

Annual Meeting: Welcome artist Gabriel Frey

The Orono Land Trust Annual Meeting this year is being held at 6pm, Friday, May 19 at the Keith Anderson Building on Bennoch Road, Orono. We are very pleased to announce that our keynote speaker will be Gabriel Frey.

His biography states "...Gabriel is a Passamaquoddy basket maker; his family has been making traditional Black Ash baskets for generations. He specializes in utility basket such as pack baskets, market baskets, and purses. His artistic process includes locating and harvesting basket quality Black Ash trees from the woods, processing Black Ash logs, and weaving Black Ash materials into basket forms... This reflects interconnectedness and reciprocity between people,

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their natural world, family, and all beings."

The Black Ash (also called Brown Ash) is endangered by the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive insect recently found in Penobscot County. We all can find common cause in this important issue that relates to the forests and culture of this region, called the Dawnland by the Wabanaki people. Let's gather to celebrate the Ash tree, so important to Wabanaki culture, and hear this artist's perspective on our native forests. There will be demonstrations of the craft, and time for questions.

The meeting will also offer a recap of the many OLT projects from the last year, plus announcements and news from the field. Refreshments will be served. This program is open to the public. See you there!

Sunday Funday at Caribou Bog Conservation Area

On February 23rd, the Orono Economic Development Corporation (OEDC), the Penobscot Valley Ski Club (PVSC) and the Orono Land Trust (OLT) worked together to have a fun winter outing and to celebrate the opening of the Caribou Bog Outdoor Center (CBOC). The pond in front of the Outdoor Center, Taylor Pond, was cleared off for skating. Dan Baumert's firepit was set aflame and people gathered around. The trails were groomed for skiers and snowshoers had trails to use. OLT gave two guided snowshoe walks. Kenny Fergusson and Jim Ferrante, both foresters, led a group up Newman Hill. Bucky Owen led a group across the bog. Orono Brewing Company (OBC) made a Sunday Funday IPA and some proceeds from the sale will go to the Outdoor Center. (There was a nice gathering at OBC afterwards, good food and beer! Thank you, OBC!) The weather was not perfect, but people came out and all seemed to have a wonderful time! Thanks to all the volunteers who made this special event happen.



Text and Photo by Gail White



Photo by Gail White

From **Boardmember Gail White**: On March 24, **Gabriel Frey** led **Dave Thompson, Kenny Fergusson, Gail White and Judy Walker** to a Black (aka Brown) Ash Stand in the Jeremiah Colburn Natural Area. The Wabinaki use Black Ash trees in their basket making. Black Ash stands are not extremely common. The Black Ash have a cork-like bark, which allows the tree to grow fast. The female trees show the seeds in a frill like look. There is usually one female ash tree to several male ash. The Black Ash need a very special habitat. The Wabinaki would like Town of Orono and OLT permission to manage these trees and put up purple boxes to catch Emerald Ash Borers (EAB), which are currently found as far north as Augusta. They hope to manage the stand to encourage the trees growth.

OLT runs on volunteers. Thank you to all who groom trails, lead programs, haul gravel, carve signs, trim brush, handle office work...! All ages, 35+ years, four seasons, we thank you!



Photo by Gail White

Peter Buzzini extending the clearing of the pond after Bucky Owen, Dave Pickering and Gail White shoveled.

And speaking of volunteers... : **Boardmember Jenn Dann** says: "Throughout the year, we could use volunteers as an extra set of eyes on trails noting both concerns and positives - especially the less heavily-used trails. Unauthorized use, drainage problems, boundary issues, wildlife, hazard trees/branches, trash, etc., etc. They could provide a simple report back to the primary steward with any issues. I've started that informally at Piney Knoll with a couple of students, and it's a big help. Contact info@oronolandtrust.org.

Veazie members: OLT is looking for a steward for Veazie's Manter Wood. Stewardship consists of keeping note of trail conditions, easy brush removal for trail access, and a once yearly report of conditions. Email linswak@gmail.com for info. Thanks!



Photo by Charlie Todd

From **Boardmember Charlie Todd**: "This may not be relevant or desirable but here's a photo of a *mountain of porcupine poop* at the well-signed tree at the Colburn Natural Area."

Orono Land Trust 36th Annual Meeting

Friday, May 19

6 p.m. Refreshments and table displays

6:30 p.m. President Adam Toothaker, welcome, OLT updates and announcements

6:45 p.m. Keynote program: Passamaquoddy artist and author Gabriel Frey: Art and culture of Black Ash Tree

"Gabriel Frey is a Passamaquoddy basket maker; his family has been making traditional Black Ash baskets for generations. He specializes in utility baskets such as pack baskets, market baskets, and purses. He weaves each basket solely with Black Ash and handcrafts leather features such as straps, lids, and liners for each basket.

His artistic process includes locating and harvesting basket quality Black Ash trees from the woods, processing Black Ash logs, and weaving Black Ash materials into basket forms. Each piece has an element of carving. He carves the hoops, rims, handle, and wooden pins to fasten leather straps. His basket making tools, such as basket molds, gauges, splitters, and shave horse are adaptations of traditional designs. Maintaining the traditional knowledge of Wabanaki basket makers is an important aspect of his artistic process.

His art is an expression of his worldview. He finds inspiration in the natural world and the transformation of a living tree into a functional basket. His baskets are a connection to his past, present, and future, interwoven to create functional pieces of art. Culture, family traditions, personal experiences, and hopes for the future are embodied within these baskets. He learned the cultural tradition of basket making from his grandfather. Creating functional Wabanaki baskets is a platform to connect people to place. This reflects interconnectedness and reciprocity between people, their natural world, family, and all beings."



Photo by Gail White

Female Black Ash tree in winter.

Questions, comments, and our thanks.

Adjourn

Immediately after: Short OLT Board meeting: Vote on Board member changes, etc.

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(con't on page 7)

Nature Clip

by J.R. Longcore

The Future is Not What it Used to Be

This prescient comment by David Trauger, a former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service colleague and Laboratory Director, was uttered when our agency was being merged into the newly named National Biological Survey (NBS). The NBS did not survive, and neither will our own future survive if the assessment of Ben Rawlence—author of *The Treeline The Last Forest and the Future of Life on Earth*—is correct.



Photos by J.R. Longcore

Fig. 1. Scots Pine, note characteristic

The temperature of the Earth's atmosphere is rapidly approaching the two degrees Celsius tipping point after which catastrophic environmental effects are inevitable. Climate change models have correctly predicted the current erratic and extreme weather events in CA, FL, MS, and elsewhere in the country. Rawlence concluded that "Before the end of the twenty-first century there will be a wave of extinctions, trees will leap north, steppes will expand, the tundra will disappear along with the Arctic sea ice, the oceans will be reconfigured and cities will flood."

The author reached these conclusions by visiting all regions containing the boreal forest, which essentially is the forested habitats of the Arctic treeline that encircles about three-fourths of the Arctic Ocean. Rawlence focuses on the history and role of specific tree species in the regions visited. For example, Scots



Fig. 2. Scots Pine, two needles, new cones, and old opened cones.

pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) (Fig. 1 & 2), the most widely distributed pine in the world, which ranges from Scotland, Scandinavia (excluding Denmark), northern Europe, northern Asia, and almost to the Pacific Ocean and above the Arctic Circle, is a primary focus. White and black spruce (*Picea glauca*, *P. mariana*) in Alaska, and balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*) in Canada, among others, also are featured. Rawlence argues that this boreal forest treeline is more than the sum of its parts and each tree species contributes uniquely to the history, diversity, and stability of its niche in the treeline.

The brutal reality and challenge of the warming climate according to Rawlence is to "Adapt, move, or die." His in-depth discussion of how trees and related biological organisms could or must respond to survive are fascinating while sobering because they apply to humans as well. When Dave (The Elder) Thompson loaned me a copy of the book he commented "Read it and cry". He was right about that.

J.R. Longcore

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(*Indicates Legacy Member)

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Thank you!



Photos by Ron Logan

Tough sledding at Heron Pond! Ron Logan (at left) and Bucky Owen (at right) install Wood Duck boxes recently for the season ahead.

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Orono Land Trust
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Calendar

- Next Board meetings: Weds., May 10, 6:30pm
- Annual membership Meeting, Fri., May 19, 6pm.

Membership renewal dates are printed next to your address on mailed print versions of this newsletter. Electronic versions of the newsletter do not contain your info. To renew your membership, contact our website oronolandtrust.org. Thanks!

Please Note: This newsletter is distributed in 2 versions: A printed, black & white, US Postal-delivered format and an digital, all-color, PDF-emailed format. We are proud to showcase color photos of OLT activities, and currently, that is best seen by requesting the paperless, digital version. If you would like to switch, please notify linswak@gmail.com.

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

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