

## OLT volunteers complete major projects for 2023

As the Veazie Railroad Trail (VRRT) work comes to a close for the season, it is time to celebrate this two-year project and reflect. As OLT President Adam Toothaker said, "Finishing this project is an incredible accomplishment. Many thanks to the folks that planned it, coordinated it, managed it, and actually jumped in and did the work!"

We hope you have checked out the progress over the past season. There is now access from the Kirkland Rd. Extension in Old Town through to the City Forest in Bangor, where Bangor Land Trust picks up the trail to areas south of Orono. The Rail bed has been widened and improved, with gravel. New culverts have been built to mitigate seasonal flooding, and 2023 proved the need for water control with our recent rains. Habitat was a major element with the planning and construction of the project. New beaver deceivers and an amazing new bridge were built in the southern end of the trail. Wildlife passage and community recreation can coexist in this final phase of the project.



Photo by Jenn Dann

The Big Crew, from left, Dave Erker, Dan Baumert, Bucky Owen, Dave Thompson, and Charlie Todd at the new bridge south of Forest Ave., on the Veazie Railroad Trail.

It bears repeating that this was accomplished by a small, all-volunteer crew: Grantwriters, gravel haulers, tractor drivers and plain human labor. This is non-motorized, multi-use recreational trail built with habitat a priority. The project is ready for hiking, skiing, running, biking, birding, etc. Orono Land Trust is proud and grateful to all!



Photos by  
Adam Toothaker, Gail White

Never underestimate  
what a volunteer  
community can  
accomplish together.  
Join us!





## Orono trail evaluated for access

Text and photo by Gail White

On October 16th, Enoch Glidden of Maine Trail Finders, visited the Town Woods/Rampe property. Enoch was joined by Gail White, Dave Thompson, Glen Rampe, and Orono Parks and Recreation Director Meghan Mazzella. Enoch, who uses a non-motorized wheelchair, was testing this property for wheelchair use by others. We visited the cross-country trail, stopping to see sights and rest. The area is very hilly, especially from the start behind the OHS football field. Enoch found the trail very challenging, and thanked us for a nice visit. We thank him for his input about how the OLT trails can be accessible for all.

## Invasives problem to be tackled

Gail White provides this update on the Jeremiah Colburn Natural Area (JCNA): "I've been speaking with Megan Hess, the Orono Environmental Services Coordinator, who says the town received funding this morning to tackle invasives on the JCNA. Hunter Manley will be the licensed applicator. He will pull and cut and dab stumps with herbicide and create piles. This work will start sometime at the end of September. At some point, Megan will alert me that she needs volunteers to help stack the invasives for the town to pick up. We will be needing help moving brush and creating educational materials for residents in this area to inform them on invasives."

## Girl Scout Troop 1806 on the trail

Text and photo by Gail White

Girl Scouts from local Troop 1806, gathered at the Davis Conservation Easement off Gardner Road in Orono for a work day on September 30th. The girls walked the one mile trail picking up sticks and cutting small trees growing in the trail. Gail White led the group and talked to them about invasives and how to pull them out when they are small. Wildflower leaves were also pointed out and the girls want to come back to especially see the Lady Slippers. We saw witches brooms (a deformity in a tree) and learned about the witch hazel bushes. They did a wonderful job. Thanks!



## Interpretive trail coming for 2024

A new interpretive trail is in the planning near Newman Hill and the Caribou Bog Outdoor Center. You may have noticed the recent activity. Since this past spring, the path has been widened and improved, and inventoried for future signage and natural features that aim to educate and provide enrichment. Loads of gravel were hauled in and spread by many hands. As a winter season project, the OLT will write, design, and produce signs for kiosks. Our office is equipped with a CNC signmaking tool, which is managed by Joanna Toothaker. Stay tuned for new features and a new experience, which will commence in 2024.





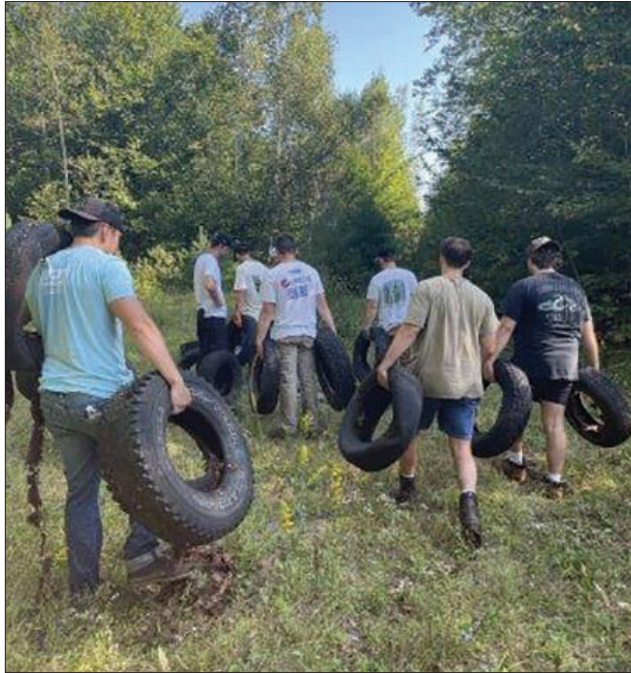


## Fraternity volunteers assist at Argyle

Text and photos by John Banks, Chair, Lands Committee

On Saturday, September 9th, about 25 brothers from the Phi Eta Kappa fraternity converged on the Orono Land Trust's conservation easement land in Argyle to provide a clean up of trash and other litter. In June, 2018, the Lane Construction Corporation granted the Conservation Easement to the Orono Land Trust in recognition of the significant ecological, scientific, educational, and aesthetic values on approximately 837 acres of forested land bordering Birch Stream in Argyle. The main purpose of the Conservation Easement is to provide a significant public benefit by protecting, in perpetuity, the conservation values associated with the protected property. The 837-acre parcel contains diverse wildlife and plant habitat, forest, wetland, stream, and natural communities, and other significant ecological values. The parcel also provides opportunities for low-impact outdoor recreational use by the public, consistent with protecting the conservation values.

The September 9 clean up activity removed about 20 old tires, and other trash that has been accumulating on the property for a while. Many thanks to the Phi Eta Kappa Fraternity brothers for their help with the clean-up as well as a big thank you to the landowners representative Sara Caldwell, Environmental Specialist with Eurovia Atlantic Coast, for helping organize the clean up.



## American Chestnut project update

by Bucky Owen

We completed two days of work in the orchard recently. After finding blight on eight trees related to mouse damage last winter, we decided to lift the mulch mats, place a metal cone around the base of each tree, cover the cones with gravel, and then slip the plastic tube down around the gravel. We encountered two more trees with the blight, but over 100 trees look good and are ready for winter. Our thanks to: Linda Swackhamer, Bob Bass, Judy Walker, Charlie Todd, Adam Toothaker, Joanna Toothaker, Peter Buzzini, Gudrun Keszocze, Kate Locke, Kenny Fergusson, Ben Hale, and three little munchkins for helping. As you can expect, I only watered the orchard once in early June but dealing with Japanese beetles was gruesome. Thankfully, a small fly is parasitizing about 30% of the beetles in the orchard and this percentage should increase with time. Let's hope we get the go-ahead to begin raising the genetically resistant trees next year. Thanks again, everyone.



Photo by Adam Toothaker  
OLT Office Manager Joanna Toothaker at the chestnut grove.





## Piney Knoll 'spruce up'

Text and image by Jenn Dann

**W**hile it's not been great weather for people, it was a great season for seedlings. We got the 40 red spruce seedlings donated by JD Irving planted in at Piney Knoll. I'm hopeful that they have a good start with this cool, wet weather. Thanks for hooking us up!



## Cool tools from school (UMO)

Text and photo by Charlie Todd

**D**ave Sandilands (above) prepares to launch a drone at Black Pond on August 29. The Wheatland Geospatial Lab at the University of Maine produces aerial photographs enabling OLT to monitor wetland vegetation at Caribou Bog Conservation Area. 2023 marks the fourth year of a five-year study led by Bucky Owen.

## Forest Management at Piney Knoll

Text and image by Jenn Dann

**T**he Orono Land Trust will be conducting a tree harvest at Piney Knoll Conservation Area, planned for the October to January timeframe. Our primary goal is to transition the very dense hemlock stands into healthier, more diverse habitat for wildlife. During the tree harvest, please respect periodic trail closures for your own safety and prepare for temporarily increased debris in the trails.

Thank you for your patience with us as we take care of important forest management!







## What a day...

A fabulous October moment at the Hyland Tract is captured here by OLT Board member and core Veazie Railroad Trail team member Dan Baumert.

## Pat and Sue retire!

On Sunday, July 16, OLT held a surprise retirement party for outgoing Board members Pat Thompson and Sue Owen. Both members have worn many hats over the years, and we will miss them. Gathering with family and friends at the Caribou Bog Outdoor Center, the OLT Board used the opportunity to also recognize their spouses, Dave Thompson and Bucky Owen. A pair of commemorative benches were planned and crafted by Jim and Gail White. Look for the benches at the Outdoor Center trails. These folks have contributed so much to OLT, and we celebrate their service.



Photos by Adam Toothaker and Linda Swackhamer





Photo by Phil Brown

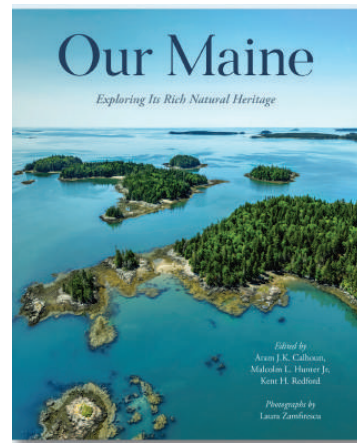
## Student get field work experience at Woodcock Grounds

by Amber Roth, Associate Professor of Forest Wildlife Management, University of Maine

Three student members of the UMaine Student Chapter of the Society of American Foresters came out to CBC on Saturday, October 28, for the woodcock habitat project. They cut all of the tree sprouts on the log landings in 2 hours. The students (above): Phil Brown (crew leader), Lou Packer, and Logan Quinn. It was a fabulous day for this project.

## New book available

George Jacobson, one of OLT's Legacy members is one of the authors of this wonderful new book, published by Down East books. "Our Maine" is like a love story about Maine. Each chapter is written by a scientist who loves their field. One chapter, on the geology of Maine, is written by OLT volunteer and Legacy member Steve Norton. Other chapters cover lobsters, seaweed, rivers, the Gulf of Maine, etc. Proceeds from sales of the book go to conservation efforts in Maine. Available where books are sold. #9781684750474 Paperback, \$34.95.



## TUCARD 2023 at CBCA



September 16, the Marsh Island Trail Runners (MITR) held a race at Caribou Bog Conservation Area (CBCA). The event is called "TUCARD – A most unnecessarily complicated trail race and a fundraiser in support of an enduring Maine tradition, Public Access to Private Lands" and is a fundraiser for OLT. Check out their weekly social runs, their adventure trips, and two truly unique and high-spirited trail races. "All are welcome. No one left behind." Contact Brain Olson at [Marshislandtrailrunners@gmail.com](mailto:Marshislandtrailrunners@gmail.com). Thank you!



## November bag sale at Old Town Hannaford for OLT

Hannaford's community bag program provides a donation to a local non-profit organization. OLT has been chosen for November. If folks buy a reusable bag from the Old Town Hannaford in Old Town, they donate a dollar to OLT. In May, Hannaford chose OLT to receive \$80.00 on their sale of flowers. They have been very generous to OLT.



Photos by Linda Swackhamer

Bangor Greendrinks visited the Caribou Bog Outdoor Center and Orono Land Trust on October 10, 2023.

## Bangor Greendrinks visits CBOC and OLT for October

On Tuesday, October 10, the moveable mixer that is Bangor Greendrinks set up a gathering at the Caribou Bog Outdoor Center (CBOC) on Taylor Road, Orono. About 127 people showed up to raise a glass and raise funds for local projects in the community.

Refreshments were donated by OLT members and Orono Beer Company, plus a red wine from the artisans at the Urban Farmhouse in Bangor. Bob Bass spoke to the crowd about the Outdoor Center, and President Adam Toothaker thanked everyone for recognizing the OLT for this month's social.

Folks enjoyed the firepit down by Taylor Pond. A bike ride on the Veazie Railroad Trail was led by OLT member Tom Cassidy, and Dave Thompson offered a walk on the Newman Hill trail to point out features on the new Interpretive Trail, another OLT project.

Bangor Greendrinks is a "Family-friendly, sustainability-focused networking group in Greater Bangor... Bangor Greendrinks meets at a various locations in Greater Bangor on the second Tuesday of each month," according to their website, <https://bangorgreendrinks.org>. All funds collected from donations go to Green Grants, which are micro-grants awarded to green efforts in the community.

OLT manages the land around the CBOC, which is a separate organization co-owned with the Penobscot Valley Ski Club. We all work together to make this area a vibrant, green, friendly place.



CBOC manager Bob Bass addresses the crowd at the Bangor Greendrinks gathering.



Folks enjoyed the firepit at Taylor Pond.



# Nature Clip

by J.R. Longcore



Photos by J.R. Longcore  
Fig. 1. Permanent deer fence

## Why a deer fence?

For many years I have erected a removeable fence of bird netting around our garden plot. This year I decided to recycle all the chicken wire that I had used around a strawberry patch and a hazelnut clump to create a permanent garden fence (Fig. 1).

Over recent years I have seen 6 or 7 deer in my back yard, especially in spring when the grass greens up early over the leach field. This late summer, three large bucks visited (Fig. 2). Increasing numbers of deer ticks and dog ticks seems to corroborate the deer's presence.

Although the garden was not yet planted when I drafted this clip, the deer had been browsing on several woody species in the yard, including Red Elderberry, Common Elderberry, Red Oak, and Black Walnut, which is not native to Maine, but has had its new growth heavily browsed (Fig 3).



Fig. 2. Three large bucks at apple tree

The succulent new stems of Jerusalem Artichoke and New England Aster also have been hit hard. Protecting the vegetables, of course, is my goal because I have observed that White-tailed deer will eat potato leaves, tomato leaves, and they absolutely relish chard.

(con't. on pg. 9)





Fig. 3. Browsed black walnut stems



Fig. 4. Browse on hollyhock plant

(con't. from pg. 8)

**A**s a final affront they have been eating my Hollyhocks (Fig. 4), which bloom the second year, so they are diminishing the blooms of next year! An early deer biologist, W.M. Newsom (1926), summed up the situation, most appropriately, when he concluded that "A deer will eat almost anything green. He is almost goat-

like in the variety of food he consumes." My observations support that conclusion.

J. R. Longcore

*Quote from: Newsom, W.M., 1926. White-tailed deer. Charles Scribner's and sons. N.Y. 288 pgs.*



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Hannaford Supermarkets  
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*Thank you!*

**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](mailto:linswak@gmail.com).



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Orono Land Trust  
PO Box 4,  
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**Calendar**

- Next Board meeting: Weds., Dec. 13, 6:30pm

*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](http://oronolandtrust.org). Thanks!*

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

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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 \_\_\_\_\_

