

An Educational Newsletter of Upcoming Events and Plans for Summer/Fall 2005.

NEWS BRIEFS:

For the first time, the Kezar Lake Watershed Association and the GLLT will be co-sponsoring a joint meeting on Saturday, August 13th at the New Suncook School. Both groups feel that since there are so many summer weekend activities, this would be a good way to cut down on a couple of time-consuming summer weekend meeting events. It will include a breakfast, short reports from both organizations and a speaker on a topic of interest to all.

Bill Hanson, Senior Biologist from FPL in Lewiston, a division of Florida Power & Light, will present a slide program on loons and eagles. His work includes studies of and slides of loon nesting success, management practices of his company related to water levels in addition to eagle reproduction and productivity data. He covers sites all over Maine. Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 13 with breakfast served at 8:45 a.m., and the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

– Joan Irish, KLWA

We are pleased and thankful that a conservation easement has been granted to the Greater Lovell Land Trust for the 148 acre Evergreen Valley Marina property. This will assure that this property will not be commercially developed. It will be retained for possible future use as a watershed and mycology research area. We will summarize the conservation easements in a future newsletter.

– Howard Corwin, GLLT

A CHILLY DAY IN FEB. '05

SNOWSHOEING ON FLAT HILL

On a beautiful clear and chilly day in late February, twenty-six intrepid souls gathered at the Flat Hill parking lot, ready to climb Flat Hill. Organized by Margaret Nomentana and Bill McCormick and led by Tom Henderson, our snowshoe trek lasted almost four hours. The snow was deep, with a sturdy crust on top. The pace was leisurely as Tom Henderson stopped the group frequently to point out interesting features of the winter forest and its inhabitants.

Our first trailside stop was a deer rub on a small maple tree. Tom explained that deer have an urge to scrape off the soft moss-like covering on their antlers, but he did not know why they find it necessary. The rub was aggressive and scraped the rubbing is usually done on small fir trees, but since few are in the woods in this area, the maple was chosen.

A short distance further along the trail revealed a large, old oak tree with a decrepit ladder laying on the ground against the tree. Tom inquired of the group what its possible use may have been. After nothing but blank stares from the crew, Tom speculated that the ladder was used by hunters to reach a crotch in the tree which may have been used as a deer stand. He also noted that the old tree was an island among much younger trees in the nearby forest and may have been left standing by a farmer more than one hundred years ago to provide shade for his grazing animals. The oak had survived a previous lightning strike, still evident in its trunk and branches.

On a nearby sapling, Tom found a small bird's nest which he showed to be cleverly built to suspend from a small branch. The nest was attached by silken-like threads which he suspected might be strands of spider web. The basic structure of the nest was made of grass and birch bark and it was lined with carefully placed pine needles. The nest would have been practically invisible in the summer, hidden by foliage, but was easily seen in winter, framed against the clear sky.

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GREATER LOVELL LAND TRUST: WALKS 2005

Our walks are free and led by trained docents at Heald Pond, Sabbatus Mt. and the Sucker Brook Preserve and other specified locations. Please see our calendar inside for details. No prior sign up is necessary. Docents will guide visitors on trails and point out important natural features, identify plants, identify animal sign, and help participants learn to read the forested landscape. Please bring appropriate clothing, bug spray, and good walking shoes to deal with all weather. Pets are not invited. Please park carefully to avoid obstruction of fire services, launching facilities, and roadways. Car pooling is encouraged. Families are welcome, but programs are most suitable for children over age 5. **All our walks are scheduled on Thursdays to make it easier to remember and plan your calendar.**

Guidelines For Walks

- A gentle walk is on wide flat trails that do not go long distances.
- A casual walk is on developed trails on mostly level terrain.
- An active walk is on developed and rough trails up and down hill.
- A strenuous walk is on and off trail, up and down hill.

**FULL
SCHEDULE
INSIDE** 

“Nine walks are scheduled for July and August . . . all start at 9 a.m. on Thursdays. . . on Sept. 17th we’ll have an 8 a.m. start for our Baldface Mt. hike. . . and on Oct. 1st we plan a 9 a.m. start for our Caribou Mt. hike”

– Kevin Harding, GLLT V.P.

THE CALENDAR FOR GUIDED WALKS AND HIKES

- **JULY 7** **9 - 12. Lower Caribou Mt. trail. Active.** Meet at the Caribou Mt. parking area off Route 113 (with appropriate White Mountain National Forest Sticker available from any ranger station). We will walk the lower section of the trail (quite flat) up Caribou Mountain to have a look at an old growth forest. Tree identification will be our focus. The trees here are really worth the drive, so please join us.
 - **JULY 14** **9 - 12. Sucker Brook Preserve. Active.** We will focus on the bear activity in this area (on and off trail) and examine a bear tree, bear prints, a bear’s skull, bear feeding activity, and if we are very lucky we might find a bear track.
 - **JULY 21** **9 - 12. Kezar River Tract. Strenuous.** Come and walk our newly acquired 100 acre tract of land that borders the Kezar River. We will walk on old roads, bushwhack through the forest and climb up and down several steep ravines to examine what a newly cut forest does for wildlife.
 - **JULY 28** **9 - 11. Heald Pond area. Gentle.** We will look for medicinal and edible plants along the roadsides and in the Heald Pond area.
- Note: There are two programs on August 4th that will occur at the same place and time designed for different audiences.*
- **AUGUST 4** **9 - 11. Sucker Brook Preserve. Casual.** We will focus on mushrooms and ground cover in this lovely shaded riparian environment along the brook. Designed for adults.
 - **AUGUST 4** **9 - 11. Sucker Brook Preserve. Family.** Parts must accompany children. A look at “under a log critters.” A special program for families with school age children to explore things close to the ground!
 - **AUGUST 11** **9 - 11. Stockford Preserve. Gentle.** We will focus on wildflowers and the forest management of this preserve as we walk to the top of a small hill to enjoy the view.
 - **AUGUST 18** **9 - 12. Heald Pond. Active.** A walk to the summit of Whiting Hill then down to the pond to explore the woodlands and look for plants and animal sign of particular interest.
 - **AUGUST 25** **9 - 12. Heald Pond. Casual.** With the guidance of Tom Wessel’s Reading the Forested Landscape two sites will be visited. At Heald Pond the concepts will be introduced and then participants will proceed to the Bradley Pond parking area to apply these ideas to a new site.

FALL HIKES: *Two hikes are planned. . .*

Note: Be sure to have an appropriate parking pass from the National Forest.

SEPT. 17 **Saturday, 8 a.m. Baldface Mt.** We need to get there early to assure adequate parking at the Baldface parking lot. We will not go to the highest summit, but will ascend the rock scramble to enjoy the views. This is about a six hour hike for those in good condition. If time permits we may explore the Chandler Gorge on the way back.

OCTOBER 1 **Saturday, 9 a.m. Caribou Mountain.** We were rained out last year, but we will once again attempt this six hour hike for those in good condition. Meet at the Caribou Mt. parking area off Route 113. We will ascend the Caribou Trail and come down the Mud Brook Trail.

DIRECTIONS

The Heald Pond and Flat Hill walks will take place at the Heald and Bradley Preserve. From Lovell drive north on route 5 and turn right on Slab City Road and proceed a short distance over a bridge to a small parking area on your left past the launching area where a docent will meet you.

The Sucker Brook walks will use the Sucker Brook Preserve off Horseshoe Pond Road. From Lovell drive north on route 5 to the West Lovell Road on your left. Proceed over the bridge to Foxboro Road (a left at the next fork). Drive about two miles to Horseshoe Pond Road on your right. Proceed down this dirt road a short distance to the Horseshoe Pond parking area.

The Kezar River Tract and Stockford Preserve walks will meet at the Library due to limited Parking.

Natural History at the Lovell Library

Wednesday Evenings in July and August at 8:00 PM

July 6: David Brown, Tracker and Naturalist. *Eco-birding: Hawks Overhead II.*

This program is a follow-up to last summer's video presentation on common raptors. It will show footage of lesser-known hawks found in New England at one season or another, as well as intimate video of some of the owls that live in our woods. Along with the videotape, behavior, life-histories, and flight dynamics will be discussed.

July 13: Michael Perry, Professional Speaker. *Summer on a River, Maine's Allagash Wilderness Waterway.* Join Michael Perry (founder-director) of Dreams Unlimited for a slide show journey along Maine's historic Allagash Wilderness Waterway. Beautiful summer sunsets, brilliant wild flowers, majestic moose, evergreen-lined riverbanks characterize his trip that starts at Churchill Dam and explores the history of the river, the thundering Allagash Falls, and ends 95 miles later. Come join Michael for a look at one of America's most treasured and revered rivers, where Maine wilderness and the spirits of eras gone-by bewitch the fortunate visitor.

July 20: Dr. Drew Barton, Asst. Professor, Univ. of Maine. *Invasive Plants.*

Dr. Barton's main goal in this talk will be to teach you the fundamentals of invasive plant ecology and then to empower you to make plant selections that will help stem the tide of this problem. He'll begin by introducing invasive species: who they are, what they're like, and what they do to native ecosystems. Then, he'll describe some case studies, including his own research on invasive trees and shrubs in Maine. In the last part of the presentation, he'll provide practical information about garden and landscape plants to avoid, and ideas for readily available replacement species.

July 27: Kevin Harding, Amateur Naturalist. *Beavers and Man.*

Last year we looked at the life of beavers. This year, we will examine the historic interaction of beavers and man to ponder what would cause man to virtually eradicate a resource he was dependent on. The North American beaver trade is a fascinating example of how a single animal created an enormous industry that changed the landscape, created the mythological voyageur and mountain man, and almost exterminated the creature that was the foundation of the enterprise.

August 3: Chris Lewey, Local Ecologist. *H₂O: The Wonder of Water.*

This strange substance covers 71% of the globe and causes our planet to glow in the heavens like a cerulean jewel. We are awash both inside and out with one of the simplest and most abundant compounds on the planet, and yet this common chemical is one of the most amazing and unusual substances known by man. The attributes of this awesome material are rock shattering and earth building, beautiful and horrific, life giving and life taking. Water is odd, unique, wonderful, and along with 30% of some added materials, is reading this page. We are mostly water. Join Chris as we plunge into a wet and miraculous adventure and take a closer look at the nature of water.

Our next newsletter
is scheduled for
early in July, 2005.

Welcome to our website.
E-mail us with questions
and suggestions.
There is a lot of
news at . . .

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We then saw a large white pine tree with its bark torn by a lightning strike and bear claw marks on a large beech tree. The latter clearly showed that a bear had climbed the tree in search of the rich beech nuts in its upper branches.

Many of the larger beech trees are now diseased, with their main stems and top-most branches breaking off due to environmental factors like ice storms, strong winds and heavy snows. Tom showed that some of the larger trees seemed to be free of disease. Tom further explained that the common forestry practice has been to remove infected trees. However new theories suggest that removing healthy trees may be more beneficial in the long term. This seeming contradiction is explained by the fact that beech trees spread quickly by shooting sprouts from their roots, creating a forest of saplings around a tree which is harvested. The new logic of harvesting beech trees is to encourage the spread of these saplings which are true clones of the healthy tree. Harvesting the healthy tree stimulates the growth of the clones, which in turn should be resistant to the disease which is devastating the beech trees in our forests.

As we moved along, Tom made us aware of the "condominiums" along the trail. Dead and dying trees, now ant and bug infested, are the target of the woodpecker which frequent the woods. The woodpecker holes quickly

become home for birds, squirrel's and other small forest creatures. The larger holes, once further hollowed out, can even become home to a fisher, a recently returned relative to the weasel. The fisher is finding life to his liking with the return of the wild turkey providing a tasty supplement to his diet of porcupine and other small mammals.

Upon reaching the ledges at the top of Flat Hill, we had a fine view of the Bald Faces, Kearsarge North, Mount Washington and the rest of the range. On the way down, we diverted to a new trail being developed off the main trail. It leads first to the remnants of the old beaver pond whose deteriorated dam is at the location of the culvert which carries the stream from Bradley Pond to Heald Pond under the snowmobile trail. Walking upstream towards Bradley, we came upon the next beaver dam which was built about three years ago and has caused Bradley's surface to rise about six inches. A new bridge over the stream is expected to be built this summer as an Eagle Scout project, providing a nice loop trail back to the parking area. With no bridge in place, we were forced to backtrack to rejoin the main trail for a short walk back to the cars, concluding a fine walk in the woods on a beautiful day.

- Bob Winship

