

streamside

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF SUNKHAZE MEADOWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

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PO Box 450
MILFORD, ME 04461
WWW.SUNKHAZE.ORG

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, JAN BECKETT

Hello Friends!

This message is one of the hardest that I have ever had to write. It is a request for help and money. Most of you know that the public canoe/kayak launch site on Rte. 2 in Milford is privately owned by Bill Mackowski and he has allowed us to use it since the beginning of the Refuge and in reality going back about 30 years. His generosity has been greatly appreciated and a little taken for granted. No longer. The site is now closed and unless we can raise \$75,000.00 it will be sold to someone who will doubtfully be as generous as Bill has been.

I have sent emails to most of the members and you have all been very helpful with letters to Senator Collins and Tony Leger the Chief of the NWRS-Region 5. Unfortunately, our pleas have fallen on deaf ears. We do have an appraisal for Mr. Mackowski's property but it is too low for him to take the offer as it stands. If, somehow, we can raise \$75,000 the Friends can assist in purchasing the land. It is a beautiful site, 37 acres with ½ mile of Sunkhaze Stream wrapped around it. If we do not manage to acquire this land it will be sold and anything from a single home to a hunting/sporting lodge can be built there. It will be lost forever!

So, it comes to this: If 75 friends can commit to raising \$1000 each we can do it! Unfortunately we do not have the time to raise the money with bottle and can drives (as was suggested by the Div. 5 realty div.!) I believe that I can raise \$1000 from my friends and family and I hope some of you feel the same. This suggestion is just that, a suggestion. If any of you have other ideas I would be most thankful to hear them. I also would very much appreciate anyone with fundraising experience to step forward and help me. This is so far out of my league that I am fearful that alone I will fail. I do not want to fail. This would be a fantastic feat to accomplish and I am reaching out to all of you to help me.



Sunkhaze Stream is the very heart of Sunkhaze Meadows NWR. You can feel it in your soul when you are paddling upstream and wending your way through the meadows. Moose, otters, beavers and many birds watch your progress and entertain visitors with just the joy of seeing them in their natural habitat. The stream takes you to the center of the Refuge and imparts a sense of wildness and a feeling of isolation that is a rejuvenating break from "civilization". I feel that this piece of land is, to quote Mr. Mackowski: "A keystone piece of land for the Sunkhaze Meadows NWR. It also carries with it a strong Traditional and Historical significance dating back 4000 years and we strongly believe that it should be held in the public domain."

Please help us keep this treasure for the future.

~Jan

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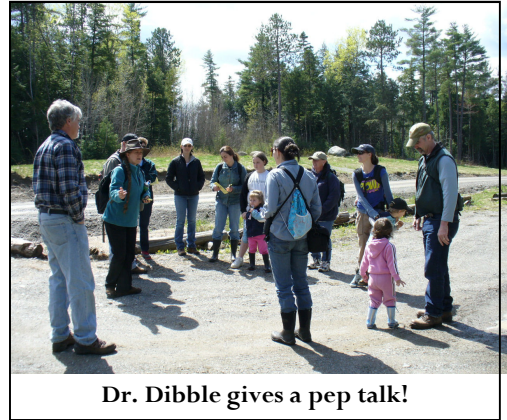
Board Members

“HOBBLEBUSH, LUNGWART, AND RAG BAG, OH MY!”

BY DANIELLE D'AURIA

On Saturday, April 24th, Dr. Alison Dibble inspired youngsters and adults alike to look, listen, and feel their surrounding natural world for a few enthralling hours.

We didn't get 2 feet past the gate at Carter Meadow Rd before we were using hand lenses to examine trillium, hobblebush, Canada yew, and honeysuckle plants. Further along our journey, we examined lichens and mosses on rocks and trees, listened for birds high up in the canopy, and even found a red-backed salamander beneath a rock!



Dr. Dibble gives a pep talk!



Connie and Ella on the hunt!

A garter snake basking in the sun sat still for all to gaze at for a few moments. Lichens such as Lungwart and Rag-Bag were study subjects for the children, who were all well equipped with hand lenses to peer closely at the color and texture of each. Puddles and pools revealed frogs, salamander egg masses, and mosquito tumblers. To all of us that day, Sunkhaze Meadows NWR was truly where the wild things are!

From the Sunkhaze Notebook
The facts about Hobblebush

Family: Honeysuckle
(Caprifoliaceae)

Habitat: low, moist woods

Height: 3 to 6 feet

Flower Size: 1/8 inch fertile
flowers and 3/4 inch sterile
flowers in heads up to 5
inches across

Flower color: white



Visit <http://www.sunkhaze.org> for important information and events!

CALLING ALL BOTANISTS!

Or anyone else who would like to collect seeds...

The Northeast Native Seed Initiative (NNSI) was formed by a group of agencies across Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Northern New York. It's goal is to develop a sustainable supply of seeds of native species with relatively local genotypes that can be used in restoration and erosion control.

Twelve species were selected by the NNSI for seed collection. Sally Butler, State Staff Forester and Plant Material Coordinator for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service writes, "We are developing an alternative to the commercial "conservation mix" that contains mostly if not all non-native plants. Last year our group collected seed from other NE states, but none from Maine and so I'm asking if you will help me with this effort here.

All you need to do is collect seed when you are out and about, and let me know and I will come get them from you.

The USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Program will take the seed and grow it out to eventually get seed for commercial growers to use for making a "native" conservation mix that can be used by contractors and others when revegetating areas.

Here is the link to more info on the collection effort with fact sheets on each species that includes ID and seed maturing dates, etc.: <http://tiny.cc/NENativeSeeds>

We will be adding two more species to our collection for this year: *Calamagrostis canadensis* & *Danthonia spicata* the web site above will have ID and collection info on them soon.

Thanks in advance for any help you may be able to give us. If you know of others that may be interested in collecting seed, please pass this message along to them."

For those interested in contributing to this effort, or if you have questions, Sally can be reached via phone or email at 207-778-4767 Ext. 106 or sally.butler@me.usda.gov.

Pictured in this article:

Four of the plants on the collection list.

****NOTE: Please remember that seeds cannot be collected on the refuge****



Rudbeckia hirta
(black-eyed susan)



Aster novae-angliae
(New England aster)



Elymus canadensis
(Canadian wildrye)



Asclepias syriaca
(common milkweed)

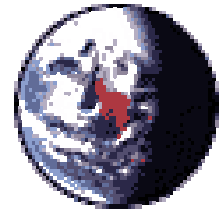
MANAGER'S NOTES: PLANNING THE FUTURE OF THE REFUGE BY BETH GOETTEL

In the fall, we will begin to write a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. These plans are required by the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act and are quite useful. They are an opportunity to gather everything we know about a place and look holistically at it, to listen to the public's opinions, and to make plans that will guide the managers and staff over the next 15 years.

To get ready, we will be reviewing what we have in our files and gathering new information, especially on how many visitors use various part of the refuge and the condition of various camps and trails. Steve Agius, a seasonal biotech for us, will be out and about the refuge a couple days a week this summer. We will again have a small trail crew who can also lend a hand if trail clearing or invasive plant control is required.

I hope you will all be thinking about what you want Sunkhaze to be like 15 years from now, and bring those thoughts to us, either by sending me a quick email or a longer letter, or by attending the public meetings we will have. Let me know if you want to be on the mailing list to receive updates as they become available!

Beth_goettel@fws.gov (there is an underscore between the first name_last name)



UPCOMING EVENTS

"Peatland Flora of Sunkhaze Meadows: Identification, Natural History, and Ecology"

Led by Lindsay Seward, Instructor, Department of Wildlife Ecology
University of Maine, Orono
Saturday, June 5th at 10 a.m. Meeting place TBA



Explore the peatlands and surrounding wetlands of Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge! Learn to recognize common (and some unusual!) wetland plants that are important to the ecology of Sunkhaze Meadows. As we walk from the perimeter of the refuge to the center of the peatland, we will observe dramatic changes in the vegetation and discuss the ecology and natural history of the flora along the trail.

Stay current with news and events online at www.sunkhaze.org

ENJOYING SUNKHAZE IN 2009 BY ROD JOHNSON

After the last storm, my neighbor Ervill Rivage and I were out clearing snow from our sidewalks. Neither of us were very excited about this chore so we eventually leaned on our shovels and got into a lengthy conversation. I brought up the subject of Sunkhaze Meadows.

I asked Ervill if he had ever used the Meadows for any type of recreation and his reply was rather negative. "Too far away, lots of bugs, wet walking, and there is nothing to see." was his answer. I said, you are wrong; it's just a few miles down the County Road; bugs can be dealt with; wear boots; and there is much to see. You can hike or paddle most anytime. He was not convinced and asked me what I did in 2009 that was so great.



My reply to this went on for several minutes but I shall summarize for the benefit of the readers.

Sunkhaze Meadows NWR is a four-season, quiet natural treasure located fully in the town of Milford. During the year past, I hiked each of the major trails, some more than once, usually with others, but occasionally alone. North Buzzy with its wonderful loop did not have any loosestrife this year, fortunately, but a small orchid was common in late summer. South Buzzy is the only trail which crosses the 45th Parallel; three visits showed three locations on my GPS! I assisted in leading a group of University students and others on this trail. I took one trip on Carter Meadow to the observation platform, always a great venue. Johnson Brook has two loops and side trails with a variety of attractions. I hike this trail many times during the summer. Finally, there is the Oak Point trail. I became very fond of Oak Point for several reasons: my first Sunkhaze moose put in an appearance here. I hope you will check out this trail in 2010 to see for yourselves why it is so enjoyable. In addition to hiking, etc., there was a moonlight canoe/kayak paddle which made me a little nervous! The moon was slow to show itself and illuminate the many hazards in the Stream.

I could mention other adventures but have rambled on enough. Ervill Rivage promised to check out the many attractions in 2010 and I might just go along and have another enjoyable year at Sunkhaze.

Thanks to all the people (and dogs) who accompanied me in 2009.

FRIENDS OF SUNKHAZE MEADOWS
NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

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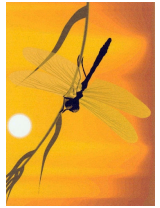
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