



2022: Fall Roundup of OLT projects

Take a minute to enjoy this view photographed on October 6 at Caribou Bog, near the junction of Beaver trail and the Veazie Railroad trail looking south. OLT strives to protect and conserve this land for all; for recreation and as habitat for the plants and animals that surround us.

OLT thanks Harry Cunningham for this photo, and you can submit your words and pictures to info@oronolandtrust.org.

Veazie Railroad Trail Restoration Project, Year 1 update

by Bucky Owen

September was a busy month for the many volunteers who helped with the trail work. We began with a review of our progress by the Bureau of Parks and Land's coordinator of the state's Recreational Trail Program. All went well, and we began fine-tuning the 1.5-mile section from Pine Ponds corner to Kirkland Ave.

We have already spent two months working on this section! The railroad bed and bypass were in good shape, but we spent a half day filling a few holes and leveling some areas. The old logging road portion of the Kirkland Trail needed considerable additional work. We ended up spreading three truckloads of 1" minus gravel to level and smooth this section. We then hired a contractor to compact the trail and get it ready for winter use. The trail looks great; if you haven't been out there you should plan a visit.

Later in September we moved to the Bangor end of the trail where we replaced a large culvert that had been blocked for years. We decided to delay building a bridge across the railroad bed till next year.

In October, a contractor was hired to pull 15-20 pilings that have emerged in the railroad bed this year. These are remnants of the trestle that crossed the Orono Bog in the 1800's! After these are removed we will spread four truckloads of gravel along this section of the trail in preparation for next year's work. We will construct several beaver deceivers for problem wet areas along the trail.

Finally, a special thanks to the 15-20 regular volunteers who have donated more than a thousand hours to the project! We are well on our way to completing this two-year project.

See pages 4 and 5 for more details.

Land Trust Notes:



Photo by Gail White

Versant Power arrived recently to hook up power for Dave's Depot at CBCA. We now have lights and outlets! Thank you to the crew!

President Adam Toothaker reports: On September 6, I met on Zoom with a PhD candidate (Alyssa) who is co-teaching Geographic Information System (GIS) and remote sensing at UMaine this coming year. She will provide a demo and then we'll give her input on how her students would be able to complete projects that could help us. According to the USGS website, **Geographic Information System (GIS)** is a computer system that analyzes and displays geographically referenced information. "If, for example, a rare plant is observed in three different places, GIS analysis might show that the plants are all on north-facing slopes that are above an elevation of 1,000 feet and that get more than ten inches of rain per year. GIS maps can then display all locations in the area that have similar conditions, so researchers know where to look for more of the rare plants."

Bar Harbor Bank & Trust on Main St. in Bangor generously invited OLT to handle **Waterfront Concerts** parking in the two lots it owns. OLT volunteers showed up to help concert-goers with parking, and was able to keep the \$20-per-car parking fee for our organization! We had fun and were able to raise over \$1,300 for our Stewardship fund! Thanks to Frank, Jen & Chris,

Linda, Adam, Joanna, Bucky, Sue, Dave, and Pat. Thanks especially to Kara Page, Branch Relationship Manager for the bank for the invitation.

Once again, **Old Town Hannafords** hosted benefits for OLT, offering the Orono Land Trust a portion of the funds they receive from the sale of Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquets in the month of September 2022. OLT has been a beneficiary of their reusable shopping bag drives, and we appreciate this support in our community.

OLT is a participant in **First Light Learning Journey**: "our goal is to expand Wabanaki access and stewardship of land for prosperity and to create a stronger conservation movement that includes and reflects Indigenous expertise and perspective... it all begins with the land." Boardmember Linda Swackhamer attended a summit on Oct. 25 in Bangor and will update the OLT Board on a new fund created to **support Wabanaki self determination around land issues**. Details will be announced in December.

The August 9th **Bangor Greendrinks** event for OLT



was held at **Geaghan's Brewery** Patio. Greendrinks are social events that also highlight a local non-profit. The Bangor events typically attracts 100 + people. **OLT Boardmember Tom Cassidy** had an opportunity to talk about all the hard work we have put in at CBCA, and the wealth

of ski, hiking, biking trails we support. Guests had a chance to try the brewery offerings and mingle with community members. According to Greendrinks: "All of our events focus on growing sustainable local businesses and provide a great opportunity to network with professionals from throughout the Greater Bangor Region. Great beer, great folks, & great causes." This organization also produces **a terrific trail map** for area outdoor-people. Check out: <https://bangorgreendrinks.org/map/>.

In September, 10 Orono Land Trust members and some new members from Brian Olsen's **TUCARD** race (**Marsh Island Trailrunners**). Funds were raised as a donation

to OLT. TUCARD is a local fundraiser in "support of public land access & Maine's private land ethic & a cross-country race."

Tim White, OLT Boardmember, Secretary and Tech specialist reports 491 visitors to the OLT website in September. Check us out @ oronolandtrust.org!

OLT and Orono Bog Boardwalk Board member Jerry Longcore reported that the Boardwalk is receiving good usage this season. He recently guided 40 University of Maine students; divided into two groups. They had several activities, including plant identification. The Bog Boardwalk closes after Thanksgiving weekend.

There was a good turnout for **OLT Fall Trail Day** was October 29, at the new Caribou Bog Trail Center on Taylor Road, Orono. It was held in coordination with the Penobscot Valley Ski Club. OLT has fall and spring trail days to keep trails in good shape for activities on the Caribou Bog Conservation Area.



On October 18, **OLT Boardmember John Banks**, former Director of Natural Resources for the Penobscot Indian Nation, was interviewed on the **Maine Public Radio program, Maine Calling**. According to the Maine Public website: "Fifty years ago, the passage of the Clean Water Act aimed to prevent and reduce pollution in our nation's waters and to set wastewater standards."

Phragmites, an invasive species of grass that has been discovered at CBCA, near Boulder Pond. Some removal was attempted before pond freeze-up and ice skating activities. OLT monitors invasives as part of the stewardship of this land.

The Town of Orono has been a big supporter and partner in local trail work. In September, the town

agreed to supply the Veazie Railroad trail project with an operator and large chipper for two days, along with various other assistance.

OLT Board Changes

We are sad to see Glen Rampe, former Board member leave the OLT Board, but thank him for his service! Best wishes to him and his family with our thanks.

Frank Alley has resigned as Treasurer. The Board accepted his resignation with regret and with its thanks for all the great work he's done.

Jennifer Dann has accepted the role of Treasurer. She will work with Frank on the transition of duties.

Are you interested in becoming a Board member for OLT? Contact info@oronolandtrust.org. We have openings for potential members with many skills: e.g., outreach, fundraising, trail work, construction...

American Chestnut Orchard

by Bucky Owen

I've been checking the orchard daily for Japanese beetles; they were on 19 trees recently! Unfortunately, they killed several of the small trees planted by the Orono Brownie Troop. Overall the trees look good, with some over 12'. I've watered and mowed the orchard with our big tractor; Jenn Dann and Charlie Todd finished the work with a weed wacker.

I've added more than sixty 8' support stakes to the larger trees. Jenn and I reset a number of these and I'll get another dozen before winter.

I understand that the federal permits for the GMO trees are progressing and that we may have pollen available next year; if not, the following year.



Veazie Railroad Trail Project

Photos by Adam Toothaker, Gail White and Jenn Dann

OLT Boardmember Dave Thompson says that the work on the Veazie Railroad Bed grant work is finished for the year. This work period covered an area in Caribou Bog Conservation Area from the Depot on Taylor Road, Orono, to Kirkland Road, Old Town.

The last work was to compact portions of the roadbed. The bridge work has been delayed, pending DEP permit approval, thus the work will be done in 2023.



Here are more facts:



- This project was funded by a **2-year grant** from the Recreational Trails Program administered by the State Bureau of Parks and Lands.
- **8,500 ft of trail** were improved since early May.
- Graveling alone consumed **46 BIG (17 cubic yds) dump truck loads** of gravel that we hand spread during July and early August!
- **More than 1,300 volunteer hours** given to the project.
- **Maine Conservation Corps (MCC)** contributed 480 hours in July!! We thank MCC members who camped by Black Pond during their stay.

...and the Hyland Tract culvert

OLT pivoted to the Hyland Tract (Orono Bog) for much of August. On Sept 29th, volunteers removed a rusty, damaged culvert from the Veazie Railroad Trail on the Hyland Tract. Volunteers then dug a better trench, rolled in a new culvert, covered it with gravel, then finally seeded the area, and covered it with straw. It is hoped that this improvement will keep the trail drier. Planned work includes building a bridge, adding two culverts and three beaver deceivers, and gravelling the entire section from the ledges to the Bangor City Forest.

Results (images at right) show the tough work and group effort: A new culvert means an improved trail and wildlife passage, with an eye to resilience for future rain events in our area.





Photo by Gail White

A fun discovery was this hidden geocache box, contents intact, which was found during culvert repairs this fall.



Photo by Gail White

Bob Bass and Dan Baumert posted a sign at the new Caribou Bog Trail Center, on Taylor Road in Orono. Opening day will be announced soon. Fundraising is underway: Donate at www.pvskiclub.org/shop.

Mark your calendars! 2023 Caribou Bog Ski Race

by Dan Baumert

The 2023 Caribou Bog Ski Race will be held in February on the Caribou Bog Conservation Area trails. A separate classic and freestyle race will be held on consecutive Sundays. The scheduled days for both races and backup dates, if needed, are as follows:

Sunday Feb. 5th, 2023 Classic Race

Sunday Feb. 12th, 2023 Freestyle Race

Saturday Feb. 18th, 2023 First Backup Date

Saturday Feb. 25th, 2023 Second Backup Date

This year the classic race may be part of the New England Nordic Ski Association (NENSA) marathon series. A bid was submitted to NENSA to include the classic race as part of the marathon series. If chosen for the NENSA marathon series, the classic race will have a long marathon distance of about 30K with a shorter 20K marathon distance option and a 10K distance option for the more recreational skiers. Snow conditions would dictate the actual course. If lighter

snow conditions prevail, multiple laps can be done to get the longer race distances.

After the freestyle race, a short "kids" race is also being planned for this year. All skill levels and ages are welcome and encouraged to participate.

A portion of both races will be on some of the trails that have been improved with the Veazie Railroad Trail grant this past summer. The new trail center will be used for registration, timing and awards. Both of these improvements will add to the quality of the races.

As always, **volunteers are essential** for running a smooth race. As the race date approaches, specific volunteer needs and sign-up will be posted on the Penobscot Valley Ski Club (PVSC) web site. Online registration and race updates also will be on the PVSC web site. Last year over 100 skiers participated in the classic and freestyle races combined. This year it is anticipated those numbers will increase. The Caribou Bog Ski Race is a great opportunity to showcase the winter use of the Caribou Bog Conservation Area trails and new trail center.

Dan Baumert, Caribou Bog Ski Race Director
djbaumert123@gmail.com, ph. 207-951-4711



Woodcock Singing Grounds

Saturday, October 15 proved to be an interesting day at CBCA. UM students with OLT volunteers under the guidance of Amber Roth, UM Prof and assistant steward at CBCA, opened up woodcock singing grounds, improving habitat for this native bird. Thanks to all for fine work. OLT strives to balance recreation with habitat stewardship.

Photo by OLT President Adam Toothaker.



Photo by Jenn Dann

July 15, a hardworking crew takes apart unauthorized bike jumps at Piney Knoll.

Piney Knoll Report

by Jenn Dann

OLT Boardmember Tom Cassidy and Penobscot Region, New England Mountain Bike Association (PR NEMBA) brought a hardworking crew out on July 15 and 17 to deconstruct the unauthorized bike jumps at Piney Knoll. Although we'll need to do more smoothing and erosion work over time (and find a lost pickaxe), we were able to deconstruct all of the major features and hauled out the leftover lumber. A lot of good conversation about how to work together as organizations.

Volunteers were: Ben, Abe, Carson, Aaron, and Emily from PR NEMBA. We also had a nice reward for our hard work at the end, courtesy of Orono Brewing Company!

Newman Hill Survey in Progress

A committee has been meeting to survey the Newman Hill section of CBCA. A tree and plant inventory is ongoing, and trail cameras are in place. The goal is to obtain baseline data on human and animal use of the different areas. OLT closes certain trails in bird nesting season. This project will provide objective data on wildlife habitat use, weather, and how recreation affects CBCA. OLT hopes to make a multi-year assessment. UMaine is interested in assisting with data collection. Stay tuned!



Nature Clip

by J.R. Longcore

Agility in Flight—Key to Dragonfly Success!

Watching a dragonfly zip around Boulder Pond reminded me of the amazing aerial abilities of this likeable and beneficial insect that is often credited as being a “mosquito hawk” because it can seamlessly change direction at high speed (~ 36 mph) and nail its prey.

The taxonomic order Odonata contains dragonflies (sub-order *Anisoptera*) and damselflies (sub-order *Zygoptera*) with ~650 species in North America that have evolved over millions of years. Figure 1a-c depicts 3 local species. A dragonfly is one of the most effective and efficient aerial predators with its compound eyes that allow it to detect, pursue, and capture airborne prey at a 97% success rate (Combes. et al., 2013). Their capabilities for flight are encompassed in four distinct flight styles of wings (counter-stroking, phased-stroking, synchronized-stroking, and gliding that Rowe (2004) summarized in the statements; “All dragonflies achieve



All photos by J.R. Longcore.
Fig. 1a. Common Whitetail, Female



Fig. 1b. Slaty Skimmer, Male



Fig. 1c. Eastern Amberwing, Male

their mastery of flight by varying what their wings are doing in a coordinated fashion. They can adjust wing shape, stroke length, angle of attack, move a wing forward (or backwards) of its “usual” position, stop one or two wings, adjust relationships between any two wings on either side of the body...the list goes on.”

A dragonfly larva hatches from an egg deposited in water, mud, or plant tissue in about a week to enter the active nymphal stage and rapidly becomes a lethal predator in the aquatic setting by capturing prey with its “labium”, a spatula-shaped mouth part with spines and hooks that can be rapidly thrust forward at prey.

Figure 2 is the cast-off exuviae (i.e., exoskeleton) of an *Aeshna* sp. nymph that had emerged from the



Fig. 2. Exuviae (i.e., exoskeleton) of *Aeshna* sp.

(Con't. next page)



(Con't. from pg. 8) Orono Bog. Eggs are laid in different ways depending on the species. I watched a Common Whitetail (Fig. 1a) lay eggs by letting her ovipositor touch the water surface while in flight; meanwhile the male flew a few feet above her as a protective escort from other males. An unknown dragonfly species laid its eggs on the plastic netting (Fig. 3) of my deer fence in Orono—not a suitable site for success.

This Clip is but a tidbit of the volumes of fascinating information that exists for the 158 species of Maine dragonflies and damselflies.

Combes, et al. 2013. <http://doi.org/10.1093/icb/ict072>

Richard J. Rowe (2004). Page. Tree of Life Dragonfly Flight. James Cook University of North Queensland, Townsville, Australia. Richard.Rowe@jcu.edu.au

Fig. 3. Eggs laid on plastic netting, Orono



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Contact info@oronolandtrust.org if you would like to join this program.

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Thank you!

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Wish List:

OLT is looking to acquire a pro cordless weed-wacker for trail work, can you help?
Contact: info@oronolandtrust.org.
Thank you!

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Calendar

• Next Board meetings: Wed., Nov. 9 and December 14, 6:30pm

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