



Friends of Merrymeeting Bay

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay (FOMB) mission is to preserve, protect and improve the unique ecosystems of the Bay through:

Education

Conservation & Stewardship

Research & Advocacy

Member Events

FOMB is 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and support comes from members' tax-deductible donations and gifts.

Merrymeeting News is published by FOMB seasonally and is sent to FOMB members and other friends of the Bay.

For more information contact:

Jeff DeRosa
Executive Coordinator
207-371-8099
jeffderosa@fomb.org



2012 FOMB SUMMER OUTSIDE!

Preregistration is required. Unless stated otherwise, programs are free. For further information, don't hesitate to contact FOMB Executive Coordinator, Jeff DeRosa, at 371-8099 or jeffderosa@fomb.org

- June 30** **Bird Sounds and Walk with Will Broussard**
Bowdoinham, 7 to 9 am, contact Ed Friedman at 666-3372
- June 30/Jul 1** **Living History Reenactment on Swan Island***
Various Times, contact Kendall Marden at 547-5344, \$8.00
- July 7** **Palmer Pond Paddle with Ed Friedman**
Dresden, 9 to 11 am, contact Ed at 666-3372
- July 7** **Second Chance Wildlife Rehabilitators with Dawn Brown***
Swan Island 5:30 pm, contact Kendall Marden, 547-5344, \$8.00
- July 18** **Learn about Peregrine Falcons with Master Falconer, Larry Barnes***
Swan Island 5:30 pm, contact Kendall Marden, 547-5344, \$8.00
- July 21** **Sheep Dog Demo and Grass Farm Tour with Joe Grady**
Two Coves Farm, Harpswell, 9 am to Noon, contact Jeff DeRosa, 371-8099
- July 28** **2012 Richmond Days with Swan Island Tours***
All Day, contact Kendall Marden, 547-5344, \$5 for Swan Island tours
- Aug 4** **Sturgeon and Bird Island Paddle with Anne Hammond**
Butler Cove, Bath, 2 to 5:30 pm, contact Anne at 442-0375
- Aug 11** **Photography Above & Below the Bay with Heather Perry****
Bowdoinham, 11 am, contact Jeff DeRosa at 371-8099
- Aug 11** **Waterfront Party hosted by Ducks Unlimited**
Bowdoinham Waterfront, morning, contact Jeff DeRosa at 371-8099
- Aug 18** **Surficial Geology of Merrymeeting Bay with Tom Weddle**
Brunswick, 9 to 1 pm, contact Jeff DeRosa at 371-8099
- Aug 26** **Rare Mud Plant Walk with Andy Cutko**
Choice View Farm, Dresden, 2 to 4 pm, contact Andy at 666-3162
- Sep 14-16** **Celebrate Bowdoinham 250!*****
Bowdoinham, Various Activities, contact Nicole Briand at 666-5531
- Sep 22** **Swan Island Outing with Jay Robbins**
Richmond, 9 am to 1 pm, contact Jay at 737-2239, \$5

*Co-sponsored with Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

**Co-sponsored with Merrymeeting Arts Center

***Event hosted by the town of Bowdoinham



Rachel Carson's "Sense of Wonder"

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, the Friends of Hog Island presents Kaiulani Lee in a one-woman tour-de-force performance of Rachel Carson's *Sense of Wonder*, a two-act drama, on July 28, 2012 at the historic Lincoln Theater in downtown Damariscotta at 7 p.m. For more information or reservations, please e-mail Friends of Hog Island at president@fohi.org.

THE DIFFERENCE OF ONE

I first heard about Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, and founder Captain Paul Watson, when I was living in Santa Cruz, California. Captain Watson had docked his Sea Shepherd vessel and surprised the crowd at a local music venue when he got on stage and awarded the band for their support of his organization. Although the Sea Shepherds have been saving whales in the Southern Ocean for decades, Animal Planet picked up the story a few years ago turning it into an extremely popular show called *Whale Wars*. Like many, I quickly became addicted to the show covering his adventures in the Southern Ocean surrounding Antarctica. Here his Sea Shepherd crew uses diverse tactics to stop the illegal poaching of whales by Japanese fleets in the Southern Oceans Sanctuary. There are international marine laws protecting whales, but no authorities to enforce the laws, which is why the Sea Shepherds intervene. They save hundreds of whales and other marine animals every year, and aim to economically sink the illegal Japanese whaling fleet.

While becoming familiar with Watson's activism, I was working for a small ocean conservation organization called Save Our Shores (SOS). SOS educates about human impacts on the ocean, and advocates for better policies and behaviors

“Paul has been my son's hero for three years now. It was an evening he'll never forget. As we walked to the car, he told me, ‘Dad, this is the best day of my life!’”

-David, Rockport

to reduce those impacts. SOS hosts hundreds of public beach cleanups every year and tracks all of the trash collected, so it can be used as valuable data on the health of the beaches and waterways. Using that information, SOS presents convincing arguments to local businesses and governments to stop trash at its source. In fact, SOS' outreach built such strong community support from those wanting a cleaner and healthier ocean community that it ultimately translated into a ban on plastic bags in Santa Cruz!

But, despite our advocacy and community support, year after year there were thousands of pounds of trash collected from the beaches. The problem seemed endless. I learned about the North Pacific Gyre; also known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, it is an area of plastic trash at least twice the size of Texas swirling around the Pacific Ocean between San Francisco and Hawaii. In this area, plastic outweighs plankton in some places 6:1, in others, over 100:1. And this plastic trash accumulation is happening in all of the five ocean gyres. It is a problem of enormous magnitude and on some days, I felt helpless in the face of it. The devastation to the



Captain Paul Watson well-rested after a night at the Haraseeket Inn

oceans seemed overwhelming, and I needed to know there are people out there who can actually make a difference in the health of the planet.

This is why Captain Watson and his direct action techniques inspire me. He has put his life on the line to save marine animals – he knows that maintaining biodiversity on this planet is the only way we are all going to survive. I know how long it takes to change public opinion, and how long it takes the government to pass laws to regulate or protect the environment. I also know that despite protective laws, enforcement from the proper authorities often does not exist. Every day we wait, whales are brutally killed. Captain Watson doesn't wait. As a result, he is constantly harassed and sometimes accused of being an eco-terrorist, among other things. But none of this deters him; it seems to only fuel his fight.

I moved to Maine just a few months ago and thought Friends of Merrymeeting Bay was the kind of organization I could get behind. Recently I was asked to join the Steering Committee and a few days later, learned we would be hosting Captain Paul Watson as part of our annual lecture series. I knew right away I had made the right decision in joining the FOMB team! Friends of Merrymeeting Bay succeeded in packing over 250 enthusiastic fans into the Maine Maritime Museum to hear and support Captain Watson, showing that Watson's inspiration runs deep in the Northeast (listeners came from as far as Montreal!) where people are firmly connected to the environment and the ocean. My first few months with FOMB couldn't have gone better. I'm just excited to see what inspiration lies around the next corner, and I hope to meet all of you along the way!

Michelle Hohensee

COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

Captain Paul Watson enjoys a large global following. As a result, his mere presence offered FOMB a tremendous opportunity to raise money—a lot of money.

Our Board was not seduced.

Watson’s popularity usually results in high ticket prices. This, of course, prevents many fans from enjoying his presence. Here at FOMB we find inaccessibility unacceptable. For this reason we disobeyed the non-profit fundraising playbook and offered this talk—like all FOMB educational events—free to the public.

Additionally, MPBN covered our event for statewide broadcast on “Speaking in Maine.” As you see below, some of the attendees clearly appreciated the accessibility.



Watson with FOMB’s committed team (sans Nate Gray). L-R: Michelle Hohensee, Captain Paul Watson, Ed Friedman, Kathleen McGee, Sarah Cowperthwaite, Andrew Fiori, Tom Walling, Jeff DeRosa, Leon Ogrodnik.

“It was so amazing to meet him and listen to him speak to-night. Never in my life would I ever have thought I could meet him. Thank you. I almost cried when I shook his hand. He has done so much and he is someone everyone should look up to.”

Octavia, Dresden

“Enjoyed the presentation immensely! Thank you, Friends, for sponsoring this important event!”

Barbara, Boston

“I had a great time! It was worth the drive! Thanks for hosting this wonderful evening.”

Theresa, Weymouth, MA

“Hats off to FOMB for bringing in a true hero. You all do great work. Who amongst us from the 60s and 70s did not reach a point where they felt that resistance is the only way to save lives?”

Lenny, Maine

“Thanks so much for your fantastic effort and dedication. It was such a great treat to hear directly from and to meet Captain Paul Watson. Thank you for that opportunity”

Bob, Portland

Singing in the Rain in Maine

I feel at home when I return to Maine,
To see again the lobster and the moose,
Singing old ballads in the morning rain,
Hearing the cry of the Canada goose.

Speaking with caring Northeast folk in Bath,
So many years since we crossed Casco Bay,
Displaying our black flag with crook and staff,
Watching blossoms emerge in early May.

In the dark Maine woods there’s no time to walk,
Under the boughs of the white pine forests,
Only a few hours to greet and talk,
No time to be a curious tourist.

Picked up some good old songs by Schooner Fare,
Had the best pea soup in many a year,
Missed the alewife’s awesome run, missed the bear,
To the Broad Arrow Tavern for a beer.

South to the Portland Jetport for my plane,
Off to the Rocky Mountains I now go,
Of the state of Maine, I cannot complain,
A place where memories, like deep rivers flow.

-Captain Paul Watson

FRIENDS OF MERRYMEETING BAY TO SUE EPA OVER ST. CROIX ALEWIVES

Alewives play a keystone role in the river and coastal ocean ecosystems, serving as food for many other species of fish, marine mammals, and birds. Alewives are fished for by commercial and recreational fishermen, are valuable to fisherman and related coastal economies as bait for lobster and recreational fishermen, and as forage for commercially valuable species like cod, hali-but, and tuna. Here in Maine, alewives are a native species and our watersheds serve as prime spawning habitat for this im-portant fish. Although alewives are abundant, no river system in Maine holds more potential for alewives than the St. Croix. In fact, no river in the world holds more potential for alewives (native only to the Atlantic coast) than this Downeast water-way.

“A vibrant Maine economy requires a healthy environment, in turn dependent on complete biodiversity in our rivers”

-Kathleen McGee

Sadly, the native run of 21 million St. Croix alewives has plummeted by over 90 percent. This depletion is the result of a 2008 Maine law that eliminates alewife access to their necessary spawning habitat, located above Grand Falls Dam near Princeton. Under this law, the Commissioners of Maine Departments of Marine Resources, and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife are directed to eradicate alewives and blueback herring from their historic spawning and nursery habitat in the St. Croix River basin. This is accomplished using stop logs to block the dam’s fishway. These fishways were installed some years ago and paid for by US Fish and Wildlife Service.

To ensure restoration of alewives, Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, Doug Watts and Kathleen McGee have filed a 60-day Notice



Grand Falls Fishway = Closed

Continued from page 4

of Intent (NOI) to sue the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Clean Water Act for EPA's complicity in eradicating native alewives from Maine's St. Croix River. The three parties assert EPA violates the Clean Water Act by refusing to strike down Maine's 2008 law. Watts, a wildlife photographer who has captured images of alewives for years, recently said "the 2008 law is like ordering cardinals, bluebirds and chickadees be eradicated from Maine." We couldn't agree more. Accordingly, FOMB Chair, Ed Friedman, publically stated: "What the Maine legislature did in response to a few shrill voices is absolutely unconscionable and in total violation of the Clean Water Act. By ignoring this, the EPA has only added insult to injury. Neither fish species dependent on river herring, nor the endangered Gulf of Maine ground-fishing industry can afford the continued collapse of St. Croix alewives. We need healthy rivers to maintain a healthy Gulf and alewives make that connection."

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay believes alewife restoration is paramount for both healthy rivers and a healthy Gulf of Maine. Unfortunately, not everyone agrees. In fact, earlier this year, U.S. Federal District Court Judge Nancy Torreson dismissed a complaint brought by the same parties directed at the State of Maine. There, plaintiffs challenged the 2008 Alewife law arguing Maine law was preempted by the federal Clean Water Act. In her decision, Judge Torreson declared, "The CWA is structured to provide an administrative process for working out any conflicts between a state law and the CWA, and the citizen suit provision provides a safety net for correcting any administrative missteps that might occur along the way. This process must be given a chance to work."

The three parties, represented by Earthjustice attorneys Roger Fleming and Erica Fuller, claim the EPA has ignored their non-discretionary duty to review a *de facto* water classification/quality change made when Maine blocked the river off to alewives and other native fish. States are required to submit water quality classification changes to the EPA for approval prior to the change becoming effective. "Good law is based on sound fact," said Fleming. "Maine misses on both counts here and the EPA is shirking its obligation to veto Maine's action."

This case specifically challenges, via the EPA's failure to act, the 2008 Maine law ordering Maine fish and wildlife officials to prevent alewives from migrating past the Grand Falls Dam. The law was put in place at the request of sport fishermen who catch non-native species of bass in the St. Croix watershed and mistakenly believe alewives negatively affect their fishery. Prior to the implementation of a similar



Alewives Photo: Doug Watts

law in 1995, the St. Croix River contained perhaps the largest population of alewives in North America and now only a small remnant remains. Elimination of a pre-existing river use (alewives) is illegal under the CWA.

"In our original lawsuit, we attempted a direct approach, naming Maine as the defendant since they were the responsible party that passed the extinction law and actually blocked fish passage" said Erica Fuller. "We are not happy with Judge Torreson's decision and will continue to pursue legal challenges until the alewife barrier is removed." Longtime FOMB member, Kathleen McGee adds, "The St. Croix must be opened to alewives to rebuild and assure strong economic and environmental vitality in eastern Maine and in the Gulf of Maine."

Since the original law suit was filed, the National Marine Fisheries Service began an evaluation of whether to list alewives as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act.

EDUCATION

Rain or Shine . . .

Wearing thin plastic waste bags for protection from a warm spring rain, 154 fourth graders descended upon Chop Point School for FOMB's 2012 Spring Bay Day. And once again Bay Day's attendance continues its gradual increase – an increase spurred by three triggers.

Trigger number one, of course, is the unwavering hospitality of Chop Point School. For those who have not been there, Chop Point is a gem. Perched on one of the most stunning properties in Maine, Chop Point School offers excellent resources and FOMB is indebted to the hospitality provided by their talented team. Trigger number two is our committed network of volunteers. Before FOMB I've worked for nonprofits with enthusiastic volunteers; but I've never experienced a network comparable to Friends of Merrymeeting Bay. Intelligent, hard-working and fun to be around, FOMB volunteers allow Bay Day thrive! And then there is trigger number three . . .

In Maine the growing popularity of austerity measures mean local schools are experiencing massive budget cuts. Consequently, important field trips like Bay Day have been eliminated from a teacher's toolbox. In response, Friends of Merrymeeting Bay's Steering Committee has increased funding for trigger number three; FOMB's Bay Day bus scholarship



Beach Seining with Toby Bonney: Local students practice before hitting the water—hands on education made possible by FOMB's transportation scholarship

made possible by your generous membership support. Right now it's hard to imagine Bay Day without this scholarship. After all, without funding 64 students would not have attended this year's Spring Bay Day. Yes, that's three regional schools that would have missed out on free interactive education. Although FOMB is committed to offering this scholarship, we are also looking for a donor who would like to sponsor this important resource. If you or someone you know may be interested, please contact me at 371-8099 or jeffderosa@fomb.org.



Volunteer Jay Robbins teaches 4th graders about Archaeology

Additionally, we always welcome new volunteers! If you choose to help out you'll be joining our skilled team of enthusiastic volunteers. This spring's team included Petey Ambrose, Leslie Anderson, David Barber, Ed Benedikt, Toby Bonney, Kent Cooper, Sarah Cowperthwaite, Marianne DuBois, Carole and Russ Dyer, Steve Eagles, Peter Goodwin, Kerry Hardy, Bill Heaphy, Michelle Hopenhese, Joan Llorente, Isabelle Llorente, Monique and Greg Lucarelli, Kathleen McGee, Ed Friedman, Colleen Moore, Steve Musica., Leon Ogrodnik, Stuart Reynolds, Cathy Reynolds, Diane Richmond, Jay Robbins, Carole Sargent, George Sergeant, Jamie Silvestri, Betsy Steen, Geri Vistein, Tom Walling, David Whittlesey, and an amazing group of students from Morse High School. Also, let's not forget Wild Oats in Brunswick for keeping everyone well fed. Thank you all!

ARCHAEOLOGISTS NEED YOU!

The Maine Department of Transportation is replacing the Richmond-Dresden bridge over the Kennebec River beginning in 2013. The new bridge approach road will pass through the site of Fort Richmond, the first of the Kennebec River forts that was constructed in 1721 and decommissioned in 1755. Also impacted will be the site of the Parks family homestead that was present between ca. 1775 and 1830. Preliminary archaeological testing by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) revealed intact structure foundations, palisade trenches and fort period artifacts, as well as refuse deposits from the Parks occupation. Excavations by the MHPC on this important site have just begun, and will continue through the spring, summer and fall of 2012. Volunteers are needed to assist with field work consisting of excavation and soil sifting at the site in Richmond, and with artifact processing in Richmond and at the Fort Western Museum in Augusta. To volunteer please contact Kathy Bridge at 207-725-8432 or via email at snowbridge@gwi.net.



Work is already underway!

WE NEED YOU! PLEASE SUPPORT OUR IMPORTANT WORK

FOMB Leadership

Our accomplishments are due to the hard work of dedicated volunteers, especially those who serve on our committees. If you want to get involved and serve, please contact the committee chair or Jeff DeRosa. Please join us!

Steering Committee

Ed Friedman, Chair (Bowdoinham)
 Andrew Fiori, Vice Chair (Bowdoinham)
 Sarah Cowperthwaite, Secretary (Topsham)
 Nate Gray, Treasurer (Freeport)
 Tom Walling (Bowdoinham)
 Leon Ogrodnik (Harpwell)
 Michelle Hohensee (Brunswick)

Education Committee

Betsy Steen, Co-Chair, 666-3468
 Tom Walling, Co-Chair, 666-5837

Conservation and Stewardship Committee

Monique Lucarelli, Chair, 443-8477

Membership and Fundraising Committee

Nate Gray, Chair, 865-9377

Research and Advocacy Committee

Ed Friedman, Chair, 666-3372

Executive Coordinator

Jeff DeRosa, (Bath) 371-8099

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay • Box 233 • Richmond, Maine 04357

Membership Levels

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000+ Sturgeon | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Striped Bass | <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Smelt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$750 American Eel | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Shad | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Wild Salmon | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Alewife | |

Name _____

Street Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

\$7 Enclosed (optional) for a copy of *Conservation Options: A Guide for Maine Land Owners* [\$5 for book, \$2 for postage].

Renewal New Member Send information about volunteer opportunities.





Friends of Merymeeting Bay
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ORGANIZATION

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Determination . . .

Alewife Pushing Forward

Wild rivers play
the old dam clenches
Herons perch near, low and high
No-fishing the rapids
Down in the laughing murk
A shiny alewife fights
Pushing forward, forward, ever-forward
To stay right where she is.

-Joshua O'Donnell



Photo: Nate Gray