



ANDROSCOGGIN LAND TRUST

Fall 2020



*Salmon Point
Lake Auburn*

Join us for our first virtual Annual Meeting Tuesday, November 17th 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Free / Suggested Donation \$5 - Open to The Public

RSVP for Zoom Presentation at <https://androscogginlandtrust.org/2020-annual-meeting/>
or email info@androscogginlandtrust.org or call 207.782.2302 for an electronic invite to be sent directly to you



Event Program

6:00 PM - Introductions with President **Jim Pross**
Presentation of Awards
Regular Business - New Board Members
Executive Director **Aimee Dorval** introduces
Guest Speaker - **Dr. Rana Johnson**
Q&A Session

2020 Award Presentations

Bonnie Lounsbury Environmental Award
Shelley Kruszewski

Androscoggin Partner Award
Lewiston Auburn Watershed Protection Commission

Community Business Stewardship Award
Great Falls Development Group

Elliott Bates Stewardship Award
Doug Boyd

Dr. Rana Johnson is an agent of change. She moved to Maine in May 2017, where she served as the inaugural Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for two years at Unity College. The geographical shift from the south to the northeast was both appealing and exhilarating. **"I encourage everyone to challenge and stretch themselves beyond their comfort zone. I grew so much when I moved to the New England area! For the first time in my life, I was attentive to my transformative immersion with the environment. Not only did I observe the culture - I became a part of it... while maintaining my cultural identity."** Dr. Johnson will introduce best practices for cultural inclusion in natural settings, highlight relationships between the environment and people of color, and feature a few of her favorite locations in the New England area. See her full bio at <https://androscogginlandtrust.org/>

Greetings from the Executive Director

In September, I started my new position as Executive Director of Androscoggin Land Trust (ALT), and I would like to truly thank our board of directors, partners, and supporters for the warm welcome I have received.

When I was first exploring a career in land conservation, there was a voice in the back of my mind whispering “What can you do to best protect the environment?” I knew that the research I had already done—on organisms from tiger beetles to grasshopper sparrows to black bears—was important, but I was always thinking on a wider scale. It was when I started working in philanthropy, sharing the message about my organization’s work and mission, that I discovered the importance and value of sharing the larger story. Connecting people and communities to their lands, and asking them to help protect those lands, has proven to be the most satisfying and rewarding conservation work for me, and I look forward to sharing that with ALT.



ALT’s longstanding mission in land conservation is more important now than ever, as the increased use of our lands and trails by individuals and families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated. This year, despite the challenges of COVID-19, we have continued to steward lands, assist landowners in options to protect their land, and forge meaningful partnerships within the central Maine region. In this newsletter, you’ll learn more about the beauty and benefits of some of these places, including research being conducted at Purinton Preserve in Bowdoin, the rare plants at Jersey Bog in Buckfield, exciting partnerships at the ALT-conserved Chirp Creek Farm in Lisbon, and more.

Looking to the future, we will continue to serve our communities—from Jay and Canton south to Lisbon and Durham—by connecting people to the outdoors and contributing to the health and well-being of our natural world. We look forward to growing and deepening our capacity to pursue the many exciting opportunities before us. It is my pleasure to serve this wonderful organization as its Executive Director, and I look forward to getting to know you and other members of our community as we share in this important work.

The support we receive from generous individuals, private foundations, and volunteers makes this work possible. Thank you for all that you do!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Dorval'.

Aimee Dorval

Executive Director



A family enjoys the David Rancourt Preserve in Lewiston during the COVID spring of 2020

Unique plants grow at Purinton Preserve and Jersey Bog

Purinton Preserve in Bowdoin, a beautiful ALT-conserved property, served as the setting last year for Bates student Gabriel Benson to study the flowering shrub Maleberry (*Lyonia ligustrina*). Gabriel worked under the supervision of Bates professor Carla Essenberg, whose research focuses on pollination ecology.

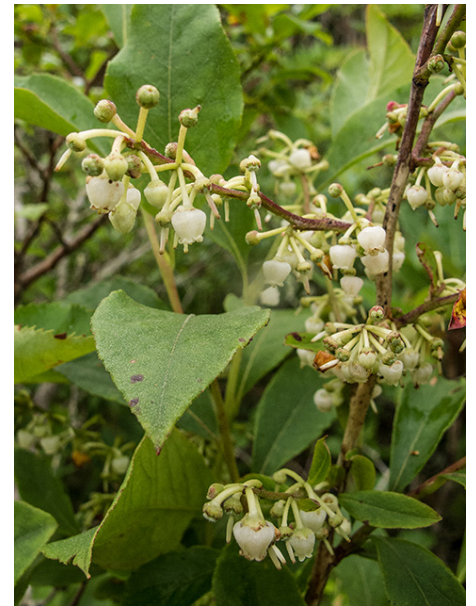
Purinton's wetlands once supported cranberry production, which can still be found in abundance there. Among the many shrubs that have grown up in this inviting habitat is a large and thriving population of Maleberry. Maleberry resembles a blueberry bush, has clusters of white flowers in the spring and a unique five-part brown fruit the size of a peppercorn in the fall.

Gabriel investigated Maleberry's flowering, pollination and fruiting to determine what effects climate change might have on the habitat range of this plant. With the average Maine temperature having risen 3 degrees F. over the last century, the warming causes flowers to appear earlier, leading to the concern that pollinators such as bees and butterflies may not be available to fertilize the ova that develop into seeds. Fortunately, Gabriel's research indicated that Maleberry can continue to successfully self-pollinate and cross-pollinate, making it adaptable to climate change.

Gabriel and Dr. Essenberg are two of the many scientists who use ALT lands to gather information for their research. These research opportunities are just a few of the many ways that land conservation plays a critical role in mitigating and addressing the critical challenges of climate change. We appreciate your support of ALT that allows these scientists the ability to carry out their research.

Jersey Bog, a large wetland complex that drains into the Nezinscot River and then into the Androscoggin River, spans roughly 4500 undeveloped acres in Buckfield and Turner. This unique ecosystem provides significant wading bird, waterfowl, and other wildlife breeding habitat; deer wintering areas; and critical watershed protection. Within the bog, ALT conserves approximately 600 acres—the Jersey Bog Conservation Area. A portion of this conservation area is an imperiled "natural community," called the Northern White Cedar Swamp. ALT purchased this section through wetland mitigation funding: Hannaford Bros. gave the funds to offset the wetland disturbance created by the construction of the company's store in Turner.

A number of rare plants thrive in the Jersey Bog. In addition to the common Pink lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), other orchids found in Jersey Bog include the Yellow lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) and Early coral-root (*Corallorhiza trifida*). The bog often draws knowledgeable botanists to study and help protect these rare species.



Maleberry - Stephanie Brundage



Early coral root orchid - Jill Weber



Yellow lady's-slipper - Rick Speer

Scavenger Hunt- Nature Walk

Can you find all 20?



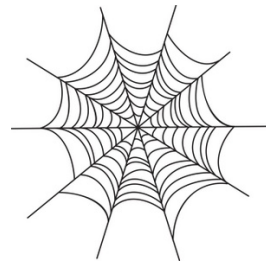
bird



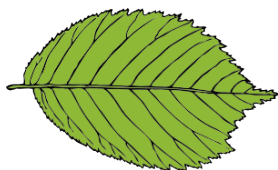
tree roots



ant



spiderweb



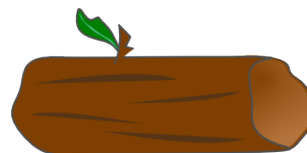
green leaf



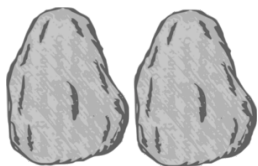
acorn



flower



log



two similar rocks



mushroom



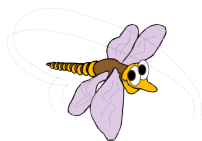
squirrel



tall grass



stick that looks
like a letter 'y'



flying bug



brown leaf



cloud



dandelion



animal footprints



wild berries



pine cone

Conservation and Community at historic Packard-Littlefield Farm

Nestled into the northeast corner of Lisbon and bordered by the towns of Lewiston, Sabattus, and the Sabattus River, lies the historic Packard-Littlefield farm. ALT began working with Bob and Ella Mae Packard in 2004, helping them to conserve what would eventually total almost 400 acres of prime forest and farmland. In the years since, first Coastal Enterprises then food-justice nonprofit Cultivating Community has leased a portion of the land for a pioneering incubator farmer training program—the New American Sustainable Agriculture Project—that serves new immigrants and refugees who have settled in Maine. That program has grown over the years, with up to 75 farmers producing fresh farm vegetables sold locally under the Fresh Start Farms brand.



The farm is now owned by Joe Daley and Susan Thornton, who are continuing the legacy of this special place, actively using the hay fields to produce feed for the growing stable of animals now on the property. Their son Ben Daley owns and operates the organic MOFGA-certified Chirp Creek Farm, with five acres currently in production and an additional four in cover crop to enrich the soil for future years. The use of Belgian horses allows the farm to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and most of the horse-drawn equipment used is upcycled or restored, giving a second life to the gear. Ben is an active community member, serving on the board of the Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District and the steering committee of the Lewiston Farmers Market.

Chirp Creek Farm runs a produce stand at the farm, offers a CSA farm share, and participates in Lewiston's farmers market and several others—forging strong community ties through the sale of local, fresh, quality produce. It reduces consumer costs and permits double value for SNAP/EBT purchase through the Maine Federation of Farmers Markets Harvest Bucks Program, providing high value nutritional options for those with limited means.



Chirp Creek Farm also works closely with Androscoggin Gleaners, a collective network made possible by the St. Mary's Nutrition Center of Lewiston, University of Southern Maine Cooperative Extension, Bates College, Healthy Androscoggin and many individual volunteers. The Gleaners harvest surplus produce from Chirp Creek Farm to distribute to food pantries, soup kitchens, low-income housing communities and other food access sites in Androscoggin County. During the season, the Gleaners visit the farm weekly to make sure food that would otherwise go to waste is shared with people with limited access.

Next time you see Ben at the farm or at market, stop and say hi! Ben's enterprise truly embodies what can be accomplished through hard work and collaboration, and the value of agricultural conservation easements created in partnership with ALT.

MEET: ALT Member and Land Steward Eileen Fair

ALT member Eileen Fair is a firm believer that great things can result when people work together for a common purpose. That belief has been central not only to her decades long, dedicated career in health and social services in the Lewiston-Auburn area, but to her longstanding support for ALT and other organizations working to enhance life in our local communities.

Eileen lives in a small, closely tied neighborhood that abuts No Name Pond in Lewiston. She and other residents comprise the No Name Pond Association, which has effectively worked for many years to improve and maintain the pond's water quality. The group worked with the City of Lewiston and the State Department of Environmental Protection on a 3-year project there—part of a larger statewide effort—during which they collected water every two weeks to monitor factors such as oxygen saturation, types of bacteria, water temperature and flow.

For many years Eileen—along with Rick Belanger, Al Curran, Chris Beam, Sue and Alan Glann, and Carolyn, Bob and Becca Lynch—have served as stewards for an approximately 30-acre parcel on the pond's southwest shore, which was purchased by the City of Lewiston as compensation for wetland loss from development elsewhere in the city. In this role, they walk the perimeter of the property each year to check for possible encroachments and file an annual report to ALT.

As a child growing up in Philadelphia, Eileen's connection to nature was limited to urban parks and other green spaces. Moving to Maine as an adult opened her eyes to the bigger, wilder landscapes of the natural world and cultivated her passion for gardening. Eileen has been a long-time supporter of the community-supported-agriculture movement, and a dedicated volunteer at MOFGA's Common Ground Fair.

Why does Eileen choose to consistently support the work of ALT with her time, energy, and resources? It comes down to her generous and encompassing notion of stewardship, she says, which as we know, involves taking care of what you love and value, the hallmark of her professional role of nurse and social worker.

"How we take care of ourselves, and others, the land we own, all connects to the health and well-being of the wider environment," she says. "I believe in people working together to make a difference, and by supporting an organization with the wider goal and greater knowledge about land conservation and the environment, I can add to my small part."

ALT could not do our work without our generous and steadfast members like Eileen. To her and others, we extend our great thanks!



ALT Board Member Doug Boyd (left) and Ferg Lea, Androscoggin River Watershed Council Chair (right), work on improvements to the hand-carry boat launch at Spruce Mountain Conservation Area in Jay.



ALT Board Member Dana Little confers with Bates College Environmental Studies students at Katherine Breton Memorial Preserve in Lisbon

LAND CONSERVATION IS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH YOUR SUPPORT!

How to make a difference? There are many opportunities to get involved...

Donate financial gifts

- Donate (make it a recurring donation)
- Contact us to learn more about Planned Giving options

Volunteer time

- Contact us to learn about current volunteer project
- Become a volunteer land steward
- Lead an educational outing or offer skills or expertise
- Join a committee or our Board of Directors

Donate land

- Donate land through a Conservation Easement or through

Get outside and participate in events

- Like us on Facebook and Instagram
- Check out our website for upcoming events and sign up for our emails
- Take a hike on one of our trails



Ways We All Benefit

The financial and human support provided by you and our committed community is the backbone of our organization and makes our investment in land protection and stewardship projects possible. ALT's work enriches communities by:

- Protecting wildlife habitat and biodiversity and providing land and water access for fishing, hunting, and other traditional uses
- Saving money for municipalities, taxpayers, and supporting economic opportunities for New Mainers
- Engaging youth in activities that foster exploration and appreciation of natural and open spaces
- Protecting water resources and clean drinking water
- Enhancing the region's desirability as a place to live, work, and visit
- Securing public recreation space and healthy outdoor opportunities by protecting in perpetuity local lands that give our region its character and beauty
- Supporting local farming and community garden initiatives

Your gift now, will benefit future generations.

**What a wonderful and positive statement
you can make.**

To support ALT's work preserving our lands for the benefit of our communities, please visit our secure webpage page www.androscogginlandtrust.org and become a **MEMBER**.

Make a tax-deductible gift by:

- Visiting our webpage www.androscogginlandtrust.org/donate-now/
- Calling our office at (207) 782-2302 to donate via credit or debit card
- Mail a donation (use the enclosed envelope)





**ANDROSCOGGIN
LAND TRUST**

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www.androscogginlandtrust.org



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The Androscoggin Land Trust is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) membership-supported organization dedicated to protecting, through land conservation and stewardship, the important natural areas, traditional landscapes, and outdoor experience in the Androscoggin River watershed. We currently conserve approximately 5,000 acres of land including over ten miles of riverfront along the Androscoggin River.

Board of Directors

Jim Pross – President – *Auburn*

Marian (Kitsie) Claxton – Vice President – *Auburn*

Raynor Large – Treasurer – *Cumberland*

Mary Howes – Secretary – *Jay*

Melissa Bilodeau – *Auburn*

Doug Boyd – *Greene*

Deb Charest – *Lewiston*

Peter Garcia – *Auburn*

Robert Kleckner – *Lewiston*

Dana Little – *Auburn*

Joshua Nagine – *Lewiston*

Rick Speer – *Auburn*

Travis Sparks – *Bowdoin*

Elwood (Woody) Trask – *Auburn*

Staff

Aimee Dorval – *Executive Director*

Our thanks to the generous year-round sponsors of ALT



Ask us about our adopt a trail program, volunteer trail work days or property monitoring opportunities! Please contact us at: (207) 782-2302 or info@androscogginlandtrust.org



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