



Upcoming Field Trips and Nature Programs

(See the full trip descriptions inside)

SEPTEMBER

- Saturday, September 1 Curtis Farm Preserve
- Sunday, September 2 Morning Birding at Popham Beach
- Saturday, September 8 Morse Mountain
- Sunday, September 9 Androscoggin River Trail
- Sunday, September 23 Green Point Farm WMA
- Tuesday September 25 Board Meeting at Gordon Smith's home
- Saturday, September 29 Bird Banding at River Point

OCTOBER

- Saturday, October 6 Brunswick Landing
- Sunday, October 7 Green Point Farm WMA
- Saturday, October 13 Work Morning – Hamilton Sanctuary
- Sunday, October 14 Dawn to Dusk: THE BIG SIT!
- Sunday, October 21 Green Point Farm WMA
- Tuesday, October 23 Board Meeting & Public Program
- Saturday, October 27 Hermit Island

NOVEMBER

- Sunday, November 4 Waterfowl of Sabattus Pond

DECEMBER

- Saturday, December 1 Waterfowl Walk, Giant Stairs
- Saturday, December 15 Christmas Bird Counts: Bath - Phippsburg
- Friday, December 28 Christmas Bird Counts: Brunswick - Freeport

“ Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the stars and the mountains above. Let them look at the waters and the trees and flowers on Earth. Then they will begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education. ”

David Polis





Field Trips & Nature Programs 2018

www.maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting

Please Take Note:

- *If you're planning to go on a Field Trip, please call the Trip Leader the night before to confirm.*
- *Inclement weather might cause trips to be cancelled. Please call the Trip Leader before venturing out.*

September

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1,
7:00–11:00 A.M.**

**Field Trip: Curtis Farm Preserve,
Harpswell**

We will explore this Harpswell Heritage Land Trust preserve for Fall migrants, including shorebirds on Basin and Curtis Coves. Expect to walk on easy/moderate trails (about 2.5 miles total). No restroom facilities available.

➤ Meet at Brunswick Hannaford at 7:00 a.m. or at Curtis Cove Preserve **lower parking lot** off Basin Point Rd. at 7:30 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 7:00 A.M.
Field Trip: Morning Birding at Popham Beach



Black-bellied Plover

Join us for a morning of birding at Popham Beach for late shorebirds and other migrant species.

➤ Meet at the gate (closed until 9:00 a.m.) at 7:00 a.m. FMI Doug Suitor at 841-1951.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 8:00 A.M.

Field Trip: Morse Mountain

The Bates Morse Mountain Conservation Area is a great spot for



Piping Plover

watching the Fall migration of raptors. Maurice & Cathie Dauphin will help you identify the birds as they fly overhead. After the view from the top, enjoy Seawall Beach and any late migrating shorebirds. Bring sturdy shoes and lunch.

➤ Meet at the Morse Mountain parking lot off Route 216, Phippsburg, at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Maurice Dauphin at 389-2585.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9,
7:30–11:00 A.M.**

**Field Trip: Androscoggin River Trail,
Lisbon**

We will walk an easy paved path (about 3 miles total) along the river to observe Fall migrants.

➤ Meet at the Brunswick Hannaford

at 7:30 a.m., or at the Sabattus River boat launch parking lot off Route 196 at Frost Hill Avenue at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23,
7:30–11:00 A.M.**

**Field Trip: Green Point Farm WMA,
Dresden**

Expect a wide variety of Fall migrants in the woodlands, fields and wild rice flats of this diverse State Wildlife Management Area. We will walk paths, farm roads and open fields (about 2.5 miles total). Wear footwear suitable for walking in dew-covered grassy fields which might contain ticks. No restroom facilities available.

➤ Meet at the east end of the Bath Shopping Center at 7:30 a.m., or at Green Point Farm by the green shed at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
Board Meeting—6:00 p.m.

➤ *Location: Gordon Smith's home, 21 Bodwell St., Brunswick. Call for directions: 725-0282.*

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29,
7:15 A.M.–12:00 P.M.**

**Field Trip: Bird Banding at River Point
Conservation Area, West Falmouth**

Join Biodiversity Research Institute for a demonstration of bird banding. We will also walk the easy trails (up to 2 miles total) seeking Fall migrants. Rest-rooms available nearby.

➤ Meet at Brunswick Hannaford at 7:15 a.m., or at Hannaford at River Point off Route 100 in West Falmouth at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.



October

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6,
8:00–11:00 A.M.**

Field Trip: Brunswick Landing

We will explore a variety of habitats for Fall migrants. Expect to walk paved and hard-packed paths (up to 2.5 miles total).

➤Meet at the parking lot off Admiral Fitch Avenue (.6 miles from Bath Road entrance) opposite Southern Maine Community College complex at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7,
7:30–11:00 A.M.**

Field Trip: Green Point Farm WMA, Dresden

Expect a wide variety of Fall migrants in the woodlands, fields and wild rice flats of this diverse State Wildlife Management Area. We will walk paths, farm roads and open fields (about 2.5 miles total). Wear footwear suitable for walking in dew-covered grassy fields which might contain ticks. No restroom facilities available.

➤Meet at the east end of the Bath Shopping Center at 7:30 a.m., or at Green Point Farm by the green shed at 8:00 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13,
9:00 A.M.–12:00 P.M.**

Work Morning at Hamilton Sanctuary, West Bath

Directions: Take the New Meadows exit off US Route 1 in West Bath. Turn left onto New Meadows Road and go straight ahead to the stop sign. Here New Meadows Road turns into Foster Point Road. Follow Foster Point Rd. nearly to its end. You will see the Sanctuary sign and a parking area on the right. If you plan to participate, please contact the Sanctuary manager, Glenn Evans, at 443-9652 prior to the day, for planning purposes.



**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14,
DAWN TO DUSK — THE BIG SIT!**

Field Trip: THE BIG SIT!, Wharton Point (Maquoit Landing), Brunswick

Join Merrymeeting Audubon's co-captains, Gordon Smith and Jay Stormer, for this fun event. We will be staking out a 17-foot diameter circle, and from within the circle we will attempt to observe/hear all birds in the surrounding area. Observations (and listening) will begin at dawn (or before, depending on the weather) and continue until dusk, or after. Anyone is welcome to join The Big Sit! at any time during the day, and stay for as long as desired.

➤Meet at Wharton Point (head of Maquoit Bay) at the intersection of Maquoit and Woodside Roads. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21,
8:00 A.M. –12:00 P.M.**

Field Trip: Green Point Farm WMA, Dresden

Expect a wide variety of Fall migrants in the woodlands, fields and wild rice flats of this diverse State Wildlife Management Area. We will walk paths, farm roads and open fields (about 2.5 miles total). Wear footwear suitable for walking in dew-covered grassy fields which might contain ticks. No restroom facilities available.

➤Meet at the east end of the Bath Shopping Center at 8:00 a.m., or at Green Point Farm by the green shed at 8:30 a.m. FMI call Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7:00 P.M.
Board Meeting—5:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

➤*Location: Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick – Morrell Room*

Public Program: South Texas Rarities, presented by Doug Hitchcox, Maine Audubon Staff Naturalist.

In February 2018, a group of Maine Audubon members took a private tour with Field Guides Inc. to South Texas' Rio Grande Valley.

In winter, this subtropical region is known to produce unpredictable vagrants that make this a "must visit"



Altamira Oriole

location for every North American birder. Supplement the rarities with large numbers of wintering waterfowl, sparrows, warblers, raptors and coastal birds. The trip list was extensive! Join one of the tours co-leaders and Maine Audubon's Staff Naturalist, Doug Hitchcox, for a photo-presentation to highlight the birds seen, places visited, and shenanigans of pursuing birds along the Rio Grande Valley (plus a preview of 2019 tours!).

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27,
8:30 A.M.–12:00 P.M.**

Field Trip: Hermit Island

Doug Suitor will lead this outing to Hermit Island on Small Point in Phippsburg. We'll walk along Head Beach, by ocean overlooks, and along a wooded dirt road by a saltwater cove. Expect to see ducks, grebes, and loons as well as some woodland birds.

➤Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the north end of Bath Plaza across from McDonald's, or 8:30 at Head Beach, Hermit Island, Route 216, Phippsburg. FMI call Doug Suitor at 841-1951.

November

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4,
8:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.**

Field Trip: Waterfowl of Sabattus Pond

John Berry will lead this trip to Sabattus Pond in Sabattus, ME. In the Fall, Sabattus hosts large con

centrations of migrating waterfowl, including Ruddy and Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, scaup, and Coots.

➤Meet at Brunswick Hannaford at 8:00 a.m. to carpool. FMI call John Berry at 632-7257.

December

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1,
8:30 – 11:30 A.M.**

**Field Trip: Waterfowl Walk,
Giant's Stairs on Bailey Island**

Join John Berry and Merrymeeting Audubon for a look at the winter waterfowl of eastern Casco Bay from one of Harpswell's most scenic locations. Directions for the site are on the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust web site. The estimated time is three hours. FMI John Berry at 632-7257 or Berry.John@comcast.net.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15
Field Trips: Christmas Bird Counts:
Bath—Phippsburg**

Birders of all ages and experiences are welcome. The CBCs usually begin early in the morning and last most of the day. The weather can be very iffy, but at the very least, cold and windy. Dress very warm, as you'll be outside much of the time. If you can't venture out with our teams, then consider doing bird counts at your home feeders. Submit the best estimates of birds in your yard—species and numbers. If you would like to participate as a team or individual, please contact Doug Suitor at 841-1951 or dougsuitor@gmail.com. ➤FMI or changes in the trip, please check our web site close to the trip date: www.maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting.

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28
Field Trips: Christmas Bird Counts
Brunswick — Freeport**
(See description above)

Circle 'round, birders!

by Gordon Smith

It's time for The Big Sit! The what? The Big Sit! Veteran birders probably know what it is, but for any neophytes out there, think of it as a *stationary* bird-a-thon. Instead of traveling to find the birds, you *stay in one place* observing the birds passing by.

The Big Sit! guidelines begin with a real or imaginary circle, 17 feet in diameter, from which participants can observe passing birds. MMA has established its Big Sit! circle at the large rock monument at Wharton Point on Maquoit Bay in Brunswick. Only birds observed and/or heard by someone *inside* the circle can be counted.

If a bird is seen or heard that cannot be identified reliably, due to distance or obstacles, a person can leave the circle to get a closer look to confirm

the bird's identity. However, any *new* species seen or heard while outside the circle cannot be counted, unless someone inside the circle observes or hears it as well.

Since the inception of MMA's The Big Sit! in 2012, an impressive total of 108 bird species has been compiled, topped by two rarities never seen at Wharton Point before—an American White Pelican in 2012 and a Leach's Storm-Petrel in 2015.

The Big Sit! is an annual event occurring on the second Sunday of October. It is a nationwide, as well as global, event. Everyone is welcome, it's free, and you can stay for as long or as short a time as you like. (See **Sunday, October 14** in this Field Trip section for more details).



“
It was in the forest that I found ‘the peace that passeth understanding’” Jane Goodall