

OLT group makes improvements on Orono High School trails

A hardy group spent a hot September weekend spreading gravel on a rough trail behind Orono High School.

The work team was: Greg and Kerry Sivik, Nancy and Glenn Rampe and Gail and Jim White along with Dave and Pat Thompson. Several bicyclists came through expressing thanks and delight with the improvements to the Eagle Scout Trail.



Photos by Gail White



Veazie Lands Committee and OLT team up on new projects

by Linda Swackhamer

The board of the Orono Land Trust also represents the citizens of Old Town and Veazie. The Veazie Lands Committee works to maintain trails, identify recreation opportunities and engage Veazie citizens in the great outdoors. The OLT has deep experience that has aided the Veazie Committee with information on land purchases, easements

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Photos by Gail White

New OLT storage garage in progress

by Dave Thompson

Earlier this year the Town of Orono donated a half acre of land on the west side of the Taylor Road to the Orono Land Trust to be used to construct a garage to store its tractor and associated equipment. It will also be used to house the Ski Club snowmobile and groomer.

Construction started in early August. A compacted base of gravel was established and forms were constructed to contain the concrete floor that included a haunch (a layer of concrete extending around the perimeter, which was 12" deeper than the floor). The building is 20 feet wide and 28 feet long and 10 feet high. There are three doors to allow easy access of motorized equipment. The siding is 5/8" texture 111 plywood, which will be stained next year. The roof will be metal secured to 2"x 4" sheathing.



All the work except for securing the concrete has been done by volunteers. They have several nick names including, "the Three Stooges plus one" and "the geriatric crew". We took a week off during the unseasonable hot weather in September. The building should be finished by mid-November.

Veazie Lands

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and public trail access. OLT also has shared their expertise in invasive species identification and control, as well as helping to bring the American Chestnut project, a hidden gem, to Veazie's Buck Hill area.

One year ago, the OLT guided the Veazie Committee on a successful application to the L.L. Bean Maine Land Trust Grant program and the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. The \$3,000 grant aimed to increase public access to trails, recreation areas and increase knowledge of the variety of green spaces available to the public. The grant has made possible the new Davis Forest area, off Davis Drive.

This forest is a land swap that resulted in a gift to Veazie of a valuable puzzle-piece that connects the McPhetres Forest and the Manter Land conservation easement. This new area allows the public to cross from the cemetery on State Street towards the new parking area on Davis Drive, off Chase Road, all by hiking trails.

Working with Town Forester Dave Wardrop, and Andy Brown, the Conservation



Photo by Linda Swackhamer

Trail day at the new Davis Forest trailhead on Davis Drive.

Commissioner, new maps were drawn, hazard trees were identified and removed, and we could plan the next phase: a trailhead and parking area with a kiosk. A clean up day was organized and Veazie folks showed up to paint new blazes and post new maps.

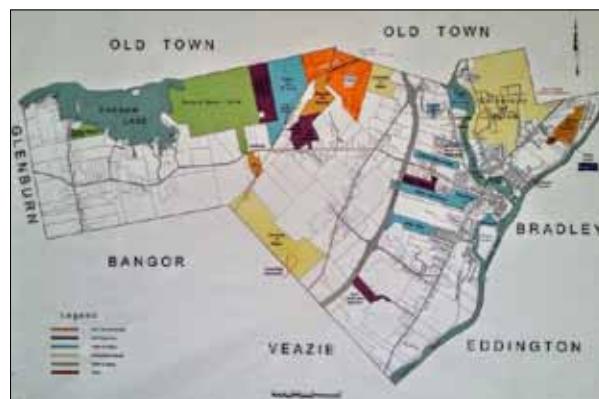
An Eagle Scout has built a kiosk and, next year when the street is repaved, we will have new curb-cuts and a gravel parking area.

The Veazie committee is grateful to all who helped make this possible.

Orono Land Trust website gets a new look

Check out oronalandtrust.org! Thanks to our tech team of Tim White and Kate Locke, we have new photos and a more secure address. The OLT website is the place for maps, hunting policies and information on memberships or volunteering on our community projects.

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



Along the Boardwalk

by Jim Bird

The Orono Bog Boardwalk closed on Saturday, October 14. This early closing in our 16th year of operation was to continue reconstruction, although the season was very successful with more than 29,000 visitors walking the Boardwalk. Volunteer guides gave many tours to students from area schools and other groups and these visitors numbered more than 600 individuals. We also had a number of nature walks, including on topics such as bats, insects, hydrology, and migratory birds.

On October 15 we started to prepare the Boardwalk for the removal and replacing of 97 sections, two interpretive stations, and three wheelchair turnarounds. By October 19 all of the 97 sections were removed and many of the new sections were staged. The Boardwalk Management Committee is especially grateful to a work crew from the Charlestown Correctional Facility and members of the North Star Lodge #22 and the St. Andrew's Lodge #83. These groups plus 20 regular Boardwalk volunteers did an outstanding job during October 15 -19. On October 20 we started installing the new sections. We hope to have this done by the first week in November.

After these new sections are installed we will have only 114 sections to replace. We hope to raise the funds (about \$190,000) to replace these sections over the next several months and our goal is to finish the Orono Bog Boardwalk reconstruction project by late 2018.



Photos by Linda Swackhamer

More than 29,000 visitors came to the Orono Bog Boardwalk in 2017, the Boardwalk's 16th year. Nature walks reveal varied plant life, such as pitcher plants (below).



If you would like to help please send your donation payable to the University of Maine Foundation to the University of Maine Foundation, 2 Alumni Place, Orono, ME 04469-5792 or donate online at: umaine.edu/OronoBogBoardwalk.

Botfly parasitizes Gray Squirrel

In the previous Nature Clip I discussed a predator – prey relationship in which a Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) caught a Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) for its morning meal – no pun intended!

Another type of relationship between two organisms is that of a parasite and its host. A parasite by definition lives on or in its host but usually does not unduly harm or cause the death of its host. Although I do not know what caused the squirrel's death, when a parasite's actions actually kill its host it is known as a parasitoid.

A couple of years ago while walking around my lot I noticed a Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) on the ground and unmoving. As I approached, however, much to my surprise a part of the carcass did move but the moving part was not that of the squirrel! My closer look revealed a larva of a botfly embedded in the carcass (Fig. 1). Although I was uncertain of the botfly species, I believed it was *Cuterebra emasculator*, the species that commonly infests tree squirrel species.

Cuterebra emasculator has fascinated biologists since 1857, when A. Fitch named this botfly. This botfly is an obligate, subcutaneous parasite of rodents and lagomorphs (rabbits and hares). The method used by the female to infect its host is ingenious. After being fertilized the female lays her eggs along the runways and entrances to burrows or nests of the host species. The slight increase in temperature of a rodent breathing on the egg as it passes by causes the egg to hatch into a tiny, wiggling larva that enters any of the rodent's orifices or a cut and migrates through the body to settle just

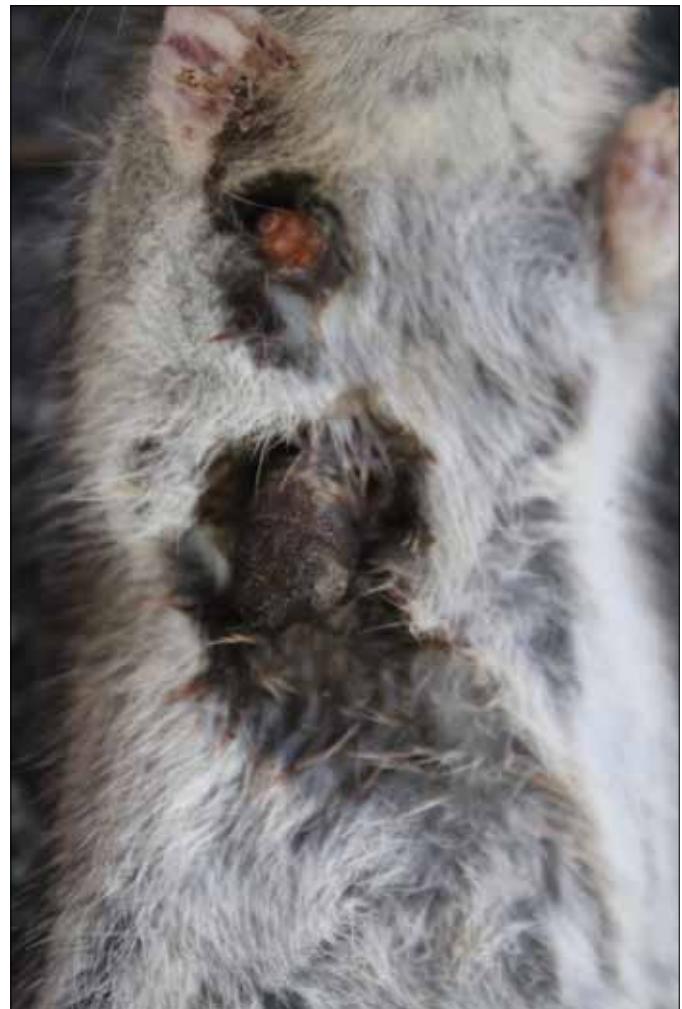


Photo by J.R. Longcore

Fig. 1: Gray Squirrel carcass with embedded botfly larva.
Orono, ME.

under the skin. The larva then cuts a hole in the rodent's skin for breathing and excreting fluids. The larva lives in the rodent for a number of weeks before it emerges from the skin and drops to the ground to pupate.

When I worked at the University of Delaware in 1964 -1965 my colleague E. Paul Catts was studying botflies in mice. From eggs collected in a petri dish he blew gently on some and they hatched immediately – an impressive reminder of the intricate workings of the natural world.

Update on Veazie railroad trail: Phase III

by Dave Thompson

The third phase of a three-phase plan to improve the Veazie railroad trail is well underway. This project is to construct a new trail around the so-called Heron Pond located near the end of the Taylor Road on the Dorion south tract.

The centerline for the trail was laid out last year and a mountain bike/walking trail was constructed. The finished route is part of the main trail from Forest Avenue to Kirkland Road. The trail will have a 4-to-5-foot wide surface to allow two people to walk abreast and to allow for grooming equipment to be used to level the trail in the winter.

Several weeks ago a crew of volunteers, which included three from Old Town Canoe, cleared the right of way. A large mini-excavator was scheduled to start construction on October 19.

The trail will be constructed in a manner similar to the trails made on Newman Hill by Chris Dorion. This method maximized the use of material dug from small "borrow pits" that minimizes the amount of gravel required, which in this case would be expensive and time consuming. The trail includes the construction of a bridge over a small stream on the east side of the pond and a bridge over the ditch on the east side of the railroad bed.

Thank you to Clayton and Paula Cole and American Canoe Association New England

Our thanks and appreciation go out to Clayton and Paula Cole for a donation of \$100, given to the new Veazie riverside park (so new it is yet to be named!) during a September clean up day at the park. Another check for \$100 was given by the Coles in the name of ACA New England, the local chapter of The American Canoe Association, to recognize that the park has become a part of renewed paddling interest on the Penobscot River. These donations were made via the OLT/Veazie Lands Committee specifically for the new Veazie park.

The Coles, of Corinth, also gave of their time during the day, which helped the Veazie Land Committee spruce up the place in hopes that new visitors find a great place to enjoy the outdoors. A group of UMaine students, neighbors and Veazie's Town Forester Dave Wardrop, all assisted in the cleanup.

The OLT is an all-volunteer organization, and is supported by friends like the Coles and neighbors like you! Thank you!

Thank you to Old Town Canoe

Old Town Canoe Company, a Maine gem, recently contributed a canoe, two paddles and two lifejackets to the OLT, reports Dave Thompson. A hearty thank you for this useful, inspiring gift!

Invasive species workshop, part 2

The OLT had another training session on invasive species control at Piney Knoll in Orono. Kate Locke and Mike Opitz led a group through the identification and methods of eradication of common invasives like buckthorn, bittersweet and Japanese knotweed. Land stewards can get training and support from OLT programs like this to increase their skills.



Photo by Gail White



2017 Business Sponsorships

In the 2015 membership year, the Orono Land Trust initiated a business sponsor membership to help support land conservation efforts serving the Orono community. Our business sponsors set a new standard in community partnerships. We appreciate their support and hope they inspire similar collaboration.

Eagle Supporter: (\$1000+)

Hawkes & Mehnert, LLP
PO Box 458, Orono, ME 04473

Black Bear Brewery,
19 Mill St., Orono, ME 04473

Old Town Canoe,
125 Gilman Falls Ave.,
Old Town, ME 04468

Cardinal Supporter: (\$250+)

Casco Bay Energy,
125 Shore Rd., Veazie, ME 04401

Chickadee Supporter: (\$100+)

Dirigo Pines Retirement Community,
9 Alumni Drive, Orono, ME 04473

The Advertising Specialists of Maine,
80 Banair Rd., Bangor, ME 04401

Orono/Old Town Kiwanis

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DO NOT DELAY**

Orono Land Trust
PO Box 4,
Orono, Maine 04473

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Calendar

Next Board Meeting: November 8

Please check for membership expiration date on your address label above.

Orono Land Trust Membership Application

Name: _____ Preferred email: _____

Address: _____ Preferred phone: _____

- \$10 Student Membership
 \$25 Individual Membership
 \$50 Family Membership
 \$100- \$999 Supporting Membership
 \$1000 Life Membership

- Business Memberships**
 \$100+ Chickadee Membership
 \$250+ Cardinal Membership
 \$500+ Loon Membership
 \$1000+ Eagle Membership

Donation only _____
for _____

I'd like to make an additional donation to help protect green space in Orono. \$ _____

Please send my newsletter by: email only _____ US Postal Mail _____

Get involved! VOLUNTEER!
Go to oronolandtrust.org to learn more and to volunteer for OLT projects, activities and committees by completing the online Volunteer Questionnaire listed on our volunteer webpage.