

Goosefeathers Gazette

The Friends of Holbrook Island Sanctuary 🍁 Fall 2020 Newsletter
PO Box 244, Brooksville, ME 04617 🍁 fhis@myfairpoint.net 🍁 friendsofholbrookisland.org



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Newsletter

Greetings from the Friends

Congratulations on managing a very unique and challenging year in our history. It appears that with the new normal Holbrook Island Sanctuary State Park continues to thrive. The participation on the Park trails has shown a marked increase in hikers (it is still possible to walk the trails and not see a soul) and others enjoying the beauty and solitude of our nature preserve.

In retrospect, with constraints on programming, the Park continued to move forward as in any other year. The interns that you sponsored with your contributions arrived in June as usual and were excellent. These two young women performed with the attitude that no task was too great or too small and enjoyed their residency with many



joyful times. They took away a sense of accomplishment and an excellent educational experience about what it takes to manage a state park.

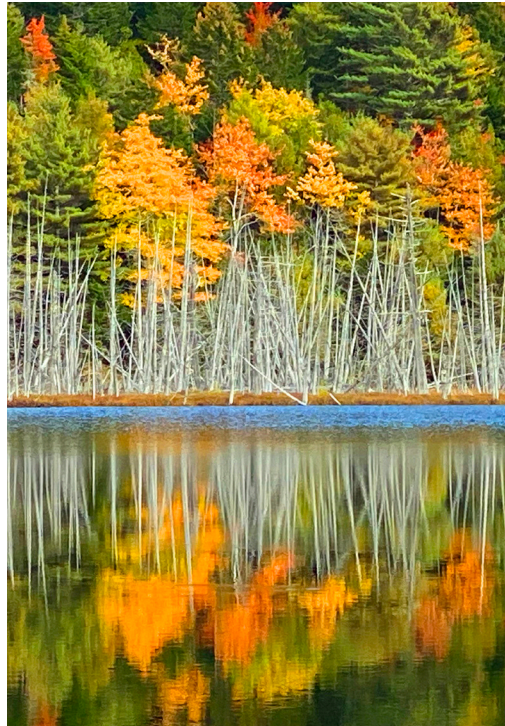
Fall in the Park was splendid. The colors of autumn were staggering and enjoyed by an influx of hikers, birdwatchers and others just passing through. When we are confronted with troubled, uncertain times and isolation we return to basic enjoyments. We explore ourselves and our relationship to the balance of nature; to steal a phrase, we seek the nature fix.

We, the Park staff and friends of the Sanctuary, give thanks for this exceptional opportunity to reflect on the things that matter most in our lives. Thanks for your support as we head into the holiday season.

Stay safe and please visit us as the seasons continue to change.

Note: Due to the Covid-19 Virus future scheduling of events in the Park is ever dependent on multiple factors. Upcoming events will be published in local newspapers, on the State website and on our Facebook page. Stay tuned!

Will Hotchkiss, *FHIS President*



Holbrook Island Sanctuary State Park encompasses 1,230 acres on the mainland and 115 acres on Holbrook Island. The Park offers trails for walking, hiking, and running (and is also open in the winter for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and skating on Fresh Pond); bird and wildlife watching; picnic areas; swimming; fishing (salt water); canoe and kayak launch areas; ramps, floats, and moorings at both Tom Cod Cove (mainland) and Holbrook Island (mind the tides); and bicycling on-road. No off-road motorized vehicles are allowed in the Sanctuary. There is no entrance fee at Holbrook Island Sanctuary State Park. Donations are always welcome.

Thoughts from Charlie Cannon

Hello to everyone from here in the Sanctuary. What a season it has been! Working as your Park Ranger I must always be ready to adjust and plan for the unplanned. During the start of the year I had no anticipation of how the pandemic would unfold or that the forthcoming season would be busier than ever and with as many adaptations. We never planned on not seeing the local schools or the many groups that usually visit the Park and cancelling all programming for the summer. We did not anticipate adding face coverings to the frequently littered items we collect or watching whole rolls of toilet paper go missing from our bathrooms. We adjusted to these changes and carried out our duties with your safety as our top priority. We had more time to spend on tending the trails, cleaning up blowdowns and many other Park projects.



Indeed, our visitation has grown by fifty percent but with the many different areas to explore guests were able to spread out comfortably. We saw many more Mainers seek outdoor areas unfamiliar to them and welcomed our new residents to visit their local park; a couple of Brooksville families completed all seven trails!



As is the case every year, our summer internship students Karoline and Tori were outstanding additions to the Park's character. They both settled into Island living and carried on numerous duties as well as welcoming guests wherever they were encountered. These young women demonstrated their tremendous adaptability to the changing operational needs of this park and others. Although their stay is a mere ten weeks, we hope they hold the Park fondly in their memories and have grown from the unique experience of working on the coast of Maine and living on the Island.

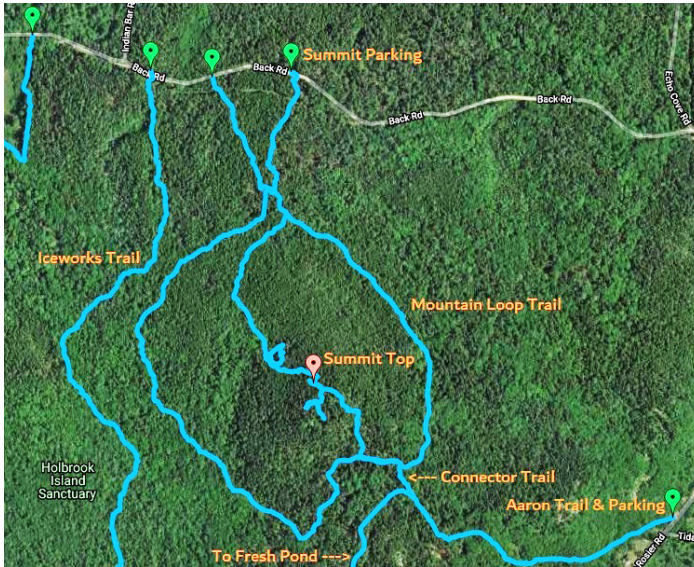


As we settle into the darker and quieter months out on the Cape, we continue to see visitors in unprecedented numbers. There are signs that the increased recreational usage of the warmer months will carry into the winter outdoor season. While boating, biking and other fair-weather activities saw tremendous growth, we anticipate sledding, skiing, skating and exploring will bring those same numbers to Maine's outdoors as well. No matter what, we will be ready to welcome you in the Sanctuary. Parking areas will be plowed, trails cleared and accessible, wildlife abundant, photography images stunning and yes, the toilets will have paper.

Charlie Cannon, Park Ranger, is on duty year-round. Park Headquarters is located on Indian Bar Road, off Back Road on Cape Rosier. Follow the brown signs! Address: PO Box 35, Brooksville, ME 04617 Telephone: 207-326-4012
Park mail and messages are checked on a regular basis. If you have an urgent issue please contact: Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands, Northern Regional Office, 106 Hogan Road, Suite 7, Bangor, ME 04401 Telephone: 207-941-4014 Website: www.parksandlands.com

Coming Soon

Next summer, visitors wishing to hike our most popular trails will have an option at the summit of Bakeman/Backwoods Mountain. After the scramble up past the bench, hikers will note a new trail descending to the left or southeast side



near the terminus of the current Summit Trail. This gentler descent will allow hikers to traverse the hill and will intersect with the Mountain Loop Trail just beyond its junction with the Connector Trail. This extension is a mere few hundred yards but offers a safer alternative or a longer route to connect to other trails in the Park. This route is of historic significance and has existed as a rogue trail for many years. According to the *Gray Family History* by A. Gray; the children of the first settlers living near the outlet of Walker's (Gray's) Pond would travel to the high hills of Cape Rosier to watch the Revolutionary War battles in Castine Harbor, likely ascending the route that this trail will follow. The Holbrook Island Corporation voted to formalize this path and we hope you enjoy the new trail from many directions.



Holbrook Island Sanctuary is open daily, year-round, from 9:00 AM to sunset. Trail maps and bird lists are located in boxes at some of the trailheads. Picnic tables and charcoal grills are located at Park Headquarters, adjacent to the lawn, the beach and in a shady glade. There is one picnic table at the Fresh Pond trailhead. Bring your own charcoal. No alcohol is permitted. No open fires or camping are permitted in the Sanctuary or on Holbrook Island. All dogs must be on a leash and please clean up after your pet. Privy toilets are located near Park Headquarters, at the boat area at Tom Cod Cove and on Holbrook Island.

From Karoline

Hello from Saint Lawrence University, it's November and the leaves are all gone but it's in the 70's today, strange. My internship at Holbrook Island Sanctuary was a wonderful way to spend my summer. Charlie did a great job switching up our workload; I was able to work on a variety of projects but also explore and learn about the Park. I enjoyed the volunteer workdays; I was able to meet the Friends and others who pitch in at the Sanctuary every season. At the end of the day, I could see the progress we made. I miss life on the Island and I look forward to my next visit. I also want to give my thanks to Charlie and Brandie for their hospitality.



Progress

There is always routine maintenance in the Park but so much goes on behind the scenes; we partnered with Claire and the Blue Hill Public Library staff for a series of "Build a Birdhouse" programs, outside, pandemic style.

Anita Harris's Cemetery was cleared and the original fencing propped up and repaired. All the Island trails were re-blazed and the many acres of fields were cut across the southern half of the Island.

MMA staff added wear pads and patched our old fiberglass float and new mooring balls and hardware were installed on the three guest moorings. A replacement "Cable Crossing" sign was drafted and painted to warn boaters of the Island's submarine electric line.

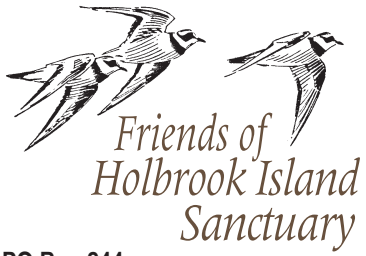
We finished installing the 300+ feet of bog bridging along the Beaver Flowage meadow and a number of bridges were replaced or rehabbed in the interior of the Park. The stone under the dock staircase was replaced. The woodchips we harvested and chipped after the Fall windstorm were spread along many of our trails.

We hope you enjoy these improvements; we welcome any feedback on how we might make the Sanctuary even better!



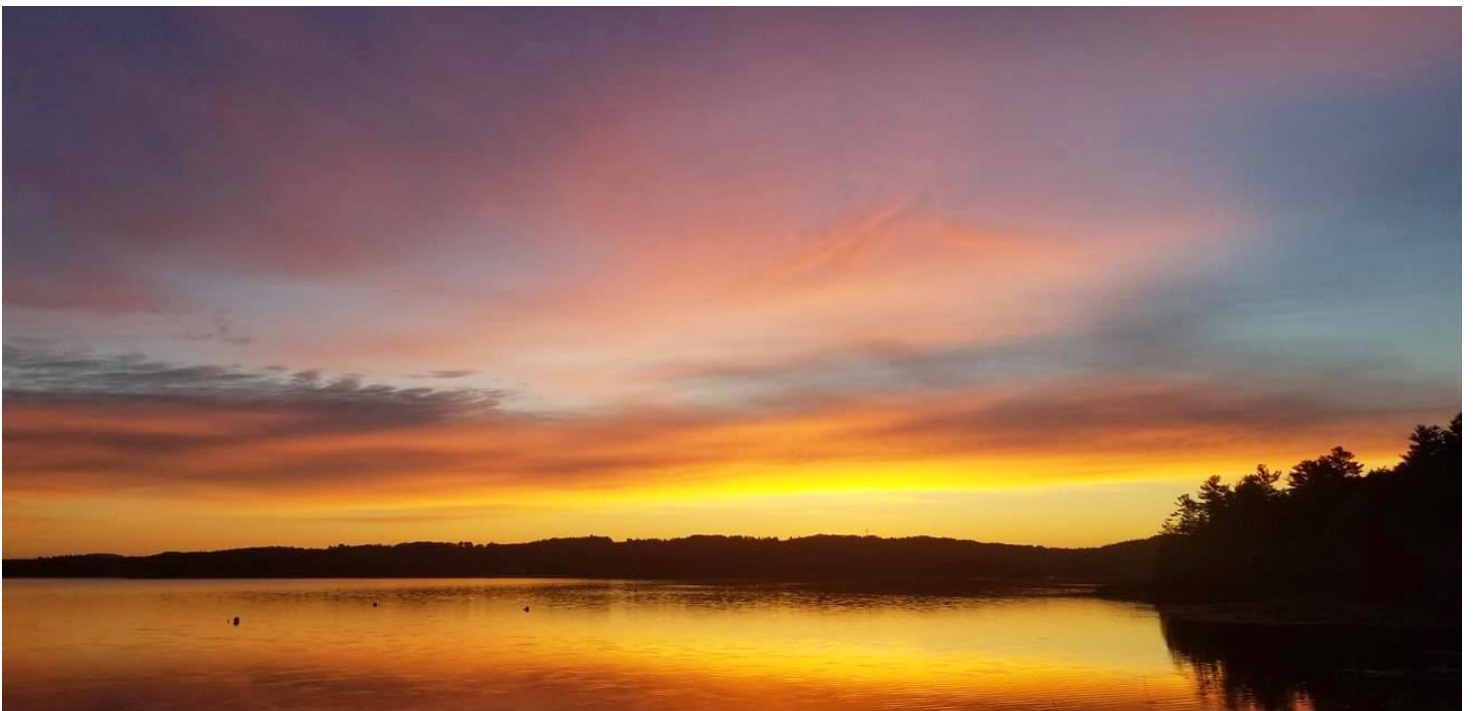
Friends of Holbrook Island Sanctuary

Photo Credits: Thanks to Brandie Ward for the feisty raccoon and the peaceful sunrise, to Zach Hildreth for the amazing photo of Fresh Pond and to Barb and Jen for sharing your family photos and visiting the Park.



PO Box 244
Brooksville, ME 04617

Peace



Our mission: To build appreciation and awareness of unique ecological, scenic, and conservational benefits of Holbrook Island Sanctuary State Park so that it will be adequately supported, appropriately used, and perpetually protected.