

Community Forest News

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Bath Community Forestry Committee * 1 Oak Grove Ave. * Bath, Maine 04530 * 207-443-8345



**Summer
2002
Edition**



"To protect, to expand, to preserve, and use wisely, the forestry resources and greenspaces found within the City of Bath, Maine."



2002 Committee Members

Thomas Barrington, Co-Chairperson
Geraldine Coombs
Nancy Coverstone, UMCE
Dr. Paul D. Doolan
Lynn Fisher
Denis Hebert, Ex-Officio
Thomas C. Hoerth, Ex-Officio
James Larson, Co-Chairperson
Judy A. S. Metcalf, Secretary
Benet Pols
Judy Souther
Arthur Tainter



Web Site

<http://www.cityofbath.com/forest/>

E-mail

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Summer and early Fall 2002 Workshops Events

Some of the workshops are co-sponsored by the City of Bath Cemeteries & Parks Department and the Bath Community Forestry Committee. Please note times, locations and dates (including rain dates). Call Gail Spath at the City of Bath Cemeteries & Parks Department Office, 443-8345, for more details and any questions.

Family Kite Flying Festival and Picnic **July 2**
Common Ground Fairgrounds
Unity, Maine

Call Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association 568-4142, or email mofga@mofga.org

Bath Heritage Days **July 3—July 7**
Bath Waterfront Park and Library Park watch the parade and look for the Forestry Float

Pruning Clinic **July 13, 2002**
9:00 a.m. to noon

At the Hyde School, Bath
Learn how to prune and get some hands on experience
Call Gail Spath, Department of Cemeteries and Parks at 443-8345 for details
Sponsored by the Bath Community Forestry Committee

Small Farm Field Day **August 11**
Common Ground Fairgrounds
Unity, Maine
Call Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association 568-4142, or email mofga@mofga.org

Common Ground Country Fair 2002 **September 20, 21, 22**
Common Ground Fairgrounds
Unity, Maine
Call Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association 568-4142, or email mofga@mofga.org

Biodiversity - Knowing Your Forest **Saturday, September 28**
Location: UM Holt Research Forest, Arrowsic **8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

...a workshop in the continuing series on *Sustainable Forests for Midcoast Maine*

On a walk with Roger Monthey of the USDA Forest Service, learn about the components of biodiversity in a forest, one measure for evaluating sustainability. The workshop is designed to help landowners assess their own forest.

Sponsored by University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Maine Forest Service, Small Woodlot Owners Association of Maine, and University of Maine Holt Research Forest.

Pre-registration is required. For more information contact:
UMCE - 800-287-1458 MFS - 800-367-0223 SWOAM - 866-845-3047

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING!

The Bath Community Forestry Committee meets the first Wednesday of every month, September to June from 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. in the Bath City Hall. The public is always invited to join us. We will have our meetings in the basement conference room. Go directly down the stairs from the side door of the City Hall, and take a left. For more information call Gail Spath at 443-8345.

Please Note: It's Mowing Time!

Watch those weed whackers and mowers. A break in the bark of your tree invites insects and disease. Place a safe perimeter of soil and mulch around your tree. This will keep the mower and weed whacker from getting near enough to hurt the tree. The mulch will hold in moisture as well.

The Bath Community Forestry Trust Celebrates Arbor Week with Major Fundraising Effort

Arbor Week, the third week of May, saw a whirlwind of activity on the part of the Bath Community Forestry Committee once again. Fifty significant trees throughout the city were recognized with big red, white, and blue ribbons and placards identifying the species of the trees spotlighted. Memorial Trees and Recognition Trees were planted on school grounds.

The Bath Community Forestry Trust also celebrated Arbor Week with a substantial mailing campaign to raise awareness of the need for a sustained financial commitment to the preservation and expansion of our community forest. With the assistance of a grant from the **Charles R. Niehaus Foundation** to support the printing and postage costs and with the incredible support of **Bath Printing Company** which donated its folding and imprint services, the Trust sent a letter to every registered voter in the City of Bath touting its work and accomplishments.

At the time of this writing, the Trust has already raised over **\$3500** from 80 households in response to those letters. The response has been gratifying to say the least, but the need is still very strong. Under the terms of the Trust, which permits expenditures only for the protection, preservation, and expansion of Bath's community forest, just the interest earned on the principal may be expended. This assures a permanent fund available forever. Like our forest.

If you haven't yet sent in your check, please consider doing so. The check may be made payable to the **Bath Community Forestry Trust** and sent to One Oak Grove Avenue, Bath, Maine, 04530.

No TV at Butler Head

Nine children and four adults enjoyed an early spring walk at Butler Head on April 27th. The walk was led by Committee member Tom Barrington and was in observation of "Turn-off-TV-Week". The theme was "What will it be when it grows up?". Many examples of young and old plants were observed, from acorns and first year pine trees to 100-year-old oaks and white pines. Wild flowers were scarce this early in the season. Fortunately, some had flowered. It was possible to emphasize the association between the flower and the leaves of the plants. Red maple, dandelions, goldthread, bluets and Canada mayflower were among those that cooperated in this way.

The continuing cycle of nature was observed in many forms. The annual spring renewal was evident from the new green emerging from last year's remnants of plants. Young, robust trees sending out new leaves; old trees with a few



less branches than last year; dead trees with mushrooms busy in the decomposition process; and the soil formed by thousands of annual cycles, each showed that everything was used over and over, nothing went to waste.

Some plants grow up in a few months, some trees grow up in a few years; other trees grow up in a few decades. The forest takes much longer to mature. Many stages of forest development are present at Butler Head. In some places trees are just beginning to sprout at the edge of a clearing. Other parts are adolescent forests with the "pioneer species" of aspen and cherry beginning to mature, with the pine, oak and beech starting to emerge. Finally, a few locations have grown into pure stands of mature trees like the beech and hemlock groves. These will continue as pure stands until some natural disturbance causes the process to start again. In the meantime, the children and adults had a wonderful day, away from the television.

Submitted by Tom Barrington

2002 Ice Storm Grant Update

As reported in our last newsletter, the Committee received a substantial grant in the second round of funding made available through the Ice Storm Grant Program. Our tree selection subcommittee has been hard at work selecting suitable trees and sites for planting on the streetsides throughout the City of Bath. In choosing the sites, the subcommittee consults the tree ordinance which provides guidelines about size of suitable sites, interaction with utilities, and set backs from intersections and public ways. A tree is chosen for a selected property. Then, the owner is contacted for his assent. A stake is put into the ground marking the location chosen. Finally, the Bath Water District, Public Works, and Dig Safe are all consulted. If there are no problems, the tree is planted.

In the next few weeks you will see the following trees planted through this program:

- 3 Amur Maple (*Acer ginnala*)
- Hoop's Blue Spruce (*Picea glauca* 'Hoopsil')
- 2 Lacebark Elm (*Ulmus parvifolia* allee)
- 2 Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)
- Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)
- Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*)
- 3 Prairie Fire Crabs (*Malus* 'Prairifire')
- Mini 'Tina' Crab (*Malus* 'Tina')
- 3 Zelvova Serrata
- 2 Columnar Korean Mountain Ash
- 2 Pink Crabs (*Malus* 'Spring Glory')
- Three Flower Maple (*Acer triflorum*)
- Magnolia (*magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Ballerina')

*Submitted by Geraldine Coombs
Site Selection Subcommittee*

Watering Volunteers Still Needed!

Three years ago the Committee set forth on an exciting partnership with homeowners, the Cemeteries & Parks Department, and citizens dedicated to the health of our city trees. We now have over 60 homeowners caring for the city owned trees in front of their properties. The Forestry Committee and friends are responsible for watering over 80 trees planted throughout the city, 25 of which will be new trees. We also have a nursery in which young trees are being nurtured that will some day grace our streets. We have developed a watering system which requires the commitment of no more than two hours a week from each pair of volunteers. Would you have two hours for a good cause? A truck with a trailer hitch is helpful. Teams make their own schedules. **Please contact Judy Metcalf at 442-7820 (evenings) or 729-1144 (days).** You will make good friends – with your fellow volunteers and with the trees!



Help the Patten Free Library Expand its Horticultural Library

The Patten Free Library is all about providing access to information. It gladly accepts donations of new books that are of interest to the community. You might want to consider making a donation to the library to assist it in assuring that books about managing your community forest are available to all your neighbors and friends. Some books we have found of particular assistance in our work and which will be a great resource to the community are:

Trees: Eyewitness Handbooks by Allen J. Coombes (Darling Kindersley, Inc. 1992)

Peterson's Field Guides
(Houghton Mifflin):
Ecology of Eastern Forests by John C. Kricker and Gordon Morrison

Eastern Trees by George A. Petrides

Selecting Trees for Urban Landscape Ecosystems: Hardy Species for Northern New England Communities, State of New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economics Development, Division of Forest and Lands (1994)

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 5th ed., by Michael A. Dirr, Stipes Publishing, LLC (Champaign, Ill. 1998)

Wyman's Gardening Encyclopedia, (2nd ed.) Donald Wyman, MacMillan Publishing Co.

Encyclopedia of Garden Plants, The American Horticultural Society, Macmillan (N.Y. 1992)

National Audubon Society Field Guide to Trees: Eastern Region-North America, by Albert L. Little (Alfred A. Knopf, 1980)

Submitted by Geraldine Coombs

STEM Grant Update

"I don't look at a tree in the same way anymore." "I learned more about trees in these short sessions than I've heard about in my whole life."

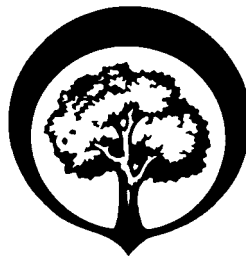
These are some of the comments received from the Honors Biology Class which participated in and completed the inventory of the trees on the Morse High School Grounds, the Vocational School Grounds, and the entire Library Park. The students learned a great deal about tree condition, species identification, and site hazards. The City gained valuable data about the valuable resource of these public trees.

Re-Inventory Volunteers Needed

This summer, the Forestry Committee and the Bath Forestry Division are planning on re-inventorying the Ward 3 voting district as a follow-up to the original inventory done in 1993. Planting sites, tree conflicts, overall health, and dimensions of trees, and any hazard or notable trees can all be identified and the appropriate cultural actions can then be taken.

But we need your help! If you, your civic organization, or someone you know are interested in volunteering, please contact Gail Spath at 443-8345, or speak to any of the Bath Community Forestry members you know. We will contact you with more information and dates, and thank you for considering this worthwhile project.

-Tom Hoerth, City Arborist



TREE CITY USA®

Bath is Tree City for 5 Years

Bath received the National Arbor Day Foundation's "Tree City USA" award for the fifth consecutive year Wednesday, May 22, 2002 at the Maine State Arbor Day ceremony held at the Pine Tree State Arboretum in Augusta. The award is acknowledgment that the people of Bath recognize trees and the community forest as a significant ingredient in the quality of life in Bath. The Tree City USA flag can be seen flying from the flagstaff on the front of City Hall.

The designation, Tree City USA, is given to communities that demonstrate a continuing emphasis on the importance of trees in community life. Specific items that qualify Bath for this honor include a forestry management plan and a forestry ordinance which have been in effect for several years, a forestry committee, financial support from the City, and annual Arbor Day observances. Tree care and planting programs such as the volunteer efforts described elsewhere in this newsletter are typical of the continuing activities that assure the designation of Tree City USA year after year.

Submitted by Tom Barrington

Musings, continued from page 4

for seeing, hearing, and wondering.

The third book speaks of community in another way. It is the community of interest and excitement that comes when two strangers find mutual joy in a shared passion. *Two Gardeners: A Friendship in Letters*, Katharine S. White & Elizabeth Lawrence edited by Emily Herring Wilson (2002) tells the twenty year friendship that grew between these two talented, civilized ladies who loved gardening, plants, and those that work with them. The reader hears their voices (and the letters are of the quality that the tone of voice is real and audible) rise in excitement about the first spring blooms and in indignation when a favorite cultivar has received an unjust slur in the gardening press. The book reminds me of my great friends, once strangers all, who sit around the forestry committee table and speak of watering schedules, the absurdities of a Lombardy Poplar, and how to identify a tree with a dichotomous key. A community is made of buildings and people, but a strong community is built of values. Kay White knew that gardening was not merely about place but about attitude. The Bath Community Forestry Committee reflects these writers' pragmatic, practical approach to plant care, cultivation, and site selection with the same commitment to and optimistic belief in the future.

Each of these books then touched my own joy in the familiar places of Bath and expressed so much better than I could the satisfied comfort that I derive from the Forestry Committee's work. As Barbara Hurd writes about swamps:

"One of the reasons we are now beginning to preserve wetlands ... has, of course, to do with learning their function. We can tick off their benefits with our fingers: they help control flooding or they filter toxic waste, both of which have to do with our physical or economic health.

But what kind of cultural enlightenment will it take for us to freely say that we value this or that because it is beautiful, because it nourishes the imagination, because it is good for the soul?" (pp. 13-14).

These three books, each so different, have been very good for my soul as I move out of the limits of winter into the possibilities of spring and summer.



Musings on the Value of a Community Forest by Judy Metcalf

I have been reading again. The books on the bedside table that piled up through the winter are being attacked. The Christmas baking is done; birthday parties and swim meets are behind me. I read. As I pick up the books that earned the honor of sitting on the bedside table, I am struck by their similarities. I remark the abiding themes in this reading. And, I notice how they reflect the larger themes in my life. The selections this week are three very different books on the outside; and yet they resonate and reinforce what draws me to the work we do on the committee.

The first is a slim children's novel (ages 6 through 12), *Tucker's Countryside*, by George Selden (1969). He is the author of *Cricket in Times Square*, the Newbury Award Winning novel about three unlikely friends, Chester the Cricket, Tucker the Mouse, and Harry the Cat. *Tucker's Countryside* continues their adventures. It tells a tale of the fight to save a meadow in Connecticut. It is the meadow in which Chester

lives with various field mice, sundry rabbits and a pair of pheasants. The meadow sets the rhythm of these animals' and insects' lives, but it is also the heart of the community of human beings. The meadow is the last patch of earth not yet consumed by housing, suburban fences, neat lawns, and sidewalks. In short, it is a fortress against urban sprawl – created in a book written thirty years before we all became familiar with that war cry. And because it is a children's book, it sets out in plausible, sincere language why it is sufficient to love the patch of earth and trees that may not be expansive or impressive but is nonetheless seen by the community as special and worthy of saving.

Stirring the Mud: on Swamps, Bogs, and Human Imagination (2001) by Barbara Hurd, a poet and essayist based in Maryland, brings us these same musings and connections in a series of essays in which Barbara visits the local swamps, more po-

etically correctly called wetlands, and wonders why these unfathomable, murky haunts stir our souls, our imaginations, and our reveries. She asks if the swamp's proximity prompts these questions by being accessible, available but unknown. What if the swamp was no more, buried under asphalt? What visual, audio, and aural proddings would our communities hold to wonder about life source, insects, the age of man, the age of time, the ghosts in mists? What of "out of sight, out of mind?" What then? It sets me to thinking about Butler Head. Its mere proximity to my square, urban patch allows me to spread my arms out wide, bend my head back, reach for the trees, the sky, and the birds. And wonder. Butler Head of course is owned by the City, and so it is mine, and it is yours. The community expands not only because of this space but because the space provides the stimulus

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**Bath Community
Forestry Committee
1 Oak Grove Ave.
Bath, Maine 04530**

