

OLT plants pollinator gardens to aid chestnut project

By Linda Swackhamer



Photo by Adam Toothaker

A rainy day did not stop OLT Board member Gudrun Keszöcse and other volunteers to plant pollinator gardens to aid the American Chestnut project at CBCA.

Orono Land Trust has new pollinator gardens at the American Chestnut grove at Caribou Bog Conservation Area (CBCA) in Orono. We didn't intend to work between rain showers, but we did. At least the rain cut down on our watering chores!

As part of the land trust's vision for the future, OLT is working to provide habitat improvements as well as promoting recreation trails for the community. On a rainy Sunday, June 1, a team went to work in three prepared garden sites at the orchard. The sites were prepped with garden fabric to block sun and kill weeds. In spite of the rain, the team planted a mix of suggested native plants compiled from the Xerces Society, a resource on this project. (<https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant-lists>).

Wow! 2025 Maine Conservation Corps summer crew and OLT volunteers tackle invasives, improve trails: See Page 4.

Native plants were selected and obtained locally, some from OLT Board members' gardens. A list of suggested plants that you can use follows this article. This site has rocky fill, and has been disturbed by previous projects, so soil amendments and fertilizers were added to promote plant success. The plantings have been checked many times since June 1, and plant survival look good. The team documented the plant lists, conditions and timing. OLT is working to promote beneficial insects like the winsome fly, *Istocheta*

(Continued on Pg. 3)

New PR-NEMBA bike trail in 'flow' at CBCA

By Tom Cassidy



Photo by Tom Cassidy

Local kids enjoying a newly completed section of flow trail on Bangor Hill.

This summer we are excited to introduce the addition of two machine-built flow trails on Bangor Hill, at Caribou Bog Conservation Area in Orono. Flow trails have many positive advantages. They create a smoother source that allows for less aggressive and novice riders to enjoy. They have features, however, that allow more advanced riders to practice their skills. While avoiding the fall line and adding

(Continued on Pg. 2)



Photo by Linda Swackhamer

A new mountain bike trail is being built at Bangor Hill at Caribou Bog Conservation Area in Orono by Penobscot Region NEMBA.

New bike trail being built at CBCA

(Continued from Pg. 1) sections with a reverse grade, they typically hold up better to erosion. On the downside, they are expensive to build. Penobscot Region Chapter, New England Mountain Bike Association (PR-NEMBA) has done an incredible job fund-raising and managing the project. They have raised over \$80,000, including grants from Recreational Trails Program, Maine Mountain Bike Trail Fund and NEMBA as well as numerous private donations. The work also includes improvements to the climb up Bangor Hill and will hopefully attract recreational use to Bangor Hill as we try to increase conservation on Newman Hill.

PR-NEMBA hired Maine Trail Builders, a mountain bike oriented trail building company that offers machine and hand built services. Numerous OLT Board Members have been monitoring their work and are impressed by the quality of the construction and their ability to minimize impact while bringing equipment in to the site.

If all goes as planned, the project should be completed by the end of July. A big thank you to PR-NEMBA for their hard work on this project.



Photo by Tom Cassidy

OLT and PRNEMBA board members meeting and reviewing the progress with Maine Trail Builders.



Photo by Linda Swackhamer

New mountain bike trails at Bangor Hill are machine-built 'flow' trails for all bikers. The construction company is Maine Trail Builders.



Photos by Adam Toothaker

A very wet and dedicated gang in the American Chestnut orchard at CBCA on June 1.

Chestnuts and pollinator gardens

(Continued from Pg. 1 *aldrichi*, which is a parasite of the Japanese beetle. Japanese beetles are a scourge of the young chestnut trees. The Winsome fly deposits its eggs on the head of the beetle, and when they hatch, the Japanese beetle is parasitized, and dies. You can hand-pick the beetles from your raspberries or other crops, and if you see a little white dot or two on the back, release the beetle. You'll be aiding in the biocontrol of this common pest. A web search for the Winsome fly easily provides more information.

The two remaining garden plots will be seeded with native plants, in contrast to the use of plant plugs in the first phase. It will be interesting to observe what develops, and we hope for the best in our diversity project at CBCA.



All American Chestnuts in this project are labeled and their progress is documented in the hopes of re-establishing this iconic tree to the American forests.

Native pollinator plant suggestions for your gardens, with common names

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	OxEye Sunflower
<i>Anemone canadensis</i>	Canada anemone	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	OxEye Daisy
<i>Angelica atropururea</i>	Great Angelica	<i>Liatris pycnostachya/spicata</i>	Prairie Blazing Star
<i>Asclepius syriaca</i>	Common Milkweed	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Beebalm
<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	Partridge sensistive pea	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	Narrow Leaved Mt. Mint
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Lanceleaf Coreopsis	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Blackeyed Susan
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Queen Anne's Lace	<i>Schizqachyrium scoparium</i>	Little Bluestem (grass)
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	Purple Coneflower	<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	Gray Goldenrod
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Canada Wildrye (grass)	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angeliae</i>	New England Aster
<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	Boneset	<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden Alexanders
<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	Perennial Gaillardia		



Dave, Harry, the MCC crew (Joe, Gavin, Ben) & Gail. Kudos!



Text and photos on this page by Gail White.



Summer crew MCC & OLT 2025

OLT is fortunate to have the help of three Maine Conservation Corp. (MCC) workers for three weeks, which started June 23rd. Gavin, Ben and Joe got right to work helping with trail work. The MCC TEAM along with Dan and Gail, worked on the Putnam Road trail. Dan instructed the team on replacing a culvert. Gavin removed a big old stump from the trail (see above right). Roots were cut from the trail, then gravel and then crushed rock were applied to the surface that made the trail should now be drier and smoother.

The next day was for tackling invasive species. MCC worked, along with Board members Charlie, Gudrun, Bob and Gail, removing Japanese Knotweed and Garlic Mustard that was close to the Outdoor Center. They moved on to *Phragmites* near Taylor Pond. OLT has a full schedule, lots of needed projects will get done. Recently, Martha Zenk joined the crew and worked with Bucky checking the chestnut grove.



MCC workers assisted at Otter Point by cutting back trees overhanging the trail and clearing around our American Chestnut trees. Dave Erker and Gail White also pitched in.



Summer crew MCC & OLT 2025



Otter Point report from OLT Board member Dave Erker:

A hearty thank you to the great MCC crew (Gavin, Ben and Joe) we have helping OLT for 3 weeks. And likewise thanks to Gail White and Dan Baumert as well. Today we brushed out the Otter Point main trail, removed 30-40 leaning birches and alders draped over the trail, and cut back trees that were starting to shade the 4 chestnuts planted in the Otter Point mini-orchard. Dan mowed the entire ~1 mile of trail with his regular ol' Craftsman mower. And we took down the two signs for the Otter Point loop trail, because the Stewardship committee has decided to let that trail continue its return to nature.

Report from the CBCA by OLT Board member Charlie Todd:

June 24: As many of you know, our new property around the Outdoor Center is quite the hot spot for invasive plants. Day 2 of battling invasive plants at CBCA was not quite as hot or humid but our crew is still smoking. This is their second haul of buckthorn tops & branches of the morning.

Bob put in a second straight morning removing *Phragmites* at Taylor Pond. Working with Harry, they raised the 2-day take of this aggressive plant to 2,800 stems. Taylor Pond looks much nicer.

Despite afternoon temperatures reaching the mid 90's, our tally of stems removed by a 7-person crew in a 4-hour period on June 24 is off the charts.

> ~ 2,100 *Phragmites* stems / maybe 400 more to go by Taylor Pond / only patch known at CBCA.

> ~1,200 garlic mustard stems / patch by parking area is virtually gone but other patches exist & we lack an overall assessment at CBCA.

> ~400 Japanese knotweed stems removed / patch by parking area is virtually gone but 4 other smaller patches at CBCA need attention.

> ~30 Oriental bittersweet small plants / maybe 40 more by Taylor Pond & unknown overall status at CBCA.

> ~12 lesser burdock stems from CBOC parking area / still widespread at CBCA.

> 3 curly dock stems by parking area / no estimate on CBCA overall .

> 1 wild parsnip by Taylor Pond / no estimate on CBCA overall.

> Buckthorn will be a much slower battle.

> For starters, there are several 15-20 foot trees near the start of the Interpretive Trail from the CBOC parking area that are starting to fruit = priority chain saw job. Overall estimate at CBCA exceeds 3,000 stems.

> Thanks to Gavin, Ben & Joe from MCC for greatly boosting our invasive plant removals.

> The cut-to-drown strategy for *Phragmites* stems in standing water that we started in 2024 at Taylor Pond seemed effective but stem density is definitely on the rise on the adjacent shores. This patch of *Phragmites* is arguably our biggest invasive plant risk at present.

Summer crew MCC & OLT 2025



**Where are these trails?
Maps and info are on
OLT's website and our
OLT Trail Guide/2nd
Edition (print).**

www.oronolandtrust.org

**Thank you to The Maine
Conservation Corps. and
all volunteers!**

Putnam Trail

On **June 27**, Gail White reports: The MCC TEAM along with OLT Board members Dan Baumert and Gail, worked on the Putnam Road trail. Dan instructed the team on replacing a culvert. Gravel and then crushed rock were applied to the surface.



Photos by Adam Toothaker

Above, Dave Erker moves gravel at Gould's Landing.

Gould's Landing

July 2: Gould's Landing trail improvements will help prevent wet feet! Above, Maine Conservation Corps. member Gavin, OLT Board members Dave Erker and Gail White place drainage materials.

Summer crew MCC & OLT 2025



Sklar Park

June 30: We worked at Sklar Park turning the muddy entry path from Mainewood Drive entrance into a dry, solid path.

Charlie and Joe also cut many invasives. Gavin cut up some fallen trees. Ben and Dan worked on a culvert. Dave Erker drove the gravel mover. Gail and Niles (**Orono town recreation department**) spread gravel and stone on the



Caribou Bog Outdoor Center news

By Bob Bass

The Caribou Bog Outdoor Center (CBOC) now has internet service. It is kept off unless needed, for example, as at an event.

The new, 4-bay garage now has power and lights. Much of the electrical components were donated by **Gilman Electrical Supply** and installed by **One Stop Home Repair** at a discounted rate. Thank you!

Most of the outside lights at both the CBOC and garages are motion activated. So, if you see them on from time to time, they **SHOULD** go off after 2-3 minutes if no additional motion.

Our goal is to open the CBOC on Fridays - Sundays, so volunteers and sign-ups are always needed. At some point this summer we hope to stain the CBOC deck. Watch for an email announcement and a call for volunteers!

In July, the **Maine Discovery Museum** is renting the CBOC for



two, 4-day outdoor summer camps. The CBOC is proving to be a resource for conferences, classes and day camps.

Want to reserve the space for an event? Email us at outdoorcenter@oronolandtrust.org.



Photos by Adam Toothaker



Hyland Bridge clearing

OLT Board members and volunteers worked on May 21 to clear debris from the stream crossing at Hyland Bridge. Beavers are amazing engineers in the watershed, and are not (always) deceived by human interventions. This was wet, chilly work by our crew, but they got the job done. (Now, we wait and see.)

June 7: Maine Trail Day. Thank you, Chris and Gail!

Chris Reidy, biologist, Natural Resource Conservationist and OLT Board member, agreed to lead a walk of the Veazie railroad trail on Maine Trail Day, June 7. Chris pointed out birds, plants and turtles and provided interesting information as one walks by the ponds and through the woods. Watch for OLT Trail walks on Facebook, emails and join us!



Chris and Melissa at CBCA on June 7.

Photo by Gail White

Visitors to CBCA: Drive slow!
Watch out for snapping turtles & painted
turtles on the gravel roads and the Depot yard.
They are making daily treks from the ponds.
Thanks!

If you attended the 2025 OLT Annual Meeting on May 9, you may remember our keynote presentation by Harrison Goldspiel, on the "Ecology of Vernal Pools." OLT is involved with this important aspect of our local landscapes and watershed.

Maine Legislature Passes Bill to Increase Protections for Vernal Pools

BY MAINE AUDUBON STAFF JUNE 11, 2025 (excerpt)

"Maine Audubon is pleased to announce the passage of LD 497, An Act Regarding the Regulation of Significant Vernal Pools Under the Natural Resources Protection Act in the Maine Legislature. This effort seeks to better protect state-recognized "Significant Vernal Pools," essential breeding habitat for many amphibians, insects, spiders, and crustaceans. Relatively isolated from streams and subject to periodic drying, vernal pools provide a breeding haven with greatly reduced predator populations for eggs as they develop into newly-hatched frogs and salamanders. LD 497 establishes a 100 ft. "no disturbance" zone around these vernal pools, closes an existing loophole that allows development to encircle these vernal pools in some instances, among other protections.

<https://maineaudubon.org/news/maine-legislature-passes-bill-to-increase-protections-for-vernal-pools/#:~:text=LD 497 establishes a 100,some instances, among other protections>



Photo by Jenn Dann



Orono's Street and Stream Clean-up

On Saturday, May 17 OLT volunteers Bob, Jake, Dan, Ben, and Jenn participated in **Orono's** Street and Stream Clean-up event. We patrolled Piney Knoll Conservation Area and the connecting trail easements for trash, removed some invasive multiflora rose, and planted 25 cedar seedlings with a fence to protect them from deer munching. We also found a salamander, and if we'd paid closer attention at the annual meeting, we'd probably know what kind it was! Orono thanked us with a great lunch afterwards at the Library.

Text and photo by Jenn Dann.



Photo by Linda Swackhamer

The Veazie volunteers enjoy donuts and trail work at Trail Day, June 21.

June 21: Veazie Trail Day

Veazie Conservation Commission and OLT-Veazie Lands Committee organized a Trail Day on June 21 to meet up and make trail improvements at Davis Trailhead on Davis Drive, Veazie. They are gathering ideas for grants and future town projects. Interested? Email veazietrails@gmail.com for future announcements.

Nature Clip

by J.R. Longcore

Biological Tale of an Old Silver Maple Stump

About 40 years ago a large silver maple was shading our garden plot; I cut it down, but I left a 5-foot-high stump that is still disintegrating and looks the part (Fig. 1). During this period the stump has served as habitat for an array of species, many of which breakdown cellulose (e.g., fungi, bark beetles, bacteria) in concert with the elements (sunlight, precipitation, and varying temperatures). During this ongoing process of decomposing, I explained the role of the Giant Ichneumonid Wasp in that process as this wasp parasitizes a related Horntail Wasp, which also contributes to cellulose breakdown (see Nature Clip #130, OLT website).

The cold-blooded Garter Snake commonly lies on top of the stump to warm in the sun or to disappear when disturbed into one of the many holes in the stump. One year a Black-capped Chickadee excavated a nest cavity by removing the punky wood through a knot hole. Woodpecker species, especially the Pileated Woodpecker, have made visits in search of insects and further added to the pile of debris at the stump's base. The overwhelming visual decomposers, however, are in the KINGDOM Fungi. A key role of the "white-rot" fungus (*Cerrena unicolor*) in aiding the success of the Ichneumonid Wasp is by emitting a pheromone (see Nature Clip # 130).



Fig. 1. Silver maple stump

All Photos by J. R. Longcore

Fruiting bodies of four other fungi species are currently making their home on the old stump. The largest is a cluster of three Polypore fungi (*Ganoderma applanatum*) (Fig. 2), which are often called "artist" fungi because of their white underside. Another species, with two fruiting bodies with gills is probably a *Pluteus* sp. (Fig. 3).

Another gilled fungus, but with the stem off-center, is probably a *Hypsizygus* sp. (Fig. 4). The last fungus I found growing in a clump at the base of the stump seems aptly named as Dead Man's Fingers (*Xylaria polymorpha*) (Fig. 5).

The hyphae (roots) of all these species penetrate and decompose the wood as they



Fig. 2. Polypore fungus, *Ganoderma applanatum*



Fig. 3. A gilled fungus, *Pluteus* sp.



Fig. 4. Another gilled fungus, *Hypsizygus* sp.

obtain needed nutrients. Organic debris, without the interconnected web of decomposers, would otherwise accumulate and nutrients would not be recycled and available for the next generation of flora. To complete the scene, the stump is cloaked in Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) a liana, whose leaves reveal brilliant red, yellow, and purple hues in fall.

J.R. Longcore

(With thanks to Alma Homola and Michaeline Mulvey for sharing their knowledge to identify the fungal specimens to Genus.)



Fig. 5. Dead Man's Fingers, *Xylaria polymorpha*

From OLT Board member, Bob Bass: The Maine Public Radio "Maine Calling" program on May 20 was about Maine's land trusts. You can stream it any time on the MPBN site.

Business members: Thank you for your support!

Bangor Savings Bank
Black Bear Brewery
Castine Kayak Adventures
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Joseph Reinzo Excavating and Recycling Vistra/Casco Bay Energy
Orono-Old Town Kiwanis
Penobscot Valley Ski Club
Rose Bicycle

And thank you to local vendors who are selling our reprinted, revised

OLT Trail Guide/2nd Edition:

In Orono: Ampersand, Rose Bike, UMaine Bookstore.

In Bangor: Ski Rack, Slippin' Gears, Alpenglow.

www.oronolandtrust.org



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Orono Land Trust
PO Box 4,
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Calendar

No July meeting.

**Next Board meeting: Wednesday, August 13, 6:30 pm at
Keith Anderson Community House, 19 Bennoch Rd., Orono**

Please Note: This newsletter is distributed in two versions: A printed hard copy, and a digital emailed format. If you would like to save paper and mail costs, choose email! Please notify linswak@gmail.com.

Orono Land Trust Membership Application / www.oronolandtrust.org

Orono Land Trust, PO Box 4, Orono, Maine 04473

Name: _____ Preferred email: _____

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

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