

BANGOR LAND TRUST NEWS

FALL 2013



Pedal the Penobscot Growing in Popularity

Pedal the Penobscot 2013 had the worst weather and the best ridership of any of our seven road rides! Celebrity rider Sarah Smiley sent off brave 28-mile riders even in the midst of a downpour, showing how committed and adventuresome our riders are. Over 219 registered, and nearly 200 finished the ride in spite of the weather. Poor visibility in the rain and hypothermia were major challenges for some, but the savory combination of the Sea Dog barbeque and a well-deserved sense of triumphant accomplishment made a positive end to the day. We are especially happy that a number of riders took the opportunity to achieve a “personal best” on this ride – riding farther than they had ridden before.

Each year brings tweaks and improvements to our plans. Experience and riders are our best teachers. We love seeing folks return year after year – six riders have participated all seven years! And we get very useful suggestions from generous riders who support the event. John and Linda Poirier, two hardy riders since 2007, sat us down in 2008 and helped us improve the ride. We hope that more riders will share their impressions and experiences, either posting on our

Facebook page or emailing info@bangorlandtrust.org. The quality of the support we offer is important – it allows more riders to set ambitious goals for themselves.

Supporters of Pedal the Penobscot give to the Bangor community in several ways. First, they help make Bangor more bicycle-friendly. Their enthusiasm for biking is contagious, and demonstrates to us all that having a bicycle-friendly city is a vital part of the lifestyle we love. Second, their financial support accounts for about a quarter of Bangor Land Trust’s annual budget – helping us to keep Bangor’s wild back yard a special place for all of us to enjoy. And finally, they are an inspiration to get outdoors and get some healthy exercise!



“Linda and I have enjoyed seeing the Pedal the Penobscot ride get bigger and better each year. We liked the initial name of “Frogs, Logs, and Bogs,” but agreed that the name change made sense and better represented it as a bike ride to support Bangor Land Trust. We start our bike riding season each year by training for the Trek Across Maine and ride with Team USA (from Union Street Athletics).

Over the last four years, we have encouraged our team members to finish the riding season by riding with us in the Pedal the Penobscot ride. It has been a nice way to end our biking season, and to have it be a local ride, makes it that much better! We hope that the local biking community continues to support this ride and allow it to grow and get better each year.”

John Poirier for Bangor Land Trust News, 10/25/13

Dear Members,

Bangor Land Trust has conserved over 800 acres in Bangor for public benefit. In consequence, we are now responsible for making a number of important decisions about the management of this wonderful asset. First, we have to figure out how to encourage people to enjoy our preserves without endangering the plants and animals that make their homes there. We need to preserve the special characteristics that make the preserves so wonderful, and thoughtfully share them with their original inhabitants. Then, because our human activity is causing dramatic changes in wildlife habitat, we must also make complex decisions about habitat management.

In his 1996 book, **The End of Nature**, Bill McKibben reflects on the fact that there is no longer any “nature” that has not been altered or changed by humans. As a species, we have affected everything. So now we live in a global “garden,” with all the responsibility of stewardship entailed by that concept. Bangor Land Trust has taken responsibility for taking care of 800 acres of this “garden” – inhabited by creatures of the field and forest and marsh. How do we manage our “garden” to promote the health of its inhabitants?

There are three categories of management decisions that we have to make: The first has to do with human use - for example, the number and placement of trails, bridges and boardwalks, and whether dogs can run freely. The second concerns invasive species like purple loosestrife and buckthorn, both of which are present in our preserves. Purple loosestrife crowds out native marsh plants and does not provide good habitat for the birds and other animals whose presence makes Penjajawoc Marsh such a special place. Common and glossy buckthorn grow aggressively, are hard to eradicate, and produce berries eaten by birds intent on building bodily reserves for migration. The problem: buckthorn causes diarrhea – thus effectively spreading seeds but at the same time keeping the birds from getting a healthy start on their trip south. We have buckthorn control and eradication plans, but putting them into action is a challenge.

The third management decision is how to maintain our fields. Greeting the joyous return of the bobolinks on West Penjajawoc Grasslands has become an important rite of spring – you should join us next year, it's quite spectacular! This spring we learned that the local farmer who has kept this field open by haying it for many years has retired. Our worries about too-early mowing, before the birds have fledged, have been replaced by worries about woody vegetation taking over the field. A generous volunteer rescued us this summer (but required a bit of self-rescuing himself, when his tractor got stuck in a wet spot!). Can we find the resources to mow it every year? Can you help?

And then there are the fields on our newest acquisition – the 100 acres adjoining (and now part of) Central Penjajawoc Preserve. They contain abundant milkweed, important to monarch butterflies that are now in trouble globally. How can we find the resources to keep our new fields open for these magnificent monarchs?

When you support Bangor Land Trust, you are helping to take care of Bangor's wild back yard, not only for us, who are nourished by our contacts with the natural world, but also for the plants and animals who share this space on our small planet.

With many thanks for your support,



Lucy Quimby
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William Phillips
Vice President



James Hinds
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Kathy Billings
Chris Dalton
Shirley Ellis
Stacy Gambrel
Lori Gettler
Karla Gustafson
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Climate Change & Fossil Fuel Divestment

Just before our October board meeting the Bangor Land Trust board heard a presentation by Karen Marysdaughter about the **350 Maine** campaign encouraging community action to change public policy regarding reduction of our carbon footprint. She pointed out that governments around the world have agreed on the desirability of limiting the anthropogenic global temperature rise to 2 degrees C, and that planning and coordinated action to limit our carbon dioxide production requires government policy changes and government participation at all levels.

The campaign proposed by **350 Maine** “calls on universities, cities, states, churches, and non-profit organizations to rid their portfolios of fossil fuel stocks, in an effort to reduce the stranglehold of coal, oil, and gas interests blocking action to address climate change.” The strategy of this campaign is to withdraw investment from businesses and public entities that have a major carbon footprint. She reported that, “In Maine there are divestment efforts on most college campuses and with the Public Employees Retirement System (MPERS). Unity College and College of the Atlantic have already divested.”

She encouraged everyone to participate as their circumstances permit. She is appealing to students, faculty, staff, and alumni of Maine schools, people with personal investments, people who participate in the Maine Public Employees Retirement System, and everyone who belongs to a not-for-profit organization that has an invested endowment.

For more information:

The Case for Fossil Fuel Divestment:
<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-case-for-fossil-fuel-divestment-20130222>

The Maine divestment campaign:
http://www.350maine.org/divestment_campaign

The national divestment campaign:
<http://gofossilfree.org/>

Upcoming Programs

Moonlight Ramble

Thursday, November 14 @ 6:30 pm - Walden-Parke Preserve

November is the beginning of Maine’s Dark Season. The fall foliage is gone, the birds have flown south, the days are short, and there is seldom much snow to reflect the sunlight that does reach the ground. But don’t stay home and curse the darkness! Brisk air, firm ground and a lack of bugs make this a great season for a walk, before or after sunset.

Join us for a full moon walk in Walden Parke Preserve. With the trees bare (and some cooperation from the weather) the moon should cast enough light that we can follow the wide trail without flashlights. We’ll stop at times to listen to the sounds of the night, and see how many we can identify. Wear sturdy, non-skid boots as the leaves tend to be slippery.

Winter Programs

In the past we’ve scheduled winter events but have had to cancel or reschedule due to weather or ground conditions. We would really like to get together for a couple of outings and think the best way to proceed is to send out emails and post on Facebook and our web site when conditions are just right. Look for:

A **Snowshoe & Hot Cocoa** outing after the first good snow of the season. We’re hoping we can get together in November or December, but we’ll just have to wait and see. Plans are to meet at the end of Kittredge Road (do not proceed to the City Forest parking area). We’ll head out over the old landfill hump and access trails in North Penjajawoc Forest. This is one of the preserves we haven’t held a lot of programs on but should be explored more often. Bring a thermos with hot water and we’ll supply the cocoa mix.

A **Frozen Marsh** outing at West Penjajawoc Grasslands is always great fun with cool things to see and a unique beauty that should be on everyone’s annual to-do list (so close to home!). We need a well-frozen marsh for safety – January or February? We’re letting you know now, so be sure to look for the email. And don’t be afraid to check in with us if you think conditions are just right.

We’ll be sure to send all the details your way. If you’re not currently receiving email from Bangor Land Trust, contact the office at info@bangorlandtrust.org or call 942-1010. You can also leave a message any time.

2013 Program Leaders

Bangor Land Trust's Programs Committee has provided a number of different options for members to learn more about Bangor's wild back yard this year. Thanks to the following program leaders for volunteering their time and sharing their expertise:

Jean Adamson - Maine Turtles
Dr. Steve Sader - Tree ID Walk
Ryan Robbins - Bangor's Bears & Beavers
Hope Brogunier - Birds for Kids
Karla Gustafson - Signs of Spring, Earth Day Walk
Shirley Ellis - Earth Day Walk
George Elliott - Lady's Slippers
Patricia Snyder - Butterflies
Bob Milardo - Whip-poor-wills
Chris Dalton - Moonlight Ramble

If there is something specific that you'd like to learn more about, call or email the office.



Pictured from top left, clockwise - Jean Adamson, George Elliott, Karla Gustafson, and Steve Sader

Useful Vocabulary Words

Sometimes having words for a feeling makes it easier to identify the feeling and communicate it to others. Here are two useful words that not only describe experiences familiar to many, but also lead to a more nuanced understanding of our relationship with nature.

The first is biophilia, which E.O. Wilson defined in his 1984 book, **Biophilia**, as "the innate tendency to focus on life and lifelike processes." Wilson himself and other writers have explored this concept in depth and used it to explain why we find natural environments restorative. We are different, and better, after spending an autumn afternoon walking in the woods. Wilson goes on to argue that our survival as a species depends on our ability to take care of the natural world in which our lives are embedded.

Another useful word is solastalgia, "the distress that is produced by environmental change impacting on people while they are directly connected to their home environment." Glenn Albrecht, an Australian psychiatrist, and his colleagues, writing in an Australian psychiatric journal in 2007, coined the word and documented the psychological effects of the loss of a familiar environment. Many people have experienced the pain of losing special places. We may mourn the loss to a mall of the special field where we once played in the sunshine, or the appearance of a cell tower in the magic view over our special lake. Perhaps the reason we don't talk about this more is because we have lacked a good word for it.





Seeds are tucking themselves away for the winter ready to bedevil your gardens come spring. Seeds are great food for many birds and animals, helping them to survive the winter. Seeds are great tasting when mashed and spread with jelly on bread (that is made from seeds). Seeds powered the loggers that worked the woods for generations as they are also powering your cars and trucks. Seeds are an evolutionary breakthrough that has greatly dominated life on this planet for the last 350 million years. They evolved during a period of drying on earth and allowed plants to survive these conditions.

Three hundred and fifty million years is a tremendous time span for evolution to work its wonders. On an incredibly varied and changing planet seeds have changed to meet the needs of plants specializing and thriving under wide ranging conditions. Containing an embryo, a food source, and protective coat, some of these wonders are able to live for centuries before germinating to adult plants.

Most seeds go through a dormant period when they absolutely will not germinate and a period when they can remain viable and able to germinate in days, weeks, years, or centuries in the future depending on the species and conditions. The dormant period prevents seeds from germinating when conditions are probably not suitable for survival. Triggers that

break dormancy are as incredibly varied as the plants themselves. Some triggers for seed germination after a period of dormancy include smoke, heat, cold, water, oxygen, no oxygen, animal digestive systems, ethylene, successive heat and cold etc.

The triggers are nearly endless as befits the tens of thousands of specialized plant species.

I especially admire some of the common weed species that require as little as 1/100 second of light to spring into action. It makes my cultivation of the gardens an endless task.

Have you been thinking about a way to make a difference - that will last even after you're gone? You can give an enduring gift of Bangor's wild back yard to future generations by making a bequest to Bangor Land Trust in your will.

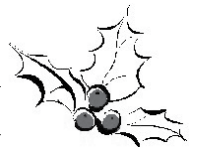
Please consult your attorney for the wording most suitable to your circumstances.

DO YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EARLY

GIVE AN ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TO BANGOR LAND TRUST

Share your love of the land. Use the form here to send with your payment to Bangor Land Trust, PO Box 288, Bangor, ME 04402. The new member will receive a gift message from you inside their new Bangor Land Trust membership package (certificate of membership, Bangor Land Trust decal and trail information). Call 942-1010 for more information.

Name _____
Address _____
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Please enroll the above at the following level:
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Please contact me: I would like to volunteer
 I am considering a land gift or easement
 I am naming Bangor Land Trust in my will
 This gift is in honor or memory of _____



Opportunities to Volunteer for Stewardship Projects



We know that lots of BLT members and friends enjoy volunteering, whether in the woods or in our office or on some other project. We've heard from many more who would like to volunteer but haven't found the opportunity. We're working on ways to connect people with opportunities.

Our latest plan is that we will send out email to our entire email list whenever we have a work project planned. Given the challenges of stewardship planning, and the unpredictability of the weather, many of these announcements may come only a few days ahead of the work project time. We thought you would like to know what we are working on – and trust that if one work date doesn't work out for you, another one might. We'll also announce work dates on our website and Facebook page.

If you find that you are getting too many of these emails, please let us know and we'll stop sending you volunteer opportunities. If you have a friend who might like to volunteer, please let us know and we'll add his or her name to the list.



Our recent projects have included the magnificent entrance to Central Penjajawoc Preserve, work on the Central Penjajawoc Preserve trail, fixing the trail signs on the Northeast Penjajawoc trail (the tree bark had grown up against the trail tags and was squeezing them off the nails), and

prowling through the woods to locate our boundaries. We have a lot more boundary work coming up this fall. Looking for boundary markers has all the wonderful satisfaction of hunting for anything hiding in one place in the woods. It does sometimes require challenging bushwhacking, so please be prepared.

We also would love to hear from folks who have been out using our trails, whether on an organized project or not. You may be the first one to let us know of a tree that has fallen across a trail, or an interesting plant or animal, or a place where we need an additional trail sign to reduce confusion about which way back to the trailhead. It takes a community to care for forests and fields!



To Bangor Land Trust's 2013
Pedal the Penobscot Sponsors,
Thank you!

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As Bangor Land Trust
members out-and-about,
please thank them for
supporting Bangor's
wild back yard.

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"Protect for public benefit
land and water in the Bangor region
that have special ecological, natural,
scenic, agricultural, or recreational
significance while increasing public
understanding of the value of
land and water conservation."



Tree Identification Walk
through Northeast Penjawoc Preserve
October 12, 2013