

Conserving the Special Character of the Peninsula Landscape

BLUE HILL HERITAGE TRUST

BLUE HILL / BROOKLIN / BROOKSVILLE / PENOBSCOT / SEDGWICK / SURRY

SUMMER 2009



Blue Hill Heritage Trust
P. O. Box 222
Blue Hill ME 04614

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New Land, New Partnership

273 acres on Wallamatogus Mountain are conserved via joint project

A 273 acre parcel of undeveloped land on Wallamatogus Mountain in Penobscot has been added to the list of conserved lands on the Blue Hill Peninsula, thanks to a generous conservation-minded landowner and a partnership between the Blue Hill Heritage Trust and the Conservation Trust of Brooksville, Castine and Penobscot (TCT).

Wallamatogus is a prominent landscape feature on the western side of the Blue Hill Peninsula, visible from numerous public roads as well as from the waters of the Penobscot and Bagaduce Rivers. The newly conserved land includes diverse topography and wildlife habitat, including forest land near the summit of Wallamatogus and lowland that is part of a large heath. It is located near the center of a large region of undeveloped land identified through our conservation planning work as worthy of additional conservation efforts.

Our partner in this project, TCT, a neighboring land trust, invited our participation after initial conversations with the landowner, who offered to sell the property for conservation purposes at substantially below its market value. Because we agreed that the property had strong conservation value, we joined TCT in this collaborative venture, agreeing to share both the purchase costs and the stewardship obligations. The owner granted TCT an exclusive option to purchase the land, which gave us time to work out the details of the partnership, and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust arranged a low interest loan which provided the interim funding that allowed us to complete the transaction in late April. Fundraising by both trusts is underway to repay that loan.

“When I first walked this property last winter I was struck by the sense of remoteness and by the grand views from the higher elevations on the property,”

An aerial view of new conservation land near the summit of Wallamatogus Mountain with the Bagaduce River in the background.

says John Merrifield, President of the Trust’s Board of Directors. “This is a great collaborative project with TCT that may lead to more joint projects in the future.”

This summer we will be conducting a natural resource inventory on the property and, using the information provided, *Continued on page 4*

Walks & Talks A combination of fun and outdoor learning

Please join us – All events are free and open to the public. For more information visit our website at www.bhhtmaine.org or call 374-5118 to pre-register.

Pitch Pine Woodlands Plant Community

Led by Sally Rooney
Saturday, 18 July,
9 to 11 a.m.

Full Moon Hike Up Blue Hill Mountain

Led by Jim Dow
Wednesday, 5 August,
7:30 p.m.

Medicinal Plants of the Kingdom Woods

Led by Anna Fernandez
Saturday, 8 August,
10 to Noon

The Shoreland Geology of Carter Nature Preserve

Led by Kirk Lurvey
Saturday, 15 August,
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Fall Mushrooms of the Blue Hill Peninsula

Led by David Porter
Saturday, 19 September,
10 to Noon



Local food!
Protected
farmland
helps feed us.



PHOTO BY SKIP LANG



PHOTO COURTESY KING HILL FARM

Paul Birdsall has been a leader in farmland conservation in Maine. Here (on left) he works with his horses at Horsepower Farm in Penobscot

The Route 15 Farmland Corridor, a stretch of prime farmland soils from Orland to Blue Hill, is one of our conservation focus areas. It includes more than a dozen working farms and its vegetable, livestock, hay and market farms account for more than ten percent of Hancock County's non-blueberry agricultural production. The Blue Hill Peninsula has the highest number of organic farms in Hancock County, many

of which are located here. This farmland is a source of local food available directly from the farm, at farmers' markets or through community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and is an important part of our local economy. The Trust has to date protected thirteen farmland properties in this focus area, totaling nearly 1600 acres, a high percentage of which are the prime agricultural soils that are one of our community's impor-

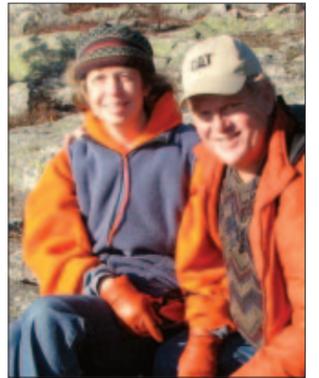
tant natural assets. Because the unprotected fields and prime farmland in this area are steadily being converted to residential uses, we continue to work with farmland owners to conserve more of this precious resource.

Visit our website for a guide to local farms with agricultural land protected by farmland easements. Please support these farms that provide a local source of high quality foods for our community.

Debbie Collins: A Triumphant Hike

Our conservation land on Blue Hill Mountain provides many things to different people: recreation, wildlife sightings, solace, views, inspiration. For Debbie Collins, one of our members, it provided a special challenge and a wonderful triumph:

"I climbed Blue Hill Mountain! A friend compared it to Mt. Everest and for my feelings of accomplishment, it might as well have been Mt. Everest. With my secondary-progressive multiple sclerosis (MS), I need to try to meet my goals while I am still able. With the help of Rick Alexander, Sheila Corbett of the Blue Hill Heritage Trust, and Sheila's husband Bill, I started on this climb with a goal of going as far as I could... and I made it to the top! It was a perfectly clear day and I was on top of the world. Seeing my 'world' from the eagle's vantage made things take on a new meaning. The elation of making it to the top took away all of the aches!"



Debbie Collins and Rick Alexander



Visit Our New Website! www.bhhtme.org

Finding information about our trails, public events and new projects is now easier than ever. With financial support from the L.L. Bean Maine Land Trust Grant Program, Blue Hill Heritage Trust's new updated website went live in April, offering a downloadable trail map, events calendar, information on land conservation and many other resources. Whether you want to enjoy a hike, purchase produce from local farmers on our Farmland Forever conservation easements, learn how to get involved or simply explore, we invite you to visit our website.



Help conserve
the places that both
wildlife & people need.



Letterboxing Getting youngsters out on the land

The Blue Hill Consolidated School, in partnership with the Blue Hill Heritage Trust and the Healthy Peninsula Project, has begun a new initiative called "Letterboxing" that will help acquaint students with some of the wonderful natural features in our area as well as promote healthy outdoor physical activity. Letterboxing is a mix of activities: hiking, art, navigation

and exploring interesting, scenic and sometimes remote places. It involves the placement of a wooden letterbox (with a special trail stamp, logbook and stamp pad) somewhere along a trail. Hikers find the letterbox, apply their own stamp and entry to the logbook, then stamp and date their own personal journal with the trail's stamp.

In early May, BHCS students from

the 3rd through the 8th grade, joined by Trust staff and Board members, placed letterboxes along four of our trails: the Osgood Trail on Blue Hill Mountain, the Kingdom Woods trail, the South Street/Parker Point trail, and the Peters Brook trail. Students are encouraged to return with their families to walk these trails and find the letterboxes. We hope they will!

YES! I want to help conserve the special character of the Blue Hill Peninsula landscape.

- Conservator\$1000 and up
- Benefactor\$500 – \$999
- Steward\$250 – \$499
- Sustaining\$100 – \$249
- Supporting\$50 – \$99
- Contributing\$35 – \$49

- Please find enclosed my/our tax-deductible gift of \$ _____
- I have named the trust in my will.
- Please contact me about bequests and other planned giving opportunities.
- I/We prefer to remain anonymous.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: _____
e-mail: _____

Please make your check or money order payable to:

BLUE HILL HERITAGE TRUST
P. O. Box 222
Blue Hill, ME 04614

Capital Campaign continues

In early 2008 we began an ambitious capital campaign to fund new land projects and to help build our operating and stewardship endowments. Called "Uncommon Places, Shared Spaces", the campaign received enthusiastic support from the donors whom we approached early in the year. Last fall, however, the dramatic international economic events slowed our progress. It also caused us to re-think our timing and strategy.

We decided to continue the campaign. We have made obligations that we need to fulfill, and the underlying enthusiasm among our members and friends for our work clearly persists. Yet it made sense to scale down our ambitions in the near-term to reflect the changed economic environment. We have thus refocused the campaign on a few specific projects to which we have already made financial commitments.

Before the end of 2009, we are working to complete, or at least significantly advance, our fundraising for the following projects (the amount needed to complete each is in parentheses):

PATTEN STREAM PRESERVE: a new 41-acre preserve in Surry (\$30,000)

BLUE HILL MOUNTAIN: a 109-acre addition (\$50,000)



WALLAMATOGUS MOUNTAIN: a 273-acre joint project in Penobscot (\$45,000, our share)

STEWARDSHIP FUND: required additions for new lands (\$78,000)

JED'S ISLAND: a joint island project in Blue Hill Bay (\$372,369, our share)

If you can help, or would like to learn more, please let us know.

With appreciation, as always, for your support,
John Merrifield

Welcome Charlotte!

We are very excited to welcome Charlotte Clews Lawther to our staff. She brings an unusual combination of skills and experience, and has deep connections to the Blue Hill Peninsula. As our Stewardship Coordinator, Charlotte will be primarily responsible for the management of all our conservation properties. (She replaces Erika Rowland, who left us last year for a university research position.)

"The wilderness and wildlife that I have encountered as a naturalist have inspired me to work in land conservation, says Charlotte. "I received a B.S. in Ecology from Cornell University in 1998 and an M.S. in Botany from the Field Naturalist Program at the University of Vermont in 2002. Since then I have worked as a field ecologist and naturalist for U.S. Fish and Wildlife and Acadia National Park. I recently re-



turned home to Blue Hill with my husband Jerome and our two young daughters Lucy and Georgia. I am delighted to help protect the wildlands, viewscapes and farmlands that nurtured my own sense of place and love of nature while I was growing up here."

A Simple Act, A Lasting Legacy

It is simple to leave a lasting legacy. Name the Blue Hill Heritage Trust as a beneficiary in your will with these words: "I hereby give to the Blue Hill Heritage Trust, a Maine nonprofit organization, a bequest in the amount of \$_____ (or ___% of my estate) to be used for its charitable purposes."



Monitoring with LightHawk

Once again we are indebted to LightHawk, a nonprofit volunteer-based environmental aviation organization that provides an aerial perspective to partner organizations, and to pilot Pat Andrews, for giving us a bird's-eye view of our conservation properties. Yearly as part of our conservation easement monitoring program, we view the properties from the air. For the last several years LightHawk has provided us with pilots such as Pat, who volunteer their time and plane. It is a huge help. Thanks LightHawk!

Who maintains all those trails? Volunteers!

The Blue Hill Heritage Trust now manages over 13 miles of walking trails that are all open for public use. Who cares for these trails? Volunteers like Ken Burgess, the manager of the EBS store in Blue Hill, who serves as our volunteer trail steward for the three-mile Kingdom Woods Trail. Ken regularly walks the trail, doing whatever needs to be done to keep it well-maintained. If a tree comes down across the trail, Ken cuts it up. If a trail marker needs replacing, Ken replaces it. We need more Kens! The rewards are simple but powerful – getting to know a



place well while helping others enjoy it. If you would like to join our team of trail stewards, contact Charlotte at charlotte@bhhtmaine.org or at 374-5118.

Local businesses invest in the future

Thanks to the following local businesses who supported our work in 2008. Please support them with your patronage.

Bar Harbor Bank & Trust
Barncastle Inn and Restaurant
Birdwatcher's Store and Cafe LLC
Blue Hill Books
Blue Hill Food Co-op
Blue Hill Garage
Blue Hill Hydraulics
Downeast Chapter of Maine Audubon Society
Elliott Elliott Norelius Architecture
EBS, Blue Hill
Gallery 66
Hypno-Health
Maine Coast Veterinary Hospital
Mainscape, Inc.
Mary Greene Design

Mendlowitz Photography
Michael Hewes & Co.
Pananche Interior Design
Pathmaker Trail Services
Patricia Bacon Consulting, Inc.
Piot Associates, LLC, Portfolio Management
Quill's End Farm
Rooster Brother
Seal Cove Boat Yard
Stewards LLC
The Bourne Studio Gallery
The First
Union Trust Company
Wanamaker Raphael Architecture

Blue Hill Heritage Trust

Mission Statement

The mission of the Blue Hill Heritage Trust is to conserve land and water of special ecological, natural, agricultural, scenic, cultural and recreational significance in Blue Hill, Brooklin, Brooksville, Penobscot, Sedgwick and Surry, and to work to increase public understanding of the importance of land and water conservation.

Board of Directors

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Co-Vice-President
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Kim Ridley, Brooklin
Peter Sly, Brooklin

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Sheila Corbett,
Membership/Administrative Coordinator
Charlotte Clews Lawther,
Stewardship Coordinator

Wallamatogus

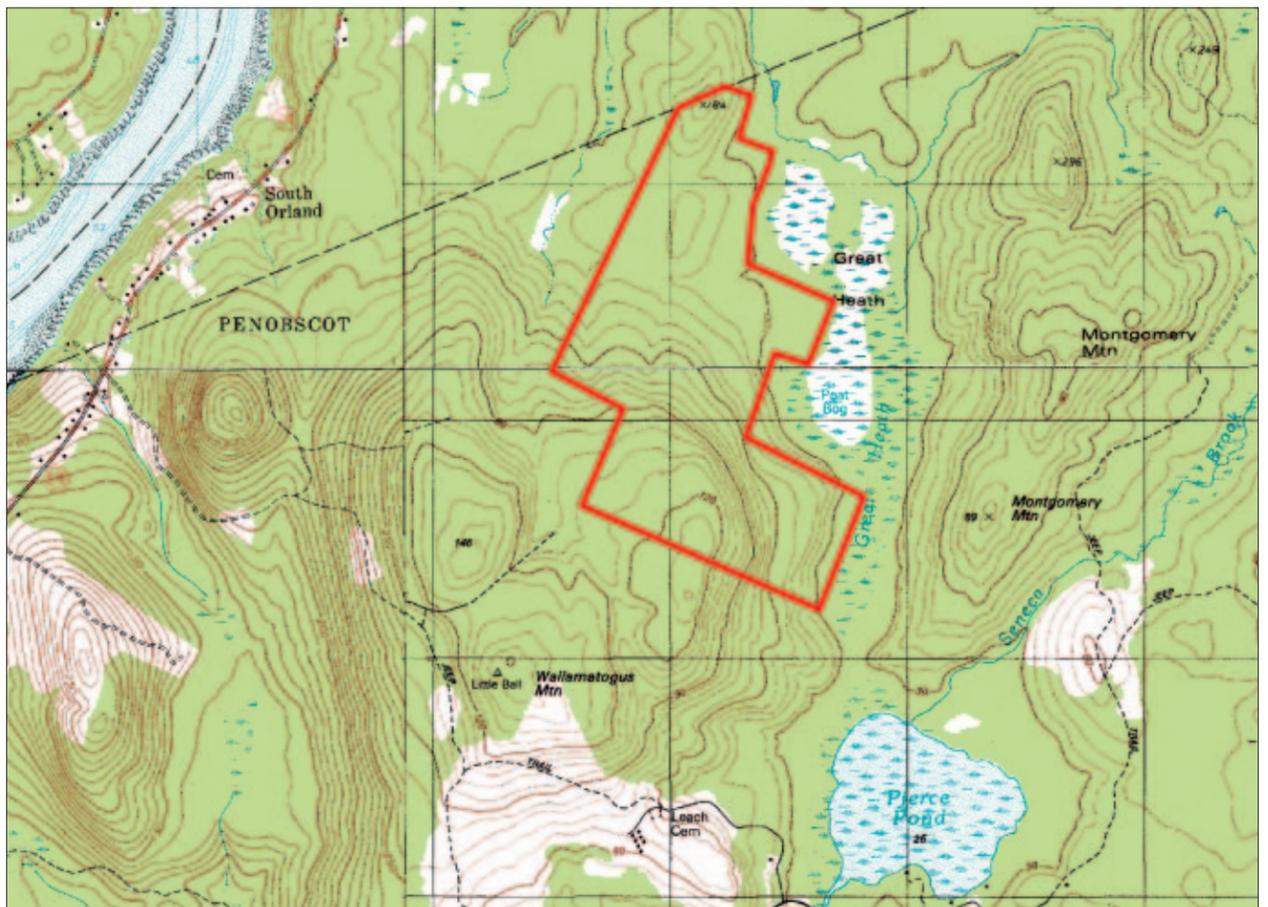
Diverse topography, wildlife habitat, forest and lowland heath

Continued from page 1

ed by that inventory, developing a management plan for the land that protects the land's natural values while allowing appropriate recreational uses. Funding for this important initial work has been generously provided by the Maine Community Foundation's Fund for Land Conservation.

THE BOBOLINK

Visiting our masthead is a distinctive grass land bird species whose numbers are declining in Maine because of habitat loss. This bird, photographed by Bill McHenry, is one of the lucky ones—it has found a home on the Great Meadow in Sedgwick, on land protected by one of our conservation easements.



The Blue Hill Way

Ireland sparks an idea

Tim Garrity, one of our Board members, loves walking through the Blue Hill Peninsula. After visiting Ireland last year with his wife Lynn and completing a long distance hike along the Dingle Way, he had a grand idea. Why not create the Blue Hill Way, a 70 to 100 mile recreational path that would encircle the Blue Hill Peninsula? Hikers could enjoy the wonder of this place on daylong or multi-day trips. It would be good for the health of our residents as well as our local economy, and would promote awareness of the cultural and natural resources found on our Peninsula.

Realizing that giving life to this big idea must begin with small steps, Tim is devoting time this summer to refining his idea as well as investigating its feasibility. As part of his graduate history program at the University of Maine, this work will give special focus to historic roads and key historic sites that might be included along such a path.

If you would like to assist Tim in exploring this idea, email him at tf Garrity@yahoo.com. We look forward to reporting on the results of Tim's summer project.

Native plant enthusiasts explore Patten Stream

As part of our 2009 Walks & Talks program, a group of gardeners and nature-lovers from across the Peninsula gathered in May at our new Patten Stream Preserve in Surry in search of "spring ephemerals"—woodland plants that bloom for only a brief time in the spring. In addition to encountering several exquisite ephemerals—such as Painted Trillium, Blue-bead Lily, and Indian Cucumber Root—the group explored the stunning hemlock-lined riverbank that is a central unique feature of this property.

Local native plant specialist Heather McCargo discussed how to identify and propagate a number of suitable native plant species for gardens and wooded landscapes, including Bunchberry, Blue-eyed Grass (pictured above), Bluets, Canada Mayflower, Wild Iris and Violets. Formerly the nursery propagator for the New England Wild Flower Society's Garden in the Woods in MA, Heather assured that "Once you get the propagating bug... you'll be ecstatic just to see the emergence of your first Bunchberry cotyledon!"

Heather's most important advice to garden-

ers is "to get out in nature and explore what is there" instead of planning a landscape based on what is available in nurseries and catalogs. Appreciating and encouraging indigenous plants in their native environment typically has the added benefits of less maintenance and cost.

While many native wildflowers can be propagated by seed and used in landscape design, there are a few exceptional plants—such as Trillium and especially Lady Slippers—that are not good candidates for home gardens. The opportunity to experience and preserve these delicate plants in the wild is just one of the reasons that Pam Johnson, native plant landscape designer and BHHT board member, is particularly enthusiastic about the Patten Stream property. "This property has so much to offer for both the serious botanist and the recreational nature-lover," says Pam, citing the wide array of plants and broader ecological relationships on display throughout the year. "Making places like this available to the public gives us all a tremendous opportunity to learn from nature."

— by Jennifer Traub



Undaunted by rain and mosquitoes, a large group of wildflower lovers explored our new Patten Stream Preserve with Heather McCargo (on right), a native plant specialist.