell Lab of Ornithology monitor the winter movement of birds. <http://feederwatch.org/>

Or, come out and help us survey the birds during Audubon's 115th annual Christmas Bird Count <http://birds.audubon.org/about-christmas-bird-count> See page 5 for dates.

Juanita Roushdy, an avid birder, lives in Bremen and is always surprised at the wild things that come to her property. To date 129 bird species and 15 mammals have been sighted - not to mention the bees, butterflies, insects, and reptiles.

Tell us about the moments in nature that made your heart sing. Send to Juanita at juanitar@tidewater.net.

The first Ruby-throated hummingbird to arrive at the feeder - flying from Central America across the Gulf of Mexico.



I was surprised to see this inseparable pair of raccoons foraging for food under the feeder in the dead of winter!



Grey Fox

Imagine the moment when Steve and Debby Muise discovered the Crested Caracara on August 26, 2014 in Unity Township. Or the moment when Don Reimer saw a Yellow-headed Blackbird on Monhegan on September 27.

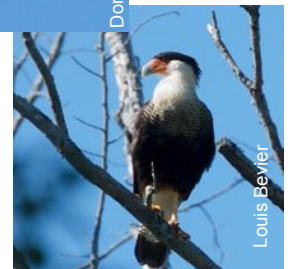
You *know* their hearts were singing.



Don Reimer



Louis Bevier



Louis Bevier



From aquatic nymph, the Darner emerges to become the adult.

Dragonfly fact

The Global Skimmer has the longest insect migration. It takes 4 generations to fly 16,000 miles round trip - India to East Africa and back across the Indian Ocean!



Calendar of Events

Bird walks and programs are free; donations are welcome to help defray costs.

Program chair: Kathy Cartwright 832-5584. Field trip chair: John Weinrich 563-2930

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 8

Sabattus Pond

Meet at Hannaford's, Damariscotta 7:30 AM

Thursday, November 20 at 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library

Nick Record from Bigelow Laboratory speaks on *40 Years of Change in the Gulf of Maine Ecosystem*.

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 14

Pemaquid-Damariscotta Christmas Bird Count

Contact Compiler Dennis McKenna at 563-8439 for details and assignments.

Monday, December 15

Bunker Hill Christmas Bird Count

Contact Compiler John Weinrich at 563-2930 for details and assignments

Saturday, December 20

Thomaston-Rockland Christmas Bird Count

Contact Compiler Don Reimer at 273-3146 for details and assignments

JANUARY

Thursday, January 15 at 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library

Mike Shannon will talk about his life as a naturalist, *Beguiled by the Wild . . . Connecting Mindscapes with Landscapes – A Naturalist's Journey*.

Check our website, www.midcoastaudubon.org for updates on trips and programs. Thank you.

Annual Birdseed Sale

Orders due Friday, November 7, 2014

PICKUP is Saturday, November 15th, 9am to noon at Plants Unlimited, Rte. 1, Rockport.



Gifts

Don't forget, birdhouses, suet feeders and bat boxes make great holiday gifts. Check them out at the birdseed sale or contact John Weinrich at 563-2930

Brown Creeper enjoys suet from an MCAS suet log.



John Weinrich

Black Oil Sunflower Seed – the mainstay ... a favorite of chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and many others!

20 pounds - \$17.00

40 pounds - \$30.00

\$ _____

\$ _____

Sunflower "meaties" - hulled sunflower seed, less mess, more food/lb. Everyone loves them. Best deal.

25 pounds - \$24.00

50 pounds - \$44.00

\$ _____

\$ _____

Melody Mix – a mix of corn, millet and sunflower.

20 pounds - \$14.00

40 pounds - \$23.00

\$ _____

\$ _____

Thistle (niger) – finches and siskins go for this

5 pounds - \$10.00

\$ _____

Suet blocks – yummy treat for woodpeckers and others

\$2.00 each

\$ _____

Total cost (make check payable to "Mid-Coast Audubon")

\$ _____

Your Name: _____

Address _____

Town and zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Send form with check to

"Seedsale Sue"

117 Texas Rd.

South Bristol, ME 04568

For more information, email is best - sschubel@tidewater.net (subject BIRDSEED) or phone Sue at 380-1370.





"I told you the fire would light up the first try," says Don Reimer as other board members Lew Purinton, Dennis McKenna, and John Weinrich look on.



John adds salt water to get the steam going.

Lobster Bake 2014

Our Big Fundraiser at Hog Island

The threat of rain did not deter loyal chapter members from attending our annual lobster bake at Hog Island in Bremen, on Sunday, August 31. Sixty-nine ate well. A lobster bake is much like making lasagna - a lot of layering!!

Fire, a steel pan, seaweed, salt water, seaweed, lobster, seaweed, potatoes, seaweed, onions, seaweed, corn, seaweed, clams, seaweed, more salt water, then a heavy tarp to seal in the steam.

Lobsters from the Bremen Lobster Co-op and clams from Community Shellfish in Bremen were done to perfection. In all, everyone had a good time and for the chapter it was well worth the effort. Thank you for coming. The proceeds will help pay for scholarships and programs.



"Now let's watch it for an hour two!" Note that it takes four board members for quality control.



Kristin Pennock

The real highlight of the lobster bake are the Cream Puffs created and made by our president Seabird Sue Schubel - definitely worthy of a photo op.



Kristin Pennock, board member, serves up piping hot fish chowder made by the president Sue Schubel!



Sue serves her yummy chowder.

Photo credits: Keither Carver, except photo bottom lower left.

Welcome New Members!

Dan and Tally Avenier, Belfast
Caren M. Clark, Waldoboro
Judy and Paul DiDonato, South Bristol
Linda Gillies, Islesboro
Leah Hurley, Belfast
Dorothy Jones, Newcastle
Zoe Jordan, Searsport
Arthur Messer, Pemaquid
Jill Piggot, Hope
William Murphy, Rockport
Kathrin Seitz, Rockport
Dan and Amy Smereck, Camden
Sulzberger-Lax Family Fund
Martha Violette, Nobleboro
Janet S. Williams, Searsport

... and Renewing Members

William Alcorn, Vinalhaven
Bill and Chrissy Bellows, Newcastle
Rose L. Bensen, Newcastle
Lark Blum, South Thomaston
Mr. and Mrs. Dirk Born, John's Island, SC
Marilyn Boyer, Boston, MA
Helen Burlingame, Belfast
Jeff Cherry and Kass Hogan, Damariscotta
John D. and Maynard Clemens, Belfast
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Curtis, Camden
Ms. Julie P. and Ms. Julie A. Eacobacci, Edgecomb
Karen Eberhardt, Freedom
Peter M. Enggass, Spruce Head
Jerry Fales, Tenants Harbor
Genevieve Flanders, Northport
Mr. and Mrs. Karl Gerstenberger, Belfast
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Goodwill, Friendship
John and Marion Griffith, Cushing
Bob Grobe, Camden
Mary M. Grow, China Village
Mr. and Mrs. Warren Haas, Damariscotta

Stanley Hall, Thomaston
Beth Hartman, Portland
Bruce Hodsdon, Port Clyde
Susan Hufnagel, Owls Head
Phyllis Janto, Washington
Glenn Jenks, Camden
Dr. and Ms. Charles Kava, Rockport
Kathryn Kellison, Windsor
Kate Kleber, Camden
C.S. Kline, Round Pond
Peter Lawrence, Nobleboro
Janet and Chris McMahon, Waldoboro
Robert N. Merrill, Camden
Peter and Susan Moulton, South China
Judy and Neil Mullins, Owls Head
Linda Nevins, Bremen
Margaret O'Brien, Rockport
Jancie and Lennart Olson, Bremen
Andrea Perko, Liberty
Carrie Pierce, Belfast
Rachel Riefe, Lincolnville
Juanita Roushdy, Bremen
Dr. and Mrs Robert Roxby, Belfast
Margaret Schuler, Newcastle
Daniel Seigel, Cushing
Mr. & Mrs. Irwin Spalding, Camden
Sherry Spaulding, South China
Drs. Brian and Sue Stahl, Somerville
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sullivan, Palermo
Dr. Harry and Virginia Swain, Yarmouth
Cynthia Thomas, Damariscotta
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Thomas, III, Owls Head
Catherine W. Verillo, Bremen
Rev. Constance Wells, Damariscotta

We welcome our new and renewing members. You help keep our programs, field trips, and scholarships going, as we receive 20% of your dues from Maine Audubon. We welcome your feedback.

We have 544 members. Bring your friends to a program or field trip and help raise our membership to 600.



*Participate in the
Christmas Bird Count - from the comfort
of your home or in the field.
See page 4 for dates.*



Mid-Coast Audubon

Organized December 6, 1969

a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization

P.O. Box 458, Damariscotta, ME 04543-0458

OFFICERS

Sue Schubel, President
John Weinrich, Vice President
Phyllis Coelho, Secretary
Lew Purinton, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Kathy Cartwright, Waldoboro
Dennis McKenna, Damariscotta
Kristin Pennock, Whitefield
Lew Purinton, Somerville
Don Reimer, Warren
Juanita Roushdy, Bremen
John Tobin, Rockland

COMMITTEES

Conservation: Joe Gray, 563-3578
Field Trips: John Weinrich, 563-2930
Nest boxes: John Weinrich, 563-2930
Membership: Juanita Roushdy, 529-2355
Preserves: Bill Goodwill, 354-0669
Programs: Kathy Cartwright, 832-5584
Scholarship: Sue Schubel, 380-1370
Speaker Bureau: Joe Gray, 563-3578
Special Events: Sue Schubel, 380-1370

Bulletin editor: Juanita Roushdy, 529-2355

The *Bulletin* is published quarterly in February, May, August, November. News items or photos are welcome. **The deadline for the next issue is January 15!**

Send to juanitar@tidewater.net



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You Never Know What You'll Find in Our Preserves

Bill Goodwill, MCAS Preserve Chairman, led three volunteers on a trail-clearing spree at our 3.3-acre Weskeag Preserve in South Thomaston. Hoping it would rain and they'd have to go home, Sue Schubel, Juanita Roushdy, and Barbara Hansen carried saws, loppers, and shears. But, alas, the rain held off. In fact, it got quite humid and hot causing a lot of clothes being shed faster than leaves from trees.

Weskeag Preserve is a little gem located at the corner of Snowdeal and Waterman Beach Road in South Thomaston. The 3.3 acres abuts Snowdeal Road but the entrance is on Waterman Beach Road. The trail meanders through the long sliver of land, passing by swaths of fern and moss. A loop near the end takes you to the water's edge and then back to the trail.

Much to our delight, Sue found a turquoise fungi on a dead branch on the forest floor and noted that the wood was blue/green. It turns out that the fungi is Blue Stain Fungus (*Grosmannia clavi*) that travels into the tree from the pine-bark beetle, colonizes the sapwood, and disrupts the flow water to the tree crown and turns the wood blue. With warmer temperatures, the pine-bark beetle is moving north. Only frigid weather kills it. For more information, visit <http://bugwood.org/>



We finished our task and made notes to return and fix a small wooden bridge and replace a wooden plank over a wet area.

Next time, you're out for a drive stop by and visit the preserve - enjoy it's quiet beauty.



Bill Goodwill, Barbara Hansen, and Sue Schubel ready to hit the trail.



The view at the bottom loop of the trail.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER - postscript

Mystery Fish Revealed

In the August 2014 issue, we had a photo of a mystery fish seen off the dock at Hog Island. Consensus is that this larval fish is a sculpin, likely a Longhorn sculpin

Myoxocephalus octodecimspinosus. It could also be a Leopard Sea Robin. Hard to tell with juvenile fish, but seabirds are providing us with lots of new information about larval and juvenile fish distribution in the Gulf of Maine.



Feathery Fun Quiz

1. What is the largest songbird in North America: (a) Cedar Waxwing, (b) Common Raven, (c) Northern Oriole, (d) Indigo Bunting?
2. What is the best way to offer water to birds: (a) in a fountain, (b) in a deep bowl on a pedestal (c) in a shallow plate on the ground, (d) all of the above?
3. What bird makes a meeow call: (a) White-throated Vireo, (b) Ovenbird, (c) Gray Catbird, (d) Wilson's plover?
4. What makes up 90% of a hummingbird's diet: (a) insects, (b) grains, (c) nuts, (d) nectar?
5. What bird depends mostly on man-made nesting boxes in the eastern United States: (a) Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, (b) Purple Martin, (c) Blue Jay, (d) Red-breasted Nuthatch?

Answers at right.

1. b. Common Raven
2. a. A fountain. The sound of dripping or running water will bring birds to your backyard. Smaller birds could drown in deep bowls. A plate or bowl on the ground leaves bathing birds vulnerable to cats and other.
3. c. Gray Catbird
4. d. Nectar
5. d. Purple Martin

Answers

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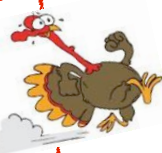


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Don't forget our Annual
 Birdseed Sale

Order by November 7.
 See page 4 for details.



As we enter the holiday season . . .

. . . we are reminded of all who make up the chapter - members, board, program speakers, field trip leaders, newsletter authors, photographers. Thank you for supporting Mid-Coast Audubon. You make our programs and scholarships possible.

M I D - C O A S T A U D U B O N

Join Maine Audubon Today

Mid-Coast

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Yes, I would like to join Maine Audubon and the **Mid-Coast Chapter** (includes membership in the National Audubon Society). I want to help promote environmental education and advocacy in our communities, and protect and conserve wildlife habitat. I will receive the quarterly publications *Habitat: The Journal of Maine Audubon* and the Mid-Coast Chapter *Bulletin*.

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Your gift will be charged automatically each month to your credit or debit card. It will allow us to dedicate more of your valuable support to furthering our conservation mission and less to administrative expenses, saving paper and resources. Visit <http://maineaudubon.org> for more information or to donate.