

Bulletin



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 36, No. 1 - February 2012

President's Corner

A new feature of the Bulletin, written by Sue Schubel, our president.

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Critter's Corner

Don Reimer, MCAS board member and author of the weekly "Birding" column in the Free Press is starting a new series here in the Bulletin.

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Christmas Bird Count

Some surprises and some disappointments

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Calendar

We have a new format for programs and field trips. We hope you like it. Our monthly programs are always popular.

Don't miss our overnight trip to Plum Island.

Pages 4-5

Feathery Fun Quiz

This is a new feature put together by Sue Schubel. Try it out!

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Bird Reports

Doris Balant's reports continue.

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MCAS Preserves

Take a new look at our four local preserves.

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Joe, We Thank You!

After a decade of expertly editing the Mid-Coast Audubon newsletter, Joe Gray has, as he put it, resigned to allow "new blood."

Joe stepped down last November, when he turned 88. But "retired" doesn't really apply to Joe, who for decades has volunteered in various causes, from Tanglewood 4H Camp and Learning Center in Lincolnville to the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

A naturalist and conservationist, Joe has given freely of his time and knowledge. He currently teaches a Senior College class at Schooner Cove in Damariscotta, where he and his wife Carolyn, MCAS treasurer, have lived for the past few years. Before that they lived in Jefferson. Carolyn's volunteer activity rivals her husband's in her various volunteer commitments.

Joe and Carolyn have been with MCAS for over 35 years - shortly after they moved to the area. Joe will continue to contribute to the *Bulletin* from time to time



and participate in the chapter. He'll also continue his column in the Lincoln County News.

With all that Joe is involved in, we wonder how he ever found time to produce the *Bulletin*, but we hope he will now have time to watch more birds!

Steve Cartwright



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

It's finally winter. Frost on the windows, ice on the paths, dogs peacefully asleep by the crackling wood stove. Today feels cold after

weeks of relative warmth, and although the strangely warm weather of the fall and early winter doesn't translate directly to global climate change, it does make one think.

Exciting things are afoot for MCAS in 2012. The Board of Directors met in November for a retreat, to refresh and refocus our energies. Les Hyde kindly lent his skill as a facilitator, and we enjoyed the venue of the Joe Gray Nature Center at the Tanglewood 4-H Camp and Learning Center.

We decided to focus the next 5 years on habitat protection and restoration. Not only can we protect the 4 preserves that we own, but we can help members enhance the habitats on their properties. Curbing the spread of invasives, planting native species to provide beneficial and well-timed

food and shelter for wildlife, and providing good habitat in as many places as possible for migrant and resident birds are some of the projects. We plan to have programs and field trips related to habitat use and protection, and to join with other conservation organizations to accomplish some important work. All this learning, action and fun will certainly engage our membership and encourage new folks to join – another of the goals we have for the near future.

Our focus meshes well with Maine Audubon's goal of activism – tackle local issues and make a difference. It also complements National Audubon's exciting new Flyway Initiative – which likens the North American migration routes to superhighways in the sky. We sit under the Atlantic flyway, and provide food, resting places, and homes for birds moving along that route.

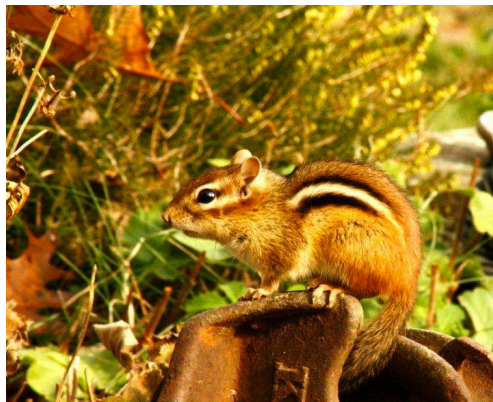
Stay tuned, and be ready to take action on behalf of birds. Keep your binoculars and work gloves handy!

Sue Schubel

CRITTER CORNER

During February's coldest weather, while we humans stay indoors, the familiar Easter Chipmunk is having a winter nap in an underground den somewhere in our snow-covered neighborhoods. Chipmunks have a restless hibernation, waking up every few weeks to dine on their winter food caches.

"Cute" is the most common adjective to describe these diminutive ground squirrels, especially when they overfill their rounded cheeks with nuts or seeds. Their omnivorous diet includes mushrooms, fruits, berries and corn. They also eat insects, bird eggs, snails and small mammals like young mice.



Found in open deciduous forests and woodland edges these active little fellows favor rocky areas, rotting logs and stone walls. They are agile tree climbers, and are comfortable living around people. During their brief 1-3

year life, Chippys never wander much beyond their half-acre home ranges.

They breed in early spring and the youngsters venture above ground at about six weeks of age. By early March, we can anticipate a sure sign of the coming spring season as chipmunks peek out expectantly from their winter burrows, which can be as much as 60 feet.

Don Reimer

112th Christmas Bird Count Results

One of our favorite times of the year is December, when birders get to do intensive days of birding during the Annual Christmas Bird Count, whether it be in the field or in their chair watching the feeders. MCAS has three count circles in its area:

Rockland/Thomaston, Pemaquid/Damariscotta, and Bunker Hill. Each count circle is 15 miles in diameter - a lot of birding. The Rockland count is notable for its Bald Eagles and the

surprises often found in Rockland and the harbor. Pemaquid includes the Pemaquid Lighthouse area which can try even the hardest soul on a cold, blustery, snowy day. Bunker Hill, just north of the Pemaquid circle, includes Damariscotta Lake, Head Tide, and Clary Lake. Over 90 counters and 3 feeder watchers participated in the counts, spotting 86 species, and almost 18,000 birds. Many thanks to the compilers, Don Reimer, John Weinrich, and Dennis McKenna, who recruited the counters and have the arduous job of putting all the figures together for their count circle and reporting them.

The complete list of species and numbers of birds seen in each circle is listed on page 3.



Christmas Bird Count 2011

Bunker Hill (BH), Rockland/Thomaston (R/T), Pemaquid/Damariscotta (P/D)

Species	BH	R/T	P/D
Canada Goose	216	418	200
American Black Duck	141	427	150
Mallard	51	445	214
American Coot		601	
Common Eider		1874	793
Surf Scoter		43	61
White-Winged Scoter		2	5
Black Scoter			6
Long-Tailed Duck		125	234
Ring-necked Duck	15		
Greater Scaup	1	10	
Lesser Scaup		1	
Green-Winged Teal		5	
American Wigeon		2	
Bufflehead	55	423	308
Common Goldeneye	123	35	165
Barrow's Goldeneye	1		2
Hooded Merganser	136	20	40
Common Merganser	14	5	1
Red-breasted Merganser	5	133	297
Ruffed Grouse	2	1	cw
Great Blue Heron		2	
Wild Turkey	331	54	118
Red-Throated Loon		5	9
Common Loon	5	37	132
Horned Grebe		52	10
Red-Necked Grebe		30	14
Norther Gannet			3
Great Cormorant		2	18

American Bald Eagle	5	40	6
Sharp-Shinned Hawk		2	1
Cooper's Hawk		2	2
Red-Tailed Hawk	4	6	1
Merlin		2	
Purple Sandpiper		4	80
Bonaparte's Gull		218	30
Ring-billed Gull	35	98	29
Herring Gull	34	974	401
Greater Black-Backed Gull		20	46
Black-Legged Kittiwake		15	
Black Guillemot		21	44
Razorbill		2	1
Rock Pigeon	103	509	75
Mourning Dove	117	262	139
Barred Owl			1
Great Horned Owl		1	
Belted Kingfisher	1		5
Red-bellied woodpecker	4	8	3
Downey Woodpecker	20	13	33
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker		1	
Hairy woodpecker	29	15	20
Pileated Woodpecker	6		5
Northern Flicker		5	1
Northern Shrike	1	3	
Blue Jay	103	66	97
American Crow	409	387	272
Common Raven	1	25	4
Black-capped Chickadee	243	292	287
Tufted Titmouse	58	38	57

Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	4	7
White-breasted Nuthatch	40	20	48
Brown Creeper	1	2	1
Winter Wren			1
Carolina Wren		1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	20	24
Eastern Bluebird	10		
American Robin	2	111	113
European Starling	354	676	231
Yellow-Rumped Warbler		1	
American Tree Sparrow	33	75	2
Savannah Sparrow		4	
Song Sparrow		4	
White-throated Sparrow	4	29	30
Dark-eyed Junco	20	76	118
Snow Bunting	3		
Northern Cardinal	36	53	47
Northern Mockingbird		5	
Common Grackle		3	
Brown-headed Cowbird	3		
Purple Finch	25	28	25
House Finch	16	106	67
White-Winged Crossbill			8
Pine Siskin	35		53
American Goldfinch	170	277	177
House Sparrow	117	104	10
Baltimore Oriole		1	1
No. of individual birds	3,156	9,387	5,374
No. of species P/D incl. cw	49	73	65

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

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 4

Harlequin Ducks, Scoters and More
Perkins Cove and Cliff House, Ogunquit
Meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 p.m., Waldoboro Public Library, **Local Environmental Activism** with Bill Pearce.

Bill works with the Green Sanctuary, 1st Universalist Church doing a campaign for window inserts, the Rockland Energy Advisory Committee, Parks Commission to get LED street lights, Cool Communities/Green Sneakers with Andy Burke, and the RSU School Board and Mid-Coast Technology on other projects. It's an important time to step up and do something for the environment. Come learn how from a caring neighbor.

Thursday, February 16, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, **Local Environmental Activism**, with Brian Robinson

Brian will share what he has been involved with. He works with Evergreen Home Performance, is on the Camden Parks and Recreation Committee (and was on the Energy Committee until this was shut down), was one of two representatives for Maine meeting with senators in D.C. on energy, lobbying for the global climate change bill last year. He has been on the 4-H Tanglewood board, organized Mid-Coast Energy Day and a chapter of MoveOn.org. His daughter is involved with Kids for a Green Camden and got a whole street to sign up for not using chemicals on their lawns. He's excited about the wind turbine project at Camden Rockport high school. His enthusiasm inspires others.

Thursday, February 23, 6:30 p.m. at Belfast Public Library, **Snow Amazing** with Mike Shannon

Mike is a naturalist, educator and Registered Maine Guide. Whether in the forest prowling for owls or aboard boats scanning for pelagic birds, he continues to lead outings for local groups. He is retired from Unity College where he taught ornithology and ecological education. A former director of the Audubon Ecology Camp in Maine (Hog Island), he has also served as Master Naturalist for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Mike has a long history of sharing his passion and enthusiasm for things natural.

Saturday and Sunday, February 25 and 26

Plum Island National Wildlife Refuge and Cape Ann with Dennis McKenna
Leave Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.
Call Dennis McKenna at 207-563-8439 for motel reservations.

MARCH

Thursday, March 15, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, **Signs of the Seasons - Coastal Climate Change** with Esperanza Stancioff.

Esperanza works for Knox and Lincoln County Cooperative Extension.

Thursday, March 22, 6:30 p.m., Belfast Public Library, **Migration** with Seth Benz

Seth was the first professionally hired hawk watcher in the U.S. He has worked for Audubon Expeditions and Audubon Camp in Maine.

Saturday, March 24, 6:30 p.m., Gibbs Library, Washington, **Puffins** with Susie Meadows.

Susie manages the Puffin Center on Main Street in Rockland.

APRIL

Thursday, April 5, 6:30 p.m., Waldoboro Public Library, **Wildflowers: What's Here, Planting for Your Area and Uses** with Wanda Garland

Wanda's roots as an avid naturalist go back to growing up on a farm in Aroostook County, in the small town of Chapman. "We were taught all the plants and the trees and it just grew from that," she said.

Saturday, April 7, 6:30 p.m., Gibbs Library, Washington, **Alewives in the Environment** with David Wilkins

David is a boat builder at Pedebco and is on the board of the Davis Anadromous Fish Trust.

Thursday, April 12, 6:30 p.m., Rockland Public Library, **Woodcock** with Mike Shannon

See notes on Mike above for Snow Amazing presentation

Thursday, April 19, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, **Deep Sea Creatures** with Buzz Scott

Buzz worked for the Monterey Bay Aquarium developing an underwater vehicle to take pictures of creatures never seen before. He now lives in Maine and gets kids out on the ocean doing research.

Saturday, April 21

Reid State Park

Meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 24

Pemaquid Point

Meet at the point at 8 a.m.

MAY**Saturday, May 5**

Sears Island for Warblers and More with Seth Benz

Meet at *Moody's Diner* at 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, May 8

Morse Property and MVLT Preserve, Waldoboro

Meet at *SUBWAY* in Waldoboro at 8 a.m.

Saturday, May 12

SVCA and MCA Birding through Sheepscot Village with Kristin Pennock

Meet at *SVCA* in Sheepscot at 7:30 a.m.

Saturday, May 19

Evergreen Cemetery and Cupisic Park for Spring Warblers,

Flycatchers, Orioles and More

Meet at *Hannaford's* in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

Saturday, May 26

Vaughn Woods, Belgrade Lakes and Augusta Airport

Meet at *Hannaford's* in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

JUNE**Friday and Saturday, June 1 and 2**

Monhegan Island

Overnight or single day trip. Call *Monhegan Boat Lines* for reservations. Boat leaves Port Clyde at 7 a.m. sharp.

More field trips scheduled in June, July, August, September, and October are on the website, www.midcoastaudubon.org and will be included in the May issue of the Bulletin.

THE CHAPTER STORE IS OPEN!

Spring is just around the corner and the birds will soon be returning to nest. With the roller-coaster temperatures we've been having they may arrive early!

Clean out your old nest boxes and start ordering news ones. We have Eastern Bluebird/American Tree Swallow boxes with a reinforced entrance. All our boxes are handmade. **Stop by Louis Doe Home Center in Newcastle or call 563-2930 to order.**



Nest Boxes: Eastern Bluebird, Flicker, Saw-whet Owl, and American Kestrel \$20

Hardwood hole replacement kit \$1

Bat Box with *Maine's Bats* booklet \$15

Maine's Bats booklet \$5

Feeders: suet log \$10; simple platform \$20, platform with roof \$40, Oriole fruit \$10

DON'T FORGET . . . HOG ISLAND

Registration is open for the 2012 programs at the Audubon Camp at Hog Island. New this year are Family Camp and Migration at Monhegan Island. Also, the camp has an exciting lineup of instructors, Bill Thompson of *Birder's Digest*, Julie Zickefoose, Don Kroodsma, Pete Dunn, Scott Weidensaul, Lang Elliot, Steve Kress, to name just a few.

Check out the details at www.hogisland.audubon.org and share with friends. If you'd like to volunteer complete form at www.fohi.org.

**Feathery Fun Quiz**

Snug in our downy coats and comforters this winter, we can thank the birds for such an amazing technology! Test your knowledge of that evolutionary marvel which separates the birds from the others.

1. Name the soft warm feathers located near the skin of the bird.
2. What color of feather is the strongest?

3. What color of feather changes with diet?
4. Name four functions of feathers.
5. Name 3 birds that use modified feathers to make sounds.
6. Name a bird that uses modified feathers to make no sound.
7. What bird has the most feathers?
8. What are feathers made of?
9. What is the definition of pteryla?
10. How many types of feathers are there?

Answers on page 6.

Injured Birds!

Birds of all species

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www.avianhaven.org

Only seabirds and shorebirds

On the Rush of Wings

207-832-5044

www.ontherushofwings.org

Bird Reports

Call Doris Balant at 563-1216 or e-mail
dbalant@roadrunner.net

2 doz. Black Ducks, doz. Mallards 1/6, Goldeneyes since 12/1, Newcastle (D.B.); Buffleheads on Damariscotta R. Damariscotta/Newcastle from 11/18 (J.G.) and others; Mergansers: pr. Hooded 1/6, Common occas. through the per., Little Blue Herons: immat. 10/14, mat. 11/7, Newcastle (D.B.); Bald Eagle 11/13, Dresden Mills (D.B.); Lesser Yellowlegs 10/3, Newcastle (D.B.); Cuckoo, Yellow- or Black-billed, 10/24, Union (N.J.); pr. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers 11/25, Newcastle (D.B.); immat. Red-headed Woodpecker feeding with Bluejays 11/11, Cushing (D.S.); Red-bellied Woodpeckers: 11/11-13, Cushing (B.W.), 11/19 fem., Pemaquid (J.B.), 2 fem. 11/18, 21/24, Waldoboro (K.S.); An Ash-throated Flycatcher found in Northport 11/24, taken to Avian Haven (D.R.): Robins: 40-50 11/6-12, Damariscotta (J.G.), 5, 1/2, Newcastle (M.W.); 3 Hermit Thrushes in euonymus bush 10/10-20, Newcastle (D.B.). Grey-cheeked, Veery; East. Bluebirds: 11/1, Bremen (L.N.), sm.flock 11/1, Newcastle (R.B.); immat. N.Parulas 10/5, Newcastle (D.B.); Yellow-rumped Warblers, Bremen (L.N.); Song Sparrow feeding daily 11/17, Damariscotta (J.G.); White-throated Sparrow 11/8, Bremen (L.N.); flock C. Grackles 11/8, Bremen (L.N.), 11/10, Damariscotta (J.G.); N. Orioles: immat. male 12/8-9, Newcastle (W.S.), pr. immat. 11/9, male still present 12/9, Bath (M.M), immat. 12/17, Rockland CBC (D.R.).

Reporters: J.B.= Julie Babb, D.B.= Doris Balant, R.B.= Rosie Bensen, J.G.= Joe Gray, N.J.=Norma Jones, M.M.= Mark Mahnke, L.N.= Linda Nevins, D.R.= Don Reimer, A.S.= Anna Shaw, K.S.= Kathy Scheinman, D.S.= Daniel Seigel, W.S.= Wendell Stephenson, M.W.= Mariellen Whelan, B.W.=Bob Worthing.

Mammals: 2 River Otters 11/8, Damariscotta (A.S.); Harbor Seal 12/1, Melanistic squirrel around through the period, Newcastle (D.B.).

Doris Balant.

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

Bebe Cucinelli, Lincolnville

Evelyn deFrees, Searsmont

Alice Drake, Nobleboro

Robert H. Flory, Damariscotta

Martin Imm, Waldoboro

Alison Macmillan, Newcastle

Michael Moore, Owls Head

Mr. and Mrs. Dana Robes, Round Pond

Juanita Roushdy, Bremen

Mary Jane Smith, Chamberlain

James Soule, New Harbor

Mid-Coast Audubon

Organized December 6, 1969

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

OFFICERS

Sue Schubel, President

John Weinrich, Vice President

Phyllis Coelho, Secretary

Carolyn Gray, Treasurer

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Kathy Cartwright, Jefferson

Dennis McKenna, Damariscotta

Kristin Pennock, Whitefield

Lew Purinton, Somerville

Don Reimer, Warren

Juanita Roushdy, Bremen

John Tobin, Rockland

COMMITTEES

Bird Reports: Doris Balant, 563-1216

Conservation: Joe Gray, 563-3578

Field Trips: John Weinrich, 563-2930

Nest boxes: John Weinrich, 563-2930

Membership: Vacant

Preserves: Bill Goodwill, 354-0669

Programs: Kathy Cartwright, 832-5584

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 April 15! Send to juanitar@tidewater.net

Answers

1. Down feathers.
2. Dark colored feathers have more melanin, which strengthens them. Black feathers are strongest and resist fraying – look at those wingtips!
3. Red, yellow, and pink feathers are colored by carotenoid pigments in the diet (birds cannot synthesize this pigment). Captive flamingos on a diet which does not contain carotenoids can fade to pale pink or white.
4. Feathers provide warmth, protection from water and sun, camouflage, sending visual signals (come hither, or stay away), and movement (flying, diving, snowshoeing) among other things.
5. The American Woodcock (outer primaries of male whistle), the Broad-tailed Hummingbird (outer primaries of male trill), and the Northern Lapwing (outer primaries make a hum) are three birds that have feathers modified to make sounds.
6. An edge of an owl feather is fringed, not “zipped together” as in other species, lending it a silent flight.
7. Whistling swan. It has 25,000 feathers during the winter.
8. Keratin proteins.
9. Any of the tracts of skin which bear contour feathers.
10. Six. Down, contour, flight, semiplume, filoplume, and bristle.



Local Preserves of MCAS

Did you know that Mid-Coast Audubon manages four preserves - each a gem in its own right. Take a moment to become acquainted with them and plan a stroll with your friends and family.

Nelson Nature Preserve



Friendship. Ninety-five acres of upland, mixed forest and a Red Maple wetland with trails to Goose River. Located 1 mile from Friendship Village on Rte. 97, with parking lot.

Van Dyne Refuge



Waldoboro. Thirty acres of upland mixed forest, Spruce woods, open fields, hardwoods and salt marsh on the Medowmak River with a trail system. Located 1.5 miles south of Waldoboro on Rte. 220.

Weskeag River Preserve



South Thomaston. Three acres with 300-foot frontage on Weskeag River. A narrow strip of mixed conifers with single trail to river from parking lot on Beach Road. Located 0.1 mile off Rte. 73, Buttermilk Lane in South Thomaston.

Davis Bog Preserve



Morrill. Forty acres of Northern White Cedar swamp is the chapter's latest acquisition. Access us by a 10-foot right of way over lands of Rudy Hamm on the Higgins Ridge Road about 1 mile off Route 3, east of the state's Ruffingham Meadow Preserve.

Preserve Committee



Bill Goodwill is chair of the MCAS Preserve Committee. The committee oversees trail and sign maintenance. They are always looking for help and partnerships for these little gems of habitat. Contact Bill at barredowl@juno.com or phone at 354-0669.

Our preserves offer a variety of habitat from river frontage to bog to salt marsh. They are perfect for a quiet walk, for birding, for an exploration of wildflowers in the spring, for a family outing, or to explore in a class outing. We can even provide a guide if you wish. Of course, winter is a magical time for snowshoeing, animal tracking, and more - not to mention the thrill of discovering early spring wildflowers.

A Big Welcome to our newest board member, Lew Purinton, who lives in Somerville. Lew has been a regular on our field trips and our CBC counts so was familiar with what the chapter was all about. He is a life-long birder who is passionate about birds and photography. We thank him for his willingness to help with the chapter's mission.

Join Audubon today!

Become better informed of legislative and environmental events in the Mid-Coast and Maine. Pay one membership for two organizations: Maine Audubon and Mid-Coast Audubon.

___ \$25 Volunteer/Senior ___ \$35 Individual ___ \$45 Household ___ \$65 Contributor

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Send with check to: Maine Audubon
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Falmouth, ME 04105



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An all-volunteer chapter of Maine Audubon

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