The lands that our Trust has conserved over the last 31 years offer a variety of places where we can all connect with the natural world. This year we are creating several new walking trails that will offer residents and visitors the opportunity to explore more of these shared community spaces. Take a walk and see first-hand what you, our members, make possible!

**BLUE HILL, BROOKLIN, BROOKSVILLE, CASTINE, PENOBSCOT, SEDGWICK, SURRY**

### A view of the Bagaduce

Each year in May we take to the air to monitor all of our conservation lands. During this year’s flight we took this aerial photo of the Bagaduce River, which stretches from Sedgwick to Castine, one of the many special natural features of our Peninsula landscape. Even if you cannot take to the air, you will be able to get a long view of the Bagaduce from our new Bluff Head trail described below (located on the head land shown in the lower right-hand corner of the photo).

### New Trails!

#### BLUFF HEAD, SEDGWICK

A mile-long trail at one of our newer properties in Sedgwick provides a wonderful walk through a forested landscape, past a variety of woodland plants and glacial erratic boulders, to a high point of land (the bluff) that overlooks the Bagaduce River. We acquired this property in 2013 as part of the Bagaduce Watershed Partnership Project with funds from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Program. It is a great place to appreciate the beauty and expanse of the Bagaduce River as well as to have a relatively flat walk through a peaceful landscape. A parking area on the Rope Ferry Road provides easy access to the trail.

#### CARTER NATURE PRESERVE, SURRY

A new trail connects our trail head parking area on the Cross Road in Surry to our Carter Nature Preserve, a shorefront property at the head of Morgan Bay that we acquired in 1995 in partnership with the Friends of Morgan Bay. The new trail creates a second way to access the preserve and the opportunity to walk a loop rather than only an “out and back” hike as formerly the case. The creation of this trail segment was a multi-year effort that involved the cooperation of various landowners, whom we applaud for their help.

#### HATCH COVE, CASTINE

We are enhancing the opportunity for people to enjoy our Hatch Cove Preserve, which we acquired as part of our 2014 merger with a neighboring land trust and which provides a scenic “gateway” to Castine. A walking trail will soon pass through the fields that make up most of the property as well as through a lovely wooded section. It is a great place for birders, for wildflower enthusiasts and for those who simply enjoy a quiet walk.

#### PETERS BROOK, BLUE HILL

Our popular Peters Brook trail will soon be extended to the western side of the brook, allowing trail users to have a longer walk and a new perspective on the stream and the nearby landscape. The new trail will wind through a 62-acre parcel donated to our Trust in 2014 by Posie and Doug Cowan. Permitting and design work for a short bridge over the brook is in the works. With luck, we hope to open the new trail this fall.

### Revised Trail Guide in the works!

We are planning a revision of our popular trail guide that will include these and other new trails. Until then we will post maps of new trails on our website. Meanwhile copies of the trail guide are still available at our office and at several local shops.
A Bequest from an Old Friend

Diana Virginia Biddle was a longstanding member of our Trust, offering us her steady annual financial support. A physician with a practice in Ellsworth, Ginny was a woman with a wide range of other interests, and one of those was land conservation. Her gifts often came with a note of encouragement or a comment on something she had read in our newsletter or a description of her hike up Blue Hill Mountain. She passed on last year, but before doing so, left us one last gift in her will. That gift will be added to our Stewardship Fund, which will help us meet the long-term costs of managing our conservation lands. We are very grateful for this final expression of her commitment to the conservation of the place she loved.
Sharing Outdoor Fun!
Trail Run & Egg Hunt

More than 200 community members participated in the First Annual HOP! Trail Run & Egg Hunt in March. We collaborated with the Blue Hill YMCA to organize a family run that traveled over one of our trails, which was followed by an egg hunt for children, with support from Blue Hill Hospital, the local Rotary Club, the Blue Hill Co-op and Tradewinds Market. Join the fun next year on April 8th!

New Conservation Easement Gift

Our conservation work near Peters Brook in Blue Hill continues. A gift of a conservation easement on 78 acres of privately owned land complements the conservation of an adjacent 62-acre parcel that was donated to us in 2014. It will advance our open space and wildlife habitat conservation goals for the Peters Brook watershed.

The easement prevents development of the land yet allows agricultural uses in the fields, which have been recently used for pastureage of beef cattle by a local farmer. The easement does not grant public access or allow us to build trails, but it will serve as an open space buffer for the new trail we are planning to create on our adjacent land, which will connect with our popular trail along Peters Brook. We are very grateful to Posie and Doug Cowan, who previously donated the 62-acre parcel, for this additional gift.