



# THE HARLEQUIN

York County Audubon

[www.yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://www.yorkcountyaudubon.org)

Autumn 2019

## **Great Progress in Maine** *by Bill Grabin*

In last year's Autumn issue, we strongly encouraged our members to Vote!!! for legislators who supported efforts to protect the environment. One year later, we have seen great results. The First Session of Maine's 129<sup>th</sup> Legislature has provided a tremendous boost to environmental protection. Maine now has new laws that will benefit us for years to come, and most of them were approved by strong bipartisan margins. Here are a few highlights:

**A Big Boost for Solar Power** – Lawmakers quickly passed a law to repeal a ruling that had discouraged rooftop solar investment. Then a comprehensive bill was passed directing the state to add 375 megawatts of low-cost solar. It also encourages the development of landfill and brownfield solar projects, and requires that community projects serve low and moderate income customers. It was approved by a 32-2 vote in the Senate and 93-52 in the House.

**A Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags** – Many communities in Maine have already successfully enacted such a ban, but effective April 22, 2020 (Earth Day!), the ban will be in place statewide. Globally, about one million plastic shopping bags are distributed *per minute*. Only 1% are recycled, and the threat to wildlife, especially seabirds, is tremendous. Maine has now joined 7 other states that have enacted such a ban, and our action will help lead other states to join us. Three states (California, Hawaii and New York) had previously enacted bans, while four others (Connecticut, Delaware, Oregon and Vermont) joined Maine in enacting legislation this year.

**A Ban on Foam Food Packaging** – Seattle, New York, San Francisco, Minneapolis and Los Angeles are among many cities that have instituted a ban on

use of disposable foam food packaging containers, but Maine has become the first state in the nation to do so (effective January 1, 2021). Foam packaging has been a persistent environmental problem, as it is essentially not recyclable. It is one of the most commonly littered items, and breaks down into tiny pieces that pollute roadsides and waterways, and can be ingested by wildlife.

**A Climate Council and an Action Plan** – In what had been called the most important climate bill ever enacted in Maine, Governor Mill's climate legislation (LD 1679) created the Maine Climate Council, and charged it with leading Maine's efforts to reduce Maine's greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050. It directs the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to develop rules to achieve these goals, and creates a 39-member Maine Climate Council which will draft an Action Plan by December 1, 2020, and every 4 years thereafter.

**A Big Boost for Maine's Renewable Energy Portfolio** – LD 1494 requires a dramatic increase in the proportion of electricity sold in Maine that comes from renewable sources. Currently set at 40%, it will double to 80% by 2030 and 100% by 2050. The Senate approved this bill unanimously and the House by a 93-48 margin.

**River and Clean Water Protection** – For the first time in many years, Maine upgraded water quality protections for over 400 miles of rivers and streams. This passed unanimously in the Senate, and with a 125-5 margin in the House. Also, for the first time ever, the State established water quality standards to protect sustenance fishing in certain waters for Maine's four Indian tribes.

**Maine Endangered Species Act Strengthened** – This new legislation strengthens the hand of our game wardens, giving them the discretion to issue citations to first-time violators instead of requiring

warnings. It also sets mandatory minimum penalties for violators, putting potential violators on notice that Maine is serious about protecting vulnerable species like the Piping Plover and Least Tern.

**Protection of Lake Water Quality** – A new bill will require inspection of septic systems in all shoreland areas prior to property sales. Previously, inspections were only required for coastal properties. This will significantly benefit all lake users, both people and wildlife like the Common Loon.

**Other positive legislative steps** included a ban on offshore oil drilling, incentives for electric vehicles, increased lead testing of school drinking water, supporting the installation of home heat pumps (especially in low-income households), increasing a handling fee that will enable bottle redemption centers to stay in business, and many others.

Some desired steps have not yet made it through the Legislature. Notably, a bond to provide new funding for the **Land for Maine's Future program** was not approved, and thus will not go to the voters this November. This program has not received any funding in 8 years. Hopefully this will be funded in the coming year.

It's been an exceptional year for environmental legislation in Maine. Our Legislators and our Executive branch deserve great thanks, but, most of all, so do you! It was your voting that elected or re-elected like-minded legislators, and your voices that let them know what's important to you. Don't stop now!!! Thank your legislators for what they've done, and let them know what you'd like them to do. Engage with them. That's what has made – and will continue to make – all the difference.

~~~~~  
***Remember, the best way to protect birds is to keep cats indoors!***



## **Planting Seeds and Singing Songs on Hog Island**

– by Caryn Beiter, who was awarded YCA's June Ficker Scholarship this year to attend the Educator's Week program on Hog Island. She is the School and Docent Programs Coordinator in



the Education Dept at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve.

When I got my first job as a naturalist I had a sticker on my classic Nalgene water bottle that said “plant seeds and sing songs.” Around the words on the sticker were colorful birds, flowers and music notes. Cheesy? Maybe. Was I a hippie? Maybe, to some. To me, embedded in this phrase was a message about the connections between the natural world, learning and joy. The spirit of this idea, which came in many forms, is what I was immersed in during the Educator's Week on Hog Island.

I spend much of my time teaching, or training others to teach, science outside. I strive to be a director of discovery and not just a teller of information. Art would be a great way to accomplish this but I've been afraid of “art” since I was a child. Art, like small songbird identification, has unfortunately never been a strong part of my naturalist repertoire. Sherrie York, an instructor on Hog Island, flipped this idea on its head and opened up a new world.

Hesitantly I signed up for her field sketching class. First she had us draw part of our hand while looking only at it, not the paper or the pencil. This is called blind contour drawing and what a way to level the playing field this was for us all. It wasn't about the outcome, it was about paying attention to the details, to the lines and cracks of experience. Next it was on to gesture drawing, where you look at the entire subject at once and draw quickly. With Sherrie as the subject in a classic “Stayin' Alive” disco pose, we recorded some quick line drawings. Her next instruction was for us to “make sausages.” Miraculously by drawing ovals over the stick figure hands, upper and lower arms, trunk, thighs, calves and feet, a person was born. Then it was time for the landscape around us. We were all asked to find

a sit spot and to draw the view at our feet and then at eye level. It was a chance for us to become mindful of the things we may often be moving too fast to notice. Before turning us loose she shared one last tidbit of magic. The sun was at an angle in the sky as we all walked to the gardens. Sherrie held out a piece of white paper just below the petals of a pink *Echinacea* for us to observe the shadow. It was both exactly the same and completely separate from the real specimen in front of us. We found ourselves embracing the idea of negative space.



Block printing is all about negative space, which is something that feels very foreign to me. The mantra in my head while carving *around* my Chickadee was “don’t cut the black line, don’t cut the black line, don’t cut the black line.” Typically in block printing you draw your lines and then cut everything away except for them. Again, we were being given a new way to see and note the world around us, to appreciate the details and rejoice in the image they came together to produce. Throughout the process there were a lot of murmurings about “not being an artist” and “it’s not going to turn out well” but the masterpieces and smiles that unfolded told a different story.

Art was just one of the many ways that the people and place reignited me as an educator and a human being. Steve Kress’s story of bringing puffins back

to Eastern Egg Rock reminded me to be adaptable and passionately tenacious. It took eight years to get the first puffins back! The education team reminded me to actively foster a diverse, inclusive and equitable space for learning. When introducing ourselves we included our pronouns and during our first evening program, we took time to acknowledge



out loud that we were, and are, on Native land. While carefully holding aquatic insects in a drop of water on a carefully held spoon at the edge of the pond, instructor Ted Gilman reminded me that often it is a simple choice of words that can inspire stewardship in young explorers. He told us that while we were there our job was to be good “zookeepers” and “gentle giants.”

Through collective expertise, mindful experiences and new perspectives, Hog Island planted a wealth of seeds that I will foster and incorporate into the Wells Reserve community and programs. Join me on December 7, 2019 to make your very own block print!

Hog Island planted a wealth of seeds. We also sang many songs! *“Eider and Osprey take to the wind, rolling blue ocean good to see you again; mountains and island so strong and so low, tell me the stories your spruce and fir hold.”* Thank you York County Audubon for this opportunity and tremendous experience.

## Birding by App Part III (Where to go birding?) by Seth M. Davis

One thing that the mobile technology age has done is expanded our capabilities to utilize and improve our hobby. In part one of this series, I discussed a few (of the many) mobile apps to replace paper field guides and to help ID birds on the go. In part two, I discussed two apps that can help ID bird songs. Both of those concepts are wonderful, however there is a gap here: none of the aforementioned apps are helpful if we do not know where to go birding! I am referring to “birding” in the literal active sense, rather than the more passive “bird watching” which many if not all of us can do from our backyard. So what do you do if you want to find a new place to go birding? Well in the classic Apple® marketing lingo, “there’s an app for that”!

**BirdsEye Hotspots** – I have found this app to be incredibly handy when I travel. It is a very simple application that quite literally just shows birding hotspots based on your location. You simply open the app, allow it to use your phone’s GPS location, and in seconds you have a list of birding locations based on eBird submissions. If you are in a new area, it will show you what is nearby, provide a map, give you driving directions, as well as give you links to the eBird hotspot page so you can see a list of all of the birds reported there. Likewise, if you are in the area where you live and you are getting bored with going to the same place, open up the app and see what is near you that you have never explored. I found two birding hotspots within 500 yards of where I work that I never knew existed. *Hotspots* also integrates with another app called *BirdsEye* by Birds in the Hand LLC. I’m not so sure how I feel about *BirdsEye* because in order to unlock the full potential of it, you have to pay a monthly subscription... though one of the “free” aspects that I like is that it gives you more relevant data. For instance, say you find a new hotspot using *Hotspots*, you can then open that particular location up in



**Apps for Birders**  
**birdseyebirding.com**

*BirdsEye* and it will show you what has been found at that location recently (rather than just a list of ALL the birds ever reported there). There’s some potential for the two to be integrated, but really *Hotspots* alone is well worth the price tag, which is FREE!

**eBird by Cornell Lab of Ornithology** – Ok I know what you are thinking, that this is kind of a cop-out of an app recommendation. The fact is, however, eBird is not just an app for submitting sightings, it is an entire birding technology ecosystem. In fact, the previous app reviewed gets all of the hotspot data from eBird, it just compiles it in a more user-friendly manner. If you want to scout out new birding locations, eBird can do that. One of the easiest ways to accomplish this is to subscribe to the eBird Rare Bird Alerts. You can set the parameters to what you want (e.g., hourly notifications, daily, weekly, etc.) as well as your preferred location (e.g., all of Maine or a particular county). You will then receive an email with any rare bird recorded in that area with a link to the checklist. What is important here is that the checklist also has the location. You can see where the bird was seen and tap on the GPS coordinates and then have whatever GPS navigation app you prefer send you to that location. Some of those locations may be private land however, so use caution and abide by birding ethics when seeking out a new location.

Additionally, eBird has been integrated into Subaru vehicles (the official car of birders everywhere...seriously next time you are at a bird walk, count how many Subarus you see!) since 2017 as part of their Starlink® infotainment systems. You simply connect your phone, click on the eBird icon and a list of birds will pop up. You can then click on the bird you want to see, it will tell you when it was last seen and more importantly give you driving directions to where the bird was found! Note: you can’t use the app while driving, you need to be parked because it’s “not safe to bird while driving” according to the police officer who made the report of my car accident a year or so ago... So even though the “app” for eBird only allows you to make submissions, there is a lot more information regarding places to go birding if you use all of eBird’s tools.

## YCA welcomes its New and Returning Members!

*April - July*

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Paul Bukowiec                  | York              |
| Cathy Conley                   | Alfred            |
| Laurie Lambert                 | Newfield          |
| Bina Salvador                  | South Windsor, CT |
| Brent and Ann Soucie           | Wells             |
| Daniel T. Bonville             | Porter            |
| Michael P. Cantara             | Biddeford         |
| Sara J. Denning-Bolle Do       | Biddeford         |
| Deborah R. Etheridge           | York Harbor       |
| John McGuckin                  | Springvale        |
| Yvonne M. Ney                  | Wells             |
| Michael C. Spath               | Saco              |
| Gordon B. Stewart              | Biddeford         |
| Laura Stolp                    | Arundel           |
| Beverly G. Spares              | Limington         |
| Constance G. Weeks             | Scarborough       |
| Ferdinand L. Wyckof            | Kennebunkport     |
| Joan Joseph                    | Wells             |
| Elizabeth Lochhead             | Kittery           |
| Nancy McKinney                 | Springvale        |
| Sharon Miesel                  | Wells             |
| Christopher and Mairin Moulton | Kennebunkport     |
| Patricia Rynkiewicz            | North Berwick     |
| Susan Tourigny                 | Biddeford         |
| Philip Vince                   | Old Orchard Beach |
| Carol Weeks                    | Kennebunk         |
| Lisa Westberg                  | Scarborough       |
| Kathryn Anderson               | Kennebunk         |
| Pamela Audet                   | York              |
| Lori and Bob Bartlett          | Buxton            |
| Ellen Beaudoin                 | Old Orchard Beach |
| Roberta Buccigross             | Saco              |
| Garnet and Wendie Colpitts     | Biddeford         |
| Sheila and Michael Conway      | Acton             |
| Marjorie and Patrick Flood     | Saco              |
| Dorothy Green                  | Kennebunkport     |
| Susan Huggins                  | Limerick          |
| Shirley Holt                   | Old Orchard Beach |
| Jeffrey C. Leathe              | Eliot             |
| Roger Lycette                  | Bangor            |
| Paul Meadows                   | Saco              |
| Cindy K. Angerhofer            | Circle Pines, MN  |
| Tom Bridge                     | Kennebunk         |
| Scott Evans                    | Biddeford         |
| Susan Strommer                 | Old Orchard Beach |

## Our 21st Annual Bird Seed Sale is coming! *Early Bird Pricing through 10/25*



*A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak appreciating some quality seed in Kennebunk.*

Keep your feathered friends happy this winter by treating them to tasty and fresh premium-quality bird food and help

support two of your favorite environmental organizations. Proceeds from our annual sale support programs of both York County Audubon and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. A wide variety of types of seed and suet is available, with great pricing, especially if you order early. Early bird pricing is available if you place your order by 4 p.m. on October 25<sup>th</sup>. Order pick-up will be at the Wells Reserve November 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup>, with easy access and volunteers on hand to help load your car. ***Please refer to the enclosed blue order form for more information.***

### YCAS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

|                                          |              |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Bill Grabin, President                   | 985-3342     |
| Joyce Toth, Vice President               | 216-4756     |
| Kathy Donahue, Treasurer                 | 967-4102     |
| Monica Grabin, Secretary                 | 985-3342     |
| David Doubleday, Programs                | 967-4486     |
| Doug Hitchcox, Field Trips               | 671-0185     |
| Eileen Willard, Director                 | 967-5118     |
| Ken Janes, Email, Membership             | 967-2955     |
| Marian Zimmerman, Birding Trail          | 710-3015     |
| Marion Sprague, Maine Young Birders Club |              |
| Coordinator                              | 749-2520     |
| Mary Bateman, Publicity                  | 646-8589     |
| Seth Davis, Maine Young Birders Club     |              |
| Coordinator                              | 509-339-3154 |

For all upcoming events and general information, please visit our website:

**[www.yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://www.yorkcountyaudubon.org)**

And for the latest news, photos and updates, please visit us on Facebook at:

**[www.facebook.com/yorkcountyaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/yorkcountyaudubon)**

## Consider Participating in FeederWatch this Winter

Project FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.



Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. You can count birds as often as every week, or as infrequently as you like: the schedule is completely flexible. All you need is a bird feeder, bird bath, or plantings that attract birds.

New participants are sent a Research Kit with complete instructions for participating, as well as a bird identification poster and more. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. Then each fall, participants receive a 16-page, year-end report, [Winter Bird Highlights](#). Participants also receive access to the digital version of *Living Bird*, the Cornell Lab's award-winning, quarterly magazine. There is a \$18 annual participation fee for U.S. residents (\$15 for Cornell Lab members).

All kinds of interesting information is available at the website: [feederwatch.org](http://feederwatch.org). You can review the results of past years, either nationally or by region or state. You can see where the feeder watchers are located. There were only about 135 participants spread across the state of Maine last year, so your observations can definitely be a valuable contribution.

## The Christmas Bird Counts are Coming!

Beginning on Christmas Day in 1900, the Audubon Society has been sponsoring Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's) to help monitor the health and status of bird populations throughout North America. In that first year, there were 25 count circles with a total of 27 birders. Now, there are over 2,300 count circles each year with over 70,000 birders participating in locations stretching from Alaska to South America.

Each year, York County Audubon sponsors two counts. The Southern York County circle extends from Kittery to Ogunquit, while the Biddeford - Kennebunkport count circle reaches from Kennebunk to Saco. Each circle is carved into six or more territories. Each territory has a team that scours it during "count day" looking for all bird species, and recording the numbers seen of each. It can, at times, be a bit more art than science, as we attempt to count - but not double count - the birds we find. We also have supporters who monitor their home feeders during the day and contribute their totals. To avoid double counting, we ask them only to report the greatest number of each species that they see at any one time during the day.

At the end of the day, we meet to compile the counts and share highlights. Once compiled, the counts are forwarded to National Audubon for the master compilation. The local and national totals are reviewed to assess trends in the populations of all species. While the totals can vary dramatically year to year due to the weather that happens to grace us on count day, the bigger picture over time can be very informative.

This year, the Southern York County CBC will be held on Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, while the Biddeford/Kennebunkport CBC will be on Saturday, December 28<sup>th</sup>. If you might like to find out about participating, please contact Monica Grabin at 985-3342 or [grabin@roadrunner.com](mailto:grabin@roadrunner.com) for the Southern York County CBC, or Kathy Donahue at 967-4102 or [kadona11@roadrunner.com](mailto:kadona11@roadrunner.com) for the Biddeford/Kennebunkport CBC.

**\*\*\* Upcoming YCA Programs at the Wells Reserve at Laudholm Farm \*\*\***

***Oaxaca Mexico: Rare Birds and Ancient Cultures* – with Doug Hitchcox and Ken Janes**  
**Tuesday, Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>** at 7 pm in the Mather Auditorium. Please come early for refreshments and social time.



In March 2019, Maine Audubon, in association with Field Guides Birding Tours, made a trip to south-western Mexico in search of rare species that are unique to the Sierra Madre mountains area. Based in the beautiful colonial city of Oaxaca, known for great birds, traditional food, and amazing human history, the group explored many habitats including the semi-arid deserts near Teotitlán and the pine forests of La Cumbre at altitudes up to almost 10000 feet.

Doug and Ken will report on the successful search for rare endemic species like Dwarf Jay, Gray-barred Wren, Mountain Trogon and Chestnut-sided Shrike-Vireo in the mountains as well as the

Oaxaca Sparrow, Boucard's Wren, Gray-breasted Woodpecker, and Dusky Hummingbird in the desert areas. Many other species were added to the list including flocks of Gray Silky-flycatcher, rare Ocellated Thrasher, and the beautiful Red Warbler. The presentation will include a description of the city of Oaxaca and the surrounding area, home of the ancient pre-Columbian Zapotec culture.

Doug Hitchcox is the Staff Naturalist at Maine Audubon and was one of the guides. Ken Janes is a Kennebunk resident and enthusiastic birder. Both are members of York County Audubon and serve on the Board of Directors.

***The State of Maine's Loons* with Nick Lund ~ Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>** at 7 pm in the Mather Auditorium. Please come early for refreshments and social time.

Nick is Maine Audubon's Network and Outreach Manager. A Maine native and well known birder, he writes for publications like Audubon, Slate, Down East, and National Geographic. On the web many follow his entertaining posts about birds and birding at "The Birdist."

The Common Loon is an iconic denizen and for many epitomizes a Maine summer. But how well do you actually know the Common Loon? Do they migrate? What do they eat? How long do they live? How many Common Loons are there? Why are loons important?

This program will start with an in-depth look at the physiology and habits of the Common Loon, including how its body is built to be an effective underwater hunter, and the timing of its arrival on Maine breeding lakes. We will also take a look at the threats faced by loons.



Maine Audubon has worked for more than 35 years to count loons in the state, and to examine the causes of loon mortality. This information has helped inform policies necessary to protect loons and ensure that their calls echo across Maine lakes for years to come.

York County Audubon  
P.O. Box 201  
Kennebunkport, ME 04046-0201

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
KENNEBUNK, ME  
04043  
PERMIT #69

OR CURRENT RESIDENT



Frequent Flyers are a group of dedicated supporters who make monthly gifts to sustain Maine Audubon and York County Audubon. For more information, visit: [maineaudubon.org/support/frequent-flyer/](http://maineaudubon.org/support/frequent-flyer/)

MAINE   
AUDUBON

# MEMBERSHIP FORM

York County Chapter

**YES!** I want to protect and conserve wildlife and habitat in Maine as a  **new**  **renewing** member.

Annually  \$30 Senior/Volunteer/Student |  \$40 Individual |  \$50 Household |  \$100 |  \$Other \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly  Enroll me in the Frequent Flyer Program and charge my credit card *each month*:  
\_\_\_ \$5 \_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_ \$25 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

View all member benefits online by visiting [maineaudubon.org/memberFAQ](http://maineaudubon.org/memberFAQ)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Seasonal Address: \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Please charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my credit card (below)

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Join or renew online:  
[maineaudubon.org/join](http://maineaudubon.org/join)

Our community of members is integral to our success on behalf of Maine's diverse wildlife and habitat. When you join or renew your Maine Audubon membership, you ensure that work can continue.

Thank you!

Please make checks payable to Maine Audubon | 20 [Gilsland Farm Rd](http://GilslandFarmRd.com), Falmouth, ME 04105 | 207-781-2330 ext. 230