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The Nature Conservancy



SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

Storehouse

# 1 maine legacy

summer 2005



Message echoes from the  
Big Woods of Arkansas  
to the North Woods of Maine

## ivory-billed woodpecker

If woodpeckers could write ... Recently rediscovered in a bottomland swamp in Arkansas, the Ivory-billed woodpecker - thought extinct for over half a century - might pen a few words about a story of improbable hope turned to astonishing affirmation.

The first thing the Ivory-bill might write is 'don't give up hope.' Hope is an important ally - whether it is on behalf of the Atlantic salmon listed several years ago as an endangered species, the Bald eagle which has just been downlisted from that status or the American eel now under consideration. And as the Ivory-bill might tell us, that hope needs to be the precursor to action.

### The Ivory bill returns

"I almost let it go by."

That's what Gene Sparling said. He's the kayaker who spotted a ghost flying over the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge.

"The bird's red crest came to a fine point," recalls Sparling.

"It had a white bill, and there was a parchment-colored tinge to the edges of its wings."

Wings that stretched three feet across. He knew instantly what he was seeing, but wasn't sure he had the nerve to believe it. The Ivory-billed woodpecker, the largest woodpecker in North America, had last been documented over 60 years ago, just after overzealous harvesters cut into the virgin forest which were its last refuge, the last of millions of acres of habitat leveled between the 1880s and 1940s.

There had been frantic efforts to save the forest - offers of funds more than it was worth, but the landowner simply didn't care. After many years without a solid sighting, ornithologists had declared the Ivory-bill extinct, one more

*continued on page two*

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# first thoughts

On a sunny June day atop Mt Agamenticus in York, I had the pleasure of joining a group of diverse partners, including Governor John Baldacci and Congressman Tom Allen. We were there to announce remarkable progress on the \$10 million Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Initiative. Even before this formal public announcement, the campaign had attracted more than \$7 million in support. The Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Initiative was launched three years ago on the heels of the successful Mount Agamenticus Challenge, an effort that added more than 2,000 protected acres around the mountain - bringing the total to nearly 10,000 acres in this fast-growing area.

It was a proud moment. As Helen Winebaum, chairwoman of the Mount Agamenticus to the Sea committee, said, "it feels so good to guard the future."

The Nature Conservancy has been involved with conservation efforts at and around Mt Agamenticus for more than 15 years, working with key partners to raise funds and acquire thousands of acres of conserved land. With our mission to protect global diversity, The Nature Conservancy chooses the places on which we focus our resources with great care. I told the gathering that morning that the choice of Mt Agamenticus was an easy one.

Why? Because our science tells us.

Identifying hot spots of natural diversity around the world is central to our mission.

*continued on page five*

Executive Director  
Mike Tetreault



## ivory-billed woodpecker

*continued from page one*

species lost - and not to Nature's natural processes or even human ignorance, but to greed.

Sparling is no professional naturalist, but an outdoorsman with a pretty good feel for his surroundings. Still fearful he'd be taken for the fool, he nevertheless posted his sighting on the web. Because of that and details he included, Tim Gallagher, editor-in-chief of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Living Bird magazine and Bobby Harrison, a professor at Oakwood College in Huntsville, slipped their canoe into that same stretch of black water a few weeks later.

They spoke in whispers. It was one in the afternoon when a huge shape streaked across their bow. It came like a jolt.

"We both shouted 'Ivory-bill!'" recalls Gallagher. "I think we must of scared the hell out of that bird. Next thing we knew we were knee deep in mud, scrambling over branches to reach the shore."

*Searching for hope in an Arkansas swamp*



And there they started writing field notes before a single detail could slip away. Gallagher looked over at his companion sitting on a log. Suddenly Bobby Harrison stopped writing and buried his face in his hands. "I saw an Ivory-bill," he kept repeating. For thirty years as a scientist that had been Harrison's primary if fading hope. And now the tears were rolling off his face.

Gallagher and Harrison were the vanguard of a highly-secret corps of 50 scientists and conservationists drawn from Cornell, The Nature Conservancy, the University of Arkansas, state and federal wildlife agencies, and a handful of other partners. They spent the next year validating the



discovery. The Conservancy used the time to accelerate land protection efforts, adding 18,000 acres to the 120,000 acres it had already helped protect over 20 years.

Eventually the secret leaked out and it was big news. The day it was announced, the story was carried by 630 media outlets worldwide. And there was a rush of public excitement: in that one day, the number of visits to The Nature Conservancy website (which averages 14,000 visits daily) jumped to 2.3 million hits.

### **A story we share in**

While less sudden and dramatic, we have stories like this to tell in Maine as well. The best known is that of the Bald eagle, which in the 1960s was a species very much at risk. Their numbers had plummeted and continued to fall. Years of pesticide ingestion - DDT - had caused the eagles to produce eggs with shells so thin that the roosting eagle crushed her own eggs. Meanwhile they were losing habitat they needed for breeding and feeding to an upsurge in building on island and coastal properties.

Today, thanks to a ban on DDT and to the habitat protection efforts The Nature

Conservancy has led here in Maine, the eagle is rising. Several years after the Bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list, the breeding success in Maine is something to cheer about. The bald eagle has been pulled back from the precipice of extirpation in the lower 48 states.

And right now, we are bringing hope to another powerful symbol of Maine's coast, another endangered species - the native Atlantic salmon. Far from the massive runs of the past, fish returning on some of our salmon rivers can be counted on your hands and toes. The U.S government placed the salmon on the endangered species list a few years ago and

identified eight Maine rivers as important for restoration and protection.

The Conservancy and our partners have been working to protect these rivers for some years. We have a project closing later this year on the Narraguagus for example (see page 8). We've protected nearly the entire length of the Dennys and the mighty Machias. We've helped partners on the Ducktrap and look forward to success on the Penobscot.

What we and our partners protect is a gift to the future.

Which brings us back to Gene Sparling, the ordinary guy who made an extraordinary



*The Machias River:  
Bringing hope to a  
powerful symbol of the  
Maine's coast - The  
Atlantic Salmon*

discovery. He called the return of this woodpecker "a great gift and a blessing for all mankind." But he hesitated at first to share his discovery.

"I thought I wasn't capable, but I learned that ordinary people can have a very powerful impact. And making a commitment to try is how we do it"

Maybe that's something the Ivory-billed woodpecker would write as well. We can make a powerful impact, each of us, working together, giving hope a chance, as did Gene Sparling. We can learn from the story of the Ivory-billed woodpecker and our own experience with bald eagles and Atlantic salmon that hope need not be passive. Hope can become action, whether in the bottomlands of Arkansas or the coast of Maine.



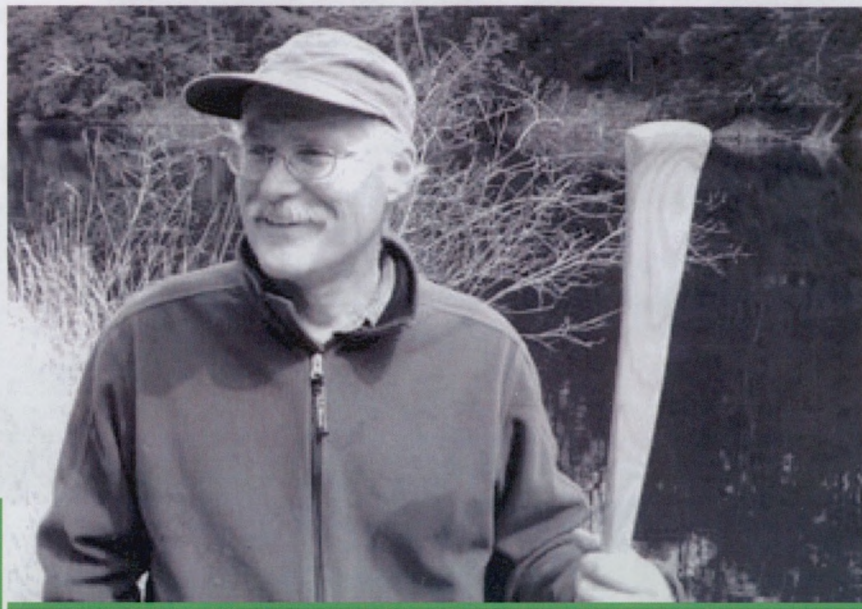
## An Appreciation *Investing in Nature*

They are a new breed. Picture a business suit with a hand lens tucked into the breast pocket. In his new book William Ginn describes how business-people-turned-environmental-entrepreneurs are pioneering a new set of tools for land conservation. Some of the stories Ginn tells are as close to home as the Katahdin Forest and the Machias River.

Bill Ginn, Director of the Conservancy's Forest Conservation Program, draws on his considerable experience in both business and land conservation in offering a practitioner's guide to these innovative methods. In the process, he adds a new lexicon to the glossary of conservation with terms like conservation investment banking, emerging markets for nature's goods and services, and new tax incentives that encourage companies to do the right thing. And in doing so, he goes well beyond theory to present real-world applications and strategies - stories of conservation success that could have been accomplished in no other way.

In an era of dwindling public resources and expanding challenges, Ginn's tools are building new pathways to achieving enormously ambitious biodiversity goals.

Maine



*Negotiating deals or negotiating rapids,  
Bill Ginn is a true asset to  
The Nature Conservancy*

## Ginn to Highlight Annual Business Meeting



While we know full well that the opportunity to hear the secretary's and treasurer's reports and to welcome new trustees is ample incentive for you to join us on August 4, we think you'll enjoy the other parts of our get-together. William Ginn, author of *Investing in Nature*, will be our keynote speaker. And our Executive Director, Mike Tetreault, will sum up his first year as Executive Director in the annual review of Chapter and provide a look ahead to the coming year.

Snacks and soft beverages provided.

**Date:** Thursday, August 4, 2005

**Time:** 4:00pm - 6:30pm

**Place:** Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell

**Registration:** Please call the Maine Chapter membership line at (207) 729-5182, ext 221. Once Conservancy staff has reserved a spot with you over the telephone, you will receive written confirmation which will include directions to the registered activity and any other important information you'll need to know.



# An Appreciation of Leadership

The Nature Conservancy recently recognized nearly 80 Maine businesses who have pledged their support as members of the Corporate Conservation Council of Maine during a luncheon at the Augusta Country Club that featured Governor John Baldacci.

The Corporate Conservation Council of Maine provides business expertise and financial support to The Nature Conservancy to protect ecologically significant lands, waters and natural communities in Maine.



*Recognizing Maine's Business Leaders: CCCM Co-Chair David Flanagan and Jeff McGown of Waste Management, Inc. (top, left to right). Chris McCormick, Jim Dowe of Bangor Savings Bank, and Mike Tetreault (bottom, left to right).*

creating  
a balance

*The Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative is a coalition of ten conservation organizations that have come together to protect a full range of community and ecological values in this six-town area of southern Maine. Partners include:*

- The Nature Conservancy
- Great Works Regional Land Trust
- Kittery Land Trust
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Trust for Public Land
- US Fish and Wildlife Service / Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge
- Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve
- York Land Trust
- York Rivers Association

*First Thoughts - continued from page two*



Our science tells us that the forests and freshwater resources stretching out from the summit of Mt. Agamenticus are a treasure trove of natural diversity unlike that found anywhere else in Maine. But time is not on our side. Congressman Allen observed that "the pressure in southern Maine is tremendous. Once homes are built on farmland or open space, it never reverts back to what it was. The mountains and the streams need to be protected or they are lost forever."



# join us in the field

## Northern Blazing Star at Kennebunk Plains

Thursday, August 25, 9:00am – 11:00am and 12:00pm – 2:00pm.

(Two tours with 25 people per tour.) Kennebunk

In late August and early September more than a hundred thousand stalks of Northern Blazing Star (*Liatris scariosa*) burst into bloom at Kennebunk Plains. That's more stalks of this globally endangered purple flower than can be found everywhere else in the world combined! It is also home to a variety of grassland birds and even an endangered reptile, the northern black racer snake. Join Southern Maine Project Manager, Parker Schuerman as we explore the flora and fauna on an approximately 3.5-mile family friendly walk. Please indicate which time slot you prefer when calling to register for this field trip.



Northern Blazing Star (above) and an Upland Sandpiper (left) at Kennebunk Plains.

register

today

To register,

call our membership line

at (207) 729-5182, ext. 221.

Space is limited.

## a visit to Great Wass Island Preserve



The remains of a humpback whale (above) and watching Bald Eagles (right) on Great Wass Island.

What's so special about beach head iris, marsh feltwort, blinks or birdeye primrose?

For one thing, they need to be hardy enough to face constant wind and salt spray on the exposed headlands on Great Wass Island, and they need to thrive through cool summer growing seasons that often find them engulfed in banks of fog. These were among the lessons offered recently as Science and Stewardship Director Nancy Sferra led a group of members on a field trip to the Conservancy's spectacular 1,579-acre

preserve. Acquired in 1978, the Great Wass Island Preserve, just off Jonesport, is relatively untouched by human presence. With a small parking lot and several trails, a varied coast, Jack pine stands and interior peatlands it offers a full day of adventure.





## stewardship is forever - but you can play a part now

Volunteer monitors help our science and stewardship team care for preserves and make sure other protected lands are managed appropriately. If you'd be interested in helping at any of these sites, please call Nancy Sferra at 207-729-5181 x212 or email at [nsferra@tnc.org](mailto:nsferra@tnc.org).

### Preserves

(lands owned and managed by  
The Nature Conservancy)

Great Duck Island (Frenchboro)  
Great Wass Island (Beals)  
Alley Island (Trenton)  
Mark Island (W. Penobscot Bay)  
Placentia Island (Frenchboro)  
Trout Mountain (T2 R9 WELS)  
Step Falls (Newry)

Falls Island (Trescott)  
Halifax Island (Jonesport)  
Little Eaton Island (Deer Isle)  
Mt Abraham (Salem)  
Outer Scott Island (Deer Isle)  
Welch's Island (Sorrento)  
Lane's Island (Vinalhaven)

### Transfers

(lands once owned by the  
Conservancy but now transferred to  
conservation partners)

Sebois River (T5 R7, T6 R7)  
Forbes Pond (Gouldsboro)  
Helliwell Preserve (Beals)

### Easements and

### Restricted Tradelands

(lands on which management  
restrictions have been placed)

Coombs Neck (Vinalhaven)  
Deep Cove Forest (Cooper)

## Truck, tractor, ATV donation

Would you or your business be interested in donating a new or used truck, tractor or ATV to The Nature Conservancy in Maine? We are looking for a vehicle in good working condition to perform a number of varied stewardship duties at Indian Point-Blagden Preserve on the western side of Bar Harbor, on the Indian Point peninsula. Located in the part of Mount Desert Island that escaped the fire of 1947, it provides interesting contrasts to the central and eastern parts of the island, which were severely burned.

The preserve supports an abundant variety of wildlife including white-tail deer, porcupine, varying hares, ruby-crowned kinglets and osprey, and is home to at least 12 species of warblers and six members of the woodpecker family, including black-backed and pileated woodpeckers.

To donate a vehicle or for more information, please contact Science and Stewardship Director Nancy Sferra at (207) 729-5181 ext 212 or [nsferra@tnc.org](mailto:nsferra@tnc.org)

maine legacy: Published quarterly by the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, Fort Andross, 14 Maine Street, Suite 401, Brunswick, Maine 04011 (207) 729-5181. Subscriptions to this newsletter are available to members. Over 11,000 households support the Conservancy's work in Maine.

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Time is moving quickly for a Conservancy opportunity Downeast. Two years ago, the Conservancy negotiated a long-term option on a 10,000-acre property to prevent excessive cutting that would have endangered Atlantic salmon habitats and other vulnerable wetlands. Included is more than 12 miles of frontage along the Spring and Narraguagus Rivers. Once acquired, the Spring River property will significantly enhance the state's ecological reserve system Downeast. Abutting the state-owned Donnell Pond Public Reserve Unit, the Spring River acquisition will create 24,000 acres of connected conservation land in Hancock County, comprising the largest designated ecological reserve holding in the State of Maine.



## Priority Project: Spring River

*The view from Tunk Mountain with Spring River Lake in the distance and Little Long Pond and Tilden Pond in the foreground.*

The option agreement must be executed by December 2005. If you are interested in supporting the Conservancy's efforts to purchase the Spring River property and our plan to provide an endowment that will ensure it is properly managed as an ecological reserve, please contact: Cori Messinger, Donor Relations Manager at (207) 729-5182 or [cmessinger@tnc.org](mailto:cmessinger@tnc.org).

# 1 maine legacy

Thanks for your support!



### Putting The Nature Conservancy in your Will?

The Nature Conservancy should be named as: *"The Nature Conservancy, a nonprofit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the District of Columbia, with a principal business address of 4245 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203."* If you'd like the bequest to be used in Maine, please add this language: *"...to be used to further the purposes of The Nature Conservancy in the state of Maine."*

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