

The Merganser



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 40, No. 3 - November 2016

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Summer in Colorado

In July, I went to Camp Colorado, a young birder camp sponsored by The American Birding Association, thanks to a generous scholarship from Mid-Coast Audubon.

It was my first time flying and only my second time leaving Maine; I could possibly get 60 new birds. The camp is based at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park an hour's drive north of Boulder.

On the first day, we stuck around the YMCA picking up some of the birds around the feeder station and grounds.

On one of the trails we came upon something very different from the regular scenery of Maine... An Elk, this big bull obviously is used to humans as he couldn't have cared less about our presence.

On the second day we got up early and went to Wild Basin in Allenspark. Wild Basin is one of the best places in the area to find Dippers, one of my most wanted birds. During the first session they found a dipper nest. When we got there a couple weeks later, they had fledged. We had amazing views of one fledgling, it perched out in the open on a rock in the Saint Vrain, napping and bobbing around waiting for a parent to bring it food.



A bull Elk



A fledgling American Dipper

Continued on page 3



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

SUE SCHUBEL

Happy Fall! I hope everyone is busy squirreling away their nuts for the winter and enjoying the

colors and crispness of the season.

Early this fall, we were thrilled when President Obama signed into existence on September 15 the first National Marine Monument in the Atlantic. This is a big deal, and it followed quite closely behind the discovery that our geo-tagged Maine puffins went to this area to spend the winter.

The Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument encompasses 4,913 square miles of rich habitat, about 150 miles southeast of Cape Cod. The plunging canyons, deeper than the Grand Canyon, house ancient colorful corals; upwellings from these deep chasms help supply nutrients for life closer to the surface. What excellent foresight to save a still pristine and highly valuable marine area. Being especially rich in marine life, it can serve as a restocking source for our fisheries, especially as they are further stressed by climate change.

The monument covers just 1.5 percent of U.S. federal waters on the east coast but includes

very diverse habitat. The four seamounts are the only ones in Atlantic U.S. waters - Bear, Mytilus, Physalia, and Retriever. They rise high from the bottom but top out still 8,800 feet below the surface. The canyons - Oceanographer, Gilbert, and Lydonia, have deep-sea corals that are the oldest known marine organisms!

Life is abundant - with whales, turtles, birds, fish and invertebrates calling it full or part-time home. The designation will prevent oil and gas drilling in this still pristine habitat. Ground-fishing will cease. Fishing for lobster and crab will phase out after 7 years. There will be some transitional effect for fishermen initially, in the long run there will be huge benefits.

President Obama hasn't braved the chilly Coral Canyons yet, but did dip into the marine monument that he recently expanded in the Pacific. At Midway Island, in the [Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument](#) he swam, and said the life there, "reminded us that nature's actually resilient, if we take care to just stop actively destroying it."



Sue Schubel



Sue Schubel

CRITTER CORNER - DON REIMER

Within all families of birds, the size, shape and structure of their bill play a critical role in survival. Occasionally birds exhibit bills that fall well outside the physical norms - individuals with oddly shaped or twisted bills.

Such was the case with an American Crow I spotted feeding with likely family members on a corrugated metal roof several months ago. What had first appeared as a small length of stick carried in its mouth was actually the crow's ultra-long lower mandible. As I pondered the crow's chances for survival, it went to work to relieve my doubts.



Don Reimer



Don Reimer

American Crow with deformed bill adapts to a side-eating technique.



Don Reimer

The crow gang had discovered some insects lodged in the recesses of the corrugated roofing. Instantly the long-billed

individual used its

uniquely shaped bill to probe the roof crevices, extracting the secluded insects that were beyond the reach of its shorter-billed companions. Upon extracting an insect, the crow skillfully positioned its feet to cloister the prey for consumption. Employing a forward leaning posture, the crow scooped successive insects into its gaping mouth. Its saber-like lower bill

also serves as a handy jousting tool to poke his companions in the chest when they tried to share in his meal. I continue to see this unique crow daily. Not only is he surviving, he is thriving!

Summer in Colorado... cont'd.

After Wild Basin we headed over to the Fawn Creek Inn where they have a bunch of hummingbird feeders out. There were probably 30 or so birds around, predominantly Broad-tailed but with a few Calliope and Rufous Hummers mixed in. Here's a Broad-tailed.

The next day, we went west to Endovalley. The previous session had a Dusky Grouse along the side of the road. We kept our eyes peeled and sure enough, there was a big ol' mountain chicken sitting on a rock just off the road.

In the evening master bander Scott Rashid, who has been banding there for 12 years, came out to the YMCA. That day he caught around 15 birds, including Rufous and Broad-tailed Hummingbirds, multiple Cassin's Finches, a few Mountain Chickadees and a Cordilleran Flycatcher.

The next morning we got up well before dawn to take the long drive to Pawnee National Grassland. At a small park we witnessed a huge flock of Common Nighthawks flying out from the patch of woods in the middle of the grassland.

We then went into the heart of Pawnee where there were Ferruginous Hawks, Meadowlarks, Shrikes, Say's Phoebe, Kingbirds, Longspurs, numerous sparrows and Mountain Plovers coming closer than anyone had ever seen. On the

second to last day we went all the way up to 12,000' ft. There we had one of my most anticipated birds, White-tailed Ptarmigan, sadly we only had scope views.

On the way back down we stopped at a spot where American Three-toed Woodpeckers had previously been seen. Lucky for us, a family of 6 were foraging just off the road giving great views.

It was an amazing week that I will never forget, 56 new species of birds and 26 new friends. Thanks again for all the support, Mid-Coast Audubon!



Rufous Hummingbird



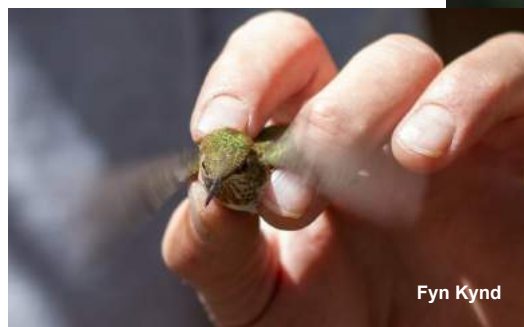
Common Nighthawk



Dusky Grouse



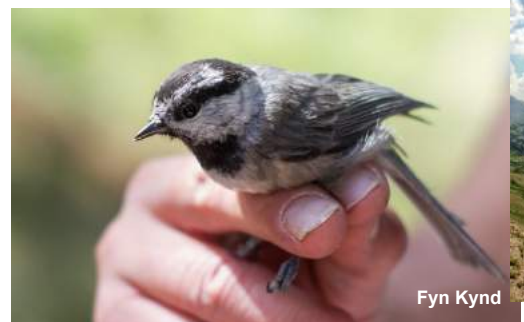
Loggerhead Shrike



Broad-tailed Hummingbird



American Three-toed Woodpeckers



Mountain Chickadee



Fyn Kynd

Fyn Kynd is a 16-year-old, home schooled student from Searsmont and an avid birder and photographer. He paid for his transportation to Colorado by selling a calendar of his photos. We, at Mid-Coast Audubon, have faith that Fyn will go a long way in the ornithological field.

Calendar of Events

Free bird walks and programs; donations are welcome to help defray costs.

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

NOVEMBER

Program: Thursday, November 17, 7 p.m.

Camden Library

Dr. Howie Nielsen will present a program on *Bird Life in the Kingdom of Cambodia*. See camera trapping new species for this area and coastal survey work for conservation of endangered species, done over the last 10 years, 8 months each year.

Field trip: Saturday, November 5

Sabattus Pond, Sabattus

This central Maine pond is known to attract Ring-necked Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Lesser and Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, mergansers, and raptors. Dress warm!

Meet at Damariscotta Hannaford at 7:30 a.m.

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 17

Pemaquid-Damariscotta Christmas Bird Count. Contact compiler Dennis McKenna at 563-8439 for more information.

Monday, December 19

Bunker Hill Christmas Bird Count. Contact compiler John Weinrich at 563-2930 for more information.

Saturday, December 31

Thomaston-Rockland Christmas Bird Count. Contact compiler Don Reimer at 273-3146 for more information.

JANUARY

Field trip: Saturday, January 14

Pemaquid Point with Don Reimer. Meet at lighthouse at 8:30 a.m.

Program: Thursday, January 19

Camden Public Library

"Seabird" Sue Schubel, president of Mid-Coast Audubon will present *Wintering Puffins*. The mystery of where puffins go after fledging, until they go back to where they were born to breed is no longer a mystery. Come find out how the mystery was solved.

Field trip: Saturday, January 28

Perkins Cove and Cliff House, Ogunquit

Depart Hannaford's parking lot in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

FEBRUARY

Field trip: Saturday-Sunday, February 18-19

Plum Island

Plum Island with Dennis McKenna (overnighter).

Depart Hannaford's parking lot in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

Check our website, <http://maineaudubon.org/midcoast/calendar/> for updates on trips and programs. Thank you.

HURRY!

**December 26-31,
2016**

Join Us

*Mid-Coast Audubon Board meets
the first Thursday of each month, 6-7
p.m. at Waldoboro Library.*

Public welcome.

*New board members and a program
chair are needed. We are an active
chapter that welcomes new ideas, You
are never too young or too old to be a
board member!*

Come and see what we are all about.

Teen Birders . . . Costa Rica Calls You!

Hog Island Camp goes tropical in Costa Rica. A few spots still remain on this trip. Follow the migration route of many of our warblers and come with Hog Island to Costa Rica. Trip is designed for ages 15-17 years.

The trip will include trips to Braulio Carrillo, La Selva Biological Station, Tirimbina Biological Station and a float tour along the Puerto Viejo River. Selva Lodge is base camp. Don't wait, check out the details at <http://hogisland.audubon.org/>



Eva Matthews



Whoo Whoo Knows About Owls?

1. Many owls exhibit polymorphism. What does this mean?
2. Which owl is the most widespread?
3. What owls might we hear

performing prolonged duets between the male and female?

4. What is the largest owl in the Americas?

5. What is the term for female owls being larger than male owls?
6. Where do Saw-whet Owls make their nests?
7. What is the term for young owls leaving the nest several weeks before being able to fly?
8. What is the purpose of ear tufts on many owls?
9. Which North American birds nest the earliest in the year?
10. Which owl has a call like a barking dog?

Nancy Dickinson, MCAS Quizperson

Good Friends, Good Food, and Good Times . . .



Our annual fundraiser - a lobster bake at Hog Island Audubon Camp on Saturday, September 3, 2016 - exceeded our wildest expectations. First we were worried that so close to Labor Day would not be good. Then, Sue, our fearless president, kept asking can we accept a few more reservations. In the end, we had 93 friends, neighbors, guests, and members enjoying fresh lobster from the Bremen Co-op, fresh clams from Community Shellfish and potatoes, corn and onions - all steamed in layers under blankets of seaweed. What a feast.

To top it off, came the march of the edible chocolate cream puffs. You haven't had one? Well, next year be sure to make a reservation.

We worried that we had too many, that there wouldn't be enough food, that it would be too crowded, but fine weather, magnificent scenery, camaraderie all made those worries disappear like the smoke from the lobster bake.

Ah, what can be better then being on Hog Island!

This fundraiser allows us to provide scholarships to summer camps, free lecture series, free field trips, and free newsletters throughout the year. Thank you for making this possible.

See you next year!



Don, Steve, Dennis, Bill, Lew getting ready to prepare the fire for the lobster bake.



Steve, Dennis, and Bill with their hands



Don Reimer



Don Reimer

Seabird Sue's famous cream puffs for dessert - what a feast!

Oh yum! the reason we all come - steamed lobsters fresh from fire pit!



Counting in the slushy rain on the Bunker Hill count.



Christmas Bird Count

This winter will be the 117th Audubon annual Christmas Bird Count. All Christmas Bird Counts take place between December 14 and January 5 each year. It is the longest-running citizen science bird count in the nation. Birds are counted in 15-mile diameter geographic circles called count circles. Volunteers count every bird they hear and see. Maine has 28 count circles, including on islands such as Monhegan, Matinicus, and Jordan Basin. Each circle has

a compiler. Anyone can join but be sure to contact the compiler.

The Mid-Coast has three count circles, Bunker Hill, Thomaston-Rockland, and Pemaquid-Damariscotta. Teams head out at daybreak and start counting in their circle until dark. Some do owl counts as well. You can also count birds on count day in your backyard if it is in the circle; be sure to report your sightings to the compiler. This is a good way to get family, guests, and neighbors involved.

Dress warmly, be patient, and join in a fun day of birding, or sit in the warmth of home and count.





New, Renewing, and Rejoining Members!

Philip D. Allen, Isleboro

Walter and Susan Barnard, Northport

Seth Benz, Belfast

Roger E. Blomquist, Palermo

Alison Briggs, Tenants Harbor

Annie F. Brown, Rockland

Nancy M. Carter, Walpole

Charles Dhyse, Camden

Karin Eberhardt, Freedom

Holly Emmons, South Bristol

Judith R. Falk, Washington, DC

Katherine Fitzgerald, Camden

Karen Foxwell, Lincolnville

Janet Getgood and Ernie Johnson, Tenants Harbor

Marion and Christopher Gray, Union

Doris L. Harrison, New Harbor

Scott and Susan Haynes, West Rockport

Daniel A. Hughes, South Portland

Robert and Carol Jones, Damariscotta

Sazanne B. King, Bremen

Julia Levensaler, Waldoboro

Mimi McGee, Appleton

Leesa Mann, Lincolnville

Kristin Meserve, Hope

Annelle B. Miler, Friendship

Donna Minnis, Jefferson

Dr. Paul Nielsen, Whitefield

Kara Pellowe, Newcastle

Gene Piken, Rockport

Gail L. Presley, Rockland

Marietta Ramsdell, Searsport

Debbie Rapp, Tenants Harbor

Matthew Reeve, Northport

Kristen Rupert, Watertown

Clair Riser, Waldoboro

Julie Sells, Rockport

Joanne M. Sharpe, Edgecomb

Carl Small, Rockport

J.P. and Kaki Smith, Pont Vedra, FL

Nancy B. Smith, Rockland

Shelley Spanswick, Lincolnville

Chris Stewart, Boulder, CO

Priscilla Ulin, Damariscotta

Catherine Verrillo, Bremen

John Weinrich, Damariscotta

Robert E. Worthing, Damariscotta

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

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Bill Goodwill, Friendship

Dennis McKenna, Damariscotta

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Don Reimer, Warren

Juanita Roushdy, Bremen

Vacant

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Conservation: Joe Gray, 563-3578

Field Trips: John Weinrich, 563-2930

Nest boxes: John Weinrich, 563-2930

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Preserves: Bill Goodwill, 354-0669

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Scholarship: Sue Schubel, 380-1370

Speaker Bureau: Joe Gray, 563-3578

Special Events: Sue Schubel, 380-1370

The Merganser editor: Juanita Roushdy, 529-2355

The Merganser is published three times a year in February, May, November. **News items or photos are welcome.**

Deadline for next issue is January 15!

Send to juanitar@tidewater.net



Quiz Answers

1. The species comes in multiple plumage colors, not related to age or gender.

2. The Great Horned Owl

has the widest range of any owl in the western hemisphere.

3. Barred Owl.

4. Great Gray Owl is the tallest, but is not nearly as heavy as a Snowy or Great Horned.

5. Reversed sexual dimorphism

6. Usually in old woodpecker nests

7. It's called "branching", and the parents continue to watch over the young in the branches or on the ground.

8. They help with camouflage.

9. Bald Eagle and Great Horned Owl

10. Short-eared Owl



Don't Forget Winter Shelter . . . for Birds!

Our winter birds still need shelter, food, and water, even more so than in other seasons.

As you put your garden to bed, leave a few dead stalks - birds will eat the seeds and insect larvae. Make brush piles at the

edge or in the middle of your yard. They provide shelter from wind, snow and predators.

Keep feeders clean and full; suet is good too. Black sunflower seed, millet, or hulled sunflower seeds will give birds the needed energy to keep warm during the chilly nights. Put out a shallow pan of water for drinking.



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Solar Power Comes to Hog Island!

What better way to celebrate 80 years than going solar! Thanks to generous donations, Friends of Hog Island was able to install solar arrays on two buildings at the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Bremen.

Bart and Virginia Cadbury had no way of knowing what their grandson, some 60 years later, would do for their beloved Hog Island. Benjamin Cadbury Wong, son of Peggy Cadbury and Ching Wong, knew he wanted to do something for Hog Island but what. Two years ago while volunteering at camp, he learned of our dream of being solar powered. He knew then how he could give and contribute to the wellbeing of the camp and planet.

Benjamin, a systems engineer with SunPower Corporation in California, put together a proposal and submitted it to his company. They donated at cost 92 solar panels and 72 micro inverters – the heart of the system. Dwayne Escola, systems designer and engineer with Northeast Smart Energy LLC, donated his time and expertise. FOHI paid for shipping and materials. Eric Snyder, Hog Island Facilities Manager, was the linchpin in bringing the solar project to fruition. FOHI volunteers under the guidance of Benjamin, Dwayne, and Eric put it all together.

On September 24, 2016, the switch was flipped and the Hog Island Audubon Camp met the future. Two buildings – the

Fish House and the Bridge – support solar panels that will provide 70-90% of the camp's needs, including those of the mainland facility. Benjamin also provided a means whereby the daily energy production can be used as an educational

online tool during camp and off-season. In the winter, energy produced will become electrical credits for use during the season. Within 2-3 years, The system will pay for itself!

Twenty-nine FOHI volunteers excited at their part in the camp's history donated 1,000 hours; some came for a day just to be part of it. The roof team spent long hours in sun and drizzle – Ben, Dwayne, Eric, Adrian, Anthony, Pete, James, Phil; the rest of us were the ground team.

The Hog Island Audubon Camp's solar system became reality through teamwork, passion, and love for Hog Island. Friendships were forged and mutual respect for every member of the team was the norm. The island has


gone green.

Mid-Coast Audubon has a long history of supporting the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Bremen - through scholarship recipients, volunteers, and funding. Many of you know it the home of our annual lobster bake fundraiser. The camp was the first conservation camp in the nation and celebrated its 80th anniversary this year, 2016.

Photos and article by Juanita Roushdy, Friends of Hog Island



Bottom photos: Benjamin, Dwayne, Benjamin, and Eric in front of finished Fish House, and assembly in the Fish House. Other photos show transporting materials from mainland to island, trench digging, sorting of screws, laying of racks for the solar panels, and FOHI ground crew!

Mid-Coast Audubon
 P.O. Box 458
 Audubon Damariscotta, ME 04543-0458

<http://maineaudubon.org/midcoast/>

An all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) chapter of Maine Audubon



Scholarships for Teachers and Students

Apply for a scholarship for a one-week session at Hog Island Audubon Camp in Bremen. Check out their program sessions for 2017 at <http://hogisland.audubon.org/>. Then contact Sue Schubel at sschubel@tidewater.net for a scholarship application.



Thank you all your support in 2016!



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



Maine Audubon

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mid-Coast Chapter

Mid-Coast

 Audubon

YES! I would like to protect and conserve wildlife and habitat in my community and
☐ **join** ☐ **renew my membership** with Maine Audubon and the Mid-Coast Chapter.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Seasonal Address: _____ from _____ to _____

City/State/Zip: _____

☐ I'm enclosing an additional \$10 to receive *Audubon*, National Audubon's magazine
 (free for Patron members and above)

☐ Check enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Charge my monthly Frequent Flyer gift of \$ _____ to ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

☐ Charge my annual membership of \$ _____ to ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

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☐ \$35 Individual

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☐ \$100 Patron

☐ \$250 Sustaining

☐ \$500 Benefactor

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Checks payable to Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Rd., Falmouth, ME 04105. Join/renew online at maineaudubon.org/join or call 207-781-2330 ext. 232