



SUMMIT VIEW

The Newsletter of the Friends of Mt. Agamenticus

Summer 2022

VULTURE NOTIONS ARE GROUNDLESS

Have you ever wondered what the large birds flying around or sitting on the tower at the summit of Mt. A are? You were probably looking at the several turkey vultures who are frequent visitors up there! Turkey vultures are distinguishable when they are flying because of the silvery feathers running down the entire length of the underside of the wing, with their 6 foot wingspan in a v-shape. Up close, you may also notice that they have a red head, just like a turkey!

Although they are often considered to be dirty and gross because of their role as scavengers in the ecosystem, they are simply misunderstood. Turkey vultures only eat carrion, or animals that have already passed away and they don't have strong talons like our hawks, owls, and other birds of prey because their food isn't moving. Other scavengers such as opossums, crows, and ravens are

like nature's janitors, but turkey vultures are actually more like nature's haz-mat crew! With stomach acid that is stronger than battery acid, their stomachs can

neutralize Lyme disease, rabies, botulism, and a lot of other things that can make us very sick! Turkey vultures keep themselves clean by extending their wings while perched in the sunshine (just like turtles basking on a log in the summertime), using their toes to pick their nose, or going to the bathroom on their legs (which acts just like their own



Joseph Mazzaglia

personal hand sanitizer).

They may not often be recognized for their beauty, but turkey vultures play a vital role in the circle of life. Pictured is Violet, the non-releasable turkey vulture ambassador at Center for Wildlife who is a silly and wonderful ambassador for her misunderstood species.

- Kristen Brewster-Melvin, Center for Wildlife

WELCOME 2022 CONSERVATION STEWARDS!



This team will assist with natural resource protection along with visitor and recreation management at the mountain and beyond. You will see them working on a variety of projects maintaining trails and facilities, landscaping, restoring native habitat, and promoting safe and responsible use of this important conservation land.

Front: Kailyn Robie; Naomi Densmore, our Outreach and Education Coordinator; Wynn Thompson; Graham Burdon | Back: Thomas Franks; Ben Jankowski, our Trails, Facilities & Grounds Supervisor



David Tibbetts

FRIENDS OF MOUNT AGAMENTICUS TO NAME A BROOK AFTER MARION FULLER BROWN

Efforts are under way to have a brook that flows around Mount Agamenticus in York named after the late Marion Fuller Brown who spearheaded the movement to protect much of the land that is now called the Greater Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region.

As a conservationist and visionary, Marion Fuller Brown was one of the organizers of the York Conservation Commission where she was involved in getting the Town to purchase the land that was once the Big A Ski Area and prevent development of condominiums on Mount Agamenticus. When she served as the State Representative for the Town of York, she introduced the Land for Maine's Future Bill that provided much of the funding for the acquisition of thousands of acres surrounding the mountain. She was also one of the founders of the York Land Trust that, over the years, purchased many land parcels to form the largest contiguous coastal forest between the New Jersey Pine Barrens and Acadia National Park. This unique ecosystem is where the northern boreal forest and the southern hardwood forest merge to form the most biodiverse region within the State of Maine.

The brook itself flows through three rare plant communities and has at least seven rare plant species within its watershed. This is the jeweled necklace at the heart of the Mount Agamenticus region that Marion Fuller Brown spent her lifetime to protect; it is to honor her efforts that we are applying to the US Geological Survey for naming this Marion's Brook. - David Tibbetts

WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Jewelweed

Learning a name is the first step in getting to know someone, and that demands special attention. A name is like a threshold that leads to discovery of complexities, treasures and mysteries that might take weeks or a lifetime to know. The mistake is in learning the name and nothing else.

Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778), known as the "Father of Taxonomy", gave standardized names to all living organisms. He revolutionized how humans referred to the natural world. If a flower had been identified by 60 different names, he gave it a definitive distinction with Latin, binomial nomenclature – a two-name system (genus and species). Not unlike our own first and last names which also speak to genealogy.

After almost three hundred years we still use Linnaeus' system to find the exact species of say, a native plant or tree we might wish to grow. For example, if you want Orange jewelweed, seek specifically, *Impatiens capensis*, unless you want the Pale jewelweed, *Impatiens pallid.* If it's a colorful Aster you want, there's about 600 species to choose from. Linnaeus' two-name system will serve you well.

Knowing the name, we can become sensitive to shapes, colors, textures, and scent. Awareness opens to distinctive biological qualities, phases of growth and development, seasonal cycles, suitable environment, even stressors. Questioning, studying, appreciating lead to familiarity and relationship.

Shape and color gave Jewelweed its name. Learning more than its name, we discover it invites hummingbirds, bees and butterflies who reciprocate by pollinating. Observation reveals the elongated seed pods that explode, sending its progeny everywhere, while the nutty-tasting seeds provide food for mice and game birds. Caterpillars of several moths use it as a host plant and White-tailed deer heavily browse its foliage. First Peoples knew Jewelweed relieves itching from poison ivy, stinging nettle, even athlete's foot. Though they used the whole plant for medicines they also understood their symbiotic relationship and never over-harvested. In some Native languages the term for plants translates to "those who take care of us."*

What's in a name -- an invitation to edge into mystery, kinship and the widening of "our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty."***



Aster

The Frogs are Calling and I Must Go! By Wynn Thompson

What sound means “summer” for you? Waves crashing on the beach? The ringing bell of an ice cream truck? The neighbor’s lawn mower? How about singing frogs?

Starting in early spring, amphibians begin stirring from their winter hibernation and searching for a mate. Male frogs produce calls that are unique to each species and individual organism. These calls attract females, who can glean information about a male’s species and size from his call alone. While we humans may not be able to detect such details, with a little practice you can learn each species’ distinct song.

Learning frog calls is a fun way to get to know the amphibian species in your area and enjoy the warm evenings of summer. Read on for descriptions of common frog calls in southern Maine!

1. Spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*): High pitched “peep.” One of the most recognizable frog calls, often heard in early spring and summer.
2. Wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*): Soft quacks, “ca-ha-ha-ac, ca-ha-ha-ac.”
3. American toad (*Anaxyrus americanus*): Long trill that may last from five to thirty seconds. Listen for a chorus of overlapping trills of different pitches.
4. Gray tree frog (*Hyla versicolor*): Short, repetitive trills. Generally higher in pitch than American toads.
5. American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*): Loud bass notes, “rumm . . . rumm” or “jug-o-rum.”

Happy listening!

Additional resources:

- Learn frog calls and test your frog knowledge! Visit the U.S. Geological Survey’s Frog Quiz and Frog Call Lookup at: <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/Frogquiz/index.cfm>.
- Help track Maine’s herpetofauna by uploading photos or audio recordings to the Maine Amphibian and Reptile Atlas Project (MARAP) at: <https://tinyurl.com/MEamphibs>.



The Learning Lodge

Serving as the lodge for the Big A Ski Area from 1964-74, the summit Lodge at Mount Agamenticus is now our visitor center, home to a number of educational displays, hands-on activities, and gift shop. We are open to the public from 12:00-4:00pm on most Saturdays and Sundays through Indigenous Peoples’ Day.

The Lodge is also available through October to school and camp group visits, and other pre-scheduled groups for educational programming. Use the Group Registration form at Agamenticus.org to schedule your visit! Please fill out the form at least a week in advance of your desired visit date to better ensure staff availability. We’ll do our best to accommodate you!





A Summer Solstice sunrise on Mount A. ❤️

Newsletter written and designed by volunteers from the Friends of Mount Agamenticus.



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Second Annual Plein Air Paint Out



The Friends of Mount Agamenticus Second Annual Plein Air Paint Out will be held Saturday, July 30th as part of York Days celebrations! Rain Date, July 31st. Artist Registration is closed for this event, but the public is invited to spectate at Mount A from 9:00am-3:00pm and to attend the Artists' reception at York Art Association from 5:00pm-7:00pm.

Finished paintings will be on display and available to purchase at York Art Association (YAA) beginning July 30th through the month of August, and a 40% commission on work sold will support YAA and the Friends of Mount Agamenticus, both nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations.

YAA is located at 394 York Street, York Harbor and is open Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 11am-5pm.

A \$500 Purchase Prize was generously provided for this event by Anchorage by the Sea – Ogunquit.

Additional support for this event is provided by The York Art Association, The Rotary Club of York Maine, Kennebunk Savings Bank, and Stonewall Kitchen.

Summer Programs and Events... Mark your calendars!

Saturday, July 9th | 6:00-8:00pm | Nature's Nightshift with the Center for Wildlife After an interactive nocturnal animal presentation with the Center's Ambassadors, we will hit the trails to search for both nocturnal animals and the signs they leave behind. This will be an intermediate level hike and all participants are encouraged to bring their own headlamp, bug spray and weather-appropriate clothing. \$12/person.

Saturday, July 16th | 9:00am-12:30pm | Volunteer Community Work Day, Invasive Species Management Work includes invasive plant education and hands-on removal. One culprit at Mount A is Common Buckthorn, which out-competes native plants for nutrients, light, and moisture. Register by e-mailing bjankowski@yorkmaine.org.

Sunday, July 17th and August 21st | 9:00-11:00am | Nature Journal Club Join us at the summit for a casual gathering of our monthly Nature Journal Club! More information can be found at <http://agamenticus.org/nature-journal-club/>. Registration is encouraged, but drop-ins are welcome!

Saturday, August 6th 9:00am-12:30pm Volunteer Community Work Day, Boardwalk Construction Work includes demolition, moving heavy planking, and installing new decking. Volunteers will learn hands-on dimensional lumber construction techniques by replacing boardwalk along Cedar Trail. Register by e-mailing bjankowski@yorkmaine.org.