



Environmental Education and Outdoor Learning

Cathy Lookabaugh,
Outreach and Membership Director

Every Wednesday since early fall of 2020, fifth grade students at Rose M. Gaffney Elementary have 'adventured' into the woods behind their school for Outdoor Ed - outdoor lessons and nature exploration - with our Stewardship Director Kyle Winslow and myself, DCC's Outreach Director.

The students learned about leaf and tree identification, built small mammal habitats, and explored their school's forested ecosystem through hands-on lessons, scavenger hunts and games. When the snow, ice, and freezing temperatures arrived, the students were not deterred! "They are begging to go out," said teacher Caitlin Roy. Bundled up and masked, they continued to learn about hiber-

nation and animal adaptations during Maine's coldest months. With the arrival of spring, we continued to provide outdoor lessons that delved into Maine's birds and vernal pools.

In alignment with DCC's new mission, we are thrilled to engage local youth and families outdoors and augment their appreciation of our unique region. Developing youth-specific programming fits perfectly with our

environmental education goals to excite future stewards while building a strong connection between nature and the community.

In partnership with the Lubec Memorial Library, we have assembled four different nature-themed backpacks that patrons can check out free from the library. Each backpack includes a children's book, pocket guides, tools for exploration, and family-friendly activity cards to provide basic guidance on getting outside and self-exploring local preserves around Washington County.

Another new opportunity for young explorers and their families is our new Nature Club created in partnership with Maine Outdoor School (MOS) and given this spring and summer. The club offers educational outings to different DCC preserves



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A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Moving Forward; It Always Involves Change

This year marks my 20th anniversary of moving to Maine from England. I had intended, those many years ago, to set off elsewhere in search of a “real” career. But, by my first summer, I was hooked. I knew I had found my spiritual home. Like so many of our members, I knew I had to protect the lands I had fallen in love with. As the challenges grow, so does my desire to make a difference.

While we still labor under the shadow of this COVID pandemic, there is light at the end of this tunnel. For all our losses and challenges, I look back to 2020 with a smile. We accomplished great things at DCC and continued moving forward. We added a number of new easements and enriched our Outreach and Stewardship programs to respond to changing community needs. Driven by our determined and energetic staff, board, members, and volunteers, we did not lose focus, even as we stayed largely isolated. Instead, we found new smarter, more creative ways to do our work, both indoors and out.

‘A strengthened approach to Stewardship and Environmental Education and Outreach’

Record numbers of visitors continue to seek outdoor recreation even as COVID restrictions ease. DCC continues our stewardship of conserved properties to ensure that they present the needed trail resources and access opportunities. Two UMaine Machias students are interning this year with Kyle Winslow: Tracy Guptill during the winter and spring and Cam Leavitt for the summer season. Their work ethic and enthusiasm have made a significant difference in completion of new trails at Vining Lake and accomplishing numerous maintenance tasks. We look forward to the day when we welcome them both as successful land stewards.

Maine schools have been clamoring for help during COVID to create outdoor learning opportunities – especially those that support a science-based curriculum. Schools and youth groups now turn to DCC for these learning opportunities on our preserves. Our outreach programming under Cathy Lookabaugh has grown dramatically in order to respond to these needs for quality and meaningful environmental education. I am thrilled with our new endeavors that connect kids to the outdoors. I have always believed that DCC’s mission must extend beyond protection of land itself. We must play a key role in educating the next generation of stewards; otherwise, our efforts today will ultimately be in vain.

One of the unforeseen changes this past year has been the speed and scale at which people are fleeing urban areas and moving Downeast to find safer places to live. Real estate prices have exploded. Lands listed for years are now selling for up to three times their appraised value. This change poses a new set of challenges for our conservation efforts, not only in the loss of open space but in increased acquisition costs and competition for parcels. This surge of new residents and property owners highlights more than ever the importance of our conservation efforts that preserve access to public lands.

‘Our new mission and vision statements and supporting strategies guide the important work we still aim to achieve.’

With each passing year (now 34!), we at DCC strive to maximize what we do well and prune those efforts less productive. We believe that it is important as a land trust to revisit our goals and objectives on a regular basis. How has our world changed? Where do the most important needs lie? How can we serve



our communities better? What new opportunities now lie within our reach?

This year we have re-envisioned our strategic plan so that we can embrace additional directions and values in land preservation. We will not focus any less on our original goals of protecting Downeast ecosystems and their natural resources. We do intend to step more strongly into environmental education. We must instill the same passion of preservation in those who follow us. We need to expand our collaborative efforts with others in order to gain a more lasting impact. With the help of others, we can be greater than the sum of our parts. So with these intentions in mind, we now share with you this new plan. We hope you find these components of our plan as all-encompassing, as inspirational, and as exciting as we do.

Our Mission

We conserve essential ecological habitat, engage the local community, and foster an environment where wildlife and people thrive in coastal Washington County, Maine.

Our Vision

A healthy community working together as stewards of our natural lands and waters.

We support this mission and vision through a variety of strategies including:

- Working with community partners to identify and conserve land and water resources of the Downeast region
- Mitigating impacts of climate change through conservation activities that increase resilience of vital lands and

watersheds.

- Collaborating with landowners, resource agencies, and other conservation organizations to protect ecosystems that enhance wildlife refuge and corridors
- Protecting renewable resources that strategic natural habitats support and on which local economies depend
- Connecting people to the ecological, cultural, and historic values of our lands and waters through educational and recreational opportunities
- Developing strong, diverse relationships

within our communities to share the values of conservation and enhance connections to the natural world

- Working with volunteers of all ages to encourage and nurture the next generation of stewards

Please reach out to me and share your thoughts and comments on DCC’s new strategic plan. Thank you for supporting the work of DCC and I wish you good health and a brighter 2021. I hope to see you on our preserves this summer!

Jon Southern – Executive Director

Environmental Education and Community Outreach
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that encourage participants to learn and play together outside. Led by Hazel Stark, co-founder of MOS, a Naturalist Educator, and a Registered Maine Guide, each outing will be unique in location and focus.

By giving families and youth opportunities to connect with nature, we hope to encourage a deep passion for and a desire to understand the natural world in their own backyards. Ultimately, our goal is to encourage individuals to take actions that protect Downeast ecosystems and conserve a future for us all.

To learn more about these and other youth-designed opportunities, please visit our Family Activities page on DCC’s website, sign up for our e-newsletters, or email me at cathy@downeastcoastalconservancy.org.





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Welcoming New Board Members

Robin brings to DCC a strong background in landscape architectural and historic use interpretation that will enhance DCC's ability to determine best use management practices, assess community values of DCC's properties and to expand our growing educational Outreach efforts.

Parke brings to the DCC Board a well-respected and seasoned career in Ecology further enhancing DCC's scientific approach to future conserved lands acquisitions as he has stepped up to serve as the Lands Committee Chair.

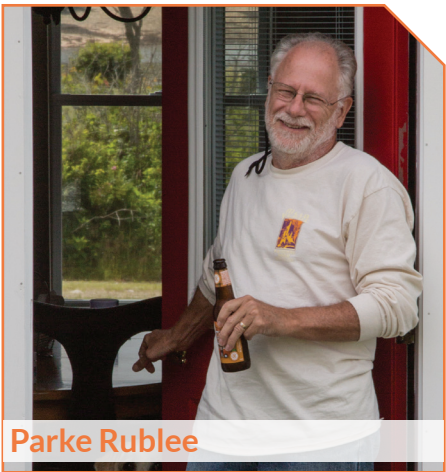


Robin Pinto

*DCC Vice President,
Outreach Committee Chair*

Robin grew up outside of Boston MA but spent her childhood summers in Roque Bluffs. A descendant of early Machias settlers, the Downeast coastline is an integral part of her genetic and spiritual makeup. Wandering tide pools and beaver ponds, exploring islands, and canoeing estuaries were her first lessons in the importance of protecting Maine landscapes. She has explored numerous disparate fields from Classical Languages to Biological Oceanography to Landscape Architecture and History. She has a BA from Harvard, a BS and MS from UC Santa Cruz, and an MLA and PhD from University of Arizona.

Robin and her astronomer husband traded coastlines for mountains when they moved to Tucson, Arizona 28 years ago where they raised one son. Now she studies the evolution of historic landscapes in the Southwest and in Maine. In anticipation of their impending retirement Downeast, Robin and Philip recently renovated her family's 160-year-old farmhouse in Roque Bluffs. She is excited to rediscover her old haunts and to probe the depths of Downeast Coastal Conservancy's remarkable portfolio.



Parke Rublee

Lands Committee Chair

Parke grew up near Buffalo, NY, and received his undergraduate degree in Biology from Dartmouth College. He then completed an MSc and a PhD in zoology at North Carolina State University. After positions with the University of Miami, the Smithsonian Institution and Whitman College, he moved back to a position in the Biology Department at the University of NC at Greensboro until he retired in 2019. His research interest has been in aquatic microbial ecology, studying coastal zones as well as arctic and temperate lakes.

Parke has been a lover of the outdoors since attending a summer camp in Ontario, Canada, specializing in canoe trips. Vacations have always focused on the environment and National Parks. After spending 4 years renting cottages in near Milbridge, Maine, he and his wife purchased a camp in Steuben overlooking Pigeon Hill Bay near DCC's Pigeon Hill Preserve. Hiking DCC's trails and meeting members confirmed that he could "give back" by contributing as a board member of DCC.



DCC Adds to Two Key Preserves

Reversing Falls Preserve by Robin Hadlock Seeley

Reversing Falls Preserve Grows

DCC's Reversing Falls Preserve in Pembroke has grown by 13 acres thanks to long time supporter and former DCC board member Mark Boyer and his family. This preserve was originally established in the 1990s from a gift of land Mark made to Quoddy Regional Land Trust, one of DCC's predecessors. For over 50 years Mark worked to preserve vital habitat and coastline and facilitate conservation projects throughout the Cobscook Bay region. His many gifts over many years helped conserved significant areas of Cobscook Bay coastline now protected by conservation easements and preserves held by DCC and other conservation organizations.

Mark died this year just as the addition to the Reserving Falls Preserve was being completed.

Mark received his BA degree from Princeton University. After serving in the precursor of the Navy Seals, he earned an MD at the University of Pennsylvania and other degrees from Harvard and Oxford. Most of his career

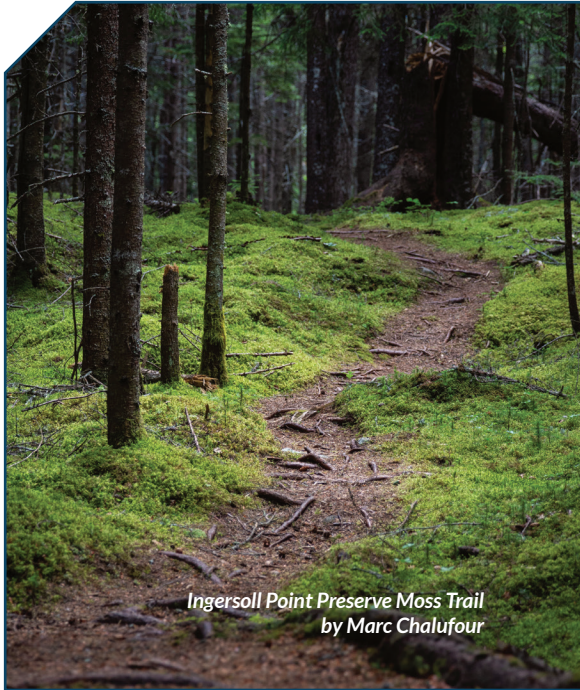
was devoted to teaching and leading programs in public health. Mark retired in 1995 from Tufts University where he was the Director of the M.D./M.P.H. program. A sister, half brother, four children and seven grandchildren survive Mark. He had many friends in Maine.

Ingersoll Point Preserve - Addison

Dorothy G. Adler and DCC came together in a classic conservation story. In 1966 she and her husband, Richard Adler, a professor at MIT, bought about 92 acres on Wohoa Bay in South Addison. In 2007 a developer asked Mrs. Adler if he could buy her property. She said no. She immediately phoned the Addison town office and asked if there was a local land trust. They told her that the Great Auk Land Trust had an office in Milbridge. She then phoned GALT and said, "I want to give you my property in South Addison." Her remarkably generous gift created DCC's Ingersoll Point Preserve. It also provided match for a grant from Land for Maine's Future to purchase Outward Bound's abutting, landlocked 41-acre parcel. DCC, forev-

er grateful, named the main trail on Ingersoll Point Preserve the Adler Woods Trail in honor of Dorothy Adler. Twelve years later Mrs. Adler and her family enlarged her generosity to DCC by giving DCC her four-acre lot adjacent to the property she had previously given. Her second gift removed the possibility of that lot's being developed with a driveway cutting through the entire southern part of Ingersoll Point Preserve.

DCC is truly fortunate to have outstanding benefactors like Dorothy Adler and Mark Boyer.



Ingersoll Point Preserve Moss Trail
by Marc Chalufour

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Maine Outdoor School

by Cathy Lookabaugh, Outreach and Membership Director

Perhaps you noticed DCC's new programming this Spring. Maybe you tuned in for our webinar, Nature Phenology, with Hazel Stark. Or maybe your family is planning to attend an upcoming Family Nature Club outing. These fantastic programs could not be possible without the support and expertise of one of our newest partners: Maine Outdoor School! Based out of Milbridge, Hazel Stark and Joe Horn co-founded Maine Outdoor School to share their love of outdoor learning.

As a strong new partner for DCC, I asked Hazel to take a moment and answer a few questions about their work, the importance of outdoor education, and the impact of connecting youth to the natural world:

What is the background of Maine Outdoor School?

Joe and myself co-founded Maine Outdoor School, L3C in 2016 following years of academic and professional experience in place-based, experiential, outdoor education. Teaching science and outdoor skills at outdoor schools and camp settings across the country showed us that hands-on learning in nature results in students being more engaged in learning, more connected to their communities, and more thoughtful about their impacts on the world around them. Having grown up in rural Maine camping, hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, paddling, and picking fiddleheads, I realized that outdoor learning had been missing from my public school experience. Joe and I both

wanted to return to Maine to get more people outside, learning from nature and connecting to their backyard assets. So we started our own business to do just that! Maine Outdoor School can provide custom, standards-aligned out-



Family Nature Club Participant Sadie Showing Hazel Her Nature Find

door programming for public schools Downeast, guided educational hikes and paddling adventures for locals and visitors, and professional development opportunities for adults looking to incorporate the outdoors into their work.

What are the benefits of learning in nature for youth?

The outdoors is inherently interdisciplinary. All children can find something to fascinate them – be that birdwatching, building with sticks and rocks, identifying plants, or challenging themselves on a tough hike. Simply spending 20 minutes in green spaces is proven to decrease stress and increase a sense of wellbeing. Building regular, longer periods of time outdoors into a child's routine, either as part of the school day or at home, enhances those mental health benefits. Students who struggle with concentration in an indoor setting are

able to focus better when learning outdoors and concentrate better indoors after an outdoor experience.

Nature is a place where youth discover their strengths and their passions. When they recognize that every choice they make has an impact on the diversity of living things, they increase their capacity for empathy through interactions with non-human organisms. 'Nature time' in all seasons and in all weather helps us all to learn how to be more resilient, to prepare for and adapt to challenges.

How can we further support and foster a strong connection to our lands and waters?

Children are inherently scientists. They naturally observe, ask questions, test hypotheses, and experiment. Like learning a second language, developing observation and identification skills as a child is much easier than as an adult. The more kids

study individual living beings in diverse environments, the more they will understand their importance, and the better they will be to help them when they are challenged. It is easier to know when your friend is struggling than to notice a stranger in difficulty. When we observe that struggle, we do our best to help. The more we nurture these skills in children, the more their childhood outdoor experiences will evolve into environmental stewardship behaviors as adults.

Joe and I strongly believe that Downeast Maine is rich with assets. Our wild spaces and our people who live here are great role models for communities elsewhere. We need to show people, especially the young people in our region, those incredible assets in their own backyards.

Learn more about the Maine Outdoor School at www.maineoutdoorschool.org.

Intern Insights

by Tracy Guptill

Hi! My name is Tracy Guptill; I am a senior at the University of Maine at Machias. I am currently finishing my internship with the Downeast Coastal Conservancy. Let me tell you about some of the projects I have been involved with for Stewardship and Outreach. I started my internship in December at the Vining Lake Community Preserve just before the snow hit. Stewardship Director Kyle Winslow is in the process of putting in a trail that circles around the entire lake. Some parts of the trail have fantastic views of the lake and others take you deeper in the forest where you might get a peek at some of

Maine's wildlife. My first project was assisting the Stewardship crew with the construction of a boardwalk over a rugged section of trail. This project has taken a while to complete, due to weather delays, but with better weather has come much progress.

Not only did I work in the field, I also helped out in the office doing filing, painting a sign, and making soil maps. One of my projects that I accomplished with the DCC Outreach Director Cathy Lookabaugh was to design a Trail Challenge. This trail challenge has never been done before! I decided to bring my carving skills and create unique tree cookies that illustrate Maine species on them. I came up with the idea of putting a letter/symbol on the back of each cookie for people to decode our challenge. I have placed

these cookies on seven of DCC's trails for hikers to find throughout Washington County. Good luck on decoding the mystery puzzle!

Now that I am approaching the end of my internship, I am sad that I have to leave this wonderful group of people that I have gotten to know. I have learned so many things in my time with them that I will take with me for future jobs. I would just like to say thank you to all of DCC's staff and members.



Dealing with an Invasive: Japanese Knotweed

Kyle Winslow, Stewardship Director

Invasive species, both plant and animal, can create serious problems for land managers. Invasives alter habitat, push native species from their home ranges, and affect natural ecological processes. Adding to this list of bleak attributes, they are very challenging to manage. Among the more common invasive plants in Downeast Maine is Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*). Knotweed grows in dense stands and often shades out other native plants. Although the plant is attractive (it was introduced as an ornamental), Knotweed is described on the Maine Natural Areas Program invasive species list as "widespread and severely invasive".

If not for its adverse ecological impact, we might appreciate Japanese Knotweed for its remarkable resiliency! Not only can it reproduce through seed production, but small portions of the plant's rhizomes and stem nodes (abundant on a living plant) will form new roots that

spread the plant very effectively. Because of its ability to reproduce easily and its fast, persistent growth, Knotweed is extremely difficult to eradicate – especially without herbicides.

But, why not try? The DownEast EcoSattvas, a volunteer group who care for our Mowry Beach Preserve in Lubec, have led the charge to eradicate a stand of Knotweed at the edge of the parking area. The plant was likely introduced during the parking lot's construction with fill that contained pieces of Knotweed. In the late fall of 2020, our EcoSattvas removed the dead, dried plant material from that year's growth and laid down cardboard and loam. With persistent removal of any new shoots, they hope to keep the patch under control and establish some native flowering species in its place.

This valiant effort will require regular attention and a long-term commitment to carefully removing new growth in order to keep the Knotweed in check.

Time will tell if they will be successful; but it is well worth the effort! The DownEast EcoSattvas have cared for Mowry Beach Preserve for several years; they clean the beach and parking area of plastics and other debris regularly. We at DCC are immensely grateful for their love and attention to Lubec's most beautiful public area! Their volunteer work at Mowry Beach benefits all of us.

For more information about invasive species in Maine, visit the Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) website, or contact your local Cooperative Extension agent.



W. Carter, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

Volunteer Accomplishments During Our Winter 'Down Time'

Kyle Winslow, Stewardship Director

Winter usually offers a bit of 'down time' – a break from fieldwork and a chance to take care of the ever-present laundry list of pesky office tasks. Winter work, we call it. This year finished with another relatively mild winter; our fieldwork never really stopped. We pushed through our 'break' to complete two trail bridges, maintain preserve boundaries, and cut and prepare bridging material for the upcoming 2021 season.

We need to develop a formal trail system that highlights this preserve's ecological and recreational features.

Much of our efforts focused on our new Vining Lake Community Preserve in Cooper. Since its acquisition in 2020, DCC staff have been preparing a recreation management plan for trails around the lake. Even though the property has long been a popular fishing spot, we need to develop a formal trail system that highlights this preserve's ecological and recreational features. Visitors will be able to explore the different ecozones of granite outcrops and bog areas and glimpse ever-changing views of Vining Lake. With the help from professional trail builder, Pete Coleman, our staff and a few hardy volunteers have almost completed the woods trail that loops around the lake. As COVID restrictions allow, we are hoping to involve more volunteers to build bog bridges and further develop components on Vining's new trail that will keep it sustainable.

At the Ingersoll Point Preserve in South Addison, the old shoreline trail has been re-routed. Steadfast volunteers and long-time DCC members, Donna Kausen and Liz Demetrius, completed a trail that now gives hikers an alternative to a notoriously soggy piece of the Wohoa Bay Trail. The same volunteer group with DCC Stewardship Chair, David Dowley, cleared a large section of alder brush at the end of Adler Woods Trail. The cleared space opens and enhances the view of Wohoa Bay and Jonesport in the distance. Their ground-clearing has revealed the homesteading remnants of cellar holes, old building foundations, planting fields and ancient apple trees abandoned one hundred years ago at the Point. Look for the historic lilac bush, now enormous in size and surrounding one of those foundations!

Please reach out if you too would like to volunteer. We hold frequent volunteer work parties throughout summer and fall. If you are interested in participating, please visit our website, sign up for our email list, or call our office at 207 255 4500.



NPS trail designer Pete Coleman, Jon Southern and Tracy Guptill, DCC spring intern, work on the trail bridge at Vining Lake Community Preserve



Tracy Guptill building steps at a short slope at Vining Lake Trail



Trail bridge at Vining Lake Community Preserve

Steady Hands & New Transitions

by Robin Pinto

This past year our president, Ellen Hostert, retired from her role as head of DCC's Board of Directors. For many years, Ellen has been a steady-hand firmly guiding this organization through some of its most difficult challenges and upheavals. She leaves DCC in a better and stronger place.

Ellen joined DCC's predecessor, Quoddy Regional Land Trust, shortly after she began teaching genetics at UMaine Machias. As a student of Michael Soule, the father of conservation biology, Ellen was encouraged to volunteer time and energy with non-profit organizations. She liked the values expressed by and the achievements of QRLT's small, dedicated staff and members. Its land preservation had succeeded in creating multiple benefits in recreational opportunities, wildlife protection, and habitat enhancement for many Downeast communities. Ellen leapt into Stewardship with both feet and has been getting dirty with the rest of that committee ever since!

Following the merger of QRLT and Great Auk Land Trust, Ellen was instrumental in helping the new DCC achieve consensus and coherence. Her stewardship committee spent a year creating new policies and procedures that were amenable to all. "Groups need to talk through things in order to figure out difficult issues. When everyone participates in discussions, has a chance to express his or her concerns, and others listen, their ideas are incorporated into shared policies and practices." Her emphasis on consensus-building created strong personal bonds within the committee and a willingness to hear different ideas that still bears fruit today.

Ellen assumed the DCC president's mantle in 2016 just as DCC was ap-

plying for its land trust accreditation. It was an 'all-hands on deck' effort to update and formalize DCC records, policies, and procedures and to gain that national recognition. But, just as accreditation was achieved, the full complement of DCC's staff submitted their resignations! Their reasons had little to do with DCC, but their almost simultaneous departures created another chaotic period for Ellen to manage. In her quiet and level-headed manner, she resolved, "We are going to get through this; we will hire all new staff; and we will stay the course. I will make sure our remaining staff get paid; our lands are cared for; and 'thank-you' letters to every donor are written."

Now DCC's three new staff members – Jon Southern, Kyle Winslow, and Cathy Lookabaugh – are settled in; they are working together like a well-oiled machine managing administration, stewardship and outreach better and more effectively than ever before.

Transitions are rarely easy. But as Ellen retires, Anne Baker, DCC's new president, is stepping up to take the lead. An experienced director of well-known zoos, Anne has made that transition feel almost seamless. Anne, herself a nationally recognized zoologist, continues to lead other wildlife conservation organizations in addition to her work here in Downeast Maine. Her goals for this organization in the next few years center on Community Conservation. "DCC does not exist apart from the communities and the people that we serve. Our expanded engagement with schools and the younger generations is essential to our mission. We are now updating our strategic plan to reflect this commitment to Outreach and Education in its many forms." Connecting kids to the land, keeping families healthy and active outdoors, instilling a community passion for protecting resources will be key to our future quality of life and,



Past DCC President, Ellen Hostert



Anne Baker, DCC's new president

indeed, to our survival under the growing issues of climate change. Our natural resources, our wildlife, our ecology, our open spaces, and our landscape history: by sharing all of these values and benefits of land preservation in Downeast Maine, we open minds and hearts.



Yellow Warbler, Mowry Beach Preserve

Thank you to our 2020 Donors!

The generosity of all of our members is vital to preserving the spectacular areas of Downeast Maine that we love. We are thrilled to welcome our newest members, highlighted in bold, who joined us in 2020.

LEADERSHIP

Anne Baker and Bob Lacy
Connie Greaves Bates
Craig and Barbara Snapp
John Bullitt
John Woollam
Joyce and Les Coleman
Roger and Judy Clapp
Sepp Huber and Sheila Unvala

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We have made every effort to make this listing as accurate as possible. Please contact us at (207) 255-4500 if you have any questions or corrections.



DOWNEAST COASTAL CONSERVANCY

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The mission of the Downeast Coastal Conservancy is the conservation of the natural habitats and resources of the coastal watersheds, islands and communities of Washington County, Maine, for present and future generations.

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YOU'RE INVITED! 2021 Annual Meeting

Sunday, July 18th, 2pm, Middle River Park, Machias

We hope you can join us at this year's annual meeting. We'll kick off the afternoon with a brief meeting to update our members and guests on what's new at DCC and there will be time to take a hike or mingle with DCC's newest faces!

All COVID-19 guidance will be followed. Please consider bringing along someone new to introduce them to DCC!

