

## Swallow Tales

### Hirundo Fall Newsletter



# Fall — Time of Change

Bucky Owen

Fall is a time of rapid change for most wildlife species. Cool nights and shorter days signal that it's time to prepare for a long winter or head south. It's a time of abundant food to layer on fat for winter insulation and energy, or fuel for a long flight south. Squirrels rush around gathering acorns and other seeds,

storing them in underground caches. Chipmunks and woodchucks prepare for a long winter sleep.

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Many species of birds shift from a diet of insects, abundant in the summer but scarce in fall and winter, to seeds, berries, and other fruit that are high in carbohydrates and easily converted to fat. Robins for example, feed on worms through spring and summer, then they add a diet of berries just prior to migration. Mountain ash and flowering crabapple are two species providing abundant fruit in the fall.

As fall approaches waves of migrants will appear from farther north; here for a few days and then

off again to destinations as far south as Central and South America. I have banded blue winged teal north of Maine only to have the band recovered 3 days later in Colombia. Sandpipers banded in Lubec have been recovered in South America 36 hours later! Hummingbirds, common in our back yards, make an extraordinary nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico.

CFW's or, "confusing fall warblers", will appear in large numbers. The males, no longer easily identified by their colorful breeding attire, are now donned with drab colors making them less conspicuous to predators. Shortening day length is the main environmental cue to prepare for fall and winter, and also leads to some unexpected behavior. When fall day length equals that of the spring courtship period, many males again begin to sing.

Woodcock go through their courtship dance, robins sing in the yard, and warblers can be heard singing along our trails. This period of autumn romance doesn't last long, so keep an ear tuned.

Once the migrants are fueled and ready to go, weather patterns determine the exact flight time. A rainy, low pressure system, followed by a crisp high pressure cold front is the key to leave. Northerly breezes will carry the migrants south, reducing the energy to make the flight. Watch the weather and pay particular attention to robins. During unsettled weather they will feed voraciously, flocking up as a high pressure system approaches. If the high comes through in late afternoon or early evening, then off they go. As dawn approaches, or if they encounter bad weather, back down they come. It's at this time we often see large numbers of sparrows, warblers, vireos and thrushes in our yards and along the trail. Night time migrants use the stars to navigate, and by flying at night they avoid the many avian predators that migrate during the day.

So enjoy a walk outside, there's plenty to see at this great time of year!



**The adventures of Alex and Nick:** Who we are — My brother Nick, 10, and I (13) have always been interested in wildlife. We love learning about the environment, how animals interact, the ecosystem, and the nature programs and volunteering at Hirundo.

## Nature Art Alex Baron

Family Day at Hirundo is a fun summer day. For nature art this year, we made prints with Kris Sader, using natural and found materials, made paper, and did nature weaving. I decorated cards with different outlines, designs, colors and drawings. I tried out were printing using foam and with a printing press.

I pressed different objects into a piece of foam, such as a gear, a knife, and a cork-screw. Then I chose a color of paint to spread over the designed side of the foam. After I had evenly spread the paint out, I flipped the foam over onto a piece of paper and pressed down until the design was copied onto the paper.

The other type of printing involves a printing press. I used crayons to draw a Baltimore oriole on a piece of plastic, then placed the paper over it and ran it through the press. If the pressure is right, the picture comes out beautifully.



For the next one, I spread orange paint over a sheet of plastic, and then added plant material with bubble wrap on top on the surface. The pressure happened to be perfect, and this card turned out with white shadows of the plants on the paper.



## Migratory Insects Nick Baron

Fall is here! Many insects have to face the harsh, cold winter. How do insects survive in this cold climate? The majority of insects lay eggs that are covered with a protective coating, and then the adults die. Some insects bury themselves into the ground, and some have a special kind of antifreeze that allows their bodies to freeze internally. A very small group of insects migrate.

This group includes locusts, butterflies, and dragonflies. While there are not large swarms of locusts or butterflies



Photo by Amy Baron

migrating from Maine, large numbers of dragonflies, the Aeshnids (darners), do. In late evening, groups of green darners

(Anax junius) gather above meadows and forests, and take advantage of thermals to migrate south, usually to Florida.

Monarch butterflies gather in small groups and collectively fly south to join many other small groups from across North America. This large group will travel all the way to a special patch of trees in Mexico. Locusts also gather in small groups. They mainly travel to Florida or Texas.

## Volunteers — Thank you!



Cardinal flower

Dick Andren  
Seanna Annis  
Raanan Avargil  
Amy, Alex and Nick Baron  
Larry Beauregard  
Angie Bennett  
Lois Berg Stack  
Lola Bullion  
Margo Boyd  
Lisa Carter  
David Clement  
Stephen Coghlan  
Andrew Corson  
Sandy Daniels  
Ellie Durso  
Steve Dunn

Jo Eaton  
Deanna Fahey  
Patti Ferguson  
John Ferland  
Shawn Goodie  
Jimmy Haller  
Alyx Hannigan  
Catherine Herr  
Karl Hill  
Jeremiah Hobbs  
Brenda Jackson  
Glen Koehler  
Clay Kirby  
Gerry Lapointe  
Stephanie Larouche  
Helen Lock  
Phil Lock

Jerry Longcore  
Paul Markson  
Rad Mayfield  
Bucky Owen  
Nathan Parkhill  
Kim Perkins  
Kris Sader  
Steve Sader  
Rori Saunders  
Lindsay Seward  
Bob Steven  
Gloria Vollmers  
Peter White  
Jim Young  
Yang Yu  
Steven Madera & participants of the

Life Jackets program  
Gamma Sigma Sigma  
National Service  
Sorority  
UMaine Chapter of The  
Wildlife Society  
UMaine Freshman  
Volunteers  
Bodwell Center UMaine  
UMaine Alternative  
Spring Break Group  
RSU 34 Chaperones  
**And numerous others who did not sign their name.**  
We apologize should your name be missing.

## Swallow Update 2013 Megan Dood

What a wonderful summer it has been working at Hirundo. The tree swallows were successful (as were my favorites in box 24, the chickadees) in raising their young with a 91% success rate of 116 fledged young from 127 eggs.

They started heading south in late July as food supply decreased, taking their fledglings with them. Tree swallows are the last member of the swallow family to head south, and will be the first swallows to return north in the spring. Their journey down the east coast takes place in large flocks that fly during the day and roost at night. They will most likely spend the winter in Florida. Tree swallows from the east prefer not to travel over the Gulf

of Mexico to wintering grounds in Central America.

Bird boxes not only shelter their namesake but can be full of surprises! One of the bird boxes by Lac D'or uninhabited by birds for several years is now home to a flying squirrel. They are nocturnal and spend much of their life high up in trees. Its sudden appearance jumped us, making our mid-day encounter very exciting. Flying squirrels are opportunistic omnivores, eating a variety of foods like berries, bark, fungi and insects. Shelter choice is also variable. They may use holes from woodpeckers, make their own nest in a tree, or take advantage of a nest box.



## Upcoming Programs

DATE	TIME	PROGRAM	PRESENTER	LOCATION
Oct. 18, Friday	5:30 PM	<b>Full Moon Paddle</b> weather permitting	G.Keszöcze	HWR Gate 3
Oct. 19, Saturday	1 PM	<b>Guided Mushroom Walk</b>	Seanna Annis	HWR Gate 1
Nov.10, Sunday	1 PM	<b>Reading the Landscape</b>	Hirundo Volunteer	HWR Gate 1
Dec.14, Saturday	10 AM	<b>Christmas Bird Count</b>	Hirundo Volunteer	HWR Gate 1

**"In the end  
we will conserve only  
what we love,  
we will love only what  
we understand,  
and we will understand  
only  
what we are taught."**

-Baba Dioum

## YOUR SUPPORT

Hirundo Wildlife Refuge is a private, non-profit organization that depends on public donations and volunteers to run its programs.

We receive funding from grants and donations for the preservation of wildlife and forest management and are not supported financially by the University of Maine, or any other institution.

Your support of Hirundo is greatly appreciated. Please make a tax deductible donation online at [www.hirundomaine.org/support](http://www.hirundomaine.org/support) or by mail to:

*Hirundo Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 266  
Orono, Me 04473*

Thank you!



**SMILE**

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## Hirundo Wildlife Refuge

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We're on the Web!

Visits us at  
[www.hirundomaine.org](http://www.hirundomaine.org)  
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*The mission of the Hirundo Wildlife Trust is to maintain the Hirundo Wildlife Refuge as a sanctuary to preserve and protect wildlife and their habitats. Consistent with this primary purpose, the Trust makes the Refuge available as a living laboratory for education and research, and to promote the public's appreciation of Nature.*

Oliver Larouche founded Hirundo in 1965. Today the Refuge protects 2400 acres of diverse habitat. We offer seven-miles of hiking trails, including self-guided educational trails; and canoes, paddles, life vests and a dock to access Pushaw and Dead Streams. Archaeological digs in 1970 discovered remnants of a 9,000 year old fishing village, placing Hirundo on the National Register of Historic Places.

Many people enjoy our public programs. Local schools and the University of Maine use Hirundo as a living laboratory.

Hirundo Wildlife Refuge serves the Greater Bangor area, and visitors from around the world.

We are happy to hear your comments and questions:  
Gudrun Keszöcze, Naturalist: 207-944-9259  
Fred Bryant, Caretaker: 207-951-3061

## YES, I WANT TO VOLUNTEER!

We welcome your skill and interest!

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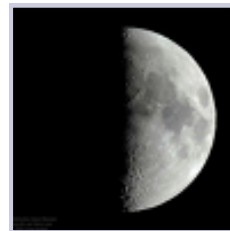
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### Outdoor Volunteer Activities

- ♦ Trail maintenance
- ♦ Removing non-native invasive species
- ♦ Lead walks, present a program
- ♦ Public Outreach
- ♦ Fauna & Flora inventories
- ♦ Photography

### Indoor Volunteer Activities

- ♦ Administrative and technical help
- ♦ Publicity
- ♦ Coordinate Volunteers
- ♦ Fundraising



## Quarterly Question

Which true mammal hibernator(s) can be seen at the Refuge?

- A) Black bear
- B) Chipmunk
- C) Meadow jumping mouse

**Send your answer by November 15** and win a Hirundo bird feeder, just in time for a holiday gift.

Reply to [web@hirundomaine.org](mailto:web@hirundomaine.org), or to  
Hirundo Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 266, Orono, ME 04473

Answer to previous Quarterly Question:  
There are seven beaver lodges along Pushaw Stream, five of them are active.