



BANGOR LAND TRUST
**NEWS
LETTER**

Fall / Winter 2022

photo by Andrew Czwakiel

MORE THAN WAYFINDING *By Lucy Quimby*

A few years ago, I received a late-afternoon phone call from the worried father of a young woman. She had gone exploring on Walden Parke Preserve and gotten lost. Could I help? He gave me her cell phone number. When I called her she was luckily able to send me a “pin” showing her location. She had wandered off Walden Parke Preserve into an area with many confusing trails.

I asked her if she could see the sun. She could. I reassured her that there were no fierce animals out there intent on causing her harm and told her that she could find her way out by walking towards the setting sun. An hour later she called, telling me through tears of relief and joy that she had walked into someone’s back yard and found a street nearby. A happy ending! I congratulated her on her self-rescue.

This rather dramatic episode made us realize that we needed more signs to show the boundaries of our preserves as well as more and better maps. We then asked ourselves: if we were going to invest in better maps, what did we want them to show? Were they just to help keep people from getting lost? What other messages did we want the maps to carry?

Mapmakers through the centuries have asked and then answered in their own way these same questions. Humans apparently created maps even before they invented written language, using images to inform one another. If a picture is worth a thousand words, maps are images conveying many pieces of information and relationships and are worth at least two thousand. More than 30,000 years ago the earliest maps were of the

night sky and drawn in caves. They were likely created to help with way finding but also became a means of telling what was important in the area. We can first assign actual dates to maps created around 600 BCE. As maps and mapmaking evolved, maps then began to put a local area into the context of the larger world, conveying more information about what the viewer could expect to find

In 2021 Bangor Land Trust asked Maine’s premier map maker, The Center for Community GIS, to create a map for us. We wanted it to be about more than just wayfinding. Our map has lots of information about our preserves and the special qualities of Penjajawoc Marsh, our “Wildlife Oasis in Bangor.” As many of you know, thanks to a series of nearby wetlands and a swath of relatively uninterrupted habitat reaching all the way to Maine’s North Woods, our preserves and the adjoining City Forrest are exceptional wildlife habitat. Penjajawoc Marsh has earned national recognition as an Important Bird Area, central in the effort to prevent species extinction. While Bangor has the distinction of being Maine’s third largest city it also has the distinction of being home to what is probably Maine’s most productive freshwater marsh. Our map shows people how they can walk for a full day on over 10 miles of trails and have a truly authentic experience of nature.

Not only did we want to introduce our map users to the extraordinary wildlife habitat on our preserves, we also wanted to make people aware that this land

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design and printing by
Bangor Letter Shop



Pink Lichens photo by Grace Bartlett



A LETTER *from* BANGOR LAND TRUST PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

We are in a predicament. On one hand, our large, wonderful, complex brains allow us to create ever-more powerful tools to satisfy whatever goals we desire. All too often we believe that we can make our lives more convenient and comfortable, even to the extent of “conquering nature.” On the other hand, the natural world remains our home. We depend on it and, as we are learning with climate change, we neglect it at our peril.

Bangor Land Trust is doing its best to preserve balance in what sometimes seems like a lopsided competition. How can we love and share our home in nature without harming or destroying it? The answer: Know, appreciate, and respect the beauty in the life that surrounds us. You have ample opportunity on Bangor Land Trust trails, woods, and fields. There you can not only get good exercise but also clear your head and de-stress, breathe in the scent of evergreens, see and hear birds, find flowers, see traces left by bears and porcupines, feel a connection to non-human living beings, develop your relationship with the natural world that gives us so much, and be fully human.

What are our responsibilities to help balance the equation? We need to take care of the Bobolinks who nest in West Penjajawoc Grasslands. Breeding habitat for these and other birds with declining populations is crucial. You can help preserve Bobolink and Savannah Sparrow habitat by not disturbing the birds when you visit during nesting season. You can volunteer to participate with us in rehabilitating the field to make it a better nesting area.

You can appreciate that Bangor has been blessed with what is probably Maine’s most productive freshwater marsh and help meet our responsibility to respect the needs of its wildlife. Sedge Wrens in Penjajawoc Marsh are listed as endangered in Maine. US Fish and Wildlife lists them as a “species of management concern.” They need to be able to sit undisturbed on their nests. On all Bangor Land Trust preserves you can avoid using artificial lighting that will interfere with the ability of wildlife to hunt for food and raise their young. We all can learn more about the natural world around us so that we can protect and restore our local ecosystems.

We want to make our preserves a major feature of life for all of us who live in Bangor and all our visitors. To that end we are distributing 5000 copies of our newly printed map. I hope it will encourage you and others to develop your own personal relationship with Bangor’s Wild Back Yard. All Bangor Land Trust supporters will get a copy in the mail. More are available from local businesses who support Bangor Land Trust; it will also be available at www.bangorlandtrust.org. We always appreciate your support!

Lucy Quimby

NATURE NOTES

GRASSLANDS AND THE BOBOLINKS *By Dave Thompson*

As the sun slowly rises in the east in the spring you finish breakfast, get in your car, and drive out Essex Street. When you reach Fox Hollow Road you turn right and drive to the cul-de-sac at the end where there may already be a few parked cars. Directly to your south is the 31-acre Penjajawoc Grasslands Preserve owned by Bangor Land trust and Maine Audubon.

After you start down the trail along the east side and turn out into the field, you see them: The Bobolinks are back!* They have been far south for the winter and returned home to breed and raise their young. Theirs is a cheerful, burbling, jangling warble with short notes on widely different pitches. The males fly high up from their grassy perches, up to the sky, and back again.

Over the past 50 years North America has lost three billion birds. Bobolinks are ground nesting birds and are on the list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Bangor Land Trust has made the preservation of their habitat in Penjajawoc Grasslands (which includes part of Penjajawoc Marsh), a top priority. The Oldenburgs gifted this land to BLT in 2004 with the provision that a farmer be allowed to cut hay on 13 of its acres. The haying usually took place in early July which did not bode well for the Bobolinks and Savanna Sparrows.

No mowing occurred in 2014 and the composition of the plants changed. Small trees, shrubs and different grasses were growing. This is what takes place in the natural evolution of a field to shrubs and then forest. I arranged for Eric Giberson of the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to visit. He said that the major problem was that the grasslands had not been mowed.

BLT hired a contractor to mow the fields. Early the next summer I took soil samples from each of the four major soil types found in the field and took them to the UM Extension Service Soils Lab to be analyzed. The analysis showed that the soil was quite acidic with a pH of between 5.2 and 5.9. (The lower the number, the more acidic the soil). The grasses that we wanted require an

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Photo from the Vermont Bobolink Project
<https://www.bobolinkproject.com>



Cutting the grassland. photo by Lucy Quimby



Liming the grassland. photo by Adam Toothaker

SAFETY FOR EVERYONE ON BANGOR LAND TRUST PRESERVES

As the poet Gary Snyder wrote, "Nature is not a place to visit, it is home." It is indeed our home. It is where human beings evolved over millennia. That is why a walk in the woods, looking for birds, photographing flowers, or just sitting under a tree is such a good way to calm our minds and reduce stress. In these difficult times, beset by COVID, we want to be sure that everyone seeking wellbeing in our preserves is safe there.

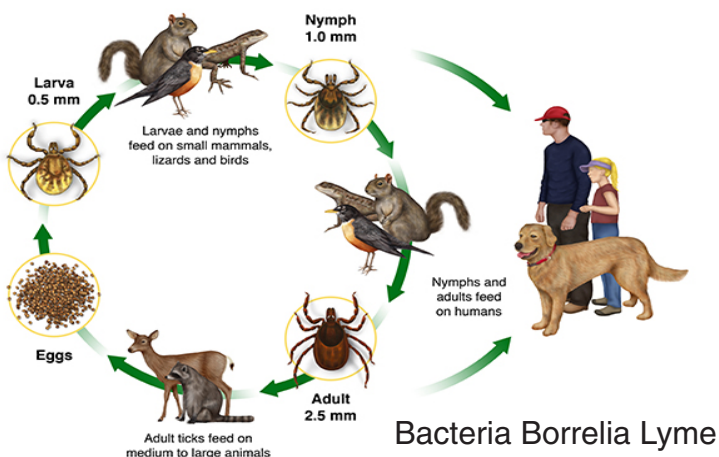
Two major threats to our health are bacteria carried by deer ticks that cause Lyme and other diseases, and the COVID virus. Safety requires taking precautions against both.

To avoid tick-borne diseases, dress defensively with pants tucked into socks and shirt tucked into trousers, wear light-colored clothing to make it easier to see ticks that may have climbed aboard, and do a thorough tick check when you get home. Treating your clothes with permethrin is a good way to repel ticks. The Maine CDC website has excellent information on ticks.

Having BLT preserves be safe in the time of COVID requires that each of us be thoughtful of others that we may meet. The COVID virus spreads through aerosols – from the lungs of someone breathing deeply. People who are not yet showing symptoms and unaware that they are sick can and do spread COVID. Please stay at least 6 feet from everyone not masked or fully vaccinated. If you are moving fast along a trail, please yield to more slow-moving walkers. If you are on a bike, please stop and figure out with the person you are passing how you can maintain physical distancing in a way that is comfortable for both parties.



Lyme Disease: Tick and Host Lifecycle



We still have T-Shirts left to give out to anyone who would like to support Bangor Land Trust and the work that we do

All new members that donate \$35 or more can get a FREE edible landscape project T-Shirt while supplies last.



Donations not only help with our edible landscape project, but they also help conserve land for everyone to enjoy. Your support also helps to:

- Maintain a 10-mile network of trails
- Protect the forests and grasslands that help air quality and combat climate change
- Provides educational & nature-based events, and games
- Brings you our newsletters, and other great information for an entire year

Thank you to everyone who has already donated and received a T-Shirt, we appreciate your support!



The Bangor Land Trust newsletter is available to view in full color on our website www.bangorlandtrust.org (use your phone's QR code reader to take you to the website)



Bangor Land Trust can also be found on facebook, follow us for updates



alkaline (not acidic) soil. We arranged to spread lime on the field the following spring to increase the pH to provide better soil for growing grasses. Unfortunately the spring was very wet. We feared that the lime truck would get stuck, we spread no lime.

Fast forward to 2022: BLT has had the fields mowed with a brush hog from 2016 to the present. This spring in cooperation with the Somerset County Soil and Water District's Ag Allies program BLT arranged to have lime spread on the land in August. To continue to move the project forward we are going to:

Ask the NRCS office in Bangor for help in upgrading the quality of grasses in the field.

Resample the soil for nutrient deficiencies in the spring of 2023.

Look for a different type of mower to do a better job of cutting the grass.

Establish a community group to provide input into the project. (Fund raising, a yearly newsletter, meetings with neighbors, etc.)

Examine the literature for more information on Bobolinks. (A great start is "Birds of Maine" by Peter Vickery.)

This is an exciting project especially in view of global warming and habitat loss. It has been estimated that the bobolink population has dropped over 56% since 1966. We can use your help!

Please contact the BLT office if you are interested.

* "Bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) are a grassland species, one of the longest migrating song birds". The Penjajawoc Grasslands is listed as one of only several places in Maine with suitable habitat. "Birds of Maine", Peter D. Vickery 2020 ISBN 978-0-19319-9.










is the homeland of the Penobscot Nation. We've included Penobscot language in the map, and a land acknowledgement. We hope that visitors to Bangor Land Trust preserves will be inspired by the Native American ethos of sustainability practiced for over 12,000 years within their homeland, encapsulated in the Four R's: Relationship, Respect, Responsibility, and Reciprocity. By cultivating a Relationship with the natural world, you feel more connected to Nature, and develop a sense of give and take known as Reciprocity. With this comes a Responsibility to protect those places from harm and be Respectful of all who call them home.

Bangor Land Trust members will receive copies of the new map in the mail and our corporate sponsors will have copies to distribute at their places of business. We hope you enjoy using it to develop a relationship with the natural areas within our city limits.



*Bog boardwalk being built in Nov. 2021.
photo by Geoff Gratwick.*

How to play: Visit the preserves and look for the ferns that are all in a row, a column, or on one of the two diagonals of 3 boxes. When you find one, enter the preserve in the box below its picture. A white arrow points to a distinguishing feature for some fern fronds. 3 completed boxes in a row, column, or along a diagonal, is a winner; email a copy of the completed Nature Bingo Card to info@bangorlandtrust.org to make arrangement to receive a Bangor Land Trust logo pin and water bottle prize. Use the QR code on the back of this card to download an electronic copy from the Bangor Land Trust website.

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| <p>Sensitive Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="110 848 574 913" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>Narrow Beech Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="574 848 1039 913" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>Interrupted Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="1039 848 1516 913" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> |
| <p>Christmas Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="110 1295 574 1360" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>Northern Lady Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="574 1295 1039 1360" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>Royal Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="1039 1295 1516 1360" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> |
| <p>Bracken Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="110 1743 574 1818" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>New York Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="574 1743 1039 1818" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> | <p>Cinnamon Fern</p>  <div data-bbox="1039 1743 1516 1818" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div> |

*Walden Parke is now even bigger, so more places to explore and play Nature Bingo.
Enjoy your journey!!*

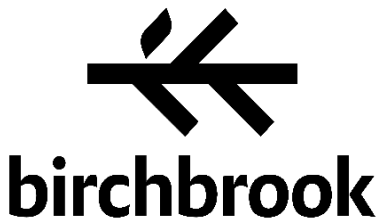


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Thank You to Everyone!

We couldn't do what we do without your generous support!

If you would like to learn how to sponsor Bangor Land Trust please visit our website or call



BANGOR LAND TRUST
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- <https://www.realtimerendering.com/flowers/flowers.html>
- iNaturalist app and website