



## BANGOR LAND TRUST'S PAST AND FUTURE: AN INTERVIEW WITH OUTGOING PRESIDENT, LUCY QUIMBY

Lucy Quimby, co-founder and longtime president, recently stepped down from her position and has assumed the position of vice president. She is, thankfully, still very much involved in BLT's strategic planning and operational management, but we thought this would be a good time to get her thoughts on BLT's past and future.

### **1. What led you to help found Bangor Land Trust?**

Twenty-four years ago, I was alarmed to learn that developers were planning to build a shopping mall right next to Penjajawoc Marsh. A birdwatching friend had taken me to Penjajawoc years ago to show me how many birds there were, and how easy it was to see them. As a novice birdwatcher, I was delighted to add at least one new species to my list every time I walked down the old railroad bed that crosses the Marsh. At the time, Penjajawoc Marsh had more bird life – more species of birds and greater numbers of birds – than any other marsh in Maine that had been studied.

The birds needed people to advocate for them. I saw that it would be a tragic loss to our community if this wonderful wild area were to be eaten away by a shopping mall. The only reasonable and fair way to save the Marsh was to found Bangor Land Trust and raise funds to buy from willing sellers as much of the Marsh as we could.

### **2. In these 23 years, which Bangor Land Trust accomplishments are you most proud of?**

This has been a community project with many participants. We've conserved over 1,000 acres within Bangor City limits, including much of the Marsh and its uplands. All of our preserves allow public access. We've worked closely with the City of Bangor to form the Mall-Marsh Commission, which has advised prospective developers in the Marsh Overlay Zone how to complete their projects in ways that minimize negative impacts to habitat. Thanks to this community effort, you can hear the melodious tunes sung by Hermit Thrushes, enjoy finding the delicate flowers of Trailing Arbutus in the spring, and admire the signs left by bears and porcupines as they make the area their home.

### **3. What do you hope for Bangor Land Trust in the next 23 years?**

We have committed to maintaining our preserves in perpetuity – longer than 23 years! Our 1,000+ acres of Bangor's "wild backyard" are a unique and very special resource for Bangor. I hope that we will continue to find opportunities to conserve land of an exceptionally high conservation value. The warming of our planet is stressing both plants and animals. Conserved areas will allow plants and animals to find places where they can survive and even thrive

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Lucie Estabrook  
*President*



Lucie Estabrook  
*Vice President*



James Hinds  
*Treasurer*



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*Secretary*



Brian Ahern  
Kevin Allcroft  
Andrew Czwakiel  
Brandon Keim  
Steve Norton  
Robert Ostrowski  
*Executive Director*



## A LETTER *from* BANGOR LAND TRUST PRESIDENT

*Dear Members and Friends,*

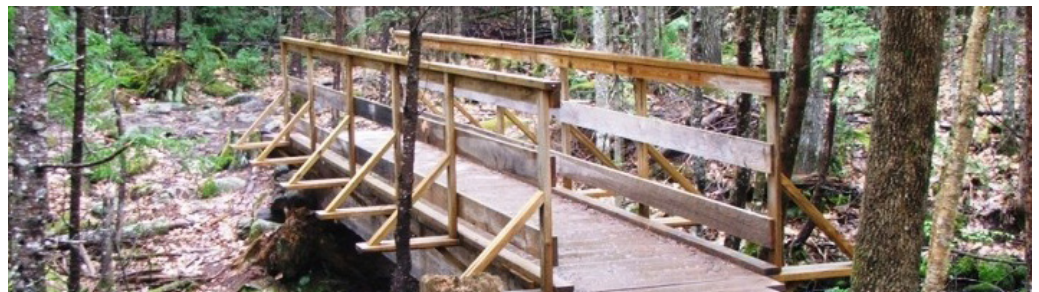
I first want to thank my fellow board members for their confidence in my ability to step into the very large shoes of Lucy Quimby. I would never have considered such a task without Lucy's whole-hearted support and her always generous gift of her time to ensure the success of Bangor Land Trust.

My first interaction with BLT was as a participant in the inaugural Frogs, Logs, and Bogs Road Ride. This morphed into a recurring gig as a volunteer for Pedal the Penobscot and then into a seat on the board. I grew up in rural Aroostook County and have learned the importance of the restorative value of spending time in natural settings. Bangor Land Trust has played a significant role in providing spaces for Bangor citizens and visitors to observe wildlife and birdlife in their natural environs, and to allow us to take a break from the daily grind and spend time unwinding, reflecting and observing the larger world around us.

I look forward to guiding BLT as we expand our educational offerings and our footprint. I hope to honor the great work done by Lucy Quimby over the past decades by continuing her legacy of integrating our world with the natural world around us.

Thank you!

President, Bangor Land Trust  
*Lucie Estabrook*



# NATURE NOTES

## THE BIRDS OF DOWNTOWN BANGOR

By Robert Ostrowski – BLT Executive Director

When we think of high-quality bird habitat, our minds gravitate towards undeveloped land, not densely packed multi-story buildings surrounded by asphalt roadways. This is for good reason, of course, because cities pose many threats to birds. For one, the habitat that once provided birds with their basic needs, namely food, cover, and water, has either been degraded or eliminated. Add to that noise, light, and air pollution, and you now have an environment that makes survival very difficult for most birds.

Nevertheless, birds still move through and even live in urban centers, and Bangor is no exception. In fact, Bangor's downtown may be more fortunate than most in that there's a lot of high-quality habitat in the surrounding area and because it's located where the Kenduskeag Stream meets the Penobscot River. These two bodies of water provide habitat and food for many bird species and act as navigational guides during migration. For the purposes of this discussion, I'm considering downtown to be the area from Cumberland and Harlow Streets south to the waterfront, roughly flanked by Park and Oak Streets to the east and Court and Main Streets to the west.



Robins drinking icy cold water from the Kenduskeag Stream. February 5, 2023. Once rare in the winter, Robins can now commonly be seen downtown taking advantage of planted fruit trees, like crab apples.

Perhaps the best place to look for birds downtown is during fall on the Kenduskeag Stream Trail, from Franklin St upstream to the pedestrian bridge. Some migrating birds inevitably follow the relatively uninterrupted, albeit narrow, green space of the Kenduskeag's banks southeastward until they end up in this last bit of welcoming habitat. If the conditions are right and you get some luck, in this 1000' stretch of trees, you can find an impressive



An Iceland Gull takes off from the Bangor Waterfront. January 10, 2021. Many hundreds of gulls can be found during the winter on the frozen Penobscot River

collection of warblers, vireos, thrushes, and tanagers, among other species.

The Kenduskeag then runs under Franklin St and is directed around Norumbega and Hannibal Hamlin Malls, both veritable forests relative to their immediate surroundings, and regular homes to nesting Song Sparrows in the summer and Northern Mockingbirds in the winter. The stream then works its way through downtown before it briefly widens and joins the Penobscot River around Broad Street Park. Yellow Warblers nest every year in this park's trees and it's where you'll generally begin to notice more songbirds. Double-crested Cormorants have attempted nesting in this area (probably on the small island that supports the railroad bridge across the stream) and Bald Eagles regularly survey the river from trees on the nearby riverbank.



Just downriver, the big open greenspace of the waterfront is a great vantage point to look for waterfowl, and it's a favored resting place for the many gulls that feed in the surrounding communities. When the river is frozen, it's possible to find resting on the ice many hundreds of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls, along with a smattering of less common species like Great and Lesser Black-backed Gull, Iceland Gull, and Glaucous Gull. Migrating waterfowl, like Long-tailed Duck, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Greater and Lesser Scaup, mergansers, and many others will often pause here to rest and refuel. Rare visitors include species we're more accustomed to seeing at Acadia NP, like Red-throated Loon and Common Eider, and a few years ago, even an Arctic breeding goose species, the Brant! All of this activity of course attracts a fair amount of attention from birds of prey: Bald Eagles are almost always in view and this is a great spot to catch a glimpse of the resident pair of Peregrine Falcons.

By my rough count, around 150 bird species have been seen in downtown Bangor in the last decade. Rock Pigeons are well-adjusted to crowds and the tall buildings and bridges in Bangor are suitable approximations for the cliff loving Peregrine Falcons that prey upon them. Similarly, House Sparrows thrive on the food crumbs humans leave behind, and even Chimney Swifts have found a way to make cities work – a fact demonstrated by the spectacular roosting congregations in certain downtown Bangor chimneys. For almost all the



A member of the resident pair of Peregrine Falcons zips by the Bangor Waterfront. March 4, 2015

other 150 species, surviving in an urban environment is something of a struggle. That's not to say that on the whole cities are bad for conservation. In fact, the opposite can be true if one considers the benefits of consolidating development. But it is to say that we should take notice of and cherish the birds that come through downtown and, whenever possible, make improvements to their habitat, however small.



**The Bangor Land Trust newsletter is available to view in full color on our website [www.bangorlandtrust.org](http://www.bangorlandtrust.org) (use your phone's QR code reader to bring you to the website!)**



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

**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 against 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!***

and will enhance the quality of life for people as well.

#### 4. Do you have any advice for future leadership?

Yes – (1) Slow down and take time to be nurtured by the natural world you are protecting. Yours is a labor of love. (2) We have a responsibility to the City of Bangor. Studies have shown that cities with a unique identity do better economically; Bangor Land Trust preserves need to be known as part of Bangor’s unique identity. Bangor is not just a place to shop before moving on, it is a place to stay and enjoy. We have exceptional hotels and restaurants, and areas that feel so wild that you could almost be in the North Woods. We need to get the mix just right – protect habitat for wild animals and provide some accessibility to human visitors. Let Bangor Land Trust preserves be an oasis of natural beauty and calm.

#### 5. Finally, most of us volunteering and working in conservation are propelled by a love of nature. Do you have a favorite trail, plant, animal, or experience that inspires and motivates you?

It’s very hard to pick a favorite. I love to hear Hermit Thrushes sing while walking on a Bangor Land Trust preserve, knowing that we protect their nesting sites. Finding Trailing Arbutus in the spring on land that Bangor Land Trust has preserved is a special treat. Seeing tracks of animals whose homes we are protecting is like greeting a friend for whom you’ve done an important favor.

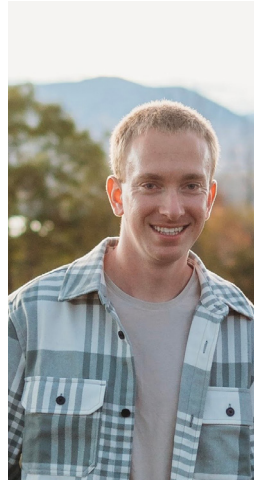
Bangor Land Trust is excited to announce that in January, we hired our first Executive Director.



Previously a biologist at the USGS’s Bird Banding Lab, Robert more recently worked for nearly 15 years in higher education administration. He holds degrees in wildlife ecology and environmental management and is continually amazed and fascinated by the natural world. When not working, he enjoys birding, hiking, gardening, and spending time with his wife and three kids. He previously served on the board of directors

(2015-2020) and is thrilled for the opportunity to advance conservation and environmental education in the Bangor area.

Welcome to our newest board member, Andrew Czwakiel!



Andrew is a graduate of the University of Maine with a B.S. in Ecology and Environmental Science. Andrew currently works in the Blue Hill peninsula region as a Land Steward with Blue Hill Heritage Trust. Having worked with multiple non-profit land conservation organizations since 2020, he brings multiple years of land trust experience with him along with a valuable land stewardship ethic, and trail building and land management experience.

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#### Thank You

Adam Toothaker has stepped off the board due to that ever-diminishing resource: time! We thank him for his leadership and his service to Bangor Land Trust. Adam not only served as secretary but used his extremely valuable stewardship expertise to help keep up and improve our preserves.

Justin Poland just finished his latest three-year term on the board, and we thank him for his steadfast service. We are thrilled that he will continue to serve on the Programs Committee where BLT will continue to benefit from his experience in program development and his skills as a Maine Master Naturalist.

*H*ave 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.

For more information, please email [info@bangorlandtrust.org](mailto:info@bangorlandtrust.org)

*“Nature is not a place to visit, it is home.”*

*Gary Snyder*

## **Upcoming Programs**

For more information and to register for our programs, please visit our website or email [info@bangorlandtrust.org](mailto:info@bangorlandtrust.org).

Thursday, April 25th at 6:30 p.m.  
**Annual Meeting at EMCC's Rangeley Hall**  
Guest Speaker: Steve Norton

Saturday, April 27th at 10:00 a.m.  
**Vernal Pool Visit. Location to be announced on our website.**  
Harrison Goldspiel, University of Maine PhD Candidate

Thursday, May 23rd at 7:00 a.m.  
**Neighborhood Bird Walk at West Penjajawoc Grasslands**  
Co-sponsored with Maine Audubon  
Elizabeth Payne, Bob Milardo, Lucy Quimby

Wildflower walk in June. Details to be announced on our website.

Saturday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.  
**Fern Identification at Northeast Penjajawoc Preserve**  
Justin Poland

## **Annual Meeting Reminder**

Please join us at our annual meeting, Thursday, April 25th at EMCC's Rangeley Hall! This event is for members only and registration is required (email [info@bangorlandtrust.org](mailto:info@bangorlandtrust.org)). If you or your guest need to join Bangor Land Trust or renew your membership, please visit our website and click "donate."

6:30 p.m.: Social time with coffee and light desserts

7:00 p.m.: Short business meeting

7:30 p.m.: Guest speaker, Steve Norton's talk titled, Listening as Land Conservation.



Steve Norton, Photo taken by Jim Winters

"My group, the Island Soundscape Project, is a Maine-based arts research collaborative. Our work sits at the intersection of art, ecology, and society. We are inspired by the idea that through listening we can gain a unique understanding of the world we inhabit, one that can both complement and contrast with the world we see.

Currently, we find ourselves working in partnership with land trust organizations, using our unique outlook to increase their understanding of the environments they are stewarding, and then to help communicate this to their visiting public. In service of these goals, we engage these soundscapes as community, educational, aesthetic and artistic resources to be documented and worked with."



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If you would like to learn how to support Bangor Land Trust, please visit our website.



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