As old man winter pulls us farther from the warmth of the summer sun, there is time to reflect on the people, organizations and birds, that made our 11th Acadia Birding Festival June 11-14, an island-wide success. Bird watchers from around the United States, Barcelona, Spain and Canada, came to Mount Desert Island (MDI) this June to experience the unique spring migration and early breeding season of our Neotropical migrant and year round resident birds. They also enjoyed vibrant flowering plants and our amazing Asticou Azalea Garden where Rhodora and flowering Cherry tree dazzled their olfactory senses and offered opportunities to see Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and Warblers by the waters edge.

Acadia Birding Festival (ABF) is a celebration of avian life on Mount Desert Island, promoting thriving ecosystems and a healthy productive Gulf of Maine bio-region. This year’s festival focused on the Penobscot River Restoration Project and those important watershed connections between land and sea that sustain our Maine economy and make us free people. Understanding the relationship between human networks and natural ecosystems is an important goal of Acadia Birding Festival. ABF celebrated this project because it heralds wide-ranging ecological benefits for the Penobscot River and Gulf of Maine by opening 1000 miles of riverine habitat.

For example, the wetland transition zones where birds forage on insects are the same wetlands nourishing the commercial fisheries allowing lobsterman to feed their traps with Alewives. Important species like American Eel, Atlantic salmon and American Sturgeon will thrive from the nutrients of Maine’s open riverine systems and traditional breeding grounds. The Penobscot River Restoration Project is vital for the restitution of our faltering fishing industry and will prove itself with return on investment through enhanced and thriving coastal ecosystems. Protecting our natural resources is not a luxury for good economic times, on the contrary, policy makers must understand that thriving ecosystems and environmental concerns are tied to a sustainable economy and keeping Maine people and our tourists safe and secure through an enhanced food production system and job development. Americans must become better stewards of our watersheds and important ecological resources like the Gulf of Maine.

During Acadia Birding Festivals’ public forum: Connecting Land and Sea: Engaging people in the Natural Landscape through Poetic Interpretation, it was a privilege and honor to host COA president David Hales, Bill Carpenter, Cheryl Daigle, Kristen Lindquist, Stuart Kestenbaum, Catherine Schmitt and Candace Stover. This amazing and talented panel of literary writers and poets lead us to a deeper understanding of watersheds, native sea-run fish populations, and the importance of thriving ecosystems. How we view the world around us will be shaped by the stories and poems that are written for future generations. A special thanks to technology specialist Zack Soares at the College of the Atlantic for helping preserved this event at http://www.vimeo.com/7453780.

Acadia Birding Festival participants experienced the open ocean aboard the Friendship V, where pelagic birds and whales have evolved over millennium. Pelagic birds live at sea except for the brief breeding period on land and are “life birds” for many people from around the world. Acadia Birding Festival would like to thank the expert staff and naturalists aboard the Friendship V and
the Bar Harbor Whale Watch Company. Thank you for your continued support for a healthy Gulf of Maine fishery.

The 2009 Acadia Birding Festival had an outstanding group of featured guests including Leslie Clapp, Alison Dibble, Jennifer Greene, Ed Hawkes, Billy Helprin, Steve Ingraham, Craig Kesselheim, Becky Marvil, Zack Klyver, David Lamon, Abby McBride, Wayne Petersen, Robert Shaw, and Scott Swann. This is a talented group of people and we would like to thank them for their lifelong commitment to a deeper understanding of birds, bird communication and outdoor education. Alison Bell has been the “go to” person and coordinator of the daily field events and has smoothed over many rough spots. These experts are the core of Acadia Birding Festival and our community.

I would like to give a special thank you to our guest speaker, Wayne Petersen, director of the Important Bird Area (IBA) Program for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has been an inspiration for his dedication and understanding of New England ornithology and communicating that information to the public. His jovial and engaging personality mixed with the torrents of rain falling all week produced a steady stream of laughter and fun for participants. Everyone enjoyed his broad understanding of ornithology and in depth analysis of particular species. The Northern “Rain” Forest was in rare form and everyone was impressed by the 3.09 inches of rain on Friday, June 12th. A special thanks to Barbara Petersen for recognizing the importance of outdoor education in our schools and promoting a new awareness of environmental issues.


ABF would also like to recognize the important conservation work of the “Beginning with Habitat” coalition including Maine Inland, Fisheries and Wildlife. Every town government in Maine should familiarize themselves with this document and the concept of beginning with habitat as a landscape approach to assessing wildlife and plant conservation needs and opportunities.

Acadia Birding Festival has started to prepare next year’s program June 10-13, 2010. We are pleased to announce that keynote speaker Paul Kerlinger, past director of Cape May Bird...
Observatory, author and ornithology expert, will address the issue of “Bird Migration, Wind Turbines and Communication Towers”.

Many ecological questions arise from our increased use of these technologies. ABF will offer an opportunity to look more deeply and find solutions to the number of bird fatalities and the role of night time lighting systems associated with communication towers. Land use and night sky issues greatly affect bird migration and will a focus of this year’s festival. We look forward to hosting Paul on June 10, 2010 and seeing you there.

Michael J. Good, MS
Founder and director of Acadia Birding Festival
www.AcadiaBirdingFestival.com
2009 Acadia Birding Festival Bird List

This year’s event started in the rain on Thursday June 12, heavy rain on Friday, clearing to perfect blue sky and calm on Saturday and drizzle on Sunday. The birding was good with 101 species seen or heard and approximately 10,834 individual birds observed.

Canada Goose 6
American Black Duck 4
Mallard 15
Common Eider 232
White-winged Scoter 2
Black Scoter 3
Hooded Merganser 7
Common Loon 11
Northern Fulmar 7
Greater Shearwater 12
Wilson's Storm-Petrel 3,500
Northern Gannet 6
Double-crested Cormorant 40
American Bittern 1
Great Blue Heron 3
Turkey Vulture 10
Osprey 7
Bald Eagle 5
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1
Northern Goshawk 1
Peregrine Falcon 4
American Woodcock 3
Parasitic Jaeger 1
Laughing Gull 1,184
Ring-billed Gull 35
Herring Gull 450
Gt Black-backed Gull 18
Roseate Tern 1
Common Tern 2,602
Arctic Tern 1,337
Common Murre 16
Razorbill 204
Black Guillemot 95
Atlantic Puffin 268
Rock Dove 35
Mourning Dove 12
Northern Saw-whet Owl 1
Common Nighthawk 1
Chimney Swift 4
Ruby-throated Hummingbird 4
Belted Kingfisher 1
Downy Woodpecker 5
Hairy Woodpecker 7
Northern Flicker 3
Pileated Woodpecker 2
Olive-sided Flycatcher 1
Eastern Wood-Pewee 5
Alder Flycatcher 8
Least Flycatcher 2
Eastern Phoebe  4
Eastern Kingbird  1
Blue-headed Vireo  10
Red-eyed Vireo  20
Blue Jay  16
American Crow  65
Common Raven  8
Tree Swallow  2
Cliff Swallow  1
Barn Swallow  6
Black-capped Chickadee  35
Red-breasted Nuthatch  24
Brown Creeper  4
Winter Wren  2
Golden-crowned Kinglet  25
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  1
Swainson's Thrush  2
Hermit Thrush  12
Wood Thrush  1
American Robin  40
Gray Catbird  5
European Starling  29
Cedar Waxwing  25
Nashville Warbler  6
Northern Parula  5
Yellow Warbler  3
Chestnut-sided Warbler  10
Magnolia Warbler  4
Black-throated Blue Warbler  4
Yellow-rumped Warbler  18
Black-throated Green Warbler  25
Blackburnian Warbler  15
Pine Warbler  3
Black-and-white Warbler  5
American Redstart  16
Ovenbird  10
Common Yellowthroat  18
Scarlet Tanager  1
Chipping Sparrow  10
Song Sparrow  16
Swamp Sparrow  7
White-throated Sparrow  8
Dark-eyed Junco  12
Northern Cardinal  3
Bobolink  5
Red-winged Blackbird  7
Common Grackle  3
Purple Finch  10
White-winged Crossbill  5
Pine Siskin  27
American Goldfinch  18
House Sparrow  12

Total birds seen and heard = 10,834