



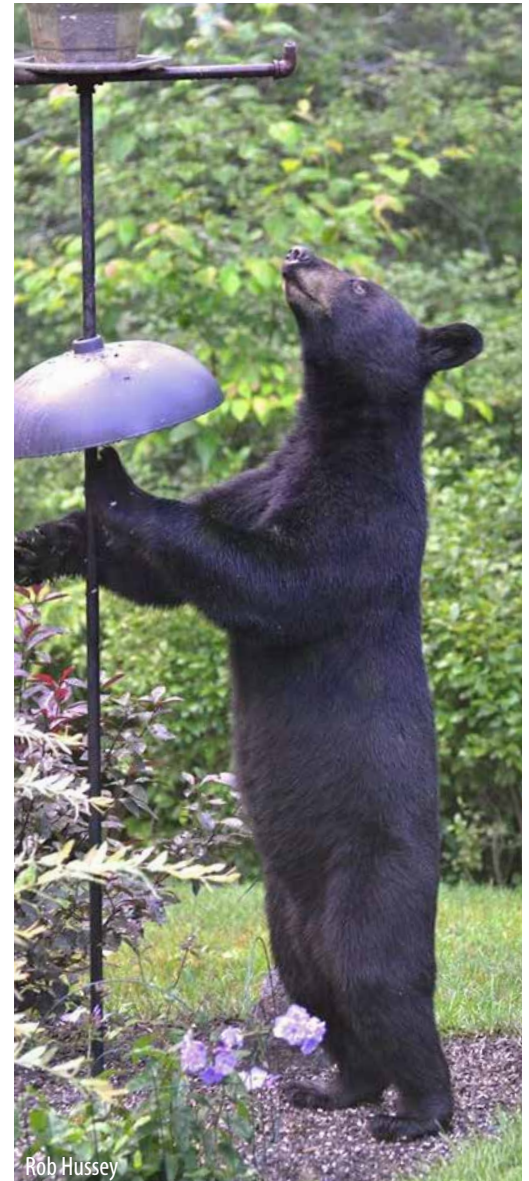
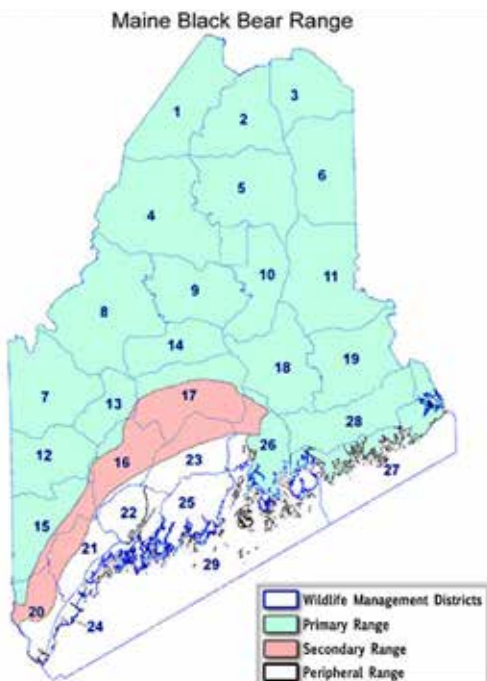
Avoiding Black Bear Conflicts

Spring is here, which means hungry black bears will be emerging from their dens to replenish their body fat. Mothers with young will also begin to explore, which puts added stress on mom to maintain her nutrient rich and fatty milk for her young. As omnivores like us, black bears are opportunistic and will eat various sources of fruits, vegetables, and proteins.

To prevent season-long conflicts with local wildlife (including hungry bears) there are several things you can do. Bears will remember where they find food so the best way to prevent conflict is by assuring you are not accidentally providing an easy food source!

You can:

- Remove or secure outdoor animal feed (including bird feeders, pet food, and livestock feed). Anytime you leave this food out unsecured, you are risking attracting bears and other unintended species.
- Bird seed is full of fat and birds do not require the extra help from April to November because food is not as scarce. If you wish to continue using your bird feeder through the year, it should be placed at least 10 feet up and 4 feet out from the nearest tree, using a rope and pulley system to refill it and cleaning up spills.
- You can also replace hummingbird feeders with hanging flowerpots.
- Secure trash and recycling bins and keep indoors when possible. You should also secure your compost bins.
- Don't leave barbecue or picnic food outside and clean your grill after use.



Rob Hussey

Black bears are native to Maine and can be found throughout the state. If a bear is localized in a dense residential area or if it shows aggression toward people or livestock, then it should be reported to Regional Communications Centers (RCC) dispatch at 624-7076 or 1-800-452-4664.

- Kristen Brewster, *Center for Wildlife Resident Environmental Educator*

“Sit-Spot” for Vitality and Joy

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.” - Rachel Carson

By simply going outside and finding a spot to sit in nature we can expand awareness, invigorate the brain and lower blood pressure. Although similar to other meditative practices ancient and modern, “Sit-spot” is often associated with “Nature Connection” and is validated across multiple scientific disciplines as having healthful benefits to humans like fuller sensory, emotional, intellectual, and creative potential.

Nature harmonizes the biology of the human nervous system in great contrast to how the brain is programmed by technology. By regularly visiting the same Sit-spot, birds and animals become accustomed to us and draw ever nearer. Our observations increase and sharpen, as do vitality and focus as we open to wonder, joy, and connectedness.



“We’re part of this living Earth and that is actually a real thing and not an idea. It’s not a book on a shelf. It’s really who we are.” (Jon Young)

Sit-spot can last 5 minutes or 45. The challenge is to commit to doing this every day, every week, or month, until we look forward to a daily dose of “Vitamin N”* (N is for Nature).

Find a favorite place in Nature that is safe, easy to get to, not far from your home/workplace.

- Sit on the ground if you can, a rock, park bench, lean against a tree, or look out a window.
- Practice opening your senses and observe Nature. (It’s important to tune in, not zone out.)
- Express gratitude for the seen and unseen forces.
- Repeat.

Settle into your Sit-spot, take a few deep breaths. Relax. Open your eyes into soft, wide-angle vision and take in

as much as you can. Allow different sounds to fill your awareness. Awaken sense of touch, feel the wind, sun’s warmth, the way your body touches the earth. Smell the trees, plants, earth, air –perhaps they’ll kindle sense of taste. Don’t be distracted from seeing the beauty that surrounds you. Aim for a quiet mind. Stay fully present.

For observations, insights, questions, feelings, plant, bird, and animal identification, weather records, drawings, begin a Sit-spot journal. Make your practice fun and something you look forward to.

“The future will belong to the nature-smart—those individuals, families, businesses, and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of the transformative power of the natural world and who balance the virtual with the

real. The more high-tech we become, the more nature we need.” (*Richard Louv)

“When people meditate and calm their brain chatter, their brains emit alpha frequencies of 7 to 9 Hz. The human brain in a relaxed state then has the same frequency of vibration as the energy field of the earth. When humans live close to nature, their energy fields are in synchrony with the energy field of the earth, so they experience more balance and better health...energy fields connect all living matter – humans, plants, animals, and the earth. “

**- Dr. Robert Becker,
renowned expert on electromagnetic fields**

Species Spotlight

American Honeysuckle, *Lonicera canadensis*



Depending on who you ask, honeysuckles are either a welcomed, sweet-scented and beautiful addition to a home garden, or a vining, aggressive invasive that takes over yards, wetlands, and forests. As there are 180 species of honeysuckles worldwide, both of these opinions could be considered correct.

Honeysuckles can be either shrubby or vining, and invasive species from Eurasia are the bane of many landowners and conservation managers. When in doubt, always ask for the species Latin name of any plant you are buying, as plants will often be labelled simply as “honeysuckles”. Taking care when purchasing and planting honeysuckle species is essential to supporting our wild landscapes.

- Katie Brodeur, Center for Wildlife Resident Environmental Educator

American honeysuckle, also known as American fly-honeysuckle or Canadian honeysuckle, is a subtle and often-overlooked member of the *Lonicera* genus found in the forest understory and along mixed forest edges. It is one of the earliest understory plants to put out leaves and flowers, taking advantage of the light before trees in the canopy are in full leaf. Mid-spring is the best time to encounter this modest species, before other understory plants are in full leaf. Light-yellow trumpet flowers attract and support wild pollinator species of moths, butterflies, and bees. The resulting fruits will ripen in July and support woodland birds like brown thrashers, warblers, and ruffed grouse. The early foliage of American honeysuckle also provides essential cover along the forest edge for mammalian prey species like New England cottontail and snowshoe hare.

Native Honeysuckles

American honeysuckle (*L. canadensis*)
Trumpet/coral honeysuckle (*L. sempervirens*)
Waterberry/Mountain Fly honeysuckle (*L. villosa*)
Swamp fly honeysuckle (*L. oblongifolia*)*
Lilbert/glaucous/wild honeysuckle (*L. dioica*)*
* Endangered/uncommon in ME

Non-native Honeysuckles

Japanese/white honeysuckle (*L. japonica*)
Tartarian honeysuckle (*L. tartarica*)
Morrow's honeysuckle (*L. morrowii*)
Amur's honeysuckle (*L. maackii*)
Bell's honeysuckle hybrid (*L. x bella*)
European honeysuckle (*L. periclymenum*)
Fly woodbine/honeysuckle (*L. xylosteum*)

Mountain Biking Etiquette

Please follow these rules of the trail when mountain biking on and around Mount Agamenticus.

Ride Open Trails

- Respect trail and road closures - ask a land manager for clarification if you are uncertain about the status of a trail.
- Do not trespass on private land.
- Obtain permits or other authorization as required.
- Be aware that bicycles are not permitted in some wilderness areas.

Leave No Trace

- Avoid wet and muddy trails as they are more vulnerable to damage than dry ones. When the trail is soft, consider other riding options and locations.
- Stay on existing trails and do not create new ones.
- Don't cut switchbacks.
- Ride single file in the middle of the trail to avoid widening the trail.
- Pack out at least as much as you pack in.

Control Your Bicycle

- Control your speed at all times and ride within your limits. Reckless riding and high downhill speeds are not appropriate here.
- Slow down when approaching and passing others or around blind corners and intersections.

Yield Appropriately

- Let your fellow trail users know you're coming - a friendly greeting or bell ring are good methods.
- Try to anticipate other trail users as you ride around corners.
- Bicyclists should yield to other non-motorized trail users.
- Bicyclists traveling downhill should yield to ones headed uphill.
- In general, strive to respect everyone you meet on the trail.

Never Scare Animals

- Respect wildlife and wildlife habitat. Animals, such as dogs and horses, are easily startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement or a loud noise.
- Give animals enough room and time to adjust to you.
- When passing horses, use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain).

Plan Ahead

- Know your equipment, your ability and the area in which you are riding and prepare accordingly.
- Strive to be self-sufficient.
- Keep your equipment in good repair.
- Carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Spread the Word

- Teach new riders trail etiquette—lead by example.

Adapted from the International Mountain Bicycling Association's "Rules of the Trail."





Be Aware of Ticks

Ticks are out in Maine in abundance, including here at Mount A. This doesn't mean you shouldn't still enjoy the outdoors and everything the warmer months have to offer, as long as you stay aware and alert.

Precautions to avoid tick bites:

- Choose light-colored clothing that makes ticks easier to spot. Wear long sleeves and pants; tuck pant legs into socks and your shirt into your pants when walking in woods, brush, or tall grass. Deer ticks attach to clothing and move upward.
- Use an EPA-approved insect repellent.
- Walk in center of trails. Use caution in wooded and bushy areas with leaf litter.
- Do a tick check ANYTIME you have been outside! Inspect your skin, clothing, and pets for ticks and remove them promptly. Don't miss scalp, ears, neck, armpits, behind knees and pelvic region. Have someone else check your back!
- Showering removes unattached ticks that you may not have found.
- Tumble dry garments on high heat for 10 minutes to kill any ticks remaining on clothes.
- If you spot an embedded tick, use a tick spoon or tweezers to grasp its mouth and pull out with steady pressure. Don't use petroleum jelly, hot matches, or nail polish remover as this can increase the risk of infection. Wash any possible tick bites with soap and water and apply antiseptic.

More information about ticks and Lyme Disease can be found by visiting the CDC website: cdc.gov/lyme/

PROGRAMMING & EVENTS

Join us this season for a **Volunteer Community Workday** or a **Guided Educational Program!**

Upcoming Workdays:

May 22 | **Spring Trail Maintenance**

June 5 | **Intro to Trail Adoption**

Workdays run from 9:00am-12:30pm. Space is limited, so registration is required. Please e-mail bjankowski@yorkmaine.org to sign up! Full details are available at agamenticus.org.

Upcoming Programs:

May 16 | **10:00am-12:00pm | Pollinator Playdate** (*meet at CFW*)

June 13 | **10:00am-12:00pm | Beginner Bird Walk** (*meet at summit of Mount A*)

Spaces are limited for our joint programs with our friends at the Center for Wildlife. Please visit thecenterforwildlife.org to register! Registration is \$8/person.

Bring your Group to the Learning Lodge!


For the 2021 season, the summit Learning Lodge will be open to small groups of up to 20 people. Each scheduled visit will include a staff-lead program or hike, time to explore the Lodge's hands-on exhibits, and access to the gift shop. Groups must register online in advance by filling out the Group Registration form found at agamenticus.org. A \$5/person fee applies. Please fill out the form at least a week in advance of your desired visit date to better ensure staff availability!

We'll be ready for groups starting Memorial Day Weekend and will continue to schedule through the end of October!

The Learning Lodge interior will otherwise remain closed to the public for the duration of the 2021 season. Thank you for your patience and continued support!



Newsletter written and designed by the Friends of Mt. A.

Scan here to **Like Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region** on Facebook! 



Spring Bird Sightings at Mt. A

eBird is managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and uses data contributed by birders around the world to document bird distribution, abundance, habitat use and trends. To learn more visit eBird.org.

Here is a list of some of the birds documented on eBird at Mount Agamenticus this spring:

- Turkey Vulture · Red-tailed Hawk · Common Raven · Black-capped Chickadee · Tufted Titmouse
- Tree Swallow · White-breasted Nuthatch · Hermit Thrush · American Robin · Song Sparrow · Herring Gull
- Bald Eagle · Eastern Phoebe · American Crow · Eastern Bluebird · Dark-eyed Junco · Canada Goose
- Sharp-shinned Hawk · Downy Woodpecker · American Kestrel · House Finch

Pictured at left: Tree Swallows