

ACADIA



The Friends of Acadia Journal WINTER/SPRING 2025



'24 STORM DAMAGE UPDATE

MUCH ACCOMPLISHED,
AND MUCH STILL TO DO

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GULL

WHY MONITORING MATTERS

DEDICATION TO VEGETATION

ACADIA'S 35-PLUS-YEAR INVASIVE
PLANT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

PURCHASE YOUR **PARK PASS!**

Whether walking, bicycling, riding the Island Explorer, or driving through the park, we all must obtain a park pass. Eighty percent of all fees paid in Acadia National Park stay in Acadia, to be used for projects that directly benefit park visitors and resources.



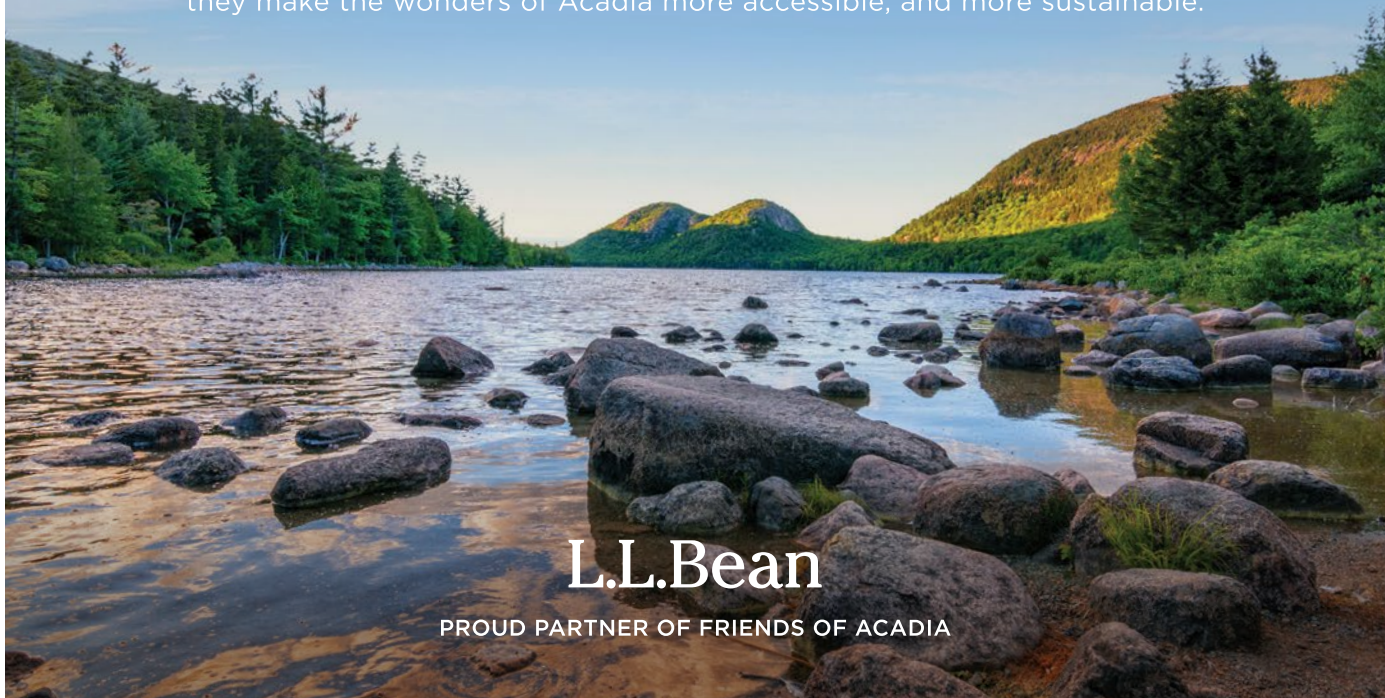
BUY A PASS ONLINE AND PRINT before you arrive at the park. This allows you to drive directly to a trailhead/parking area & display your pass from your vehicle.

Acadia National Park passes are available online:
www.recreation.gov/sitepass/74271

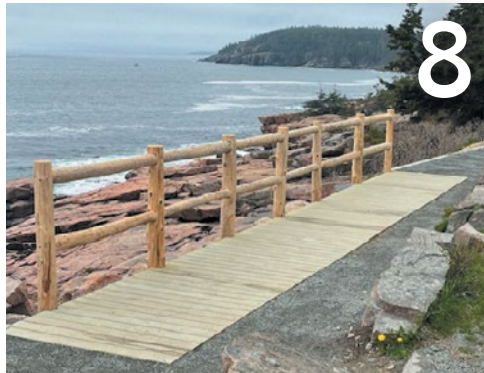
Annual park passes are also available at certain Acadia-area town offices and local chambers of commerce. Visit www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/fees.htm

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ACADIA

The Friends of Acadia Journal

WINTER/SPRING 2025

Volume 30 No.1

*A Magazine About Acadia National Park
and Surrounding Communities*

Friends of Acadia preserves, protects, and promotes stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Acadia is published three times a year. Submissions and letters are welcome.

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EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Perrin Doniger

EDITOR
Shannon Bryan

PHOTO EDITOR
Julia Walker Thomas

COPY EDITOR
Elisabeth Pepper

DESIGN
Lise Williams/Indigo Art Design

PRINTING
Penmor Lithographers

PUBLISHER
Eric Stiles



Composite created from this single unedited image of common terns fishing at sunset off the Isle au Haut section of Acadia National Park.

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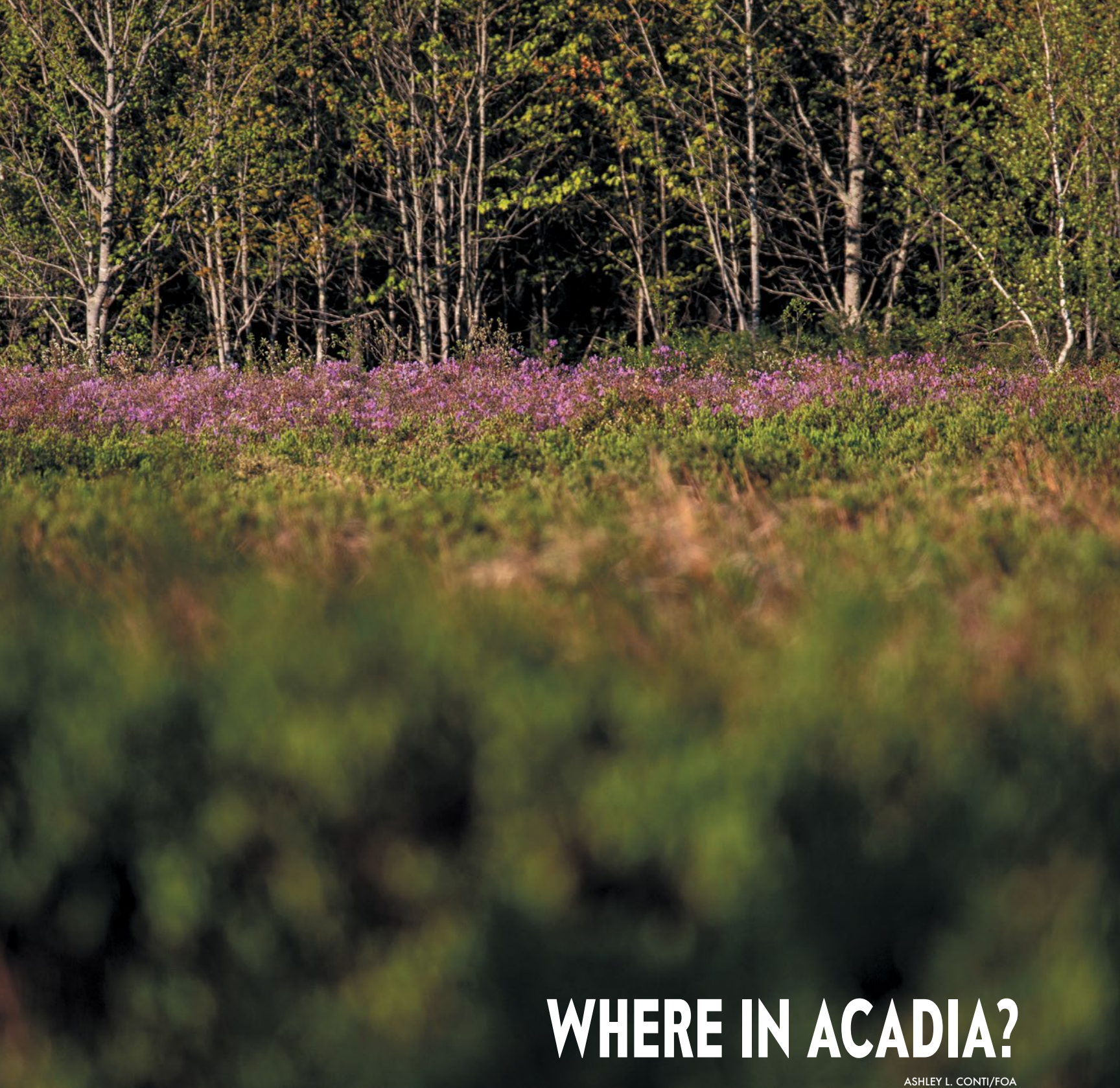
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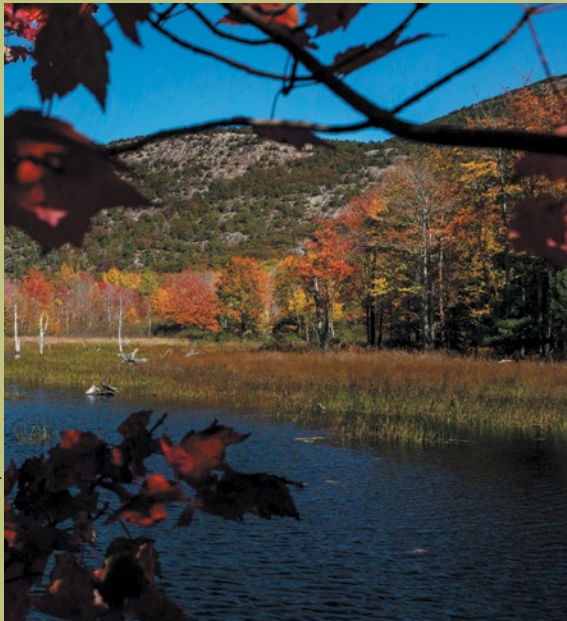
WHERE IN ACADIA?

ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

In late spring, this splash of magenta welcomes viewers who pause to take in the sweeping view of a vital watershed.

If you think you can identify the location of this scene, email us at editor@friendsofacadia.org and include a personal story or memory with your answer. We'll print our favorite responses in the next issue of Acadia and send a Friends of Acadia hat to a randomly selected correct respondent.

READERS RESPOND TO "WHERE IN ACADIA?"



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

Huguenot Head from the Canon Brook Trail

Thanks to the readers who responded to our "Where in Acadia?" question in the fall magazine and correctly identified the location as a view of Huguenot Head from the Canon Brook Trail. As the clue indicated, this trail may only look like a round hill (Round Hill being one of its earlier names), but the name Huguenot Head was given by the "Father of Acadia," George B. Dorr in honor of Pierre Dugua, Sieur de Mons (also sometimes spelled "Monts"). Dugua was a Huguenot (i.e., French Protestant) and explorer in the Acadia region who lived from around 1560 to 1628. Hence the name Huguenot Head.

Sieur de Mons in Acadia, which today includes the Spring House, Nature Center, and Wild Gardens of Acadia, is named for Dugua as well, and the park was originally called Sieur de Monts National Monument before Congress designated it as a national park in 1919.

Below are a few of the correct responses (or so close we're including them) that we received from members.

"This looks like the corner of the Kane Path (where the wooden bogs begin) and the Beaver Pond that comes in from Route 3. Looking at Huguenot and Champlain in the background there. Facing this direction, if you went left, you would head towards the tarn, and if you went right, you would head towards the end Murray Young Trail and the south end of Dorr Mt.

My husband and I love to walk past this view and take a left to East Canon Brook or the Andrew Murray Young Trail. These are some of our favorites!"

- Megan Bourke, Seal Harbor, ME

"That is Huguenot Head from the perspective of The Tarn. We love the Beachcroft Trail to and from the Head. In our opinion, that trail is the best example of trail design, engineering, and craftsmanship in the park."

- David and Mo Dowd, Needham, MA

"I'm sure I've hiked the engineering work of art that is the Beachcroft Trail more than 100 times over the 70+ years I've been traipsing Acadia's trails. However, on precious few of those occasions have I bothered to veer off and make my way up the beautifully rounded, sign-free dome featured on the 'Where in Acadia' page of the fall 2024 issue of the FOA journal – Huguenot Head. Note to self: 'Visit HH the next time you're rambling up Beachcroft.'"

- Charlotte Stetson, Hancock, ME

In each issue of Acadia magazine, we post a photo and clues to help readers identify the location. If you think you can correctly identify the location of the photo, email editor@friendsofacadia.org. We'll run a few of the correct responses in the forthcoming issue, and we love it when you send photos and stories to accompany your answers. Thanks to all of our readers who play along!



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

Raising a Glass to Everyone Who Helped Us Raise the Roof!

This spring, seasonal employees working in Acadia will move into a newly completed, eight-bedroom housing complex at Dane Farm in Seal Harbor. With construction finished last fall, crews spent the last few months planting grass, moving in furniture, and putting the final touches on a major development in our ongoing efforts to alleviate the park's critical housing shortage.

This milestone would not have been possible without generous donors like you who helped us reach our \$10 million goal earlier this year. Your philanthropic investment will unlock an expected \$21 million in federal matching funds and an additional \$2 million from the National Park Foundation, helping Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park secure a total of \$33 million for housing.

Building on the momentum of Dane Farm, Acadia National Park is putting these funds to immediate use. Construction geared up this spring on the most ambitious housing initiative yet: the first phase of a 56-bedroom facility at Harden Farm in Bar Harbor.

A Collective Achievement

Reaching our ambitious \$10 million fundraising goal was a significant achievement – one made possible by generous contributions led by the Cornelia Cogswell Rossi Foundation in early 2023 and completed this spring by Kate and Andrew Davis, who matched \$1 million in donations. These gifts and matching funds helped catalyze a groundswell of support from over 321 total donors, many of whom gave for the first time. To each and every one of you: thank you! Your support will make a lasting impact on Acadia, not just in housing but across every aspect of park operations for decades to come.

Addressing a Critical Need

Building housing for Acadia's seasonal workers is vital to the park's success. Without affordable housing, the park has struggled to fill up to 30% of its seasonal positions in recent years. This shortage has forced the delay of essential projects such as trail maintenance, facilities upkeep, habitat preservation, and visitor programming. We are relieved that, thanks to the support of the public and Maine's delegation, the hiring freeze on seasonal workers was lifted in February. These new housing options will help the park attract and retain the skilled seasonal workers Acadia needs this year and into the future.

Comprehensive Housing Initiatives

Beyond the developments at Dane Farm and Harden Farm, Friends of Acadia is helping address the short-

term housing needs of Acadia and its partners with a multifaceted approach that includes the renovation and expansion of options at four additional locations.

- **Jordan River Road:** Acquired by Friends of Acadia in July 2024, this 18-acre property in Trenton includes six two-bedroom townhomes. Renovated over the winter, these single or double occupancy units are now ready to house seasonal staff, with priority given to Island Explorer bus drivers. Over time, this additional housing will help support the Island Explorer's growth, as new buses are added to the fleet starting as early as 2027.
- **White Birches Campground Upgrade:** Recognizing the diverse housing needs of Acadia's seasonal staff, 13 RV pads were created at White Birches Campground in Southwest Harbor and equipped with water, electric, and septic. The former commercial campground now serves seasonal employees and volunteers who utilize recreational vehicles during their tenure at Acadia.
- **Kingsleigh House:** Purchased by Friends of Acadia in 2023, this 10-bedroom former bed-and-breakfast in Southwest Harbor opened to seasonal staff last year and is ready to welcome tenants again for the upcoming season.
- **Park Housing Renovation:** Friends of Acadia helped fund the rehabilitation of three bedrooms in existing park buildings in Seal Cove and Bar Harbor.

These new accommodations can provide housing for up to 58 seasonal employees in 2025, with the first phase of Harden Farm adding another 28 beds as soon as 2026. Together, these projects represent significant progress toward our long-term goal of creating 130 new beds over the next decade. In addition to supporting Acadia, they will also help ease Mount Desert Island's broader housing shortage by reducing demand for local rentals.

A Heartfelt Thank You

To our donors, partners, and community members: your support has been the cornerstone of these accomplishments. These new accommodations will help ensure Acadia has the seasonal workforce it needs to protect and preserve the park for generations to come. Together, room by room, we are building a stronger foundation for Acadia's future.

With deepest gratitude,



—Eric Stiles

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"These new accommodations can provide housing for up to 58 seasonal employees in 2025, with the first phase of Harden Farm adding another 28 beds as soon as 2026. Together, these projects represent significant progress toward our long-term goal of creating 130 new beds over the next decade."

To learn more and support these ongoing efforts, visit friendsofacadia.org/housing.

DONOR DOLLARS AT WORK

Heavy equipment and a new roof for Bass Harbor Head Light Station

The Scoop on Heavy Equipment

Updated equipment is helping park staff do their work, thanks to donors like you.

Last year, Friends of Acadia purchased a new excavator, two dump trucks, and a diesel tractor for Acadia National Park. Heavy equipment is integral to keeping Acadia's trails, roads, structures, and carriage roads in good shape, from schlepping stone and gravel to moving soil, sand, and the remnants of wind-topped trees.

It's also crucial to cleanup and repair in the aftermath of severe storms, like those that impacted the park last winter.

The purchase of the excavator was made possible in large part thanks to funds raised during last year's Acadia Storm Damage Giving Challenge. Donors Kay and Bill Koplovitz offered a \$100,000 gift, which was more than matched thanks to gifts large and small for a total of \$250,000. Those dollars also went toward post-storm repairs, as well as volunteer cleanup days at Schoodic, Seawall Picnic Area, and other locations in the park throughout the season.

Our 2024 Paddle Raise also raised funds for heavy equipment, including two dump trucks purchased last year. These purchases replaced heavy equipment purchased in the early 90s as part of the carriage road restoration project. The park did an exceptional job keeping that equipment in great shape for as long as they did!



EVIE LINANTUD/FOA

ABOVE: Acadia National Park staff pose in a new excavator, recently purchased using Friends of Acadia funds.

BELOW: Repairs and new roof for the Bass Harbor Head Light Station funded by the 2018 Friends of Acadia Annual Benefit Paddle Raise.



KIP WING/AERIAL AESTHETIC/FOA

Bass Harbor Head Light Station Roof

Dollars raised during our 2018 Paddle Raise continue to fund repairs at the historic Bass Harbor Head Light Station. This year, the lightkeeper's house got a new roof.

The park acquired the light station from the United States Coast Guard in 2020, and the Paddle Raise helped make restoration efforts possible. (The Coast Guard still maintains the light.) Like any home, there's always work to be done—and Bass Harbor Head Light Station was built in 1858! But funds from this Paddle Raise continue to help restore it and transform it into a permanent cultural and educational resource.

Our North Star: Preserving Acadia for Future Generations

Since we moved to Maine, the Schneider family has always found winter in Acadia to be particularly magical. I was reminded of this as I skied 12 miles across perfectly groomed carriage roads on a February weekend. In many ways, winter in Acadia is the most peaceful time of the year.

Yet, January of 2024 was anything but peaceful when Acadia was hit by two back-to-back winter storms within days of one another. The island, and the state of Maine, saw storm surges like never before.

In the aftermath of these storms, I went out in the park with our leadership team to get an idea of the storm's impact on the park. It wasn't lost upon us that this was no ordinary winter storm. (See the following pages of this magazine for images captured after the storm to get a better sense of the damage.)

Thanks to support from Friends of Acadia, many dedicated volunteers, and the efforts of our maintenance crews, we successfully cleaned up enough to be able to have the park open and accessible to visitors during our busy 2024 summer season. In fact, in most places in the park, it may have looked like everything was back to normal.

The reality, though, is that a lot of damage remained. For example, the roof of Rockefeller Hall, a historic building on our Schoodic Institute campus, suffered extensive damage. This led to major leaks, causing damage to interior walls and ceilings.

The stairs providing access to Sand Beach endured structural damage because of the storm surge and high levels of erosion to the adjacent bluffs that threaten to undermine the area. Temporary repairs were made to stabilize the stairs, and park staff continue to assess the stairs for safety until a more permanent repair can be completed.

Thanks in part to the work of Maine's federal delegation, Congress passed a supplemental appropriation that allocated funding to the National Park Service for damage across the agency from extreme storms and natural disasters. Acadia National Park will receive some of that funding to fix damage caused in the 2024 storms. This will give us an opportunity to build back in a more resilient fashion, to make investments that will hopefully stand the test of time—and future storms.

The National Park Service's mission statement has always been my north star: to preserve unimpaired for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of future generations. We want the work we do and investments we make today to have a lasting impact so that Acadia can be a place to visit and make memories forever.

It's this mission that constantly guides our work—and it's this mindset that is going to guide our approach to storm restoration. What solutions will help native plants and animals thrive in our ecosystems? What structural solutions will help prevent future damage from extreme storms? How can we share lessons learned with our community so we can be better prepared in the future?

Change is inevitable in the world we inhabit. Oftentimes, those changes can be daunting, especially when the most current science says we will need to prepare for a world with more frequent and more intense storms. The National Park Service's mission keeps us grounded and guides our path forward. We will always find ways to preserve the power of this place through the turbulence.



—Kevin Schneider

SUPERINTENDENT'S VIEW



"We want the work we do and investments we make today to have a lasting impact so that Acadia can be a place to visit and make memories forever."



COURTESY PHIL LICHTENSTEIN

Cross-country ski tracks are visible on a section of groomed carriage road.

Storm Damage UPDATE

Much accomplished—but plenty still to do—a year after intense winter storms walloped Acadia National Park

BY SHANNON BRYAN

Acadia National Park still bears scars from severe winter weather in early 2024. Back-to-back mid-January storms brought intense winds and extremely high tides (the highest water levels recorded in Bar Harbor since the tide gauge was installed in 1947). Several park locations experienced significant damage—severe erosion, scattered rocks and debris, downed trees, and sections of coastal paths unceremoniously disappeared. While those storms packed an extraordinary punch, park managers were quick to respond. Crews assessed areas for safety and shored up where they could, then began the detailed process of surveying and tracking the impact and prioritizing repairs.

“Given that we had limited resources, our trail crew had to completely redo their workplan, swapping out previously planned projects to work on cleaning up and repairing damage from the storms,” said Matt Outhier, chief of project management at Acadia National Park. “They were able to quickly pivot and focus on the

park’s most-used trails, so they were safe and usable for summer.”

Deciding what, when, and how to repair is no easy feat. “These decisions don’t happen in a vacuum. They include people from multiple park departments—trails, maintenance, cultural/natural resources—ensuring we do the work mindfully,” Outhier said.

“Our ultimate goal is to make a fix once and have it last,” said Amanda Pollock, public affairs officer at Acadia National Park. “We’re always working to make good investment of Americans’ dollars.”

“We’re so grateful to Friends of Acadia. Without those donor funds, much of last year’s work would not have happened.”

In addition, Congress passed a supplemental appropriation this winter that allocates funding to the National Park Service for damage from extreme storms and natural disasters. Acadia National Park will receive some of that funding, enabling the park to tackle remaining damage.

OCEAN PATH

More than 1,000 feet of trail washed out, and many trees were blown down during the storms. Repair work to reopen the trail last spring included two temporary boardwalks and stonework. While the work doesn’t look temporary, more permanent repairs are planned in the next several months to shore up the path and improve its resiliency. Friends of Acadia funds helped support this work, and equipment purchased by Friends of Acadia in previous years, like the Canycom rubber track carrier, helped park crews get the work done.



SEAWALL PICNIC AREA AND CAMPGROUND

Storm winds blew down hundreds of trees in the campground and picnic area, destroyed and pushed picnic tables into the woods, and scattered cobble and debris. More than 700 trees were removed. Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park co-lead volunteer days to help clean up and carry out cut trees from the woods. Scattered rock was cleared and picnic tables replaced.



NPS PHOTO
JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA



BLUE DUCK SHIPS STORE - ISLESFORD

Wind tore off siding and waves undermined the foundation of the Blue Duck, a former ship's chandlery built in 1853 that currently serves as home to Islesford Boatworks, a nonprofit community-based summer boatbuilding program on Little Cranberry Island (a.k.a. Islesford). The historic building's foundation was restored last spring by Islesford Boatworks and a dedicated crew of community members.

Islesford Boatworks leases the building from the park and is responsible for its upkeep and repairs, although the dollars they pay in rent are kept in a pool of money dedicated to the building's maintenance. That meant the Islesford Boatworks staff could immediately pull from those funds to begin repairs.

"It's such a unique partnership," said Pollock. "Because of the kind of work Islesford Boatworks does, they were uniquely positioned to do that historical rehab. They have the skill set to get that done. Rehabbing a historic building is a billion times harder than a modern building; it's a huge asset to have them there."

Outhier added that structural engineers from Redwood National Park helped draft a roadmap showing how to get those repairs done. "It's a great success story," he said. "Although there's more work to be done long term."



NPS PHOTO



AMANDA POLLOCK/NPS

SHIP HARBOR TRAIL

Wave action broke apart a section of bog walk during the storms (carrying it off to Seawall) and winds tore an information wayside from its metal base and tossed it into the woods. Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park trail volunteers repaired the bog walk, finding large sections of the original still in great condition, albeit displaced. They were able to place it back where it belonged. The wayside has not yet been replaced.



NIKKI BURTIS/FOA



NPS PHOTO



MATT OUTHIER/NPS

SCHOODIC PENINSULA

Waves overtopped the east side of Schoodic Loop Road, flooding back-barrier wetlands and moving cobble beaches and coping stones onto and across the road. Trees were blown down and debris washed up on shore; Frazer Point Picnic Area was flooded. Many of the roofs across Schoodic Institute's multi-building campus experienced damage, in particular Rockefeller Hall. Roof repairs are ongoing, with plans to repair Schoodic Shores and Suites this spring. Friends of Acadia funds supported temporary

repairs to Schoodic Loop Road, although longer-term repairs are needed. In addition, Friends of Acadia and Acadia National Park led volunteer days to help clean up scattered rocks, branches, and debris.



NPS PHOTO

SAND BEACH

Sand dunes were significantly eroded during the storms, causing stabilization concerns with the stairs leading down to the beach. Emergency repairs were made under the stairs to stabilize them with funding support from Friends of Acadia. Park managers continue to assess the stairs for safety; they're also considering what alternative access options might look like at Sand Beach.



CARRIEBETH RICHARDS/NPS

LITTLE HUNTERS BEACH

High storm surge ripped away a portion of the wooden stairs leading to Little Hunters Beach from Park Loop Road. Acadia's trail crew and volunteers rebuilt the stairs. The park continues to assess the cliffside, which was heavily eroded. ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia's Content and Website Manager.



COURTESY MARK MUNSELL



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA

A photograph of a winter forest. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, with some patches of bare ground visible. Several trees are scattered throughout the scene, including evergreens in the foreground and deciduous trees without leaves in the background. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day.

Winter People

The biting cold and snow-covered intimacy of winter connect Karen Zimmermann to Acadia like no other season.



BY KAREN OLGA ZIMMERMANN

I love hiking Acadia in spring, when the trails are bursting with fresh chartreuse leaves. Dining outside at 10 p.m. because the sun has finally gone down is one of the joys of summer. Autumn, with the first scent of woodsmoke and colorful trees is vibrant and inviting. Spring, summer, and fall are fine, but winter, with its cold, snow, and ice, brings me alive.

Winter grounds me in a way the other seasons do not. The biting cold, the sparkling brilliance of a snow-covered field, the instant freezing of nostril hairs when I inhale—these all connect me to our climate and our world more intimately than any other season.

There is also a deep communal awareness of the grandeur and power winter offers. An acquaintance I passed on a snowy path one morning said to me, “Those Florida snowbirds just do not know what they are missing,” as we both looked at the sun shining through a mass of tinkling ice-coated twigs. The beauty was undeniable.

Winter brings challenges—some may complain about shoveling, the occasional frozen pipe disaster, or the winter storm that closes schools—but we help each other. While this happens year-round, in winter it includes a deeper feeling of unity and bonding. Businesses sometimes refer to those who stay rather than go as “the Winter People.” It fits. This is our place.

There is skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking up icy trails with microspikes. When the ice is good, simply walking across the flat, open expanse of a frozen lake is an adventure. When Jordan Pond freezes, it feels like a festival.

**THERE IS ALSO A
DEEP COMMUNAL
AWARENESS OF THE
GRANDEUR AND
POWER WINTER
OFFERS.**

ICE SURROUNDS white pines and paper birches near Great Meadow.

COURTESY KAREN OLGA ZIMMERMANN



NIKKI BURTIS/FOA

LONG BLADE SKATERS SKIM BY, AND YOU MAY HEAR THE EERIE VIBRATIONS FROM THEIR WEIGHT BENDING THE ICE. PARENTS WALK THE POND TOWING THEIR CHILDREN TUCKED DEEP INTO BLANKETS ON A SLED.

ABOVE: An ice skater on Jordan Pond. OPPOSITE: Full moon over a field of snow-daubed shrubs.

Long blade skaters skim by, and you may hear the eerie vibrations from their weight bending the ice. Parents walk the pond towing their children tucked deep into blankets on a sled. People are fishing. A look down an ice hole reveals another world, and you see how thick the ice is, with its silvery layers.

Jordan Pond is a mecca for ice seekers, where there is a palpable feeling of good spirits in the air. It is rare to pass another winter explorer without a friendly exchange.

Other ponds are smaller and offer a quieter adventure.

One sunny, single-digit day, I walked Lake Wood, near the north end of Acadia. Boot prints, heart-shaped tracks of white-tailed deer, and the tiny pattern with the telltale tail-drag of a mouse showed I was not the first to use this road since it snowed. Chickadees and a red squirrel called as I approached the lake. Lake Wood groaned and snapped, booming as it expanded, “making ice” as some call it.

Most liquids contract as they freeze, but water, forming intricate crystals with space between the branches and spikes of each exquisite structure, expands. When it has nowhere to go, it cracks and booms. There was one loud explosive bellow, then, a gentle reply. The sound bounced off the surrounding ledges repeating itself more and more softly until silence returned.

Lake Wood is a small lake, and the booms were modest, not heart-stopping, as they can be on bigger waters. The surface of the lake, so perfectly flat and level, was puckered with the imprints of what seemed to be a thousand small cat paws, a chance pattern of the wind.

I knelt and traced the outline of one imprint. I imagined the party of prancing, leaping cats that might have left such patterns in the ice. As I stood, I looked across the lake and saw the focused, unwavering trail of a coyote—this was not an imaginary creature. I had passed human and dog track on the road in, and the erratic roam and sniff trail of the domestic dog is strikingly different from this animal in the wild, for whom conserving energy is a matter of survival.

Following the streamside path to Fawn Pond, I came to a pool just below a beaver dam. A skim of ice was exposed at its edge. Black ice. The name sounds fearsome, implacable, but the underwater scene it reveals is beautiful in its otherworldliness.

I laid on my belly and peered through the ice. I could see thin grasses waft slowly in the current. The sunlight pierced through to the bottom, illuminating a few gray and gold speckled rocks, but they were as far away as the moon. I could not touch them; they were on the other side of that invisible ice wall.

This barrier makes the world below even more compelling. I was on the outside looking in, and I wanted to dive down and explore.

Under the surface, a small twig shifted and dipped. A caddisfly larva had changed its center of balance and clung, bouncing gently, to the branch. It wore a case it had made of bits of rock and twig and weed, and, until it moved, seemed part of debris on the pool's bottom.

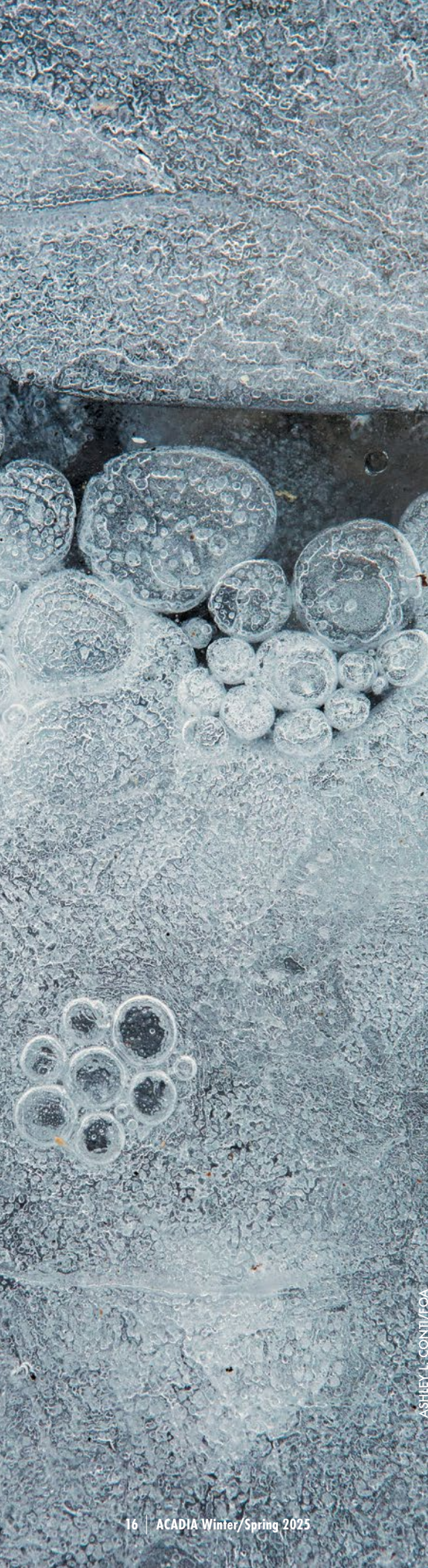
Confined behind clear ice, this larva—creeping, barely moving as it went about its business—seemed to have no relation to the swarms of long-antennae shadflies, or caddisflies, that will be in my face and hair a few months from now. The rhythmic tapping of a pileated woodpecker resounded in the distance, and I pulled myself away from that hidden world to head home.

It was a short adventure, perhaps only two and a half miles total. There were remote worlds and minute details. There were signs from deer, dogs, humans, coyotes, mice, woodpecker, red squirrels, chickadees, caddisfly larva, and beaver. I was content.

For decades, I shared this winter joy with my late husband, a fellow snow lover. If we were not together at first snow, Dennis would call me at work, or I would try him on his phone. We always shared the excitement of those first flurries, however modest they were, and often celebrated with a bonfire.



COURTESY KAREN OLGA ZIMMERMANN



We would watch the snow drift down and stretch our hands out to catch the occasional flake. We wondered if we knew who it was, as each snowflake has a bit of organic matter or dust at its core and could be anything, or anyone.

Knowing that reminds me how connected everything is and gives me comfort when I miss him.

I walked the road from Lake Wood back to my car, kicking light powder into the air simply to watch it sparkle. It landed softly and may not have melted that day, but there is no doubt it will melt. Whatever bit was at the center of each flake will rest on the earth. The earth will warm, the days will lengthen, and emerging buds will don their spring green colors. Spring, summer, and fall lie ahead to be enjoyed, but winter will follow, and, once again, we will be the winter people. ■

KAREN OLGA ZIMMERMANN is a Maine Master Naturalist, Registered Maine Guide, and a lover of winter. She lives in Otter Creek where she writes about all the seasons and gets out in them at every opportunity.



COURTESY KAREN OLGA ZIMMERMANN

WE WOULD WATCH THE SNOW
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ABOVE: Karen Olga Zimmermann and her late husband, Dennis Smith, revel in a snowfall along Jordan Stream.

A person wearing a dark t-shirt and a cap is holding a fluffy, downy gull chick. The chick has a dark beak and large, dark eyes. The background is a clear blue sky. The text 'KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GULL' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GULL

A Seabird Study Grant from Friends of Acadia is helping researchers better understand the region's seabird populations and how and why they might be changing.

BY SHANNON BRYAN



SAM MALLON/FOA

THE ALICE ENO RESEARCH STATION AND LIGHTHOUSE on Great Duck Island, where College of the Atlantic students conduct seabird research.

OPPOSITE: A gull takes a crab it found for dinner to shore at low tide along the sand bar leading toward the Bar Island Path.

"A lot of visitors assume that Acadia is only the 40,000 acres of Mount Desert Island," said John Anderson, professor of ecology and natural history at College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor. "It isn't."

"The park has over 120 islands that it owns or has easements on," he said. "That's pretty substantial."

Among those are 13 important seabird islands—rocky offshore spots relatively free from predators where cormorants, gulls, black guillemots, and Leach's storm-petrels go to nest and raise young. The crown jewel of those, Anderson said, is Schoodic Island.

Located about a half mile off the coast of the Schoodic Peninsula, 67-acre Schoodic Island has large nesting colonies of gulls and cormorants.

"It's very close to the shore, and yet it's managed to hang onto its birds," said Anderson. "It's absolutely fascinating." As College of the Atlantic faculty and the field station director at the college's Alice Eno Biological Station on Great Duck Island, Anderson has studied the region's seabirds for three decades.

Great Duck has possibly the oldest gull colony in the northeast, he noted. Since 1999, he's taken teams of students out to Great Duck to study the gulls there, with some students staying on the island for weeks at a time.

Two summers ago, with support from a grant from Friends of Acadia, Anderson and his team were able to expand that research to islands within Acadia National Park.

"Acadia National Park is so critical because we're right on the ecotone—a dividing zone between two very different floras and faunas," Anderson said. "We're right where a lot of northern species end up and where a lot of southern species end up."

This means changes to the health and populations of the region's gulls could have far-reaching impacts – particularly as colonies face threats from climate change and avian influenza.

WHO'S THERE?

The Seabird Study Grant from Friends of Acadia enabled Anderson and his students to conduct a survey of the park's seabird islands, which hadn't been done in a decade. The survey identified which of Acadia National Park's islands had seabirds. "There's a limited number of islands that are suitable for seabirds," Anderson said. "If the island has a dense spruce forest, it's not going to have nesting seabirds."

The survey also tallied the number of nests on several of those islands and mapped where each of those nests was located.

"We have high precision GPS, so we're able to get the nests mapped to within half a meter of accuracy," said Anderson. The data will enable researchers to track population shifts over time and as the climate changes.

"Somebody can go back five, 10, 20 years from now, and they can see not only whether there were birds there, but whether they're nesting in the same location."

WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?

The grant also enabled Anderson and his students to deploy solar-powered GPS tags on herring gulls on Schoodic and Shabby Islands. The tags tie into the cellular network, recording the gulls' movements.

"That allows us to see movement patterns: Where are they coming from? Where are they going?" said Anderson. Gulls from

PREVIOUS PAGE: College of the Atlantic student and seabird researcher Autumn Pauly holds a herring gull chick.

Great Duck have worn different GPS tags for the last several years, and being able to now compare the comings and goings of both populations helps researchers better understand the ways in which the colonies might differ or overlap.

The GPS tags are in addition to long-used colored bands researchers place on gulls' legs. Together, they provide data as part of a longer-term study helping researchers understand where these birds go and how different colonies interact.

"Gulls are incredible creatures of habit," said Anderson. The gulls from Great Duck tend to travel to Little Cranberry Island and locations west, like Deer Isle and Blue Hill Bay—but never to Frenchman Bay. Gulls from Schoodic Island go to Winter Harbor, Bar Harbor, and Frenchman Bay—but never to Blue Hill Bay.

The initial data is already revealing significant differences in movement patterns between birds from different islands, Anderson said. This winter, the team is watching post-breeding data as the birds disperse to wintering areas.

"If they're like Great Duck birds at all, some of them are probably going to stick around...and some of them may be off to Virginia," he said. "We could get birds that go to Bermuda, go to Chesapeake, go to Florida, or Louisiana, or the Great Lakes."

Gulls sometimes detour to unexpected places, too.

"We had one very odd bird that...took off from Great Duck, flew down the coast, and, for reasons I still don't understand, when he got into New Hampshire, he hung a right and spent a day or two hanging out in the White Mountains," Anderson said. "Then he came back down to the coast and went on down to Virginia."

PROTECTING BIRDS, PROTECTING PEOPLE

The surveys and tracking are important for protecting the park's natural resources and biodiversity, said Anderson. But there's an even more immediate reason:

"For the last number of years, we've been aware of a form of avian influenza—highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)—which has had devastating effects on seabird colonies in Europe, Alaska, and more recently down the Pacific coast." It's also found its way to Maine.

HPAI is a changing virus, he said, meaning the actual structure of the virus can shift very suddenly, and that fools your immune system. It can also jump species.

SAM MALLON/FOA

"Acadia National Park is so critical, because we're right on the ecotone—a dividing zone between two very different floras and faunas," Anderson said. "We're right where a lot of northern species end up and where a lot of southern species end up."





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EVIE LINANTUD/OA

"It started showing up in Maine seabirds. It's now showing up in mink. It's showing up in fox. It's showing up in seals," said Anderson. "And there are a few cases of people getting it. So that's really worrying."

With seabird populations that frequent the mainland, and a national park that sees millions of visitors every year, monitoring is essential.

"From Acadia's point of view, part of it is about resource management protection. Part of it is also about visitor experience. We want people to be safe," said Anderson. "If HPAI were discovered in birds, we'd want to know which islands are involved. We also want to know where those birds are going and how they might interface with the general public."

Last summer's monitoring included bird counts on several offshore islands, including Great Duck Island and Mount Desert Rock. Nearly 100 swabs were taken from adult birds and some chicks, providing a good measure of possible infection levels. Results are not yet in, but Anderson noted that no significant seabird mortality was detected in any of the visited islands.

Tracking data from those GPS tags is critical to the epidemiology, Anderson said, "because gulls don't migrate. They disperse."

Much like college students leaving a central campus to go home for the summer, some stay close to campus, others scoot off to far-flung states.

"Knowing where the birds are going gives us potential insights into where they might pick up disease and also spread disease," Anderson said. There remains a good number of unknowns with HPAI. Researchers don't yet have answers to critical questions.

"We're learning as we go," he added. "To me, the first step of learning is knowing what you're working with, and thanks to Friends of Acadia, we've got such a huge jump on it."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Monitoring the seabird islands is additionally important as the climate changes.

"We're going to be seeing not only sea level rise, but we're also going to be losing vegetation as a consequence of changes in temperature," said Anderson. "Schoodic Island isn't going to be Schoodic Island anymore. It's going to be two little islands because of sea level rise. The vegetation on it is probably going to be very different vegetation."

One of Anderson's students spent a recent summer identifying vegetation around herring gull nests to better understand what vegetation, or lack thereof, encourages or discourages nesting.

"I think it's critically important to monitor," said Anderson. "I think it's critically important to try to understand. These are all things the Friends of Acadia grant encourages us to do."

And while the research is crucial, the work has another meaningful effect.

"The Friends of Acadia grant is so great because it gave me a perfect excuse to take half a dozen really bright kids and put them on an island doing real research and handling real birds—for a purpose. But also, in the process of handling those real birds, falling in love with them too." ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia's Content and Website Manager.



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA



HOW YOU CAN BE A PART OF THIS WORK!

If you see a gull with a band on its leg—even if you can't read the whole band—report it. To report a banded bird found in Acadia National Park, you can submit a report online at reportband.gov or send the information directly to John Anderson from College of the Atlantic at janderson@coa.edu.

If you see any sick or dead birds, contact the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife at 207-287-8000 or 800-452-4664 or report online at maine.gov

You should especially report dead wild birds if there are three or more dead birds in a localized area; dead birds are found near domestic poultry; or you find dead waterfowl, birds of prey, shorebirds, gulls, or other seabirds.

And, of course, don't feed or touch seabirds.

OPPOSITE: A gull flies over the ocean with food at Otter Point.

ABOVE: Herring gull eggs. **CUT OUT:** A ring-billed gull flying. **BELOW:** College of the Atlantic student Autumn Pauly, right, works with a fellow student to place a band on a gull as part of the Acadia Seabird Monitoring Project.



COURTESY JOHN ANDERSON



EAGLE LAKE *The Spirit of Place*

This "great pond" has inspired a host of artists.

BY CARL LITTLE

S ometime in the late 1860s, Boston photographer Edward Lowe Allen (1830-1914) made a series of “stereo” views of Mount Desert Island. On the verso of some of these double-image photos, Allen listed various motifs that might appeal to the collector of these cards.

One, labeled “Mount Desert Scenery,” featured 37 subjects, including well-known houses, views, and the largest of Acadia’s “Great Ponds,” Eagle Lake.

What might be thought of as the beating heart of Acadia National Park, that great lake, all 436 acres of it, not only provides drinking water to the town of Bar Harbor but also serves as muse. From Frederic Church in the mid-19th century to present-day painters, the lake has drawn scores of artists to its mountain-surrounded shores.

PHYLLIS REES (1926-2012), who painted extensively in Acadia, found inspiration at the water’s edge. In “Eagle Lake, Moving Water,” Rees translated the confluence of water, sky, rocks, and weeds into a shimmering abstraction. “Every moment, every glimpse of nature offers a complex beauty, if we take care to love what we see,” she wrote in the introduction to “Intimate Views: Acadia National Park,” 2006.

The late art historian and Northeast Harbor resident John Wilmerding once referred to **ERNEST MCMULLEN** as the “painter laureate of Mount Desert Island.” McMullen, who retired from teaching at College of the Atlantic in 2015 after 40-plus years, earned this honor through stunning views painted in a hyper-realist manner.

“In the late summer, during periods of low water,” McMullen writes of his Eagle Lake vista, “the ledges emerge like ancient stone whales with their glacial-scoured backs telling mysterious tales of 12 thousand years ago.” There’s a wonderful sense in the painting of standing at the edge of a primeval place at the dawn of time.

One of the nine “Great Ponds” located within Acadia National Park, Eagle Lake gained additional iconic status in 1972 when Montana-born sculptor and painter **FRANK HAGEL** (1933-2024) chose a view of the lake to feature on a commemorative medal. Commissioned by the National Park Service to design and model a series of medals to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first national park—Yellowstone, in 1872—Hagel composed a simple scene of lake, trees, and mountains. (The “1919” on the medal refers to the year President Woodrow Wilson signed the act establishing Lafayette National Park.)

OPPOSITE PAGE: Phyllis Rees, “Eagle Lake, Moving Water,” 1994, oil, 40 x 32 in.

BELOW: Frank Hagel, Acadia National Park commemorative medal, 1972. Copper and zinc alloy, 1-3/8 in. diameter. Medallic Art Company. Lettering by Joseph Di Lorenzo. Collection David Little.

BOTTOM: Ernest McMullen, “Late Summer, Eagle Lake,” 2014, oil on panel, 36 x 48 in. Collection Margot and Boykin Rose. Photo courtesy the artist.





ALEXANDRA TYNG, "West Shore, Eagle Lake," 2017, oil, 12 x 11.5 in. Courtesy the artist and Dowling Walsh Gallery.

To paint "West Shore, Eagle Lake," **ALEXANDRA TYNG** set up her easel looking southeast, so she could get the distant view of the mountains and the sheltered cove into a single prospect. "I liked that half the composition was in light and the other half in shadow," she writes, adding, "There were so many visual delights to paint!"

During decades of summer trips to Mount Desert Island from her home in Philadelphia, Tyng has painted a variety of motifs, including a remarkable series of aerial views. She is a die-hard outdoor painter; "Plein-air painting," she once told critic Stephen May, "is my source of ideas and a way of keeping my brushstrokes fresh and my color sense

accurate." Her painting of the western shore of Eagle Lake testifies to the vibrancy that comes with on-the-spot rendering.

"The open eye of Eagle Lake," as Christian Barter wrote in his poem "Île des Monts Déserts," will continue to return—and reward—the regard of artists as long as we steward its precious waters. More than scenery, this lake represents the spirit of place. ■

CARL LITTLE, of Somesville, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his art writing from the Dorothea and Leo Rabkin Foundation in 2021. His essay on Sargent Mountain Pond appears in the anthology "Alive to This" (Littoral Books, 2024).



DEDICATION to Vegetation

Success of Acadia's 35-plus-year invasive plant management program is a testament to commitment and collaboration.

BY SHANNON BRYAN

Invasive plants can spread quickly, elbowing out native plants like hangry party crashers at a tapas table. They can reemerge, year after year, despite being cut, dug up, or treated with herbicide. Their persistence would be admirable, were they not so detrimental to the ecosystems they overtake.

As it happens, Acadia National Park's Invasive Plant Management Team—comprised of a cadre of biologists, researchers, and technicians from the park and Schoodic Institute—are decidedly tenacious, too.

Their collective dedication over the last 35-plus years to early detection and rapid response, as well as science-based experimentation, has resulted in tangible success. Their ongoing work is made possible by sustained funding from partners like Friends of Acadia.

The history of that work, and the integral partnerships that enable the program's continued development, are outlined in an article published in the *Journal of Applied Ecology* (JAE) in November 2024.

Co-authored by Kyle Lima, data analyst at Schoodic Institute; Jesse Wheeler, Acadia's vegetation program manager and biologist; Judith Hazen Connery, who started and managed the invasive plant management program in Acadia National Park for many years until retiring in 2019; Abe Miller-Rushing, science coordinator for Acadia National Park; and Nicholas Fisichelli, president & CEO at Schoodic Institute, the article offers lessons learned and recommendations to resource managers worldwide. It also shares successes earned over decades of forward-thinking management that may help ecosystems retain resiliency in the face of future change.

OLIVIA ZUKAS, Acadia National Park biological science technician, works to remove invasive glossy buckthorn off the Jesup Path.

Why Vegetation Management Matters

Of Acadia's more than 800 vascular plants (think flowering plants, ferns, grasses, trees, and shrubs) almost a quarter are non-native, meaning they don't occur naturally in the park or its coastal waters, but were introduced either deliberately (perhaps planted in a garden) or accidentally (hitching a ride in the treads of a truck tire or adhered to the hull of a boat).

Some, like domestic apple trees and lilacs, don't directly threaten native plants or wildlife, so they aren't considered invasive.

But there are two dozen or so species that pose real threats to the park's natural environments. Purple loosestrife, for example, grows in Acadia's wetlands, choking out native vegetation like cattails. But it's not just the loss of native plants; a host of insects, mammals, birds, and fish depend on the vegetation that purple loosestrife pushes out.

In short: Invasive plants are a pressing issue at Acadia, and managing them requires substantial financial and staff resources. "It's the park's biggest natural resource effort," Wheeler said.

Partners in Plants

In Acadia, the presence of invasive plants is relatively low compared to other protected areas in the northeast. That's partly a perk of Acadia's geography—cold Maine winters and the benefits of being on parcels of earth largely bordered by ocean.

Additionally, more than 35 years of collaboration and continuous effort have made a sizeable difference. It also puts Acadia in a unique position.

"A lot of other parks don't have an embedded team like Acadia National Park does," said Wheeler. "They rely on regional teams that do initial suppression efforts and sometimes follow-ups."

The longer-term success of those efforts is contingent on that park being responsible for maintenance and reinvasion, "which is a challenge for many smaller parks that don't have the staffing or capacity," Wheeler said. But thanks to park partners, Acadia does.

Continuous invasive plant management in Acadia began in 1988. Purple loosestrife was then identified as the most threatening species, so it became the priority. Resource managers developed a plan with management goals, plans of action, and monitoring. And they kept at it.

A decade later, the JAE article notes, an assessment of their work confirmed their efforts had held back purple loosestrife from invading additional wetlands, and that existing patches were managed down to maintenance levels. Complete eradication is always a goal but challenging to accomplish.

As funding and staff allowed, more invasive plants were targeted in the early 2000s.

In 2009, a pivotal partnership between the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of Acadia, and other partners to provide multi-year funding further advanced the work. Within a couple years, Acadia was managing 20 invasive species, including infestations of glossy buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Asiatic bittersweet, and Japanese knotweed.

Among the successes referenced in the JAE article is the reduction of invasive honeysuckle on Bar Island from 7.6% cover down to 0.2% between 2015 and 2017. With monitoring and maintenance, those numbers have held to <1% cover.

"Because of partnerships and the funding and support for the program, managers were able to take on more and more problematic species," said Kyle Lima, data analyst at Schoodic Institute and lead author of the JAE article. "At the same time, the amount of staff time needed and the amount of herbicide used also decreased."

"That sustained support allows us to have the crews we need. We can do early detection and rapid response," said Wheeler. They've also been able to experiment and adjust their methods over time to work more effectively.

Today, Acadia's Invasive Plant Management Team manages 29 invasive plant species.

"Most of our larger-scale sites are at maintenance levels," said Wheeler. "Which allows our teams to respond to new sites." Bass Harbor Marsh and Great Meadow, for example, are significant focus areas where science-based experimentation is taking place. (Read more about the research at Bass Harbor Marsh and Great Meadow on page 19.)

Getting to this point is the result of decades of dedicated funding and staff efforts.

"That's why sustaining this work is so important," Lima said.

The Future

"Climate change is always a challenge," said Wheeler. But with resources and experimentation, the team can continue to develop approaches that may prove valuable as the climate continues to change and adds pressure to native species.

"A lot of Acadia's spruce forests are pretty non-invaded right now. But what if our spruce forests and other forest types have less suitable growing conditions? What if they're stressed by invasive insects? Windstorms? You name it," said Wheeler.

"On the other hand, I see the work we've done with invasive plant suppression as a climate-adapted model of management. Because of the work we've done, we're in a pretty good place," he said. "And we're continuing to evolve. We're still so early with considering new methods, learning from Indigenous partners, utilizing native shrubs for competition."

"We look at this as being sustainable, but is it forever? We don't know," Wheeler said. "Even if you're not able to eradicate something, you can do a lot to keep landscapes together, more diverse, healthier, and more resilient."

Read the full article, *"Unusual success, future uncertainty, and science needs for adaptive management of invasive plants in a US national park,"* in the *Journal of Applied Ecology* at besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1365-2664.14835 ■

SHANNON BRYAN is Friends of Acadia's Content and Website Manager.

A man wearing a green National Park Service cap and a grey long-sleeved shirt is working in a forest. He is surrounded by tall grass and other vegetation. The word "Plant" is written in large, green, stylized letters, and "OUT" is written in large, white, stylized letters, both overlapping the image.

Plant OUT

Experimental plots in Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh are testing the effectiveness of native plants in crowding and shading out glossy buckthorn.

JESSE WHEELER, National Park Service vegetation program manager and biologist, removes invasive glossy buckthorn off the Jesup Path.

BY TREVOR GRANDIN

Nestled within the pages of the Mt. Desert Nursery's 1900 spring catalog is an unsuspecting nuisance. Between red chokeberry and black jetbead is *Rhamnus catharticus*—common buckthorn. When George B. Dorr, who would become the first superintendent of Acadia National Park, started the nursery, he could not have known the effort that would be put into removing a once-popular ornamental more than 120 years later.

On today's landscape, an equally invasive, kindred shrub—glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*)—weaves its way through Acadia's forests. Often confused for common buckthorn, glossy buckthorn has taken more tenacious root in Acadia. Clad in dark brown bark, ovular leaves, and white, star-shaped flowers, glossy buckthorn can be found anywhere in the park with moist soil. Through the partnership of the National Park Service, Friends of Acadia, and Schoodic Institute, research is underway to find the



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA

best course of action to manage this widespread invasive.

But first, what makes glossy buckthorn so devastating to ecosystems?

Flitting from branch to branch, a cedar waxwing gobbles up the dark purple fruit that hangs in clusters from the surrounding glossy buckthorns. These abundant berries contain a powerful laxative that turns any animal who eats them into buckthorn dispersal mechanisms.

As the bird releases the seed, it lands in a shady marsh. Glossy buckthorn flourishes in full sun but is moderately shade tolerant, enabling it to grow even under canopy cover. Three years later, the stems of this glossy buckthorn have already reached maturity, fruiting much faster than surrounding plants—giving it a head start reproducing.

That rapid maturation is in part due to glossy buckthorn's prolonged phenology—keeping leaves on later into the fall in relation to its native counterparts. As the glossy buckthorn grows, so too does the shade it casts, making the ground around it inhospitable for many native plants.

The journey taken by this glossy buckthorn is happening time and again throughout Acadia National Park. Diverse landscapes are transformed into uniform tree stands, and long-practiced mechanical and chemical removal methods can't keep up with buckthorn's regrowth. Something has to change.

During the 2023 field season, Acadia National Park's vegetation crew spent 660 person hours, or a little over two months, treating and surveying this single invasive species. How can one address this invasive plant while freeing up the valuable time and energy of park managers?

Throughout Great Meadow and Bass Harbor Marsh, 21 experimental plots are trying to answer that question.

These 10-by-10-meter tracts are testing the effectiveness of native plants in crowding and shading out glossy buckthorn. Planted within the plots are a variety of native grasses, sedges, rushes, and shrubs.

Led by Schoodic Institute Climate Adaptation Scientist Dr. Chris Nadeau, technicians track the growth of both the native plants and the surrounding glossy buckthorn throughout the year. They note information like shade percentage and germination rate—data that could uncover which native plants might outpace or slow down the growth of glossy buckthorn.

Two years of data have been collected, and although the project is ongoing, the numbers seem promising.

"More than 1,500 native plants have been restored through the experiment with a survival rate of 89%," said Nadeau. "Planting native shrubs in particular has reduced buckthorn reinvasion by up to 41% and reduced germination of buckthorn seeds by up to 56%. Some native shrubs in particular show promise at slowing down glossy buckthorn germination, like speckled alder (*Alnus incana*) and black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)."

It's an encouraging start to an experiment that allows scientists and managers to "learn while doing."

Another potential tool for Acadia's glossy buckthorn management toolbox is "critical period cutting."

OPPOSITE: Emma Lanning, biological science technician and member of the Acadia National Park invasive plant management team, takes a break while removing glossy buckthorn in Great Meadow.

RIGHT TOP: Devon Jobe, Student Conservation Association member, pulls out invasive plants in the Great Meadow.

RIGHT MIDDLE: Supplies used by the Acadia National Park vegetation crew lie at a field site where the team is monitoring the growth of glossy buckthorn, an invasive plant species, in comparison to native plants in the Great Meadow.

BOTTOM: The park's invasive plant management team works to remove invasive purple loosestrife from a wetland on Marshall Brook.

Starting in late spring, researchers cut taller buckthorn shrubs at chest height and strip the main stems of any growth. They then come back multiple times a year to strip the tree again. The cycle of stripping the stem bare continues until the tree dies.

Starting in 2024, Schoodic Institute researchers tested this approach on two private partner properties. Glossy buckthorn stems were randomly assigned pruning frequency treatments—every one, two, or three months. With only one growing season on the books, preliminary results show little mortality but suggest that a higher cutting frequency correlates to lower regrowth.

Both the native plant plot and critical period cutting experiments are in their early stages and need more data to illustrate emerging trends, but the possibility of their success gives hope to a rapidly changing landscape. Glossy and common buckthorn were once sold in nurseries across Maine, but clicking through a nursery catalog today, you would be hard pressed to find either for sale—they are illegal to sell, propagate, or trade in Maine—helping reduce their resurgence in residential backyards and places like Acadia National Park. ■

TREVOR GRANDIN was a Cathy and Jim Gero Acadia Early-Career Fellow at Schoodic Institute for the 2024 season.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

KEY EVENTS THROUGH THE SUMMER

APRIL

15

Park Loop Road opens to vehicles for the season

19

Free Entrance Day at Acadia (and First Day of National Park Week)

26

Earth Day Roadside Cleanup



MAY

8

Business After Hours
Hulls Cove Schoolhouse

10

Carroll Homestead
opens for the season

15

Jordan Pond House opens for the season



29

Pints for a Purpose,
5 p.m. Thursdays
through Oct. 16,
Terramor Outdoor Resort



Join us for informative talks and camaraderie that'll deepen your connection to Mount Desert Island and Acadia National Park. The 2025 season kicks off on Thursday, May 29 at 5 p.m. with James Francis Sr., the Penobscot Nation's Tribal Historian.

This free series happens every Thursday through October 16 at Terramor Outdoor Resort.

All are welcome to attend and \$1 of every beer purchased benefits Friends of Acadia!

Other upcoming speakers include:

- **June 5:** Eric Stiles, Friends of Acadia, and Brian Hinrichs, Friends of Katahdin Woods & Waters, on park partnerships
- **June 12:** Jim Wright on the real James Bond (the ornithologist)
- **June 19:** Fletcher Cleaves on accessibility in the travel industry

Check out the full list of speakers at friendsofacadia.org/p4p

SPRING CLOSURES TO KEEP IN MIND

Carriage Road Closures

During spring thaw each year (a.k.a. mud season), warmer weather and wet conditions soften the carriage roads and make them susceptible to damage. To protect them, park managers temporarily close the carriage roads each spring.

For the most-recent information regarding openings, closures, and activities at Acadia, see the park's website: [NPS.GOV/ACAD](https://www.nps.gov/acad). For Friends of Acadia events, see [FRIENDSOFACADIA.ORG](https://www.friendsofacadia.org).

JUNE

3

First day of the Drop-in Stewardship Volunteer Program

Runs Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays through October. No experience or reservation is required - join us once or regularly all season!

14

Wild Gardens of Acadia Plant Sale



Wild Gardens of Acadia will hold its annual plant sale at St. Saviour's Episcopal Church in Bar Harbor. Proceeds from the sale fund the maintenance and operations of the Wild Gardens of Acadia at Sieur de Monts. Find more information at [friendsofacadia.org/plantsale](https://www.friendsofacadia.org/plantsale)

19

Free Entrance Day at Acadia (and Juneteenth National Independence Day)

25

Save our Summits hikes begin at Sargent and Penobscot Mountains

Hike in Acadia and support vegetation restoration efforts in the park! Hikers will carry much-needed soil in their backpacks to the summits of either Penobscot or Sargent Mountains. Hikes run Wednesdays and Saturdays all season. Registration required. Find more info at [friendsofacadia.org/saveoursummits](https://www.friendsofacadia.org/saveoursummits)

JULY

6

Celebrating the art and contributions of Ann Rockefeller Roberts and Mary Louise Pierson to our conservation work. Gallery at Somes Sound

9

Friends of Acadia's Annual Meeting, Bar Harbor Club



28

21st Annual George B. Dorr Society at Terramor, celebrating the history of the Carroll Homestead

AUGUST

4

Free Entrance Day at Acadia (and anniversary of the Great American Outdoors Act)

9

Friends of Acadia's 36th Annual Benefit & Auction, Gate House Farm, Northeast Harbor



SEASONAL CLOSURES TO KEEP IN MIND

Trail Closures to Protect Peregrines

To provide peregrine falcons adequate space for nesting, park managers at Acadia closed specific trails on March 1, including Penobscot East Trail, Jordan Cliffs Trail, Precipice Trail, and Valley Cove Trail. These annual closures protect the peregrine falcons from inadvertent human disturbance or harassment during the nesting period.

For current conditions on trail or carriage road closures, check the Acadia National Park website: [nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/conditions.html](https://www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/conditions.html)

A vibrant orange-red salamander, likely a Hellbender (Cryptobranchus alleganiensis), is the central focus of the image. It is perched on a dark, textured branch that is partially covered in bright green moss. The salamander's body is covered in small, dark, irregular spots. Its head is in the lower right, with large, dark eyes and a slightly open mouth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus mix of green and brown, suggesting a forest floor or stream bed. The overall lighting is warm and natural, highlighting the texture of the salamander's skin and the moss.

Big Night

Helping amphibians safely cross roads
during their seasonal migrations from
winter habitats to breeding grounds

BY TREVOR GRANDIN

On a drizzly, early May night, Sieur de Monts Road was littered with catkins, leaves, and small branches. “Here’s one... or maybe it’s a twig,” I called out. Acadia Science Fellow Marisa Monroe chuckled. She knew the roller coaster of emotions one goes through when mistaking a twig for a salamander. Throughout the evening, we observed plenty of amphibians—pickerel frogs and wood frogs, spring peepers, red-backed and two-lined salamanders, and red eft—all seen in the span of one rainy night. The dozens of amphibians that Monroe and I saw on that survey don’t begin to scratch the surface of what “big nights” are all about.

Amphibians—translating to “double life”—are often aquatic during their larval and juvenile phases, transitioning onto land for their adult lives. In the winter, amphibians store themselves under leaf litter, in underground burrows, or at the bottom of deep water bodies to ride out the bitter cold months. When the nights become milder and the rains more abundant, frogs, toads, and salamanders emerge from their hibernation to hatch a get-warm-quick scheme. For some, that involves splaying on a nearby road to take advantage of the ambient heat absorbed during the day. As spring wears on, the urge to cross roads is spurred by a more reproductive instinct.

Amphibians spend much of their lives traversing the forest but return to vernal pools, lakes, or ponds to breed and lay eggs. This prenatal pilgrimage takes place in early spring during warm, wet nights to ensure the sensitive-skinned amphibians stay damp. Once in the water, the animals find a mate, then deposit their unhatched young. After the froggy bacchanal, the adult amphibians return to their forests to start the freeze and thaw process over again. That’s what the term “big night” refers to—the biggest nights when amphibians emerge from winter hibernation and take to the streets for warming and reproduction. This natural cycle would go on uninterrupted if not for one big problem—cars.

Roads often intercept amphibians’ spring journeys to and from the water, forcing these slimy critters into the paths of motorized vehicles. Though frogs, salamanders, toads, and newts lay many eggs, car strikes still put them at risk of extirpation—or localized extinction. Enter Acadia Science Fellow Marisa Monroe.

On rainy nights, clad in headlamps and reflective vests, Monroe and volunteers collect data on crossing amphibians and

prevent their undue mortality along the way. From spring to fall, participants walk their stretch of adopted roadway and note amphibians both alive and dead while giving those actively crossing help to the other side. Despite “big nights” primarily taking place during the spring, Monroe and volunteers continue their surveys into the fall to account for the most vulnerable—the babies.

While adult amphibians return to the forest, juveniles grow in their ponds and pools until they too must sprout legs and cross roads. Other amphibian assistance organizations stop patrolling in late spring, before the babies hatch, but Monroe’s survey bridges that gap to learn more about migration during the rest of the year. “Even if we save all of the adults that are migrating in the spring to their breeding habitats,” Monroe said, “if we ignore all the juveniles when they leave the pool, and they all get hit by cars, then their population could still be at risk for decline or extirpation.”

The data on where and when amphibians cross could lead to more long-term solutions within Acadia National Park, like permanent migration culverts or seasonal road closures. “The park is interested in saving their amphibians,” Monroe said. “And it’s exciting that there’s a lot of motivation behind this project.”

As we finished our Sieur de Monts survey that May night, I realized I would now need to drive home on the same road Monroe and I had just surveyed. “I’ll clear your path,” Monroe said, stepping in front of my idling car and turning her headlamp on. She carefully scooped up frogs, salamanders, toads, and newts, ferrying them to the grassy shoulder. As my car inched along behind her, I realized just how precious these creatures are and how slowly I’d be driving home that night.

Hear more about “big nights” and my time with Acadia Science Fellow Marisa Monroe on season 3, episode 3 of Acadia National Park and Schoodic Institute’s podcast “Sea to Trees.” Listen on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever podcasts are available. Or scan the QR code. ■



TREVOR GRANDIN was a 2024 Cathy and Jim Gero Acadia Early-Career Fellow at Schoodic Institute.



COURTESY TREVOR GRANDIN

Help Amphibians Cross the Road!

There might be organized Big Night opportunities in your area, where you can volunteer and collect data as a community scientist (not to mention the chance to escort amphibians across the road).

In Maine, check out Maine Big Night, a community science initiative that saves thousands of amphibians each year and collects data to inform wildlife conservation and improve road planning. Go to mainebignight.org to learn more about getting involved.



SHANNON BRYAN/FOA

Remember!

Amphibians have porous skin and are sensitive to the products or food that might be on your hands, so be sure to wash your hands thoroughly before handling an amphibian (and after)! And do stay safe on roads at night by wearing a high visibility vest and a headlamp, in addition to being mindful of moving traffic.

Pollinator SPOTLIGHT

BY OLEANDER MORRILL

Wild Gardens of Acadia intern Oleander Morrill captured these stunning images of hard-working pollinators at the Wild Gardens. Keep your eyes peeled for them in and around Acadia—and beyond!



BEE-MIMIC BEETLE

A species of scarab beetle, the bee-mimic beetle is entirely harmless and, despite what you may think from its appearance, cannot sting. This beetle has what is called Batesian mimicry to ward off predators. That is, through evolution, these insects have gained protection by looking like an unpalatable species. Bee-mimic beetles are found throughout much of North America. Other common names include the hairy flower scarab or flower chafer.

HUMMINGBIRD CLEARWING

Based on its appearance and name, the hummingbird clearwing may seem to be a hummingbird, but it is actually a moth. It not only looks like a hummingbird but also behaves very similarly—flying rapidly and hovering near flowers. Upon reaching adulthood, its wings are mostly transparent with red and brown borders. Like many other insects, clearwings have a proboscis, a tubular mouthpart that allows them to drink nectar from flowers. Although they range across North America, they are most common in the eastern U.S. and parts of Canada.





HAIRY-EYED MIMIC FLY

This pollinator's physical characteristics give it a similar look to a bumblebee, another example of Batesian mimicry. Similar to the bee-mimic beetle, this insect can't sting, but this useful disguise keeps predators away. To distinguish between a real bumblebee and mimic flies, look at the head: Hairy-eyed mimic flies have very large compound eyes that wrap around the top of their head and allow them to see in nearly every direction. Bees, on the other hand, have comparatively smaller eyes located on the sides of their heads. Flies also have two short antennae located close together at the center of the head below their eyes, while bumblebees have two longer antennae that are farther apart.

AMERICAN THINTAIL FLY

A species of hoverfly, the American thintail is a relatively small fly. The thick bands of black and yellow on their abdomen give them a similar appearance to hornets and bees. They have large red compound eyes, and the thorax, or midsection, is usually a metallic gold or bronze color. They range across most of the Northern Hemisphere.



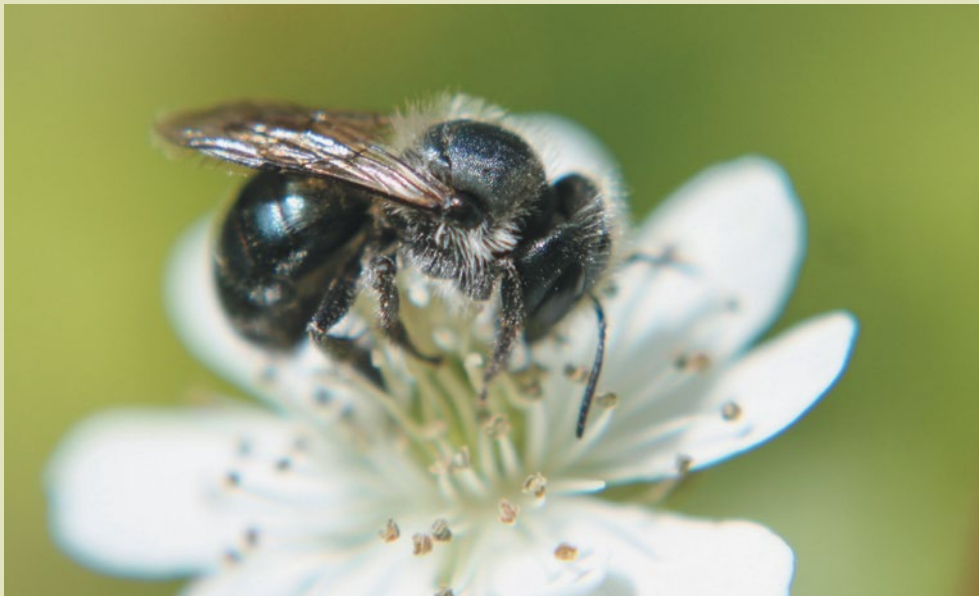
HOBOMOK SKIPPER

The Hobomok skipper is a small butterfly found throughout much of the northeastern and central U.S. and southern Canada. Butterflies such as these skippers use an elongated mouthpart called a proboscis, which acts almost like a built-in straw—to drink the nectar from flowers. Characterized by orange wings with sections of brown on males and a lighter brown with small white spots on females, the Hobomok skipper is one of many native skipper species in Maine.



BLUE ORCHARD BEE

With distinct metallic blue coloring, blue orchard bees are solitary bees that build nests in narrow tubes or crevices such as dried plant reeds. A female bee spends much of her time collecting pollen and nectar to line the nest; each egg is separated by a mud wall. Considered very docile, these bees are often kept by beekeepers and fruit farmers since this species prefers springtime fruit blossoms. They range across much of the U.S. but are separated by the Rocky Mountains—a separation that has led to the formation of two subspecies.



LIGATED FURROW BEE

The ligated furrow bee, a type of sweat bee, nests underground by burrowing tunnels and lives in a hierarchical colony. They range across most of the U.S. and Mexico. Between the many native sweat bees and mining bees, it can be difficult to identify a specific species. The black and white bands on its thick abdomen and the gray hair on the body and legs suggest that this is a ligated furrow bee, although other look-alikes, including the Wilke's mining bee, exist.





MODEST MASKED BEE

Smaller than many other bees, the modest masked bee is characterized by a primarily black body with short yellow stripes on its face, upper thorax, and legs. The shade of yellow varies between individuals and sometimes appears to be white rather than yellow. For most masked bee species, the common name refers to their colorful facial markings, which on this species are small or modestly sized. They range across much of the eastern U.S. and southeastern Canada.

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

When you think of a pollinator, you might not think of a bird species, but some birds are key pollinators. In Maine, the ruby-throated is the only common hummingbird, and they are the primary pollinators of Canada lilies. The hummingbird's long beak and its incredible ability to hover in place enable these birds to extract nectar from the downward-facing trumpets of these flowers. Ruby-throated hummingbirds also feed on small insects and spiders. During breeding season, they range throughout the eastern U.S. and Canada, and they winter in Central America.



MONARCH BUTTERFLY

One of the most recognizable pollinators, monarchs have bright orange wings with black borders and white spots. They migrate between the northern U.S. and Mexico where they winter, a journey completed by multiple generations of monarchs. As caterpillars, they are often found on milkweeds although some studies suggest that as adults, they are not effective pollinators of these plants. ■

OLEANDER MORRILL was Friends of Acadia's 2023 Wild Gardens of Acadia intern.



COURTESY GROUNDWORK BRIDGEPORT

DISCOVERING *New Paths*

BY ANNE LEHMANN

COMING TO ACADIA NATIONAL PARK WITH GROUNDWORK BRIDGEPORT SHIFTED THE COURSE OF SABRINA DASILVA'S LIFE.

Six years ago, Sabrina DaSilva was a high school student in Bridgeport, Connecticut. She'd never been to Acadia National Park—or any national park. But a conversation in her high school lunchroom would connect her to the outdoors in unexpected ways, and it would change her life's trajectory.

DaSilva met Tanner Burgdorf, deputy director of Groundwork Bridgeport, during one of his visits to the school to talk about the Groundwork Bridgeport program. She spotted him sitting behind a table during lunch hour and decided to walk over.

Groundwork Bridgeport's mission is to provide opportunities for young adults in the area to learn and engage with their community and nearby communities. This includes hands-on experience involving urban planning and landscaping, trail restoration and river cleanup, and understanding horticulture and its environmental impact. In addition, students who complete the eight-week service/learning program earn a financial stipend.

DaSilva loved that she could attend after school, and that she'd have the immediate impact of helping beautify her town. She was also enticed by the opportunity to travel to national parks with the program, which would be a new experience for her. Among those park opportunities: Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and Acadia National Park.

She signed up.

Burgdorf sees those national park experiences as being particularly eye-opening to program participants, opening



COURTESY SABRINA DASILVA

TOP: Sabrina DaSilva, far left, on a hike with fellow Groundwork Bridgeport participants during their visit to Acadia National Park in 2019. **BOTTOM:** DaSilva holds a black bear cub while doing fieldwork during her tenure at Bowdoin College. Students worked alongside Maine's Fish and Wildlife department tagging cubs and getting their measurements.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Tanner Burgdorf and Sabrina DaSilva at Sabrina's graduation from Bowdoin College in 2024.

them up to nature in ways that are long-lasting. “The trips to national parks provide life-long memories and hands-on experiences that are invaluable to our students,” he said.

Friends of Acadia is a partner with Groundwork Bridgeport, helping create connecting experiences during their time in Acadia National Park. It’s a collaboration forged by Burgdorf and Paige Steele, Acadia for All Director at Friends of Acadia.

“Perhaps if one of the students enjoys the experience, then they might encourage their family to visit Acadia,” Burgdorf said. “Which melds well with the Acadia for All program.”

When DaSilva first stepped foot in Acadia National Park in 2019, it was her first time in Maine. The same was true for the other students in her group. She was thrilled for the opportunity to learn about this amazing national park and was eager to get started. Guided by their two Groundwork Bridgeport leaders, new experiences—and a new view of their worlds—began to unfold.

Blackwood’s campground was their basecamp for the week, where they cooked fireside. Camping equipment, cooking kits, and hiking boots were provided for all participants. They quickly fell into a routine of packing daily lunches and digging out quarters for showers.

“Tanner would give us stacks of quarters every day and we would use them to shower...that was another first for me on this trip,” DaSilva said. “It truly is city kids in the wild connecting with nature, coupled with a good balance between work and play.”

And then there were the hikes—new sights and new heights. While Sleeping Giant State Park is a half-hour drive from Bridgeport, the variety of hikes in Acadia felt epic.

Throughout their visit was a focus on stewardship and recreation, meaning the team worked and enjoyed the park. They installed trail footings on Champlain Mountain North Ridge Trail and dug irrigation ditches on Kebo Brook Trail for water to drain properly.

“While working on the trails, the everyday hikers would stop and sincerely thank us for our time,” Burgdorf said. “That made quite an impression on me.”

They cut back woody debris, pruned evergreens, and maintained the landscape around the Jordan Pond House buildings. They’d done similar work in Bridgeport, which provided a base of confidence to ensure they could complete the tasks at hand.

DaSilva found that her confidence grew as the knowledge transfer from work at home to Acadia made her feel competent. “While the service work was hard at times it was rewarding to see the results and our real-time impact on our work area,” she said.

They took time to enjoy and explore, too. They hiked Gorham Mountain, scampered along Sand Beach, kayaked in Frenchman Bay, and tiptoed around Otter Cliff. Each new experience served to widen the depth and breadth of the students’ understanding of themselves and their worlds—and perhaps give them pause.

Burgdorf believes in the value of connecting students to national parks so they can experience stewardship in another location, meet park staff, and perhaps envision themselves working in a professional role in a place like Acadia. And the skills they develop along the way transfer forward.

“If you show students your greatest passion when giving your time, and you push civic engagement, I believe it carries forward in life,” Burgdorf said.

When their time in Acadia came to a close, the tuckered-out group climbed into the van to head south, but Burgdorf announced they had one more stop. Despite the loud groans, he steered the group to the campus of Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

It was on the way, Burgdorf said, and he admires the college, so he figured he should swing by with the students.

“It was the prettiest campus I have ever seen in my life,” DaSilva said. She knew nothing about Bowdoin at the time. But soon she’d know it very well.

DaSilva was the salutatorian of her high school class. She applied and was accepted to Bowdoin College with a full scholarship, earning a degree in biology with a concentration in ecology, evolution, and marine biology (EEMB) in 2024. Burgdorf attended her graduation and remains a mentor.

“He was and is amazing, and he has served as my mentor since I joined the program six years ago.”

Her experience with Groundwork Bridgeport and in Acadia National Park enabled her to feel self-assured when doing lab work outdoors for her coursework as well as going camping and hiking with new college friends.

She’s comfortable taking water samples, digging in mud for clams, and hanging off a dock to pull barnacles off the pilings. She loved working in Acadia’s forests during her 2019 trip, which later led to her doing research during a college summer, studying how willow tree DNA moves through rivers.

“I never would have felt comfortable camping, working in nature, or focusing on plant life had it not been for the program and for our trip to Acadia,” she said. “It was one of the coolest places I have ever traveled to.”

Fast forward to today. DaSilva works at Fidelity Investments in Boston in an 18-month Emerging Leader Program, giving her the opportunity to rotate through multiple departments.

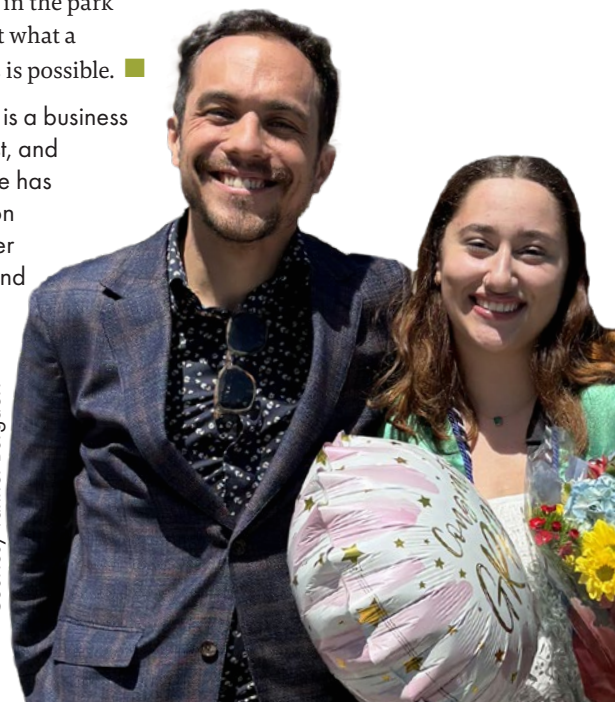
She hopes to be placed in sustainable investing, where she can research funds that work with companies with track records for interlacing environmental, social, and governance factors into investment research and decision making.

The collaboration between Groundwork Bridgeport and Friends of Acadia opens doors for young adults to learn, work, and explore in Acadia National Park. These experiences last well beyond the six days they spend in the park

and sometimes shift what a participant believes is possible. ■

ANNE LEHMANN is a business consultant, journalist, and freelance writer. She has written for the Boston Globe and a number of other New England publications.

Courtesy Tanner Burgdorf





EMMA FORTHOE/FOA

NEW MEMBERS

September 1 - December 31, 2024

- Anonymous (7)
Sandy and Roland Adams
Madison and Lansdon Alcorn
Audrey and James Altounian
Jeanne and Samuel Angell
Barbara August
Misi Ballard
William Banakos
Staci Barber
Sharon Barnes
Allison Barton
Larry Baum
Rebecca Baumann
Jennifer Beach
Brian Beans
Andrew Beck
Debra Bettis
Brock Bevan
Vivek Bharti
Jack Bickley
Debbie Bigos
Susan Blanchard
Danielle Bland
Hayle Borah
Alicia Boyce
Alice Bradbury Chisholm
Jana and Phil Bradford
Nancy Bradley-Cooney
Jenna Brewer
Susan Briggs
Susan and Tom Brillat
Edana Brook
Joseph Bruno
Christopher Cantelmi
Teres Carlin
Joan Carson
Benton Cash
Sam Casteel
Robin Cavallere
Robert Caya
Jennifer Chandler
Bonnie Chase
Patricia Chen
Devin Christianson
Joan Claybrook
Samantha Clevenger
and Jordan Frederick
Dawn Cody
Pamela Coffey-Paine
Bailey and Caleb Cole
Asia and Jacob Cole
Guy Colonna
Edward Cong
Dan Conroe
Colleen Conroy
Daphne and Wallace Cook
Rita Corley-Baker
Diane Cousins
Ruth Cox
Barbara Cummings
Katherine Curtis and Alana Johnson
Eleanor Dase
Mary and Kurt Davey
Kim Davis
Brita and Thomas Dean
Joel Dean Foundation
Jurrien Dean
Joel Dearborn
Mary and Rick Deemer
Eva DeFranco
Christopher Del Isola
Sarah and James Deluca
Kim Denny
Nicholas DePaul
Marie Desjarlais
Richard Deter
Nicole Devlin
David Domene
Judith Douglass
Kathi and Chris Duble
Sharon Dulude
Carolyn and John duPont
Rachel Dymon
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Audra Edele
Andrew Ehrlich
Jennifer El-Rifai
Rick Enslinger
Walter Erickson
Julie Eaton Ernst, Jonathan Ernst,
and Winifred Ernst
Mike Evans
Carmen Evrard
Ruth Fatscher
Anjali Fedson Hack and Andrew Hack
Lisa Feller
Kristie Ferguson
Jen and Chris Finnegan
Lindsay Fletcher
Staci Fleury
Charles Foley
Gert Fricker
Susan Gabrielson
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Benjamin Goldman
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Linda Greaver
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Dave Hahn
Brendan Hall
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Dave Hansen
David Hansen
John Hastings
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 Stephen Howe
 Kate and Charles Hudson
 Frances and Donald Hutchings
 Mary Ignazio
 Bud Jacobs
 Sami Jamal
 Krista Jenkins
 Rebecca Johns
 Zachary Johns
 Liza and Walker Jones
 Samuel Jones
 Jusdeep Judge
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 Tamara Kaleel
 John Kammerer
 Staci Kane
 Elaine Kasmer and
 Ralph Brown
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 Bina Venkataraman
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Updates **FRIENDS OF ACADIA WELCOMES NEW LEADERSHIP STAFF**



PERRIN DONIGER is our new Vice President of Communications and Marketing. She leads the communications team, directs the organization's marketing efforts, and oversees Acadia magazine—the Friends of Acadia Journal.

Perrin brings two decades of digital marketing, nonprofit, and media experience to the role. She spent 10 years running digital strategy at Smithsonian magazine and helped launch an award-winning digital news startup in Washington, D.C.

On the weekends, find Perrin hiking in Acadia with her two pups, searching for seals out on the water, or making a mess behind the pottery wheel.



MEGAN LOOMER recently came on board as Vice President of Finance and CFO following several years in financial leadership roles, most recently Vice President of Finance, at The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk in Connecticut. Prior to that, she spent two decades at various marketing companies and startups.

A recent transplant to Bar Harbor, she spent the previous 20+ years in the NYC-metro area, but originally hails from Lexington, Kentucky. In her spare time, she enjoys yoga, reading, and being in nature. She and her pup Luna look forward to enjoying all that Acadia National Park has to offer.

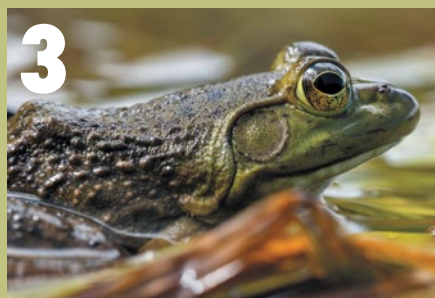


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American bullfrog • American toad •
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- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____

ANSWERS ON PAGE 46

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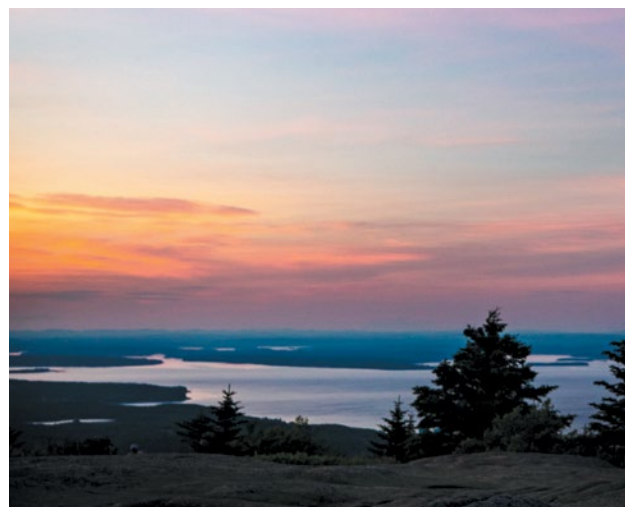
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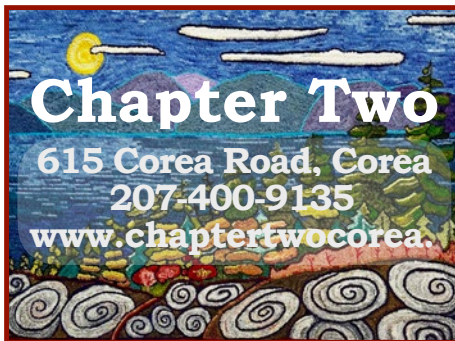
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Meghan Kyla Tateo Beebe
Edward "Eddie" Berke
Herman and Doris Bieber
Malcom E. Blanchard
Bowser and Buddy
Brandy, my dog and best friend
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Louise Yavelow
Jane Smith Zirkilton

ANSWERS to Acadia IQ Frog Quiz on page 43

1. Spring peeper
2. Pickerel frog
3. American bullfrog
4. Wood frog
5. American toad
6. Northern leopard frog



FRIENDS OF ACADIA EXTENDS OUR *Heartfelt Thanks*
TO EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE ACADIA NATIONAL PARK STAFF
FOR THE INCREDIBLE WORK YOU DO ALL YEAR TO PRESERVE THE
BEAUTY AND INTEGRITY OF ACADIA.

Join us in saying "thank you" to the hard-working park staff by emailing your thanks to editor@friendsofacadia.org, and we'll share your messages.

"If it wasn't for the hard-working park staff, Acadia wouldn't be the pristine, well-cared-for park that it is. From skiing the snow-covered carriage roads in the winter to climbing the stairs to the top of Dorr Mountain in August, the park staff's impacts are too many to list. They make life safer and more enjoyable. Thank you!"

- Kristin Clements

"One of my first encounters with a park ranger took place on the Jordan Cliffs Trail. Near the top, I came across a hiker stopped at the 'log' crossing. A ranger stood nearby, patiently guiding and encouraging her to inch her way to the other side. Watching this, I realized how much rangers do—not only protecting the park but ensuring our safety as well."

- Tony Palumbo

"I love walking and biking the carriage roads, especially Witch Hole. Thank you to Acadia's roads crew who keep the carriage roads so pristine."

- Raven LaVelle

"It wouldn't be an overstatement to say the employees at the park have transformed my life. What a gracious bunch doing all the hard work so the rest of us can enjoy a seamless vacation in a breathtaking spot."

- Therese Miller

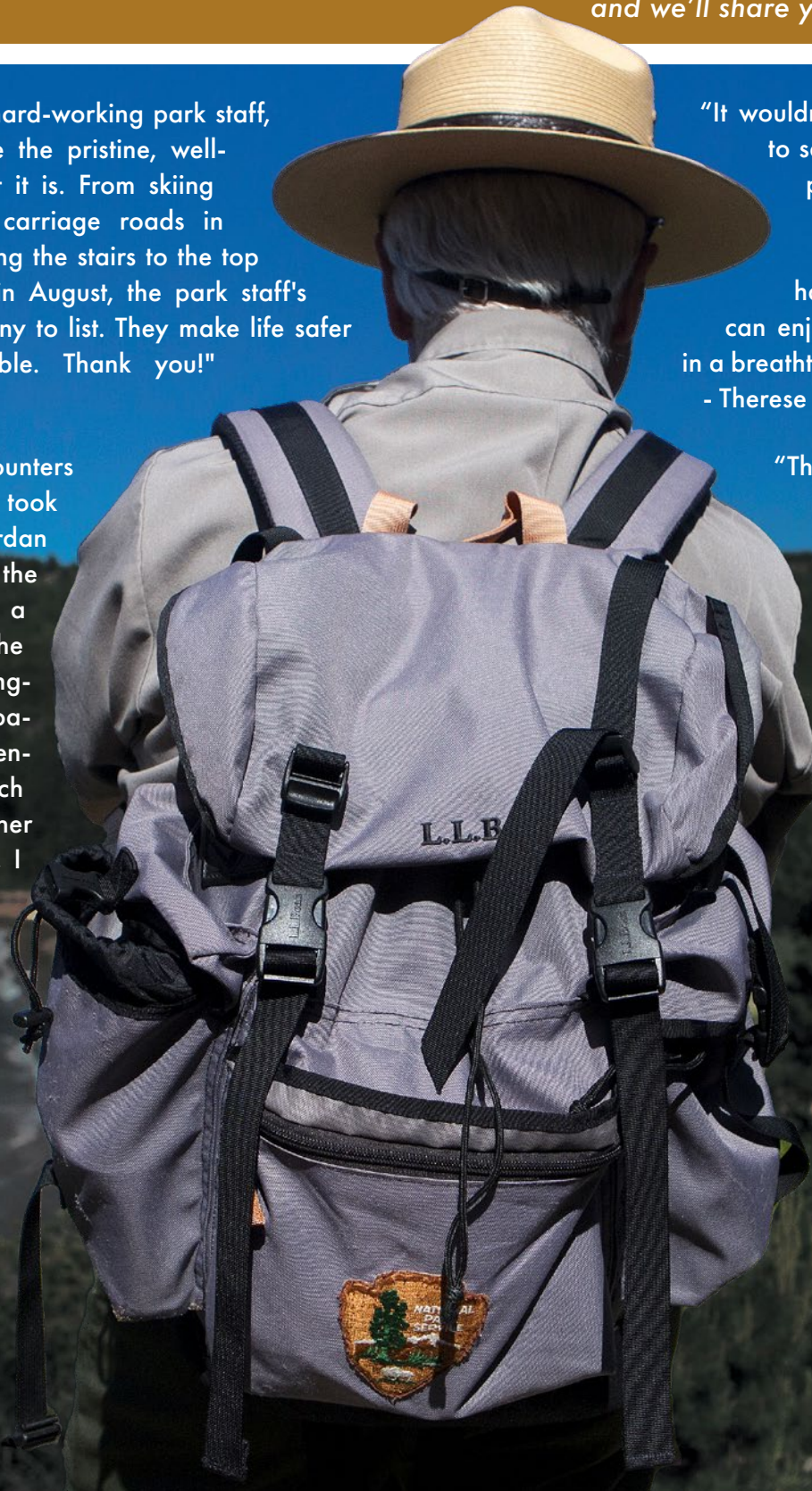
"Thank you to all park staff, but especially the custodial staff who make sure park facilities are so clean and welcoming. A clean bathroom is so appreciated!"

- Ann Walker

From maintaining the trails and facilities to ensuring the safety and enjoyment of all visitors, your hard work and passion make a tremendous difference to us all.

The park's stunning landscapes and vibrant ecosystems are a testament to your commitment and expertise. Thank you for your tireless efforts.

- Friends of Acadia



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Strengthening Our Voice for Acadia

In mid-February, I joined Friends of Acadia and Schoodic Institute leaders in Washington, D.C., for meetings with Maine's congressional delegation. Our goals were clear: advocate for the future of Acadia National Park in the face of unprecedented challenges, explore new opportunities to safeguard its beauty and legacy, and do right by the park service employees affected by changing headwinds.

Challenges at Acadia's Doorstep

Our meetings with legislators were both sobering and hopeful. We spoke with Maine's congressional delegation about our deep concerns over staffing terminations, hiring freezes, program holds, and potential service cuts. These issues threaten to diminish Acadia's cultural and natural treasures while putting park visitors' experiences—and the revenue they generate—at risk.

Mandated cuts to probationary employees on February 14 eliminated eight park staffers. Among those terminated were four entrance fee collectors, who helped bring in more than \$12 million in park revenue last year, and two members of the already under-sized trail crew, who were primarily paid for by Friends of Acadia's endowment. Following court rulings, these roles were reinstated on March 20, but we remain concerned about future cuts from reduction-in-force orders.

When you see a park staffer this summer, take a moment to let them know how much we appreciate them. These new staffing and budget pressures are difficult for morale and come at a time when record visitation and accelerating climate change are already putting immense strain on Acadia's ecosystems and infrastructure.

Yet there was hope, too. Maine's delegation reaffirmed their steadfast commitment to Acadia and expressed gratitude for Friends of Acadia's engagement and partnership on these issues.

Making a Meaningful Impact

After speaking with Friends of Acadia, Schoodic Institute, and National Parks Conservation Association, members of Maine's delegation took action and helped secure an exception to the federal hiring freeze, allowing national parks around the country to hire the 7,700 essential seasonal workers needed to support summer crowds.

This year, seasonal workers at Acadia will benefit from another advocacy win: new affordable housing, made possible by generous Raise the Roof donors and matching federal funds secured by our government affairs team.

We are also collaborating closely with partner organizations with broad reach, including National Park Friends Alliance, to mobilize Friends groups nationwide on key policy issues. This effort will empower Friends

organizations to educate lawmakers and champion the needs of national parks across the country.

Opportunities on the Horizon

Amid these challenges, there are promising aspects. The potential renewal of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which funded new maintenance facilities at park headquarters and infrastructure upgrades on the Schoodic Peninsula, may open the door for further investments. If funding is renewed, possible projects could include renovating Jordan Pond House and rehabilitating overnight accommodations at Schoodic Institute. These improvements would directly benefit park visitors and strengthen Acadia's infrastructure for years to come.

Perhaps most notably, disaster recovery funds, which Friends of Acadia advocated for and our congressional delegation helped secure, will soon make their way to Acadia. These funds will be put to good use making permanent repairs to beloved destinations like Sand Beach, Ocean Path, and Schoodic's education facilities, which were damaged during last year's devastating winter storms.

Our Advocacy Journey and the Road Ahead

The changes impacting Acadia today have led Friends of Acadia to evolve our advocacy approach. Last year, we made the critical decision to hire Veronica Torres as our full-time government affairs lead—one of the first such positions among Friends groups in the nation. Veronica's leadership and background in public policy has strengthened our relationships with policymakers, raised awareness of Acadia's pressing needs, and helped us advocate for long-term solutions to ensure the park's future.

Our recent meetings with congressional leaders made one thing abundantly clear: Friends of Acadia's voice is not only welcome but necessary. The challenges Acadia faces require proactive engagement, strategic partnerships, and a community of supporters ready to act when it matters most. Friends of Acadia is evolving from behind-the-scenes support to a more visible, coordinated advocacy effort that mobilizes our members and empowers them to engage with legislators when key decisions are on the line.

Through our shared dedication and the strength of Team Acadia, I am confident that we are building a bright and resilient future for this remarkable place. And with the support of our advocacy efforts, I am hopeful Acadia's best days are yet to come.

To stay up to date on how policy changes are impacting Acadia, visit friendsofacadia.org/policyimpacts.

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



"Our goals were clear: advocate for the future of Acadia National Park in the face of unprecedented challenges, explore new opportunities to safeguard its beauty and legacy, and do right by the park service employees affected by changing headwinds."

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bill".

—Bill Eacho

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Membership Table

During weekdays from June to September, volunteers staff a table at Jordan Pond House, helping spread the word about Friends of Acadia. They get to chat up park visitors from around the country and the world and share stories about our incredible park and the work Friends of Acadia does.

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During summer and fall months, greeters welcome visitors to the Wild Gardens of Acadia. It's an excellent way to meet visitors and to encourage them to enjoy the Garden's thirteen habitats that display Acadia's native plants.



JULIA WALKER THOMAS/FOA



ASHLEY L. CONTI/FOA

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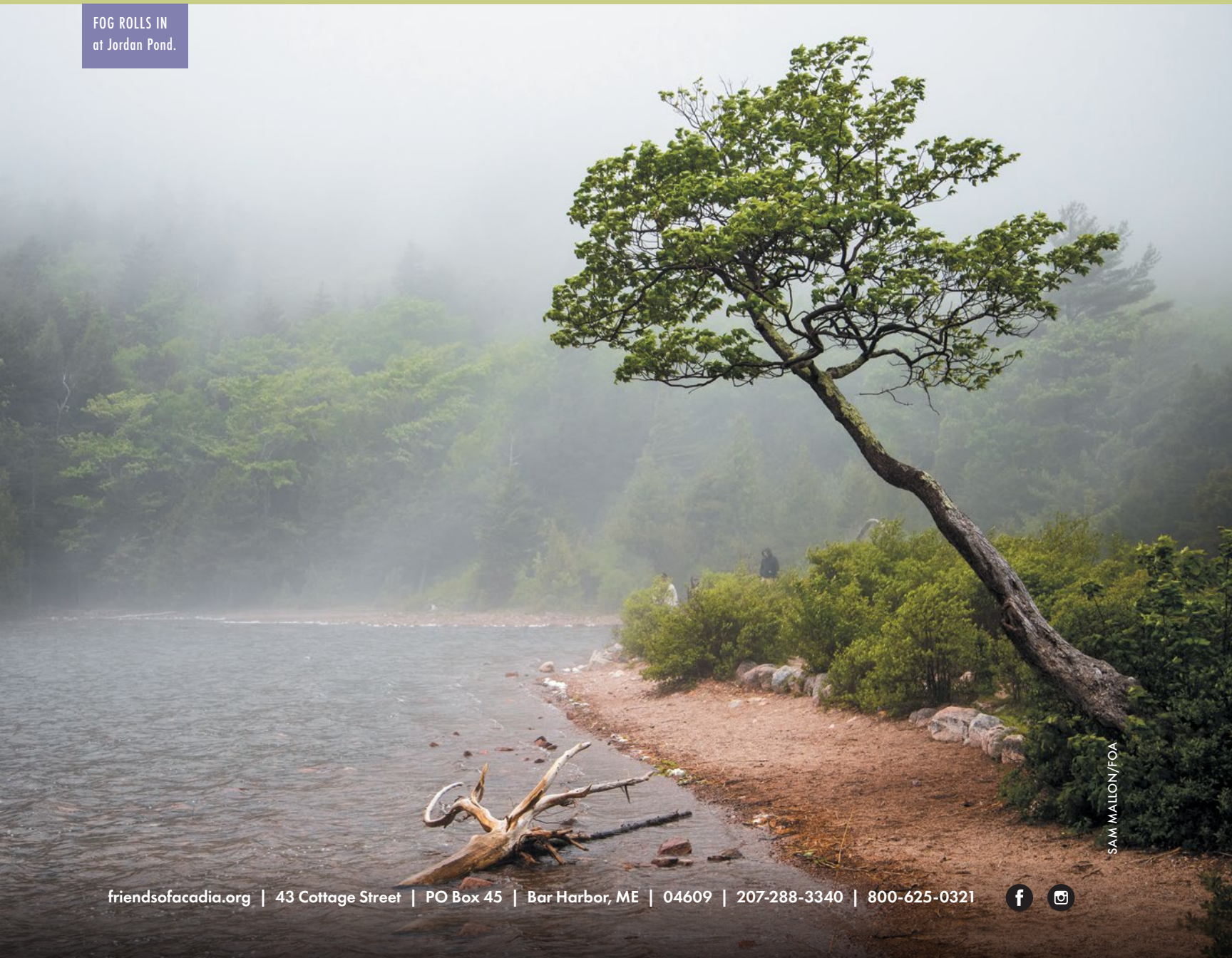
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Spring is MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL time at Friends of Acadia, too. Friends of Acadia members help preserve and protect ACADIA NATIONAL PARK and the surrounding communities for future generations.



MISSION Friends of Acadia preserves, protects, and promotes stewardship of the outstanding natural beauty, ecological vitality, and distinctive cultural resources of Acadia National Park and surrounding communities for the inspiration and enjoyment of current and future generations.

FOG ROLLS IN
at Jordan Pond.



SAM WALLON/FOA

