

Watershed News

THE PISCATAQUOG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

HIGHLIGHTS OF PWA'S 36TH ANNUAL MEETING:

Celebrating an Environmental Partner

This year's annual meeting was hosted by Crotched Mountain Foundation (CMF) atop Crotched Mountain on the western edge of the watershed. Some of the highlights are captured here in photographs.



Bob Todd, PWA Director Emeritus and CMF forester, discusses forest harvesting outcomes on one of the afternoon walks. Logs from the land are being used to build new housing. CMF students will turn one particularly large stem into a table top. (Photo: Ben Haubrich)



Jim Orr, Director of Environmental Projects at CMF, leads members on a hike around the property. (Photo: Gerry Fairbairn)



Don Shumway describes the features of Open_I to members on a tour of CMF's new energy efficient structures, which include an immense woodchip furnace that will generate heat and hot water for many of the buildings. Open_I is the prototype of a home for residents that was built this summer using "green" building practices. (Photo: Pat Nelson)



Lyn Lombard and Hannah Procter accept the President's Volunteer of the Year award for their years of service controlling purple loosestrife and other invasive plants and their willingness to help PWA in myriad other ways. (Photo: Pat Jennings)



Randy Parker admires a map of the watershed presented to him as he steps down from the Board after six years. Fortunately, Randy will continue to serve as chair of the Finance Committee and will remain engaged in all kinds of PWA activities. (Photo: Ben Haubrich)



PWA President John McCausland thanks Don Shumway, President of CMF, for eloquently sharing the vision for the Crotched Mountain community, its role in the region, and the connection between CMF's environmental goals (such as permanent protection of close to 1200 acres, a car-free campus, and an ultra-clean, wood-burning power plant) and the health and well-being of residents and caregivers at CMF. (Photo: Pat Jennings)

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Margaret Watkins

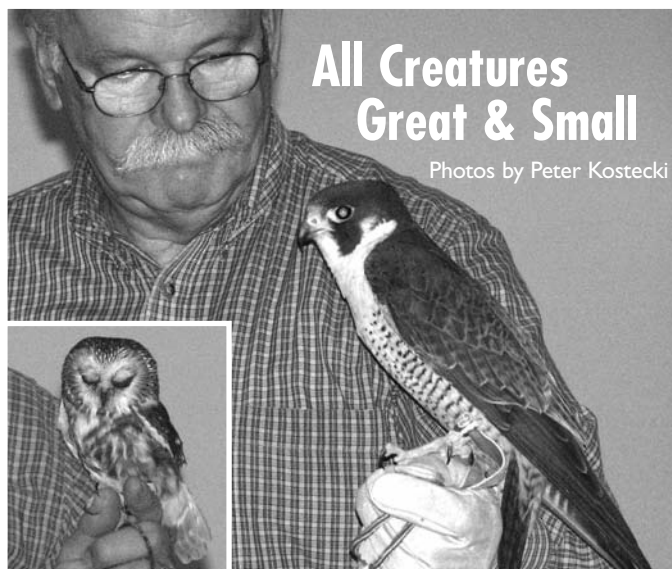
What could be more amazing than the arresting territorial call of a bald eagle heard from a distance of less than 5 feet, or seeing, up close, a diminutive saw-whet owl rotating its head 180 degrees? Tom Ricardi from the Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center

(MBPRC) introduced these birds and others to nearly 100 PWA members and friends at a presentation in Weare recently. As a rehabilitator who is passionate about his work, Tom has literally taken injured raptors under his wing. He has also participated in species propagation and has worked to reintroduce species, such as our national symbol, that were on the brink of extinction. Tom's most important work, however, may be educating the public about the threat of habitat encroachment to species such as these.

As Tom explained, the greatest threat to these magnificent birds, who come in all shapes and sizes and with different food preferences, habits, behaviors, and survival strategies, is loss of habitat. Like PWA and the MBPRC, organizations around the globe are committed to the important work of protecting habitat – each organization with its own approach and focus. Look out your window! PWA's focus is right there in your backyard – the Piscataquog region of New Hampshire, where our habitat protection work takes on many different forms. While PWA's primary focus is land conservation, other important work includes public education. The PWA's David Hardy Memorial Lecture Series, which sponsored Tom's presentation, is one way we seek to educate. As a Kenyan proverb states, "Seeing is different from being told." Through our educational programs, PWA helps people of all ages to see and experience the remarkable breadth and depth of life in our watershed and beyond.

This summer, Ian Peach of New Boston, a student at Middlebury College, offered to assist with this work. Over the summer he compiled a guide to trails in and around the watershed, with commentary on what hikers will see. Also, Gordon Russell has just completed a trail at a PWA property acquired this year, the Alan & Edgar Rice Natural Area in Lyndeborough, and is writing a trail guide highlighting the extraordinary natural features of this property. Our hope is that these new trail guides (plus trails and guides for other PWA properties), combined with our Walk in the Woods! outing series and other PWA activities, will inspire in the public a compassion for and commitment to protecting habitat for all the species that depend on it – including *homo sapiens*.

Your gift to the PWA's Annual Fund supports conservation work in the Piscataquog region, and is part of a much larger, global effort to protect the planet. By giving generously to the 2006 Annual Fund, you are truly "acting locally, thinking globally." *Thank you!*



Tom Ricardi of the Massachusetts Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center thrilled PWA members and friends with these and other raptors during a November program open to the public. From left: Saw-whet owl, kestrel, snowy owl, and bald eagle.

Putting Your Annual Fund Gift to Work

Recently you received a letter from PWA's Board President, John McCausland, asking for your support of the PWA's Annual Fund. Making an Annual Fund gift of any size is a meaningful way for PWA members and friends to express their support. More importantly, **your Annual Fund gift will protect land.** Gifts above and beyond membership dues directly support PWA's capacity to complete land projects. Today, PWA is working on 23 land projects – but we must meet our Annual Fund goal to continue work at this pace.

Your Annual Fund gift will support our work to conserve land throughout the watershed, including the following projects already in progress:



Burke Family Wildlife Preserve, Deering, acquired by PWA in 2006. Look for the trailhead at the PWA property sign on Old Franchestown Road near its junction with Pleasant Pond Road.

- 4 properties in Weare protecting 206 acres of farmland, forestland, and wetlands.
- 4 properties in New Boston, totaling 163 acres of wetlands and forestland.
- 2 properties in Deering, totaling 30 acres of fields and streamside habitat.
- 6 properties in Franchestown protecting 246 acres of riverfront land, forestland, and critical wildlife habitat.
- 3 properties in Goffstown, protecting 143 acres of fields, forestland, wetlands, and unusual habitat in this rapidly developing community.
- 4 properties in Lyndeborough, including one 250-acre parcel which, when combined with existing conservation land, will create a 500+ acre block of protected forests, fields, wetlands and wildlife habitat!

PWA is eager to complete these projects and others with your support. As a further incentive, Gordon and Barbara Russell have issued a challenge: If we raise \$60,000, they'll contribute an additional \$5,000 to the PWA! Help PWA earn that \$5000! Please – mail your annual fund gift today or donate online at www.pwa-nh.org!

BONUS: Free Watershed Trail Guide – With your gift of \$150 or more, made before **December 31**, we'll send you the new watershed trail guide! This 64-page book, slated for publication in early 2007, will feature 13 trails in and around the watershed. Send in your gift today!

PWA Completes Franchestown Easement

The PWA has completed a conservation easement on Franchestown Land Trust's Normandin Tract. In 2001 FLT acquired this 77-acre forested property that straddles Franchestown and Lyndeborough. The easement will help ensure the land is permanently protected. The property abuts a parcel in Lyndeborough that the PWA acquired for conservation this past spring.

"We are glad to have PWA as a partner in protection," said Greg Neilley, FLT Chair. "The easement allows for forestry, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat management – all in keeping with our management philosophy for the property."

The Normandin Tract has multiple exterior and interior stone walls and offers lovely hiking opportunities along the Class VI roads that run through and along it off Russell Station Road. This tract and the abutting PWA land lie in the Rand Brook watershed and are part of a larger block of protected open space. Some of this land has been permanently protected through land conservation efforts in the past, and some is being protected as part of the Headwaters Project-I. HP-I is a collaborative effort among several conservation organizations to protect 1000 acres in the southwestern portion of the watershed.



Winter Outings

Saturday, January 20, 9:30 AM

Kuncanowet Natural Area, Dunbarton

Join us for winter tracking with Jamie Bodwell, who has enthralled PWA members and friends in the past with his extensive personal knowledge of and love for this wildlife-rich property. It's a winter walk not to be missed!

Saturday, February 10, 9:30 AM

Cross Country Skiing in Franchestown

PWA member Ray James will guide a winter morning ski on his beautifully maintained riverside trails.

Watch for details on these walks in early 2007. Call the PWA Office 487-3331 for directions and to register.

Meet Gail Parker, New PWA Director

Gail Parker's commitment to PWA is nothing new. In 1963, Gail and husband Randy bought an abandoned grist mill on the Piscataquog River in the center of New Boston and proceeded to make it their home. That sense of home extended to their new community and the greater Piscataquog watershed. Gail was active in forming the PWA, food coop, Little People's Depot Preschool, the monthly "New Boston Better Times" newsletter, and the Circle Singers.

Family is Gail's priority, and outdoors is a favorite place to be, especially with any mix of their 10 grandchildren. "We love to walk the river in all seasons."

Having been involved with the very beginning of the PWA 36 years ago, when bake sales and spaghetti dinners raised funds to buy and conserve the railroad right-of-way along the Piscataquog from New Boston to Goffstown, Gail is extremely gratified to see how the association has grown, especially during the last few years. Says Gail, "The PWA's expansion is to be expected, as success comes from success, but most original members would be astonished to see what is now being accomplished. The members of the Board represent a wonderful variety of insights and ideas for the future of the PWA, and I feel privileged to be part of this work."



Photo: Randy Parker

PWA thanks the following members for their support!

Welcome to Our New Members! (as of November 1st)

W. Jean Anglim	Weare
Peter & Judith Ashworth	Weare
Laurel Bolton	Weare
John Ciampi	Weare
Thomas & Elizabeth Clow	Weare
Richard Colburn	Weare
Yvette & Jude Desmarais	Deering
Linda Gelfand	Goffstown
Goffstown Community Garden Club	Goffstown
Douglas Gove	Goffstown
Rob Gregg	Medford, MA
Faron & Linda Hickman	Weare
Michele & Scott Looney	Weare
Philip M. Mansour, D.M.D., P.L.L.C.*	Goffstown
Mary Moore & Brad Worth*	New Boston
Christine & Brian Nase	Weare
Frank & Susan Oehlschlaeger	Weare
Michael Pare**	New Boston
Jessie Salisbury	Lyndeborough
Peggy Toll	Henniker
Todd & Nancy Valpey	Weare
Carole & Murray Wigsten*	Weare
Julie (Zebhur) & John Apostolos*	Lyndeborough

* Contributing Member (\$50)

** Supporting Member (\$100)

*** Guardian Member (\$250+)

Member Renewals (as of November 1st)

Maureen & William Arakelian*	New Boston
Mary E. Atwell & Nancy Frankel	Bedford
Susan & David Avery**	Francestown
Frank (Chuck) Bolton	Weare
Donald & Marjorie Burke	Weare
Thomas Clapp	New Boston
Larry & Brigitte Cook	Dunbarton
John & Jill Flanders	Weare
George & Kristi Fullerton	Goffstown
Melinda Gehris & Richard Head**	Hillsborough
Ellen & Curt Goldsberry*	Weare
Paul & Chris Hague	Weare
Jim Hamilton	Francestown
Thomas Hanley	Goffstown
Nancy Hoffman	Manchester
George C. Holt & Deb Sellars **	Dunbarton
Charles Levesque**	Antrim
Dick & Ann Ludders*	Weare
Holly MacAdam	York, ME
Reta M. MacGregor	Goffstown
Irving T. & Elinor M. McDowell**	New Boston
Jack & Brandy Mitroff	New Boston
Pat Ann Myers & Carolyn Sheehan*	Weare
Greg & Ellen Neilley**	Francestown
George Newton	Framingham, MA
Gloria Normile	Francestown
Graham Pendlebury*	New Boston
John Rennie	Weare

Joel & Cindy Stave	New Boston
Oscar & Elizabeth Straw	Weare
Patricia A. Thompson**	Lincoln, MA
Barbara Allison Thomson*	New Boston
Art & Marjorie Titus**	Hamburg, NY
Charles Hard Townes*	Berkeley, CA
Burr & Sarah Tupper	New Boston
David & Candace Woodbury*	New Boston
Lisa Yesse	Goffstown

MATCHING GIFTS

Thank you to Michael Pare of New Boston who doubled his gift to the PWA through a matching gift program at Northeast Utilities! Many companies offer to match employee contributions to nonprofit organizations like the PWA. Does yours?

A SPECIAL THANKS TO...

Jed Callen & Carol Hess, Janet Nixon, Edward Klopfer, DDS, and Dennis Mires, PA of The Architects for their generous gifts in support of the PWA's watershed trail guide to be published in early 2007. [Watch for more information about the trail guide in the next Watershed News, or receive yours free (and hot off the press!) with a \$150 or greater contribution to the PWA Annual Fund drive. See page 3 for details.]

Help protect the places you cherish. Renew or make a gift at www.pwa-nh.org.

It's been nearly eight years since we made the Big Leap.

Taking a deep breath, we'd launched ourselves from a familiar niche in New Jersey into the adventure of a new life in rural New Hampshire. The only regret that I'd experienced was the knowledge that I'd be losing some of 'my' mid-Atlantic birds. Before we were totally settled into our New Hampshire house, I hung out my collection of well-used feeders. And I was delighted to find quite a few bright-eyed little Tufted Titmice mixed in with the expected flocks of Chickadees and Nuthatches. Occasionally, a brilliant male Cardinal would appear, often accompanied by his subtly colored but equally beautiful mate. Sometimes, before the trees leafed out, I'd spot him high in a tree, caroling his clear whistling song. For me, that familiar sound rivals the Robin's efforts as a harbinger of the new season.

Several years later, I was astonished to hear the 'teakettle' song of the feisty little Carolina Wren flitting about in our woods. Still, I had yet to see (or hear!) a Red-bellied Woodpecker. Apparently, I'd traded that species for an amazingly obliging pair of Hairy Woodpeckers. In New Jersey, Hairies rarely visited the feeders. This pair, however, was addicted to our suet. They even escorted their fledglings to the feeder, patiently stuffing their gaping bills with large hunks of the stuff.

Then one sunny day in June, a familiar sound interrupted my weeding. It was unmistakable. It was the riveting call of the Red-bellied Woodpecker – a long, loud "Quirrrr"! And there he was – a beautiful male! This bird is about the size of the familiar Hairy Woodpecker, but there the similarity ends. The newcomer is grayish-tan underneath with a boldly barred



Surprise!

by Meredith J. Allen

black-and-white back and a mostly white rump. The cheeks and throat are tan and the male sports a fire engine-red forehead

continuing down to its shoulders. Only the nape is red on his mate. If you are fortunate to see him closely, you may notice a faint, pale pink flush on his belly, thus Red-bellied! The calling male was soon joined on the locust tree by a female. They were in evidence most of the summer, perhaps nesting in our woods.

A month later, while standing at the edge of our woodland garden, I noticed something bright red at my feet. I bent down curiously and was astonished to see a large, nearly ripe strawberry growing there. Since the things I grow provide feasts for the eyes, not the tummy, I surmised that the seed must have come from our compost. How fortuitous! And there were four more pale green berries, too. I made a mental note to return to this spot in a few days.

Like its relatives, the Red-bellied is a very noisy bird, and I soon grew accustomed to the pair's raucous cries. But one morning, the bird's calls sounded particularly frantic. I saw him on the ground near our woodland garden. He was shrieking and squawking, dancing around on his stubby underslung legs and bobbing his head rapidly. What was the matter with this bird? Was he ill, perhaps on the verge of a seizure? Puzzled but too busy to investigate further, I returned to my work. Hours later I strolled over to the site and I understood instantly what I had witnessed. That bird wasn't shrieking. He was chortling with joy as he devoured every one of my serendipitous strawberries! So my surprises last summer were three-fold: a Red-bellied Woodpecker on our property, an unplanted strawberry patch, and the hard-won knowledge that woodpeckers just adore strawberries!

Meredeth Allen is an avid birder who lives in Francestown, where she tends beautiful gardens with her husband Len and enjoys the natural world around her.

Goffstown Open Space Committee Needs Your Help

The Goffstown Open Space Committee needs one or two dedicated volunteers to help manage public relations, event planning, education, and outreach to rally public support for land conservation projects.

No conservation experience necessary. For details, contact Jason Sachs at 774-6224 or David Nieman at 497-4226.

Psssst... Surprise someone with a gift membership to the PWA!

*What we do for ourselves dies with us.
What we do for others and the world
remains and is immortal. Albert Pine*

Address Service Requested



KICK OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH THESE 2007 WALK IN THE WOODS! OUTINGS:

Saturday, January 20 ~ Tracking the Winter Woods / Dunbarton

Saturday, February 10 ~ Cross Country Skiing / Frankestown

See page 3 for more information.

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Watershed News

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IN THIS ISSUE

Highlights from the 36th Annual Meeting	Page 1
Protecting Habitat for Man and Beast	Page 2
Planned PWA Projects Need Your Support!	Page 3
PWA to Hold Easement on Normandin Tract in Frankestown	Page 3
Winter Walk in the Woods! Outings	Page 3
Meet New Director Gail Parker	Page 4
A Season of Surprises by guest contributor Meredith Allen	Page 5

Memo to Self:
Help PWA protect more land
in 2007!



Burke Family Wildlife Preserve, Deering. Acquired by PWA in 2006.

**Your gift to PWA's 2006 Annual Fund
helps sustain our conservation work.**