

Merrymeeting News

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

SPRING 1998

To Preserve, Protect
and Improve the
Unique Ecosystems
of Merrymeeting Bay.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Support comes from members, tax-deductible donations and grants.

Education

Hands Around the Bay, speaker series, field trips.

Conservation & Stewardship

Protecting traditional conservation resources through private public ownership, easements and stewardship.

Membership Events

Swan Island picnic, paddle tours of the Bay, field trips, conservation meetings, potluck suppers and shoreline clean-ups.

Research and Advocacy

Water quality, data collection, toxics, fisheries restoration.

1997 Steering Committee

Frank Burroughs, Bowdoinham
Dana Cary, Topsham
Susan Fides, Brunswick
Ed Friedman, Bowdoinham
Steve Hammond, Bath
Kathleen Kenny, Dresden
Esther Lacognata, Topsham
Bob Lenna, Bowdoinham
Don and Joan Lipfert, Woolwich
Pat Maloney, Topsham
Tenley Meara, Topsham
Jay Robbins, Richmond
Karin Tilberg, Bowdoinham
Warren Whitney, Bowdoinham

Executive Director

Betsy Ham, Bowdoinham

On-Line

<http://www.col.k12.me.us/mmb/fomb@gwi.net>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

MAY 16 ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN UP

It's spring cleaning time on the Bay (see article at the bottom of this page for more information).

WHEN: Saturday May 16 from 9 AM to 1 PM

WHERE: Meet at 9 AM at the Bowdoinham Town Landing

MAY 20 THE BIRDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY

The final speaker in this year's Winter Speaker Series will be Peter Vickery, Ornithologist. He will be sharing his knowledge of the birds of Merrymeeting Bay and perhaps tells us his favorite birding spots.

WHEN: Wednesday May 20 starting at 7 PM

WHERE: The Bridge Academy in Dresden Mills

From Richmond take Rt. 197 East approximately two miles crossing the Kennebec and the Eastern. Turn left on Rt. 127 towards Dresden Mills and travel along the Eastern two more miles. The Bridge Academy is well marked on your right just before the intersection of Rt. 127 and Rt. 27 in Dresden Mills.

continued on back page

SPRING CLEANING ON THE BAY

May 16th from 9 AM - 1 PM

It's that time of year again when we make the Bay a little safer for our feathered, pawed and finned friends and a little nicer for all of us to look at by cleaning up the trash on the shores of the Bay. Mark your calendar for FOMB's and the Western River section of Maine Island Trail Association's Annual Spring Clean Up of the Bay on Saturday May 16th from 9 AM to 1 PM. Bring

boots, work gloves, sun tan lotion and work clothes; we'll provide the garbage bags and the Bay will happily provide the trash.

We will meet at the Bowdoinham Town Landing at 9 AM sharp on Saturday May 16th and disperse into groups from there to designated locations around the Bay. If

you want to get your plants at the Bowdoinham Public Library plant sale first or you can't make it at 9 AM for whatever reason,

give Ed Friedman (666-3372) or me (666-3376) a call and we will assign you to a location where you can meet the group later. If you plan to come, try to let us know ahead of time so that we can start figuring out logistics. We could use some help on

Sunday May 17 as well to pick up trash bags and recycle the contents. If you can help on either day give us a call, it's a lot more fun than doing the indoor spring cleaning and the birds and animals will thank you for it.

Betsy Ham



MaryAlice Walker had quite a haul last year

EASEMENT ACTIVITY INCREASES AROUND THE BAY

Seven FOMB members generously pledged the value of easements they plan to donate on their land to help the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife apply for a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Inland Fisheries and Wildlife needs to match the value of any grant applied for through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. When the Maine Wetlands Coalition, of which FOMB is a partner, decided to focus on the Bay area for this year's grant application, landowner members from around the Bay

stepped forward and agreed to allow the value of their easement donation to be used to match the amount of money requested. Some of these landowners were already working on easements with FOMB and other conservation groups, others were inspired by the grant application to choose this time to protect their land through a conservation easement. The grant, if successful, will allow the Wetlands Coalition to protect land in the Bay area through land purchase and conservation easements.

If you've been thinking about developing a conservation easement on your land, now is a great time to discuss your plans with us. The grant application has generated a great deal of land conservation activity and we'd like to keep up the momentum. If you would like more information on conservation easements call me at 666-3376 and I would be happy to discuss easements with you and send you more information.

Betsy Ham

WATER RECLASSIFICATION

In response to testimony last fall from a number of groups including FOMB the Board of Environmental Protection extended until June 1 the deadline for submitting proposals for water body classification upgrades. All fresh water rivers are classified by the State on a scale of AA, A, B, and C with "AA" being the most pristine and "C" the least. FOMB sees reclassification as a useful tool to drive water quality improvements. For example, if a section of river currently only meets the qualities of Class C rather than necessarily maintain its class C status we might advocate an upgrade to B as a goal and suggest a timeline and action plan to achieve that.

Presently the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is proposing an upgrade on the Kennebec between Sidney and Augusta from "C" to "B". The Bay from Abagadasset Point South is "B" but

the various tributaries to and the main section from Abagadasset Point north to Augusta are "C". While some tributaries are "C" because of (probably) naturally low dissolved Oxygen (DO) due to low flow, the Kennebec's low DO is due to human input, primarily from S.D. Warren, Keyes Fiber & the City of Augusta

We have submitted a proposal to upgrade the section of Kennebec from Abagadasset Point to Augusta from "C"

to "B". We think that by working our way north from the Point towards the more impacted areas below Augusta we can achieve this goal and have expressed our desire to the DEP to work with them in this pursuit.



Ed Friedman

Drawing by Bryce Muir

HANDS AROUND THE BAY PLANS SITE VISITS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Many teachers in the Bay region have accepted an invitation from the Hands Around the Bay Committee (HAB) to tour a Merrymeeting Bay site close to their school. Principals in all the elementary schools in the Bay region were sent letters inviting one or two of their teachers and from four to eight of their students to a guided tour on the afternoon of June 4th.

FOMB offered to cover the cost of substitutes for participation teachers and provide a HAB/MMB nature hike backpack which will be available for all to use at each site during the tour. The pack will be equipped with binoculars, field-guides, drawing materials, activities, data recording notebooks and more. Guides, either FOMB committee members or knowledgeable community volunteers and school participants will gather at one of the following sites from 1:00 to 3:00 on the 4th: Swan Island Wildlife Management Area, Richmond; Robert P. Tristram Coffin Wildflower Sanctuary, Woolwich; Merrymeeting Wildlife Management Area, Bowdoinham; Beatrice Baxter Demonstration Forest, Topsham; and Butler Head, Bath.

This exciting event will provide local educators with an opportunity to meet one another, share observations, gain an understanding of the biodiversity of the Bay and collect data. Children will record and share their experiences with other students. Experiences, photos and information collected will be added to our FOMB web site and shared with other teachers that could not participate.

Be sure to watch for a follow up article in the summer addition of Merrymeeting News to find out all about the site visits.

Many thanks to FOMB volunteer Mark Milam from Woolwich who has contributed time and energy in working with the Hands Around the Bay Committee.

Pat Maloney and Susan Fides
HAB committee members

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Merrymeeting News

is the newsletter of Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, P.O. Box 233, Richmond, Maine 04357, and is published seasonally.

Merrymeeting News is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay. For information call Betsy Ham, Executive Director 666-3376.

SPRING TIDINGS

The clock and the calendar mark time into uniform, modular units. An hour is an hour; a week is a week. Thus subdivided, time converts readily into the equally uniform and modular units of money, and what we call a career is basically the terms upon which we negotiate the exchange of hours for dollars. It is something of a revelation to us to perceive, even momentarily, that time is an unmeasured flow, which cannot be bought or bartered. We no more control it than we control the rotation and orbit of the earth. Last week was the equinox; April begins in three days. The days themselves are changing rapidly. From week to week, you are surprised and then surprised some more by how much light remains, as you walk away from the work place and head home; you are surprised again in the morning when the light awakens you, hours ahead of the alarm clock. There are no more of the austere, silent dawns of winter now blackbirds and grackles wheeze and grate and clatter in the fields; song sparrows trill from the hedges. From time to time you hear geese passing overhead that cacophonous braying that is so strangely stirring and haunting. Woodcock have begun. I heard the first one on the 9th of March, a very early date. He was silenced by a late snow, but now others have arrived, and every evening they stage a performance so beautiful and ludicrous in its extravagance that it makes the pre-nuptial behaviors of local teenagers seem prudent and constrained by comparison. While we were away during the third week of March, fox sparrows arrived, and now the yard is full of them. They scratch among the dead leaves and twigs with both feet at once; one busily engaged in this activity looks as though it is standing in place and skipping rope. They are the most handsome of all the sparrows, and will not stay with us for long, but while they are here, they repossess our back yard as confidently and officiously as our hens have repossessed the hen yard, now that the snow is out of it. Along with the geese, black ducks, some mallards, greenwing teal, and cormorants have returned to the bay. I've seen more goldeneyes than in recent



Canada Goose

years, although my observations have not been systematic enough to count for much. Among the common mergansers that have been with us all winter, you now sometimes spy a much smaller and fairly uncommon merganser the hooded. It is a shyish sort of bird, more at home on streams and shallow ponds than in the open water of the bay, but, shy or not, the drake can suddenly elevate a crest that would do a pharaoh proud. The light at this season is generally muted. There are not many of the days of unmitigated sunshine that make the weathermen beam with positively paternal pride. The ground is soggy, and the least traffic turns roads and paths to mud. This is not the New England of the calendar covers, not the brilliant skies and green fields of summer, or the blaze of autumn, or the diamond sparkle of winter. Promising mornings give way to windy, chill afternoons. The bay can be a sleek and shining gray at one moment, and look like a bad afternoon off the coast of Newfoundland the next. I am qualified to say that it is possible to acquire a taste for this sort of thing, and that once you acquire it, every other season seems slightly stale and smug. Time and tide used to be synonymous.

We had springtide and easter tide, and tidings referred to a timely kind of news.

Now, we more or less grudgingly accept the fact that time and money are synonymous, and sternly urge ourselves not to waste either. But at this season of the year, as the last of the ice cakes disappear along the shores of the bay, the idea of time as something physical, expanding and contracting, ebbing and flowing like a tide, can begin to make sense again. What we call spring fever is, I think, really two things. One is an agitation, the restlessness and yearning that a flock of geese at night, or a pond full of peepers at dusk, can suddenly trigger. The other is a tendency simply to sit and receive the tide of time as it comes at you. Each response has behind it an impulse to escape from clock time and calendar time; to join or simply to contemplate the comings and goings of creatures and processes that have no conception of time, but are themselves its ancient keepers.

Frank Burroughs

FOMB NEEDS YOUR HELP TO REACH OUR MEMBERSHIP GOAL OF 300 BY 1999

We have set a goal of increasing membership to 300 this year. This is an increase of almost 100 members so we need your help! Do you have a friend that enjoys the Bay? Do you know someone who recently moved to the area? Tell these individuals about FOMB then let Betsy know so that she can send them a complementary newsletter along with membership information. Better yet, give them a gift membership and let them see for themselves the value of becoming a member.

For those of you who have not renewed this year, please do so! I know that you get letters from many groups each month asking for support but few are doing as much to improve the local area as FOMB is. For a small group such as ours the loss of a few members makes a big difference. Yes we really and truly do know who you are!

For those of you who have received our second renewal mailing and have not yet sent in your renewal, you will soon re-

ceive a friendly phone call from Ed Friedman or Betsy Ham reminding you to renew. When we call we will ask for your continued support and for your comments on our current programs. We would like to know what we could to make FOMB an even better organization.

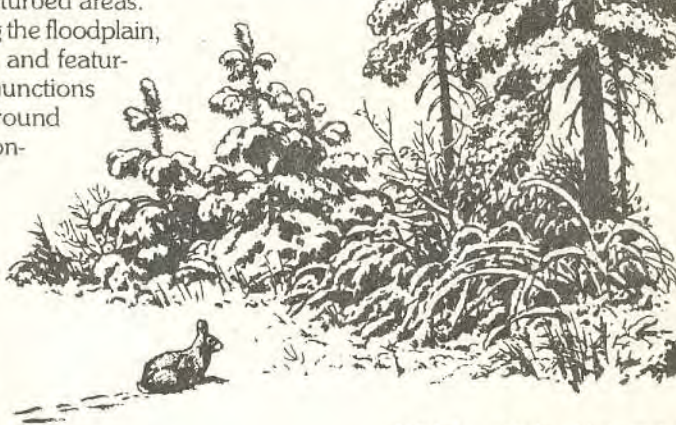
We need your help! If you would like a supply of membership brochures, newsletters or if you would like a list of individuals who are already members in your town, let Betsy know. Thank you for your support!

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS: CONNECTING THE LANDSCAPE

Imagine this: You have sprouted wings and are flying above the landscape. Below, you see roads, house lots and subdivisions, town centers, commercial development, industrial parks, power lines, and blacktop. These are areas of human disturbance. You fly over forested areas, fields and farmlands, and waterways such as wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes and ponds. These are natural patches in the landscape. The habitat values of many of these patches are limited by the proximity to human disturbance, by management practices or by pollution of the environment. Some patches are nature preserves. Many patches, surrounded by disturbed areas, are isolated. You fly over the same area to observe more carefully. This time you see "links," areas of vegetation that connect some of the natural patches.

These links are wildlife corridors. They provide landscape connectivity between and among wildlife habitat patches. Corridors are habitat for some species and for others they give the freedom of movement necessary to fulfill their unique survival needs. Corridors may enhance biodiversity, the number of different species of plants and animals in a landscape. Types of corridors include:

- * Hedgerows, stone walls, fence rows.
- * Roads, utility corridors, trails and railroads. These are barriers between or within habitats, and are populated by disturbance-tolerant species and non-native species. They are also sources of pollution, erosion and sedimentation, and human impacts on the environment.
- * Remnant corridors through disturbed areas, preserved from development.
- * Planted corridors through disturbed areas.
- * Waterways, perhaps including the floodplain, banks and adjacent uplands, and featuring large patches of forest at junctions of tributaries. Some areas around waterways are sizeable and constitute patches of habitat.
- * Networks, resulting from interconnections of many types of corridors, and the nodes where corridors intersect.
- * Small patches of habitat, called stepping stones, serve some wildlife species as a corridor between two larger patches



A number of factors determine the effectiveness of a corridor in any given situation. They include:

- * The width of the corridor.
- * The continuity of the corridor.
- * The size of the gap(s) within a corridor; and the contrast between the habitat types of the corridor and of the gap.
- * The similarity of vegetation structure and plant species between the large patches and the corridor.
- * The wildlife species being considered, the scale of their movement, their special habitat requirements.

Human practices, including sprawl development, greatly reduce landscape connectivity for a majority of wildlife species.

Human disturbance in the landscape also has a negative impact on biodiversity. Habitats are lost, become isolated or fragmented, or are altered in ways that limit or eliminate their usefulness as habitat to many wildlife species. Corridors help maintain habitat values for some plants and animals in landscapes increasingly fragmented and altered by development.

To be totally functional, corridors must be a part of a system of preserves and other natural areas, creating a connected mosaic of habitats. In general, the wider the corridor, the more

... there are substantial benefits when high quality corridors link habitat patches.

valuable it is to a greater number of species. Buffers around corridors and the natural patches they connect enhance their effectiveness. Substantial corridors along all watery habitats and along ridge tops vastly improve the quality of habitats in the landscape. Municipalities, as well as conservation and other organizations, have vital roles to play in large landscape patterns. Individual action also provides benefits. Wildlife-friendly management of agricultural and forest lands, of our yards and communities, improves habitat for many species of wildlife and enhances any corridor-patch system.

Wildlife corridors provide economic and environmental benefits that complement human goals. Managing the landscape for wildlife is consistent with our interests in recreation, tourism, public access, a sense of place and a healthful environment. The research does not offer definitive answers, but it does support the view that there are substantial benefits when high quality corridors link habitat patches. We need to understand corridors and the needs of the wildlife as we integrate corridors into our approaches to habitat conservation and preservation.

I wish to thank Jack Witham of the University of Maine Holt Research Forest in Arrowsic for his help and suggestions in writing this article.

*By Nancy Coverstone, Extension Educator
University of Maine Cooperative Extension in Androscoggin
and Sagadahoc Counties, 11/97*

"Wildlife Habitat in a Developing Landscape" is a conference that will be held on Saturday, October 24, 1998, at Central Maine Technical College in Auburn. People who should consider attending include land trust and conservation commission members, outdoor sport and recreation groups, planning boards and code enforcement officers, landowners, developers and planners. For information and a registration brochure, contact Nancy Coverstone, 1800-287-1458.

FOMB'S WINTER SPEAKER SERIES CONTINUES

FOMB's Winter Speaker Series has been a great success with many exciting lectures (see article below).

Please join us for this season's final program on May 20 entitled *The Birds of Merrymeeting Bay*. See the Calendar on page one for details and directions.

We would like to thank the Bowdoin College Environmental Study Program for helping to sponsor this series and the Patagonia Outlet Store in Freeport for providing door prizes. A schedule for next years Winter Speaker Series will be featured in the fall newsletter.

SHIPBUILDING AND SHIPPING IN MERRYMEETING BAY

A History Lecture

Picture peaceful Merrymeeting Bay as a busy commercial center, saw mills at work, wooden ships being built along the shores, vessels carrying produce between towns, packets with hundreds of people on deck.....What? Our Bay and its rivers that echo with silence and the haunting call of the thrush except during fishing season?

Nathan Lipfert, curator of the Maine Maritime Museum, drew bold strokes of the historic picture during his lecture to friends gathered on March 18th for the sixth presentation in FOMB's Winter Lecture Series. Our modern understanding of ecology lets us define the Bay as a living whole, but this concept is quite new. Until the present, Nathan informed us, no one considered Merrymeeting Bay a unit: its six towns kept separate records and ran distinct governments. Lipfert avoided this research dilemma by using the Bath Customs District registry of shipbuilding and shipping records from our all but forgotten recent past.

A 1776 chart showing habitations running like a ribbon along shores and rarely connected by roads demonstrated the most significant principal of early settlement. The rivers and Bay were

highways for travel. An 1858 map showed the beginnings of railroads, but still rivers were the major travel routes. During this time hundreds of ships were built, seemingly in every nook and cove where the terrain permitted.

Lipfert discussed each town's shipbuilding history alphabetically. Even Bowdoin, a land-locked town, constructed an 18 ton vessel in 1794. Built on the theory that it's more convenient to be near the timber supply than to drag lumber to the building site, many towns tried this approach. But they did so only once, Nathan noted.

Augusta built 64 vessels, Bowdoinham 225, Dresden 58, Gardiner 87, Hallowell 215, Perkins (Swan Island) at least 18, Pittston 217, Richmond 241, Topsham 132, and Vassalboro 36, in the period 1755 to 1900. A grand total of 1355 wooden boats were constructed above the Chops. These included the 17th century, undecked shallop, scows, gundalows, the ubiquitous schooner, and even a few square riggers. Gardiner produced many whaling ships for the New Bedford trade, and Richmond is credited with building the *Wild Wave*, a clipper ship, unusual for the Kennebec.

Regularly scheduled steam packets began in the 1820's. Boston steamers started in 1830. By 1871 the 244 foot paddle boat, *Star of the East*, made regular trips from Boston to the Kennebec, its decks crowded with passengers. According to a newspaper article, that's the year it struck a gundalow in Merrymeeting Bay and "slowed down" until the sailors could be seen clinging to the wreckage which meant they were all right. It then plowed on, assuming self rescue.

An 1880 tally of vessels seen between Bath and Augusta totaled 113, many in the ice trade, some quite large. A picture of the *Roanoke*, a square rigger tied up at Twing Point wharf taking on ice, illustrated the scene.

Another interesting trend was the tendency for larger (2000 ton) ships to be placed in international trade and homeported elsewhere. Only the smaller (1000 ton) vessels were homeported where they had been built.

In the early days, hay and lumber were frequent general cargo. Shipping manifests from 1850 to 1900 showed Hallowell granite, and a great deal of coal freighted on the Bay and rivers. Larger boats had to be towed upriver, a feat many of us small boaters can appreciate from intimate acquaintance with narrow channels, mid-river rocks and rapids.

This fascinating lecture was enhanced by audience participation as friends spoke of their family connection to this history. Linwood Rideout and Maxwell Ward recalled their grandparents building huge ships at quiet Cathance Landing (Bowdoinham). Someone else told of an 1818 journal entry of his great grandmother's describing a trip upriver which needed oxen to pull them past Hallowell at low tide.

The river is certainly wilder today than it was just 100 years ago, but this is probably only a moment in time. It remains to be seen what will become of the natural heritage handed to us from historic times. Many thanks to Nathan for filling us in on details of pre ecology days.

Anne Hammond



Peeling off a board



The square-rigger *Hope*

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

After much wrangling in the Natural Resource Committee on whether the Toxic Use Reduction (TUR) bill [LD. 2111] should include mandatory use reduction [MUR] the committee decided not to include it. Gun shy, tired and without will they voted out a bill that was weaker than it should have been but better than when it started thanks to the environmental community. While there was a great deal of support at the hearing and in committee to add MUR to the bill, industry lobbyists outnumbered the environmental lobbyists by about 20-1. After one brief, shining moment when the Senate passed the bill 25-8, the bill died in non-concurrence [the two Houses could not agree] when the house defeated the bill 79-61. This was actually preferable to the alternative, approving the committee's minority report [Committee Amendment B], a much weakened bill. We expect this issue to be fought again next year.

The mercury bill [LD. 2269] was watered down as well. What started out as a hard stand for our environment after years of abuse by HoltraChem [the company in Orono that produces chlorine using mercury and the only company that legally discharges mercury into state waters due to a grandfather clause in the

law] ended up being the least they could do [short of not passing a bill]. What we got was the removal of the grandfather clause and mercury air emissions discharge reductions to 100 lbs./year [with some incentive to get it to 50 lbs./year]. While this is a very good thing it still essentially changes nothing for quite some time [6 years]. There are no assurances that HoltraChem will act in good faith nor does it provide incentive to the company to clean up its act. There is every possibility that HoltraChem will continue to discharge mercury both legally and accidentally right up to the time the exemption is no longer available and then leave the state. They have made it very clear they do not wish to invest in conversion. Without interim goals and check points this bill leaves us completely unprotected from an unscrupulous corporation whose CEO formerly ran Hooker Chemical in New York State & were the not-so-proud sponsors of Love Canal.

Which leads to the last bill in the update: Corporate Accountability [LD. 2243]. This was an exceptionally good bill. Senator Chellie Pingree submitted this bill which would hold corporations who get subsidies accountable for what they say they will provide for the money they receive from the state. What we got from the Taxation Committee was stripped beyond recognition. What was left, in essence, was a commission created to study subsidies in the state and collect the data necessary to make determinations in the future on what corporations in this state do and do not do for our investment in them. One Legislator said, if there were any more water on this bill it would be the Titanic. The bill passed in both Houses. Our hope is to have the data from the commission this bill creates as our basis for a bill next year.

All in all not a good year in the Legislature. The Legislature is inherently contentious and consequently it is difficult to achieve anything productive. This year seemed more unproductive than usual, especially for the environment.

Kathleen McGee

Legislative Coordinator/Lobbyist for the Maine Peoples Alliance

SPRING SIGHTINGS

Oh the sound of those geese wasn't that wonderful? Several flocks of 50 or more flew over the Bay in February. The joy of seeing a fox below the bird feeders. After seeing us watching her through the greenhouse windows she decided to leave. Ed Friedman also saw a fox and three snow geese in the Abagadasset Point area. Others mentioned seeing foxes too.

Everything seems to have happened so much earlier this year. The water above Abagadasset Point never froze completely across and the ice was largely gone by the middle of March. The end of March felt like summer with temperatures topping out in the 80's.

The birds coming in are so good to see. The first flock of robins gave me quite a thrill. The usual blue jays, nuthatches, chickadees, hairy and downy woodpeckers and the lots of sparrows, juncos, black birds, red winged blackbirds, gold finches and fantastic purple finches were seen around the bird feeders. We experienced the glory of a pileated woodpecker spotted near our house! Days Ferry has had regular visits from a male cardinal.

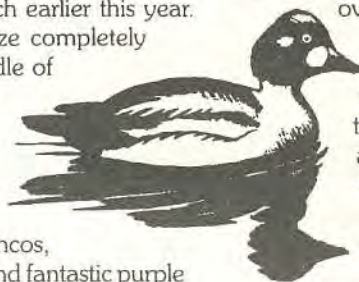
The Dresden Communicator reported that the folks in Dresden have been seeing lots of bald eagles on the Eastern River. A great horned owl, osprey, woodcocks, hoary red polls and a cock pheasant with three hens were also seen in the Dresden area. A wild turkey was spotted on Route 128 and another at the main traffic light at

Cooks Corner, a prime bird watching spot, (no he did not wait for the walk signal).

Carol Jack has been busy watching birds on the Androscoggin and Muddy and reported these March arrivals: hooded and common mergansers, mallards, black and wood ducks, Canada geese and cormorants. Four bald eagles were seen doing aerial displays over the Muddy River. Carol has been seeing woodcocks since the 21st of March. The phoebes, killdeer, red winged blackbirds, grackles and cowbirds and even a tree swallow and a ruby-crowned kinglet have all come back to the Androscoggin River area. Carol and Marilyn Cary saw an otter eating a fish on the banks of the Muddy. Carol first heard the wood frogs on the 20th of March with the peepers joining them ten days later on March 30th. I guess spring is really here (I mean here)!

We love to hear from you about your animal and bird sightings (and hearings). Please call Joan Lipfert at 443-8751 or write her at 1108 River Rd., Woolwich 04579 or call Betsy at 666-3376 or send the information to FOMB, Box 233, Richmond 04357. You may also e-mail FOMB. Our new e-mail address is: fomb@gwi.net. Thanks to all of you that contributed to our Spring Sightings. Please send us any sightings by June 15 to be included in our Summer newsletter.

Joan Lipfert



TWO DIRECTORIES AVAILABLE FOR TEACHERS

A Resource Directory describing individuals willing to voluntarily share their expertise on the Bay with area school children and a Site Directory describing public access sites on the Bay suitable for school field trips are available from FOMB. Many members have been using the site directory to scope out good bird watching areas on the Bay. The directories are free to local educators and FOMB members. Call Betsy at 666-3376 or e-mail her at fomb@gwi.net for a copy or more information.



Three-Spined Stickleback

E-MAIL, A NEW WAY TO KEEP IN TOUCH

Do you have a question or comment about our programs? Do you have information you think would be useful to us? Would you like to volunteer? There are now three easy ways to reach FOMB. You can call Betsy at 666-3376; write us at Box 233, Richmond, ME 04357 and now, if you have access to e-mail, you can e-mail us at fomb@gwi.net. We love to hear from you!

FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY

Steering Committee

- Frank Burroughs, 81 Wallentine Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 666-5979
- Dana Cary, 1052 Foreside Rd., Topsham 04086 Treasurer 729-4945
- Susan Fides, 152 McKeen St., Apt A-3, Brunswick 04011 721-9764
- Ed Friedman 42 Stevens Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 .. Chairman 666-3372
- Steve Hammond, 1 Grove St., Bath 04530 442-8535
- Kathleen Kenny, River Rd. #1105, Dresden 04342 737-2511
- Esther Lacognata, 19 Elm St., Topsham 04086 729-4088
- Don and Joan Lipfert, 1108 River Rd., Woolwich 04579 443-8751
- Robert Lenna, P.O. Box 185, Bowdoinham 04008 666-8421
- Pat Maloney, 31 Bridge St., Topsham 04086 729-8941
- Tenley Meara, RR 1 Box 96, Topsham 04086 Vice Chairman .. 725-2738
- Jay Robbins, P.O. Box 9, Richmond 04357 737-2239
- Karin Tilberg, 9 Main St., Bowdoinham 04008 666-5902
- Warren Whitney, 145 Pork Pt. Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 . Secretary 666-3376

Conservation & Stewardship Coordinator:

- Karin Tilberg, (see above) 666-5902

Hands Around the Bay Coordinator:

- Pat Maloney (see above) 729-8941

Special Events Coordinator:

- Jean Parker, Hockomock Island, RR 1 Box 1785, Woolwich 04579 442-0982

Executive Director:

- Betsy Ham, 145 Pork Point Rd., Bowdoinham 04008 666-3376

Thank you to: David Hansen for designing this issue of MMNews.

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

ANNUAL DUES **\$15.00**. Renewal

\$15.00 enclosed for individual membership. \$20 Family

\$30 Contributing \$50 Supporting \$100 Sponsoring \$250 Sustaining \$500+ Benefactor

\$ _____ enclosed as an additional tax-deductible donation.

NAME _____

RR# OR STREET ADDRESS _____

TOWN / STATE/ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

\$6.00 enclosed for a copy of **Conservation Options: A Guide for Maine Landowners.** (\$5 for the book, \$1 for postage)

FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY



Merrymeeting Bay

FISH CONSUMPTION SHOULD BE LIMITED

Due to PCB's and Dioxin Contamination
 (PCB's and Dioxin cause cancer and reproductive disorders)

- Kennebec River: Edward's Dam to the Chops
NO CONSUMPTION: freshwater fish
- Androscoggin River: Gilead to the Bay
5 Meals per year of freshwater fish

Statewide

Due to Mercury Contamination

(Mercury damages the nervous system)

- Pregnant, nursing, soon to become pregnant or less than 8 years old:
DO NOT EAT warm water fish [bass, suckers, perch, carp, etc.]
 Only one meal a month of cold water fish [trout, salmon, smelt, etc.]
- General Public: 2-3 meals of warm water fish per month.

Consumption of lobster tomalley, striped bass and bluefish limited in all waters.

This posting is a public service of the Maine Toxics Action Coalition (MTAC) and Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB). For a full copy of the State consumption advisories and more information on toxics in the environment call MTAC at 1-800-287-2345 or Maine Bureau of Health at 297-6455 or FOMB at 666-3376.

FOMB's fish posting effort last year has been expanded statewide this year and is being undertaken by the Maine Toxics Action Coalition (MTAC, formerly the Coalition for A Dioxin Free Maine). Learn more in our next toxics mailing.

CALENDAR

(con't from first page)

JULY 14 SOURCE TO THE SEA CANOE TREK ON MERRYMEETING BAY

Join FOMB as we paddle the Androscoggin SSCT (June 27-July 15) portion from Brunswick Town Landing to Butler Cove. Please pre-register with FOMB at 666-3376. To participate on all or part of the rest of the Trek call Bob Collins, Trek Coordinator at 782-2302.

WHEN: July 14 meet at 8 AM plan to paddle until 4 PM
WHERE: Meet at the Brunswick boat landing



AUGUST 15 ANNUAL SWAN ISLAND SUMMER PICNIC AND OVERNIGHT

Look for details in our summer newsletter, but mark your calendar now for this great whole family event!

WHEN: Saturday and Sunday August 15 and 16
WHERE: Meet at the IF&W boat launch in Richmond



**FRIENDS of
 MERRYMEETING BAY**

P.O. Box 233, Richmond, ME 04357
 Return Service Requested

SPRING CLEANUP MAY 16

See page 1

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