



The Newsletter of the Friends of Mt. Agamenticus

Spring 2026

## Coast to coast, communities have taken action to mitigate problems for their wild neighbors: MAINE'S FIRST TURTLE TUNNEL IS WORKING



**A**n underpass installed beneath a busy stretch of road in Eliot a few years ago has led to “a substantial reduction in turtle mortalities,” according to a state biologist.

While the Eliot tunnel was designed with Blanding’s turtles in mind, Maine DOT has documented a slew of other creatures passing through, according to Justin Sweitzer, the agency’s environmental coordinator for southern Maine.

Over a period of nearly five months, the cameras snapped more than 270 photos of wildlife in the tunnel, ranging from snapping turtles and salamanders to muskrats and mink. Not one Blanding’s turtle has been found dead on the road since the crossing was installed, according to the department. A small number of snapping turtles and painted turtles have been killed.

Blanding’s turtles are rare in Maine, found only in York County and the southern part of Cumberland County. The state listed the species as threatened in 1986 and up-graded it to endangered in 1997. Habitat loss and road mortality are among the biggest threats to these reptiles. (*D’Angelo, January 30, 2026, The Maine Monitor, <https://themainemonitor.org/turtle-tunnels/>, used by permission*)

Wildlife collisions on U.S. roads are more than a nuisance—they’re a serious safety, economic, and ecological hazard.

Policies that preserve natural wildlife corridors where possible and accelerate the pace and scale of wildlife crossing construction in known

collision hotspots—ideally backed by dedicated, stable revenue streams—can facilitate the long-term planning and efficient project delivery needed to ensure habitat connectivity and reduce collisions.

Fortunately, many states are stepping up to address this pressing economic, safety, and conservation issue. Lawmakers throughout the country have introduced legislation to facilitate wildlife crossing funding and construction. Additionally, many states have established new funding sources to help unlock millions of dollars of federal grants—particularly from the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program, which was created as part of the 2021 Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act, as well as from more than a dozen other federal programs. Continued collaboration among state and federal partners to invest in reliable funding and policy solutions can make wildlife crossings a regular part of transportation planning.

*(Skrach, January 29, 2026, Pew Charitable Trust, <https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/fact-sheets/2026/01/wildlife-crossings-save-lives-cut-costs-and-protect-animals>; used by permission)*



Be sure to report any sightings of Blanding’s turtles in the wild to the Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife at: [mefishwildlife.com/blandingsturtle](http://mefishwildlife.com/blandingsturtle)

Report New Hampshire sightings to NH Fish and Game at: Reporting NH Reptile and Amphibian Sightings

# Dedication Event Planned This Year For Marion's Brook Naming

The afternoon of Saturday, June 6th has been scheduled for a simple dedication ceremony for the Marion's Brook naming. Please look for details coming soon on social media and in public announcements.

Marion's Brook was named in honor of Marion Fuller Brown, a long-time York resident, who spearheaded the movement to protect much of the land that is now called the Greater Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region and who dedicated her life to protecting our natural resources.

As a conservationist and visionary, Marion Fuller Brown was one of the organizers of the York Conservation Commission and instrumental in the process for the Town of York to purchase and protect much of the land that is now called the Greater Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region.

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, along with other Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Coalition partners, purchased many land parcels over the years to form the largest contiguous coastal forest between the New Jersey Pine Barrens and Acadia National Park.

This unique ecosystem is habitat for many rare and endangered plants and wildlife that are both State and Federally listed and is where the northern boreal forest and the southern hardwood forest merge to form the most biodiverse region within the State of Maine.

Marion's Brook flows around the base of Mount A through three rare plant communities and has at least seven rare plant species within its watershed. This is the heart of the Mount Agamenticus region that Marion Fuller Brown spent her lifetime to protect.

- David Tibbetts



Mount A looking east after storm.



Laura Zamfirescu Photography

## American Woodcock "Timberdoodle" (*Scolopax minor*)

You might hear the American Woodcock before you see one! Appearing in open areas adjacent to young hardwood forests during their breeding season (approximately March to May), the well-camouflaged bird is difficult to spot on the ground in low light against the mostly brown and gray outdoor background at this time of year.

However, you can listen for the distinctive "peent" vocalization used by the males to attract females, and then observe their spiraling "Sky Dance" aerial displays at dawn or dusk.

As with many species, habitat alteration or destruction has negatively affected the American Woodcock, so please be sure to select your viewing location before the timeframe above; ideally, find a place at field edges, not in open areas, and within cover where you can settle quietly; maintain position to avoid interrupting their breeding activities.

Their distinctive mating activities are amazing to hear and watch from a respectful distance should you happen to be in the right place to view the "Timberdoodle" in the wild.

Details at Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry 03/20/2024 bulletin, [https://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/MEDACF-3919d2e?wgt\\_ref=MEDACF\\_WIDGET\\_1](https://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/MEDACF-3919d2e?wgt_ref=MEDACF_WIDGET_1)

# Globally Rare Plant Found near Mount Agamenticus



This past spring, a globally rare shrub, **Nantucket serviceberry** (*Amelanchier nantucketensis*), was identified in the Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region. This is the first time this species has been documented in southern Maine. Nantucket serviceberry was first identified on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts in 1911 and by 1980, it had been found only on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Since then, a few small populations have been discovered along the Northeast Coast in Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Nova Scotia (where it is considered critically imperiled). In Maine, it is listed as threatened and considered uncommon in Massachusetts. A member of the rose family, there are eight species of serviceberry that occur in southern Maine. All serviceberries bloom early in the growing season and were considered the harbinger of spring by early settlers. One of the reasons it was called serviceberry was because it came into bloom at the same time preachers made their spring rounds to perform weddings, baptisms and funeral services. Another common

name is shadbush. Native Americans used the blooming time as an indicator that the shad fish were starting to run up coastal rivers and it was time to fish. It has also been called Juneberry because the eatable fruit ripened during the month of June. Because of the attractive blossoms, these shrubs are also used for landscaping, and more than 20 cultivars of *Amelanchier* have been developed.



Brown Snake



Spotted Salamander

Robert Frost; from "West-Running Brook" 1928

## SPRING POOLS

"These pools that, though in forests, still reflect  
The total sky almost without defect,  
And like the flowers beside them, chill and shiver,  
Will like the flowers beside them soon be gone,  
And yet not out by any brook or river,  
But up by roots to bring dark foliage on.

The trees that have it in their pent-up buds  
To darken nature and be summer woods ~  
Let them think twice before they use their powers  
To blot out and drink up and sweep away  
These flowery waters and these watery flowers  
From snow that melted only yesterday."



# Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writing from New England, by Siobhan Senier, Professor Emerita UNH, (Editor)

**T**he Anthology is this edition of the Summit View's contribution to recommended readings. It contains a wide variety of fiction, memoir and poetry from historical and contemporary Indigenous writers. It is arranged by tribal affiliation from the region colonists chose to label as New England and Maritime Canada, roughly from the Long Island Sound to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

I found the book to be fascinating and enjoyable reading and, while I did read it through, it also allows for picking and choosing your personal items of interest. I recommend that you get a copy from Booktenders in York (support our local bookstore!) or from your public library.

One entry in the book entitled "The Crow, In His Own Words" by Larry Spotted Crow Mann ([www.whisperingbasket.com](http://www.whisperingbasket.com)), a member of the Nipmuc tribe from south of the Piscataqua River, was reprinted in this newsletter with his permission. His poem follows a theme from previous newsletter features on Corvids (archives available at <https://agamenticus.org/tag/summit-view/>).

## Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Programs at Mount Agamenticus

**Registration is required for all programs unless otherwise noted. For detailed information and registration links, visit: [agamenticus.org/category/programs-events/](https://agamenticus.org/category/programs-events/)**

**Thursday, April 23, 5:30 - 7 PM**  
**Peering Into Vernal Pools with the  
Center for Wildlife**  
Mt. A Summit, moderate hike

**Sunday, May 10, 1 - 4 PM**  
**Nature Printmaking Workshop**  
Mt. A Lodge, recommended ages 12+

**Sunday, May 31, 8:30 - 10:30 PM**  
**Blue Moon Hike**  
Mt. A Base, moderate hike

**Weekly, Thursdays starting in June, 6 - 9 PM**  
**Dice Before Dark - BYO Community  
Board Game Night**  
Mt. A Lodge, drop-in

## The Crow (In His Own Words)

I am the Crow,  
Mystical as the Moon  
And Dark as the Night,  
Traversing through the Spirit World  
On Shadow Wings of Flight.  
Some have feared y Murky Hue,  
Even called it a Curse,  
But the Dimness of my Feathers,  
Binds me to the Universe.  
The Sun that you seek  
Is Beauty we cannot hide.  
The Glowing of my Feathers  
Reflects the Light inside.  
I'm the product of the Dream World  
Transformed by the Creator's Gift,  
Sometimes Bird,  
Sometimes Man.  
The Ability  
To Shape-shift,  
The things I Foresee  
Have Powerful Distinctions,  
Like Earth, Fire, and Sky,  
Guiding me to the Visions.  
My Family Ties are Eternal and Strong,  
Tight as a row of Corn,  
Loving and Sharing with One Another,  
From the Moment we are Born.  
My words have been misunderstood—  
Sometimes, mistaken for a Caw;  
But if you listen with your Heart,  
I'm speaking Creator's Law.

*(Written by Larry Spotted Crow Mann,  
a member of the Nipmuc tribe)*



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