

## Recent improvements at Caribou Bog Conservation Area

by Kris Sornberger

**A**s a winter project, Gail White made new intersection signs (right) from locally harvested black locust lumber for each of the numbered corners and crossings at the Caribou Bog Conservation Area. Gail carved each number onto the rot-resistant wood using a router. Each sign and number was then hand painted by Gail, and posted by Kris Sornberger. No longer will people get confused about which numbered intersection they encounter.



**I**n May, Erik daSilva (from left above), Kris Sornberger, Carter Stone, OLT president Pat Thompson, and Michele Benoit received a \$500 check from the New England Mountain Bike Association, Penobscot Region Chapter for the Veazie Rail Trail surface improvement project at CBCA. This money was received after OLT won a NEMBA-awarded recreational trail grant. The money will be used to improve those portions of the Veazie railroad bed held in public domain into a fully functioning rail trail. The rail trail is envisioned to be the central artery in the Penjajawoc Marsh-Caribou Bog Corridor Project.

CBCA, Continued on page 2



All photos by Gail White

## OLT and Bog Boardwalk announce generous donations

by J.R. Longcore

**T**he Orono Land Trust recently received \$25,000 and the Orono Bog Boardwalk nearly \$142,000 from the Katharine M. Kirkpatrick Trust.

By any measure of a person's worth or accomplishments, Katharine "Kit" Mumford Kirkpatrick was a remarkable individual. She was born February 3, 1942 in Davenport, Iowa, the third child and second daughter of Hilda and Thomas Mumford, respectively from Maryland and New York.

Gift, Continued on page 3



**L**astly, the aging pallet bog bridge on the far side of Black Pond (right) has been replaced. Many thanks go out to: Tom Cassidy, Carter Stone, Erik daSilva and Bob McDonough for helping recreate a 100-foot, all-cedar bridge over the mucky area on this single track trail.

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## More trail news

by Nancy Rampe

**O**n June 7th, NEMBA members Erik daSilva, Bill Doyle, Gabriel Crooker, Dustin Moyer, Luke Cushman, Jordan Brown and Jonah Cushman worked on the town trail easement and the Pearce trail easement on the south side of Forest Avenue. The trail was muddy with many roots. The men hauled rocks onto the trail and cut out dead roots. They moved logs to the side of the trail and dug up large stones. The stones were put to use along the edge of the Peace TE and dirt was leveled. What a difference! The trail is now much more user friendly. See pictures of this work on OLT's facebook page.

On PKCA, six volunteers planted some native plants to improve habitat for pollinators and native birds after the removal of most of the invasive non-native honeysuckle. Then they ditched out a wet section of the blue and yellow trail to prepare this area for placement of a rock culvert and graveling within in a couple of weeks. Volunteers were: Jordan Brown, Bertrand Marshal, Erik daSilva, Patrick Molloy, Lucus Tempel, Mike Opitz.

Thank you to the wonderful person who has been clearing large blowdowns from many conserved

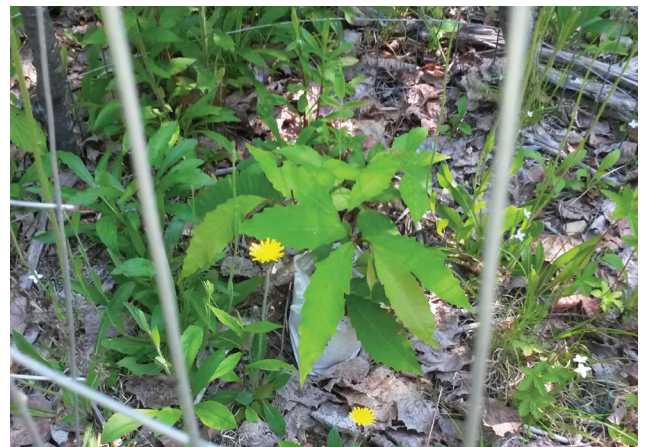
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(Right:) Bill Childs says: I checked on the American Chestnuts at Otter Point. All three made it through the winter and are putting on new growth.



areas of trails. We don't know who this person with a chainsaw is; we do want this person to know how grateful OLT is for the efforts!

On May 20th, 4 workers did a fast and fabulous job fixing the two trails that lead from the back of the football field/track to the main trails behind Orono High School as well as on the white connector trail that heads from the main trail towards the Edgewood Drive neighborhood. Greg Sivik and Jud McIntosh filled all the wet areas on one trail. Glenn Rampe and David Levy dug up and removed protruding logs; put down fill in the remaining holes as well as on other uneven sections of the other trail. All 4 people also filled in wet areas on the white connector trail. These areas get heavy bicycle and foot use so the repairs are greatly appreciated.



## OLT and Bog Boardwalk announce generous donations

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Requirements of her father's job led to moves from Illinois to Maryland, to New Jersey then back to Maryland – all by the time she was 13. She was homeschooled during the war years, but attended Far Hills Country Day School in New Jersey where she and her older brother spent time outdoors, in the woods or barns, building or climbing, exploring or swimming. Kit also read extensively and developed a lifelong interest in learning at an early age.



Photos courtesy of Kirkpatrick family  
Katharine "Kit" Kirkpatrick

Kit attended Bryn Mawr School, excelling academically and in sports. Later she attended Bryn Mawr College and began her professional life teaching mathematics in private schools, including Fox Hollow with her mother and decided to get her graduate degree from Brown University.

Her first marriage, to Richard Kirkpatrick, a former World War II fighter pilot, was brief and came after her year in a Vermont commune and before her years teaching at Fox Hollow School. She humorously described getting divorced, true to form, in a tribal ceremony in a Haitian mountain village.

In the 1970s, back in Baltimore, she directed a project that sold houses that successfully rehabilitated rundown neighborhoods in the city. She was a lifelong adventurer, traveling to Europe and spending her junior year in Bavaria, living in the home of a future German Supreme

Court justice; climbing in the lower Alps and traveling, often alone, once with an old school friend and twice with her brother, in Phil's rented VW bug, to Germany, France and Holland and another trek hitchhiking through England. She sought out adventure in New Zealand, backpacking alone, but never really alone as she met fellow travelers everywhere she went.

Later travel was to search for indigenous experiences in various regions as she took trips through Eastern Europe, Turkey, Egypt and South America, including at least one medical mission in Bolivia. Each trip involved what most would consider a hair-raising circumstance, but her charm and resilience brought her more or less out unscathed. An amazing collection of traditional dolls and crèches crowded together on the shelves - a reminder of these adventures and the cultural diversity of the world she had explored. Her musical collection included harmonicas, which "traveled easily", pan flutes, recorders, a piano, a keyboard and two guitars, a favorite being a Christmas gift from her brother and sister-in-law.

By 1980, she felt a strong desire to return to Maine, a state she had grown to love. The family had kept their camp on Mountainy Pond and she had often returned there in the spring, summer, and fall staying alone when the lake and the surrounding woods were completely silent. Back in Bradley, Maine, she joined the large Bangor hospital community, almost single-handedly creating and running their emergency alert program for the elderly, which provided an outlet for her vast energy and great joy as she spent much of her working hours in living rooms all over Central and Northern Maine listening to the life stories of the program's clients. She never tired of meeting new people from all walks of life.

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## OLT and Bog Boardwalk announce generous donations

Donations, continued from page 1

During these times she had come to know Harold Robertson, a man of the 'old school', respectful, kind and interesting. Well known throughout New England, Harold was a master builder of wooden canoes with a large barn overly loaded with great piles of wood, canoe forms and tools and equipment of all sizes, shapes and purposes located adjacent to his home in Bradley, Maine. Over the years they had developed strong feelings for each other and Harold became Kit's greatest love and partner. They rebuilt their home together after a fire and, as a surprise for her, Harold built an additional room full of space and light. She was with him while he was dying, giving him a voice when he lost his ability to speak and advocating for his dignity in death.

Her focus over the last 20 years was one of organic sustainability. The approach to gardening followed that of George Washington at Mount Vernon and detailed record keeping and trying out new approaches, always interested in how small changes affected the whole garden. Toward the end she added wildflowers to encourage more pollination by the local bees. She observed how local biomes thrived and did not presume to know better.

She said that while she loved those years with Harold, she also loved her years living on the land that supported her garden and the barn that held her boats and the tools to build innumerable bookshelves.

She was a voracious reader a lifelong learner and an amazing thinker. There was never an end to what she could discuss with enthusiasm. After her death, one of her friends wrote that Kit was an active and serious student at the University of Maine Senior College and that



Photos courtesy of Kirkpatrick family  
Katharine "Kit" Kirkpatrick

she had always advocated "you should get on with your life." Kit was a wanderer, which left her the freedom to follow her heart. She hiked and biked, canoed and white-water rafted, skied, snowshoed and snowmobiled – and even

skydived. She climbed, swam and ventured where others might not have.

Because of her interest in people, with not only a professional, but a deeply personal commitment to social justice throughout her entire life, she volunteered strongly in support of her preferred interests and organizations. She supported the "Eastern Maine Citizens", "Food and Medicine" groups and was a strong supporter of the peace and justice movement. She actively waged a campaign against Wal-Mart's environmental impact on both local wetlands and small businesses. She believed in a living wage and conserving the natural resources as a right for future generations.

Kit died August 25, 2016, 74 years of an active life, learning, loving, doing for others and fighting for those things in which she believed. Her illness was mercifully short and she was not alone in death as family members watched over her.

The Orono Land Trust is grateful for her bequest.

Core information for this essay was condensed by J. R. Longcore  
from a grave-side tribute by Kit's father, Thomas Mumford.

## Sighting: Merlin takes Mourning Dove at bird feeder

On the morning of May 7th, 2017 my wife Joyce called out while glancing out the bathroom window. "A hawk just caught a Mourning Dove!"

Grabbing my camera I hurried to the bathroom in time to snap a pose (Fig. 1) of the hawk as it stood on the Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) and tossed plucked feathers into the air. Because I was unsure of the identity of the hawk I sought a better vantage point for pictures (Fig. 2) by sneaking to the back porch, which brought me closer to the feeding hawk.

With comparative images from the internet I was able to verify the hawk as a Merlin (*Falco columbarius*), also known as the Pigeon Hawk, which has an uncanny ability to capture avian prey species in mid-air. Mean weight of its prey species is usually fewer than 100 grams compared with the average weight (i.e., 169 grams) of a male Merlin.

Killing a Mourning Dove that averages 123-130 grams is on the high end of prey taken in an urban area, because a more common prey species—the House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)—averages only 28 grams. While I was trying to return to the bathroom window for another look from that vantage point the hawk carried off the prey so I was unable to observe how well it handled the large Mourning Dove.

For a detailed description of the ecology of this interesting raptor visit Birds of North America: <https://birdsna-org.prxy4.ursus.maine.edu/Species-Account.bna/species/merlin>. The activities and behavior of raptors have a special fascination for most of us probably because of the predator / prey relationship into which they have evolved.



Photos by J.R. Longcore

Fig. 1: Male Merlin sitting on Mourning Dove that it killed.

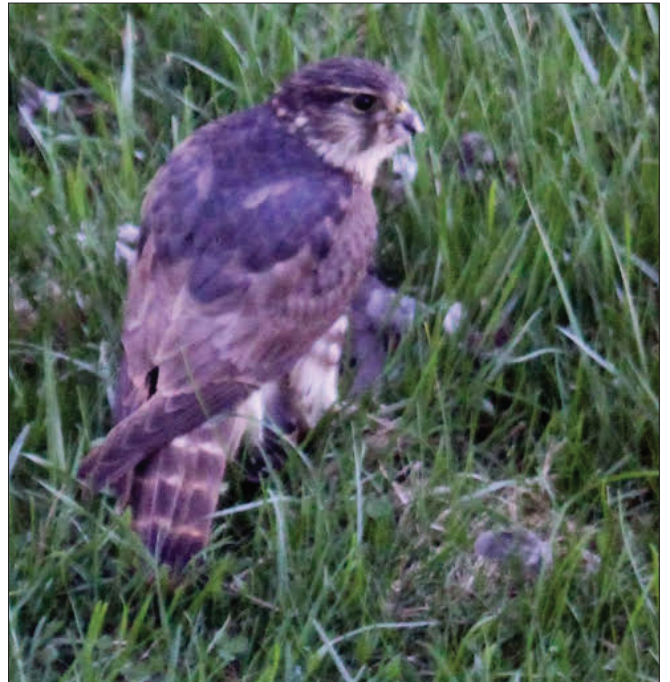


Fig. 2: Male Merlin feeding on carcass of Mourning Dove.



## OLT installs new beaver deceiver

by Dave Thompson

Last fall the Orono Land Trust (OLT) installed a culvert and beaver deceiver at the Heron Pond in such a way that we diverted most of the Heron Pond outflow to the south along the Old Veazie Railroad Bed.

After flowing along the railroad bed a couple of hundred feet, the water entered a large (4+ acres) abandoned beaver flowage. During the course of the winter and spring, the water completely filled the old beaver pond and started to flow over the railroad bed in several places.

The sound of running water over the railroad bed attracted some beavers who started to try to dam the out flowing water. If this situation had been left alone the entire part of the railroad bed located beside the new pond would have been impassable.



Checking for beavers at Heron Pond.

The stone culvert installed when the railroad was built in the 1880's was almost completely plugged. The OLT installed a new 18" culvert over the existing plugged culvert along with a beaver deceiver. We also installed several pipes with holes in them at the desired water level. As the beavers plug up the deceiver the water flows through the pipes, which maintains the desired water level and eventually the deceiver prevents the beavers from plugging the culvert.

So far it is working well. The beavers have dammed around the deceiver, but the water is flowing through the pipes and the pond water level has remained where we want it.

The result is the addition of a 4-5 acre pond with surrounding habitat, which is used by many plants and animals and the trail is usable by hikers, bikers, bird watchers, etc.

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## A thank you! to Black Bear Brewery in Orono

Our thanks go out to Black Bear Brewery on Mill St., which donated the proceeds of their Conservation IPA during a March fundraiser held for OLT. This was the second release of the brew for the Black Bear. Stop by the brewery and thank owner Tim Gallon and staff for their support, and raise a glass to community and conservation!

## OLT holds invasive species training

On June 17, Kate Locke conducted a non-native invasive plant identification session for OLT board members and land stewards at Brownies Park along the Penobscot River Trail in Orono. Just about every invasive plant species found in our area can be found along the trail, which makes it a very convenient place to learn how to identify these species throughout the growing season.

Last year, an ad hoc committee was assembled to discuss and determine OLT's overall strategy for dealing with non-native invasive plant species now and in the future. That committee identified nine species as priorities to identify and control across all OLT lands. Those species are Japanese barberry, glossy buckthorn, common buckthorn, Asiatic bittersweet, purple loosestrife, multiflora rose, Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, and shrubby honeysuckles. There are actually three different species of shrubby honeysuckle in our area, distinguished primarily by flower color, but otherwise very similar.

While we are aware of certain "hotspots" for invasive plants on OLT properties (Piney Knoll and Colburn come to mind), we are very interested in finding the small patches of invasive plants that are hiding around the landscape. These small patches, while often overlooked, are the easiest to control and quite often hand-pulling and yearly monitoring are all it takes to keep these smaller patches from becoming big problems.

For more information on the non-native invasive plants in our area go to: [extension.umaine.edu/gardening/](http://extension.umaine.edu/gardening/) and click on "Plants for the Maine Landscape" or look for future trainings with OLT.



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.

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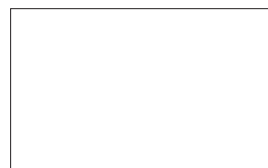
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## Calendar

**Next Board Meeting: August 9**

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Please send my newsletter by: email only \_\_\_\_\_ US Postal Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Get involved! VOLUNTEER!

Go to [oronolandtrust.org](http://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.