

The Merrymeeting News



Summer 2005 VOLUME XV, No. 3

The Newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay • Box 233 • Richmond Maine 04357

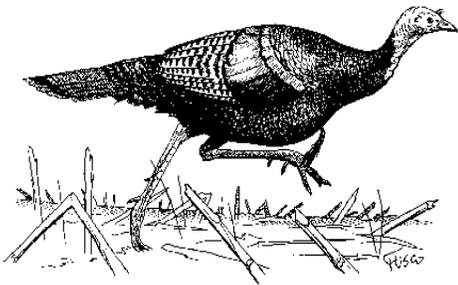


Illustration: Paul Fusco/ctdep-wildlife

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Our mission is to preserve, protect and improve the unique ecosystems of the Bay through:

Education

Conservation & Stewardship

Membership Events

Research & Advocacy

Support comes from members' tax-deductible donations and grants.

www.link75.org/mmb/

The Merrymeeting News is published seasonally by the Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB) and is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay.

For information call:
Ed Friedman, Chair,
at 666-3372.



Sturgeon Leaps

Sturgeon was in deep. But even in the deepest dark channel of the Kennebec the waters were warming up. The Sun was high, the days were getting long, and the surface waters of the estuary and all its branches were basking in the late spring sunlight. Feed was in bloom and Sturgeon's world was a seething soup of New Life.

Sturgeon had seen it all before. He was a wise old fish of considerable weight and experience. Not that he approached the gravity of his storied ancestors. Sturgeon was six feet six inches long, from snout to tail fin. A giant in today's Bay, but hardly measuring up to the 20-footers of old. Still, he was the biggest fish in the Sagadahoc and local lore-master among the finny tribes.

Those tribes weren't what they'd been, either. Salmon and shad were mostly memories, although the alewives were coming back. Glinting night passages of alewives, rushing upstream to hurl themselves at the falls, had stirred Sturgeon's sleep all month. Eels were scarce since men had cleaned the rivers and skimmed off all the elvers, but Weird Eddy was still making whirlpools out in Chops, and hanging out down to the cannery.

It was mostly the young sturgeon and stripers who came around looking for wisdom these days, or maybe a golden carp or an inquisitive perch, if Sturgeon was cruising in the fresh water. Sturgeon generally stuck to the Kennebec deeps, however, where a tongue of salt water pushed in under the fresh runoff. Sturgeon liked the density of the deeps, and the salt tang.



Photo and sculpture credit: Bryce Muir

Sturgeon's favorite deep hole was out by the end of The Sands, where all the river currents meet in merry turmoil. Here Sturgeon could taste all the news of the Kennebec, and the Androscoggin, and the Abagadasset, and the Cathance, and the Muddy, and the Eastern rivers — and all their tributaries. All the tales and treats of the upper reaches would come sifting down to Sturgeon's deep.

This Spring the tales had been good. The freshets had flushed prime feed into the waters, and the bug count was definitely up. It smelled like a profitable year upstream. There was still a disagreeable tinge of mercury and dioxin spilling out over the Androscoggin sand bars, but nothing like the old days. Sturgeon could tell when they were pumping the ponds above Pejepscoot by the way the yellow foam tinted the moonlight, and he could taste new developments up the Cathance, but nothing too disgusting.

"Same old, same old," Sturgeon grumbled to himself.

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Sturgeon Leaps

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Even so, there was something in the waters that tugged at Sturgeon's consciousness. Some niggle of hidden knowledge tingled his barbels and rattled his bony plates. Sturgeon figured on it, tried to fathom it, but it eluded him. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

This fine sunny day Sturgeon was slowly cruising below the lip of the Androscoggin overfall, close in to Sturgeon Island. Dragging his barbels through the ooze, and pushing his great tubular mouth out to slurp up annelids and the odd mussel. Whatever was nudging the back of his mind was particularly insistent. Was it the faint trace of something new in the waters, or the echo of some distant memory. Either way, Sturgeon was distracted. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

Now Sturgeon has three ways of watching the World. His snout and barbels sniff the soup around and below him, and lead him to his lunch. His whole body senses the current streaming past, and vibrates with the music of the deep. Then there are Sturgeon's eyes. While Sturgeon wends his way through the turbid depths, tasting the tide and feeling the beat, his eyes look up to the filtered light above. Sometimes a floating delicacy crosses his view, and Sturgeon will spiral up to slurp it down. But mostly Sturgeon watches the play of light by the surface for the joy it brings him. Sturgeon is a deep old fish, and he ponders on the wonders of the Light. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

This day Sturgeon wasn't alone in his foraging. He'd noticed a pair of young catfish prowling in his wake some time since, but now they were edging closer. Sturgeon quite liked these newcomers. The blue catfish had been introduced in lakes and ponds upstream, where they were expected to winter-kill, but they had escaped into the estuary. Now they were multiplying rapidly. Sturgeon liked the sound of their Southern accents, and was flattered they so often turned to him for advice about his world — a

new world for them. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

Sure enough, both young catfish came up alongside to query the old fish.

"Good morning, Master Sturgeon?" one catfish began politely.

"Mmmm?" Sturgeon responded, still half in muse.

"And how does your corporosity sagaciate this fine morning?" the other catfish drawled.

"Finest kind," Sturgeon observed gruffly, he voice croaky with disuse.

"Master Sturgeon, we don't quite understand something," the first catfish said. Sturgeon nodded encouragingly.

"We see the young sturgeon leaping up out of the water, and we can't cogitate why."

Sturgeon flicked his tail back and forth. Like all good teachers he encouraged his students to think for themselves.

"Why do you suppose they do it?" Sturgeon asked.

The catfish cast uncertain glances at one another.

"Well..." one began, and fell silent.

"Mmm ?" Sturgeon prompted.

"Well..." the second catfish chimed in, "we've heard it bandied about that..." here the catfish paused. The other hurried to conclude "... that sturgeons can't fart under water."

There was a dead silence. Then Sturgeon roared with laughter, and thrashed his tail in hilarity. He laughed and thrashed and thrashed and laughed until he'd stirred up a great cloud of silt that half-choked him and the Catfish. Then there was a thunderous noise from Sturgeon's backside and clouds of bubbles went galloping to the surface.

"Guess not," the catfish said in unison, between giggles.

It took a long time for Sturgeon to regain his composure. As he calmed down and the silt settled, Sturgeon again felt that tugging at the back of his mind. It set him in muse. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

When his attention returned to the here and now, the two Catfish were still in attendance, quizzical smiles on their faces.

"Excuse me, I must be getting old," Sturgeon said. "You were asking about the Sturgeon Leap." He paused. "You see, we do it because of a very old tale — one that comes from the famous caviar days, back in the times of the great 20-footers."

The catfish gabbled back and forth in excited whispers.

"Yes, 20-footers. There are even stories about 30-footers, but I think they must be myths," Sturgeon said.

"Anyhow," the big fish went on, "the tale goes that the Great Mother Sturgeon of those days fell in love with Kingfisher."

"Kingfisher?" one of the catfish asked.

"Yes. He's an iridescent blue bird that hunts here in the summertime," Sturgeon continued. "We sturgeons love to watch the play of light on the surface of the water, and Kingfisher makes a spectacular show when he dives in."

"Back in those storied days the Great Mother Sturgeon was so enchanted by the Kingfisher's diving display that she felt she must show the beautiful bird her own magnificence. So she swam round and round, faster and faster, until she was racing at hull speed, then SWOOSH she shot straight up out of the water. Her gorgeous immensity rose up in the air like a missile, then came down with a crash like thunder."

"Kingfisher was suitably impressed, as who wouldn't be to see the Great Sturgeon in all her glory. He in turn dove into the water and did a

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Research, Advocacy and Land Conservation Updates

This summer has been one of our busiest thus far. Our long planned Current Study began, using drifting buoys to better understand circulation patterns in the Bay and tributaries. This large project joined follow-up work on endocrine disruptors from pulp mill discharges, an archaeology dig, expanded water quality monitoring, a successful series of summer outings, ongoing land conservation efforts, and continued advocacy work on American eel, Atlantic salmon and Brunswick sludge issues. Small summaries of these efforts follow.

Current Study

In this study, we deployed drifting buoys and recorded their positions at frequent intervals. In addition to a better understanding of the complicated Merrymeeting Bay flowage, we hope to gain insight into such questions as what areas of the Bay might most feel the effects of a sewage line leak or an oil or chemical spill from Augusta or the Brunswick Naval Air Station. We may better learn where to survey for invasive plants, where drifting fish larvae might concentrate, or what plant and sediment areas are most subject to excessive nutrients or historical dioxin deposits.



Track of Cathance River Drifter #1 during July 6-16 deployment.
Image: LANDSAT, Track Plot: David W. Chipman

This study builds on previous work by FOMB (1998 & 1999), staff from the Universities of Maine and New Hampshire (1995 & 1997), and the Bowdoin College Environmental Studies Department (ongoing). Much of the prior work has focused on measuring speeds and directions of currents. Our drifter study, in contrast, should provide better data about how long water (and what it carries) stays in the system (residence time), and what effects this may have.

There are a lot of data to be processed from our three deployments thus far, so stay tuned for more information on where our drifters have traveled between launch and recovery. At this point it appears that there is a lot less flow through the system in summer than was expected, and that at least the smaller tributaries act much like vast embayments with water rising and falling but traveling little. One important implication is that whatever goes into the water in a particular spot, whether sedimentation from illegal logging or building, a gasoline spill in Bowdoinham Harbor, or excessive nutrients from a pulp mill, may indeed have a long time to affect plants, sediments and wildlife in the Bay.



Volunteer Bob Weggel helps with the Current Study. Photo: Ed Friedman

Thanks to volunteers Simon Beirne, David W. Chipman, Andy Ellis, Ed Friedman, Jim & Susan Gillies, Barry Goodman, Kathleen McGee, Dick Nickerson, Owen & Brandon Pierce, Leonard Skelton, Kermit Smyth, Bob Weggel, & Elisa Vandervort. Thanks also to our major funder: The Merrymeeting Bay Trust, to our sometime host; Chop Pt. School, to Hancock Lumber for donation of buoy materials and to Downeast Building Supply, DeLorme Mapping, and Tracker Radio Systems for discounts on various materials.

Archaeology

The Abbagadasset River, flowing by all three of our 2005 dig sites, begins in Richmond then passes through Bowdoinham and on into Merrymeeting Bay. These sites, explored in partnership with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, are now owned by the State of Maine and managed by the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife. They were protected through efforts led by FOMB, in partnership with the Maine Wetlands Protection Coalition, and acquired with funds from the Land for Maine's Future bond (approved several years ago and now out of funds).

From north to south our 2005 sites are known respectively as Umberhind, Detweiler/Leyman and Gallant, named after the people from whom they were acquired. Collectively, these three parcels total 165 acres and protect 10,500 feet of waterfront.

The *Umberhind* parcel is the site of the original carding mill for which the Carding Machine Rd. was named. The foundations were relatively undisturbed and a complete example of a building complex that served as a gristmill for flour and grain

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Research, Advocacy and Land Conservation

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as well as a place for carding and cloth finishing. According to *The History of Bowdoinham*, water was brought by spout from a dam above Abby Falls to the buckets of an overshot water wheel that powered the equipment. This mill site sits adjacent to the falls, which because of their height and low summer flow, marks the end of a three mile stretch of accessible anadromous fish spawning habitat above head tide used by alewives, suckers, eels, sea lamprey and possibly Atlantic salmon.

The *Detweiler/Leyman* tract frontage is along the head tide pond and a small tributary. The section of pond just above the property makes a very gradual transition to the upper stream that is unique to the Bay's smaller tributaries and allows for relatively easy fish passage. At various times a saw mill, grist mill and shingle mill stood at the head of the pond adjacent to this site and the current owner still owns the "mill rights." There were several cellar holes and perhaps as many as five wells found on the *Detweiler/Leyman* property. Test pits revealed some well-stratified remnants of habitation in the 1800s, but nothing of prehistoric importance was found along the river.

The *Gallant* acreage is split evenly between upland and extensive wetlands at the junction of the Abby and Beal's Creek. This was the site of the original bridge across the creek connecting the *Abbagadassett Rd.* with the *Carding Machine Rd.* and *Rt.24*. The west side of the Abby was one of the earliest parts of *Bowdoinham* to be settled and the river had a thriving shad fishery in its tidal portions. The *Captain Joseph Hall* cemetery sits on the property as well as a cellar hole that probably belonged to *Beal* as well as *Hall*. Time did not allow investigation of the foundation and test pits along the river revealed nothing of prehistoric importance.

Thanks to volunteers Simon Beirne, Robin Beltramini, Marion Blasziars, Lisa, Maya, Ansel, & Sky Critchfield, Tulle Frazer, Rocky & Josh Freeman, Pat, Max, & Andy Friedman, Ed Friedman, Linda Heller, Ruth Innes, Henry & Cyndie Lamoreau, Gerry LaRoche, Liza Nelson, Sharon Randall, D.J. Rogers, Beth & Johanna Thompson, David Wall, Bob Weggel and to MHPC staffers Lee Cranmer, Bill Burgess, Harbour Mitchell, Leith Smith & Art Spiess as well as Regional Biologist Jim Connolly and Steve Brooke of the Land for Maine's Future office.

Pulp Mill Effluent

The amount of wastewater discharged from Maine's pulp mills ranges from approximately 26–40 million gallons a day per plant. However, all of the major paper companies operating mills in Maine are running plants with much lower water discharges in other states. Typically they only do so where required by law or natural scarcity of water. Even as dioxins decline through the use of elemental chlorine free (ECF) bleach processes, we are still left with the unknown but likely harmful effects of massive wastewater discharges.

As an adjunct to our 2003 dioxin monitoring work at the *SAPPI* mill along the *Kennebec* in *Hinckley*, we conducted a pilot project to determine if mill wastewater could adversely affect the endocrine system. The endocrine system controls the secretion of hormones that impact our reproductive, thyroid, pituitary, and adrenal functions, to name just a few. We targeted a chemical/protein known as vitellin, which at elevated levels is directly correlated with sex reversal in mussels. Vitellin analyses were conducted on a small group of mussels from each station at which we did dioxin testing. We found mussels at the three stations immediately downstream of *SAPPI's* outfall showed elevated concentrations of vitellin when compared with stations above the mill. This suggests that endocrine disruptors contained in mill discharges could alter the reproductive condition of mussels.

In partnership with *DEP* and *Environment Canada*, we hope, in this summer's mussel deployment, to replicate and strengthen data from the vitellin portion of our 2003 project. If successful, we will have a tool for widespread use that can provide us with the evidence and ammunition necessary to build public involvement and support for the continued reduction of wastewater discharges into our rivers across the nation.

Thanks to volunteers Simon Beirne, Ed Friedman, Judith Hunnewell, Kermit Smyth & Martha Spiess. Thanks also to DEP staffers Zac Glidden, Joe Glowa, Barry Mower & John Reynolds; to Mark Courtenay & Trevor Hunt of the Bath Water District, to Mike & Sandra Salazar of Applied Biomonitoring and to our funders: Patagonia-Freeport and New England Grassroots Environmental Fund.

Water Quality Monitoring

Our regular monitoring this summer included 17 sites where we measured for dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature and turbidity. Volunteers covered an area from the southern end of the Bay north to *Gulf Island Pond* on the *Androscoggin* and *Norridgewock* on the *Kennebec*. The program also expanded to include fecal coliform sampling at a number of sites.

Thanks to volunteers Simon Beirne, Bill Briggs, Phil Bryzozowski, Heather Caron, Art Carrano, Clancy & Dee Cummins, Steve Eagles, Melinda & Ken Emerson, Charlotte Farnum, Ed Friedman, Dave Hedrick, Dave Lachapelle, Kathleen McGee, Bill Milam, Nancy Murphy, Dick Nickerson, Don Taylor, Jim Thibodeau & Helen Watts.

American Eels

As this newsletter goes to press, the yearly slaughter of eels attempting downstream migration [once in a lifetime] to their spawning grounds, continues to be sanctioned by the *Federal Energy Regulatory Commission* and *Maine DEP*. With downstream passage blocked by a gauntlet of hydro dams, the only way out is through rotating turbine blades. Only a few of the nearly 80 hydro dams in Maine provide safe passage for out-migrating eels. *FOMB* continues to work with other NGOs and various agencies to curb the killing.

Eels are high in fatty tissue and very long lived so they are prone to high levels of contamination via bio-accumulation of fat-soluble toxins over time. In November of 2004 FOMB recovered fresh turbine-killed eels below the Benton Falls dam on the Sebasticook River. Analyses indicated that the eels were between 20 and 25 years old and had extremely high levels of PCBs and DDT breakdown chemicals. PCB levels were typically over 500 parts per billion (ppb). The Maine Bureau of Health issues fish consumption advisories based on cancer risk when tissue levels reach 11 ppb and 43 ppb for non-cancer risks. Another effect of eel kills appears to be the release of long sequestered toxins back into the local food chain; FOMB and others have documented bald eagles feeding on fresh eel kills at Benton Falls.

On a positive note, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have recently determined that an Endangered Species petition for the American eel, submitted by Doug Watts (Friends of Kennebec Salmon), and his brother Tim Watts, presents enough scientific evidence to warrant full species status review. This is a great step forward and the brothers are to be commended for their efforts.

Thanks to Ken Oliveira and his staff at U. Mass-Dartmouth for ageing our eels.

Atlantic salmon

Just as our spring newsletter went to press, FOMB joined the Watts brothers and the Maine Toxics Action Coalition in petitioning the USFWS and NMFS to place the Kennebec population of Atlantic salmon on the Endangered Species list. While the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences named the entire Gulf of Maine salmon population as endangered, USFWS avoided putting Penobscot or Kennebec populations on the list. Our petition has been accepted and is undergoing preliminary review.

Brunswick Sludge

Not long ago the EPA allowed sludge to be dumped at sea creating dead zones in those areas. When this became illegal the EPA waved a magic wand over this municipal solid waste and renamed it biosolids. With a stroke of a pen sludge went from being a toxic substance to one that could be spread where our children play.

Sludge is generally classified as A or B, the difference being that Class A has somewhat lower pathogen levels. Both categories contain remnants of everything that is put down residential and industrial drains including heavy metals, bleach, paints, blood products, you name it. It's really as simple as that.

This past year the town of Brunswick wanted to spread sludge on playing fields that lay above their drinking water aquifer and adjacent to an elementary school. Amazingly, only two town council members voted against this. Even a quick search on the web reveals a great many questions about spreading sludge, including concerns from the National Academy of Sciences. This was the major point of FOMB's

testimony before the Brunswick town council. Neither the council nor sludge proponents, (most of whom work or have worked in the industry), could present compelling reasons to support spreading sludge. Nevertheless the council voted in favor.

A more recent concern about sludge should also be mentioned here: the issue of prion contamination. Tied to disease types like BSE [Mad Cow] and Creutzfeldt-Jakob, these proteins just don't go away. Dr. Dennis Burke, PE, in comments regarding proposed regulatory changes for sludge in Washington State, says that sludge is a public health hazard in part because of its potential to harbor disease-causing prions which are nearly impossible to get rid of through ordinary means such as time, temperature, acid or caustic treatments, incineration or burial.

The citizens group, Brunswick Pesticide Watch (BPW) organized opposition and was recently successful in their signature drive requesting a six-month moratorium on spreading to enable the council to make a more informed decision. We thank BPW for their efforts.

Land Conservation

Our conservation efforts continue to bear fruit. The latest to receive added protection was the Detweiler/Leyman parcel. In November of 2004, John Detweiler passed away. A woodsman and beloved piano teacher, he died quickly, and far too young, at his piano. FOMB worked with the state and John's widow, Fran Leyman, to craft an agreement selling the land to the state, preventing further development, and providing access to the public for non-motorized use.

Just prior to that closing another took place that was the culmination of a project FOMB began last October. Working with The Nature Conservancy and landowners we have just protected 70 acres in Woolwich, and 1,400 feet on the Bay. This is phase one of a project we hope will in the end, protect closer to 170 acres, 4400 feet of shore, 40 acres of tidal wetland, 25 acres of inland wetland, and that will fill in most of the gap in a otherwise protected two mile section of shoreland.

Currently we are actively working with landowners in Dresden and Topsham to protect valuable lands there. Our protection focus is usually on areas that contain or influence significant wetlands because these areas are most important from a wildlife habitat perspective. However, the recent devastation along the Gulf Coast is a grim reminder of the importance tidal wetlands play as a buffer between storm events and areas of human habitation. As rapid climate change events associated with global warming increase, our wetlands become even more critical.

Summer 2005 on the Bay...

We've just wrapped up a wonderful summer of outdoor adventures on Merrymeeting Bay. Over 100 of you participated in our Outside 2005! series. You came out in mobs to brave the mud and hear Arthur Haines talk about rare plants and you

Research, Advocacy and Land

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crossed the Kennebec to visit historic Swan Island (we apologize for not being able to accommodate all those interested in these last two outings; we'll try to offer them again). You discovered 600,000,000 year old clues to the formation of the Bay, and some of you showed up twice to help clean its shoreline. You came out in mobs to brave the mud and hear Arthur Haines talk about rare plants and you crossed the Kennebec to visit historic Swan Island (we apologize for not being able to accommodate all those interested in these last two outings; we'll try to offer them again). It's been a great summer! Please share with us your ideas for Outside 2006!

Thanks to following folks: Trip leaders: Piers Beirne, Andy & Kate Cutko,



Geologist Ruth Deike leads a Geology Walk of the Bay. Photo: Ed Friedman

Ruth Deike, Paul Dumdey, Ed Friedman, Arthur Haines, Anne Hammond, Bryce Muir, Bruce Trembly, and Warren Whitney. Series coordinator: Bruce Trembly. Graphic design: Tim Nason. Access to private property: Chop Point School and the landowners at Pleasant Point. Press releases: Tom Mitchell, Ed Friedman, and Heather Caron. Other publicity: David Chipman, Sarah Cowperthwaite, Ruth Innes, Loukie Lofchie, Nancy Randolph, and Mary Sturtevant.

Ed Friedman, Kathleen McGee & Sarah Wolpow

Sturgeon Leaps

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dazzling dance. It filled the Mother Sturgeon's eyes with kaleidoscopic visions."

"Each sunny day the two lovers would leap and dive for one another, and the whole Bay watched in admiration. But then the Sun declined, and it came time for Kingfisher to fly South, and for the Great Mother Sturgeon to seek her winter deeps. For all their dancing together, they had hardly shared a word, and now they couldn't find a thing to say."

"Kingfisher stayed on until there was ice in the backwaters and the baitfish scarce, but he finally had to go. They say the last pas de deux the lovers danced were spectacular — leaping and diving in synchrony in the low-angled sunlight, while all the creatures sang. Then he was gone."

"The Great Sturgeon spiraled down into the murk of the nethermost deeps and cried out her sorrow. Her lamentation was a deep rumbling song which echoed and re-echoed under the waters."

Sturgeon fell silent. Was that a faint rumbling he felt along his centerline? Or just an echo of the ancient tale? Sturgeon circled in the deep.

After a suitable pause, one of the catfish said, "That's a very sad story. Did he ever come back?"

Sturgeon awoke from his musing.

"Well, the story actually goes on. They say the Great Sturgeon began swimming round and round as she sang her doleful song. Round and round and round. Faster and faster and faster. Day after day until the whole Bay was spinning like a maelstrom. Then, in one great leap, she shot out of the water — and flew away."

"Wow," both catfish cheered, clapping their pectorals.

"And that's why Sturgeons leap," Sturgeon said. "They all jump as high as they can to show off for the ones they love. And maybe, if they jump high enough, they will fly off with the Great Sturgeon." The catfish paddled in place, their eyes as big as saucers.

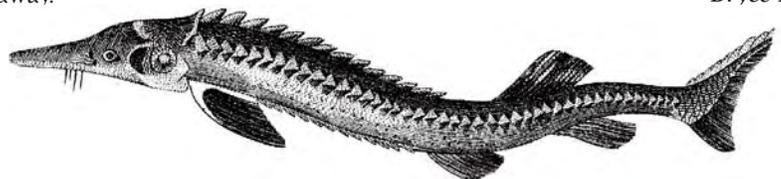
Then Sturgeon began humming a rumbling song to himself, and started to swim around the Catfish. Round and round. Faster and faster he swam. The catfish were a bit alarmed, but Sturgeon was circling them so fast now they didn't dare try to escape. Then Sturgeon pointed his snout skyward, raced upward, and crashed out through the shimmering surface. Sturgeon leaped way up in the air. And there, hanging in the sky over the Bay, was a gigantic flying fish with great shining wings, whose roaring cry filled the air.

Sturgeon was struck dumb, and he landed on his side with a bruising crash, splashing water twenty feet in the air. The catfish scattered in panic. Sturgeon sank to the bottom in amazement. It took quite a while for Sturgeon to regain his senses. It was only then he realized that the niggling at the back of his mind had been the rumbling of that Great Flying Sturgeon's song. And Sturgeon smiled. He had leaped high enough to see the Great Sturgeon at home in the sky.

The big military C-5A continued to circle Merrymeeting Bay, doing touch-and-go exercises at the Brunswick Naval Air Station. Sturgeon circled in the deep.

Which is why sturgeons leap. And why you must be careful what you believe, or you may mistake touch-and-go for true love.

Bryce Muir



Our 2006 Merrymeeting Bay Photography & Tide Calendars are here!!

Please see special insert for more information about this beautiful calendar and how to purchase copies. Every purchase moves us one step closer to our goal of raising \$20,000 for protection of Merrymeeting Bay!

Many people have contributed to making this calendar a success. Special thanks go to our sponsors: Androscoggin Animal Hospital and F.H.C., Inc.; to our photographers: Liz Bouve, Sandra J. Colby, Ed Friedman, Dennis Griggs, Martha Lentz, Michael Mahan, Jeffrey Morris, Jane Page-Conway, and Jim Young; to **Mahan Graphics of Bath** for donating much of the design work; to **all the outlets carrying our calendar** (see special insert for complete list); to volunteers Sarah Cowperthwaite and Liz Bouve for help with all aspects of this project including setting up multiple exhibits of the calendar images in venues around the Bay, **and to the following people who have given generously of their time and advice:** Dorothy Chaisson, Paul Dumdey, Kathie Duncan, Jane Fisher, Ann Hartzler, Judy Lipetz, Michael and Susanna Mahan, Kathleen McGee, Tom Mitchell, Liza Nelson, Nancy Randolph, Kermit Smyth, Martha Spiess, Mary Sturtevant, Steve Taylor Bruce Trembly, David and Marjolaine Whittlesey; **and finally to all of you who submitted photographs for consideration.**

FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY

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Thank you to Tom and Martha Mitchell for designing this issue of The MMNews & to all our contributing writers.



Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O.Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- \$_____ Other.
- \$20 Smelt
- \$50 Alewife
- \$100 Shad
- \$250 Striped Bass
- \$500 Wild Salmon
- \$1,000+Sturgeon

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- Renewal
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\$7.00 enclosed for a copy of Conservation Options:
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Friends of Merrymeeting Bay



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Newsflash:

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay and Doug Watts have filed petitions with the Board of Environmental Protection requesting the installation of up and downstream passage for eels [as well as some anadromous fish where appropriate] at a number of dams on the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers. Stay tuned!

Special Meeting of the Membership

Date: Concurrent with our Nov. 9th Speaker Series (see right)

A very brief, special meeting of our membership will be held to vote on a proposed by-law change affecting our Annual Meeting date.

Current by-law section ARTICLE II Section D. reads “The annual meeting of the Corporation shall be held **in the fall of each year,...**”

Proposed change of this Article Section is: “The annual meeting of the Corporation shall be held **near the end of each year or the beginning of the following year,...**”

Rational: Our Annual Meetings have been traditionally held in November or December, both busy holiday times for members. Additionally, FOMB operates on a calendar year basis and our year is not quite complete by meeting time. Meeting in January for instance, would be a less busy time for most members, hopefully promoting better attendance at the meeting, and would let us provide a complete year-end report at the meeting as well as a preliminary work plan for the upcoming year.

The Endangered American Eel: Miracle of Nature

Second lecture of our 05-06 Speaker Series
Doug Watts, Friends of Kennebec Salmon
Wednesday, Nov. 9th, Beam Classroom, Visual Arts Building,
Bowdoin College @ 7 PM

Maine Environmental Action 2005 Conference.

Saturday, November 12th
Colby College - Waterville, Maine

Join other activists working on issues of clean air, clean water, sprawl, energy, land use, sustainable communities and other important environmental and public health issues.

For more information and registration details visit:
www.toxicsaction.org (under Events/Conferences)
or contact Will Everitt, Toxics Action Center,
will@toxicsaction.org, (207) 871-1810.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a cosponsor of this conference. Our members can register for only \$15 (includes breakfast, silent auction and reception).