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The St. George Journal
connecting people and the natural world
from the Friends of St. George
May 2020



We hope that you are have been enjoying browsing the April issue of the Journal over the last month and have found some measure of comfort and company in it through the long, pandemic slog to May. Getting through, what passes for a normal April, tries the fiber of the most seasoned of Mainers. In this year of a search of an elusive "new normal," many of us are doing our best to stay busy. We are making lists, building things, learning a new skill, getting the gardens cleaned up and ready, or simply trying to make ends meet, deal with the fear, and keep up with the flood of information. Others of us are finding we are either forced, or choose, to use this time to recalibrate our aspirations, habits, and orientation. Either way, it is an exhausting and uncertain time, where time itself seems warped.



Remember to let them be for the bees!

A collective congratulations to having made it to another irrepressible May! Yellow is the color of the moment with daffodils, forsythia, and dandelions in full flush and Goldfinches flitting around in their spiffy new feathers. All the warm rains have flushed out the greenest of lawns and tender spring-green leaves along the roadsides. All manner of tree buds are swelling and perennials are literally bursting up out of the earth. At last, the irrepressible forces of spring are uncoiling. By the end of May, nature will have delivered us an entirely different and renewed landscape of delicate spring ephemerals, blossoming fruit trees, and a pallet of resplendent blues, pinks, and purples.

May this eternally alive land/sea/sky Maine place we share sustain us all. May you find heart and health and courage as we each find our way through this together.

Wende McIlwain, Editor

LET YOURSELF REST

If you're exhausted, rest.

If you don't feel like starting a new project, don't.

*If you don't feel the urge to make something new,
just rest in the beauty of the old, the familiar, the known.*

If you don't feel like talking, stay silent.

If you're fed up with the news, turn it off.

If you want to postpone something until tomorrow, do it.

If you want to do nothing, let yourself do nothing today.

Feel the fullness of the emptiness, the vastness of the silence, the sheer life in your unproductive moments.

Time does not always need to be filled.

You are enough, simply in your being.

- Jeff Foster



Vernal pool - W.McI

The St. George Journal is a monthly, online publication,

a collection of information, articles, and reflections from the St. George community, meant for you to browse and savor over the month . . .

CONTENTS:

To help you to go directly to what you would like to read, you may use this menu to click on the section.

- [From Friends of St. George](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)
Earth Day that wasn't
- [Follow up](#)
- [New on the Scene](#)
Message Board from JML
- [Around the Peninsula](#)
A Passive Solar Greenhouse - Ryan LeShane
- [Voices from the Peninsula](#)
Regular Monthly Columnists
A Sense of Place from Steve Cartwright
St. George in the Stone Age
Excavations from Brian Higley
Bring In Stone
Peninsular Creatures from Hugh Blackmer
Mirrored
- [Reader Contributions \(New Monthly Section\)](#)
Walkin' the Roads of St. George Reflections
- [Plant Corner \(New Section - 2 more monthly columnists\)](#)
Native Plants - Going Native - Dale Pierson

Milkweed

Invasive Plants: John Knuerr

What's Not to Love?

- [Earth/Sea/Sky](#)

Of Spring Earth:

Hedgerow Diary from Anne Cox (Monthly Columnist)

All That is Solid

Of Spring Sea:

Of Spring Sky: June Super Moon

- [Fellow Beings - Critters & Creatures](#)

(Monthly Columnists)

Nature Bummin from Kirk Gentalen

Nature Nerd from Anita Siegenthaler

- [Kids' Corner](#)

(Monthly Columns)

St. George MSU:

Sonja Schmanska Liason

We Create from Nature" Video

Spring Pandemic Reflections from the kids

Herring Gut Learning Center:

Sally Crusin Liason

The Phenology Project

- [Factoids](#)

- [Book Corner](#)

(New Monthly Columnist)

From Barbara Cross

- [Where In St. George](#)

"The Contest"



Technical & Editorial Support

Beckie Delaney

Peg Fields

Alane Kennedy - St. George CDC

John McIlwain

Regular Columns

Hugh Blackmer - *Penisular Creatures*

Anne Cox- *Hedgerow Diary*

Sally Byrne Crusan - *Kids Corner* Herring Gut Learning Center Liason

Barbara Cross - *Book Corner*

Stever Cartwright - *A Sense of Place*

Jan Getgood - *Native Plant Corner*

Brian Higley - *Excavations*

Kirt Gentalen - *Nature Bummin'*

John Knuerr - *Invasive Plants*

Dale Pierson - *Goin' Native*

Sonja Shamanska - *Kids Corner*/SGMSU Liason

Anita Siegenthaler - *Nature Nerd*

May Guest Contributors

Ryan LeShane - Article

Herring Gut Learning Center & SGMSU Students

Dianne Oelberg - Reader Reflection & Photography

Jen Derbyshire - Reader Reflection

Jan Limmen - Reader Reflection

Dianne Oelberger - Reader Reflection

Carla Skinder - Photography

Marge Winski - Photography

Contributors to Previous Issues

Betsy Blackmere

Banjie Nicolas

Rob Sloat

Friends of St. George Board

Wende McIlwain - Chair

Anita Siegenthaler - Secretary

From Friends of St. George



As the SGJ grows, we continue to invite your fanmail, feedback, comments, and critiques alike.

Such interaction and conversation are the lifeblood of community.

So please, take a moment to respond to what you are reading so that we may grow in a direction that serves you and your interests and sensibilities.

Your emails will be directed to individual columnists and contributors, who will be happy and interested to hear from you.

Email us at friendsofstgeorgeme@gmail.com

The SGJ offers two new sections in this issue:

- [PLANT CORNER](#)

This section will offer regular columns on Native Plants and Invasive Plants, as

- [READER CONTRIBUTIONS](#)

The SGJ is a celebration of a particular Maine place, seeking to gather together the voices of the St. George Peninsula to share individual experiences of the earth/sea/sky that holds us all.

Each month a topic will be suggested, inviting readers to write a few lines - a very short paragraph, or a poem, perhaps along with a photograph if you are so inspired.

June Topic:



Walkin' the Roads of St. George . . .

Everybody is out there, taking in the spring air, walking' dogs, getting some exercise, or just getting out of the house! It's hard to find a road in St. George that does not yield up some natural wonder.

What have you noticed and what has touched you?

Submit your offerings to:

friendsofstgeorgeme@gmail.com

Please understand that we will be unable to include all offerings and that your submission may undergo some gentle editing, a collaborative process.

Here is a handful of reflections to launch the section.



Dianne Oelberger

The sun is up, the air is crisp and blue sky greets without wind.

Perfect.

*Annie and I on our slow morning walk, comforting each other. Aches, pain, bodies that cannot do
what they used to.*

But we walk, slowly, side by side.

Above an eagle soars, lifted by invisible thermals, circling.

Looking down at the slow walkers, what is he thinking?

Scanning for his next meal? or for a mate?

Clearly, they won't do.

The sky is all his, a notable absence of planes.

He noticed.

He tips his head our way as if to say, might this last?

Dianne Oelberger

For more, please go to the [Reader Contribution](#) section . . .

Calendar of Events

Anita Siegenthaler/Wende McIlwain



W.McI

This calendar page, like yours, is a pandemic blank - except for online engagements and a string of cancellations . . .

everything from our Annual Town Meeting and sweet Memorial Day celebrations to iconic summer festivals, and the Common Ground Fair. We wonder when it will be safe for our friends from away to return to their houses, welcoming their return and urging them to quarantine for 14 days when they do come back . . .

Like seedlings waiting on the windowsills, in cold frames and hoop houses, we all wait together for the right and safe moment to get out, put down roots and flourish. With thanks and gratitude to this St. George community for all the individual and collective acts of care and courage that are keeping us well and healthy and poised to emerge.

This year was the year when the celebration of Earth Day got lost in the pandemic shuffle. Every day is earth day when you live on the coast of Maine.

A poignant short [video from the Island Institute](#) in celebration of the corner of planet earth that is Maine through the lens of the photographer, Peter Ralston.

Another celebration of the Maine spirit - the sweet sounds of Paul Winter's [Earth Mass \(Missa Gaia\)](#) performed at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Portland, Maine, with a chorus of 175, upon the 50th anniversary of the first view of the Apollo 8 "Earthrise" photograph.



Follow UP

The Town and its committees continue to work behind the scenes remotely. Updates are available on the [Town website](#)

The Conservation Commission continues to meet regularly every month (by Zoom for now).

Conservation Commission Town Trails and Preserves

Right now the trails in town remain open. We hope the resource of open land, wooded areas, fresh air, and sunlight will provide some comfort. Outside activity clears the head and is good for the soul. Engaging in outdoor exercise activity is permitted by Governor Mills' Stay Healthy at Home Mandate. Enjoy the trails but heed the COVID-19 Health warnings.

- Stay home if you feel sick!
- Observe social distancing, stay 6ft from other people not in your household.
- If necessary, step aside when passing other people on the trail.
- Avoid touching signs, kiosks, railings, tables, and benches, as others may have touched them.
- Plan to hike early or later in the day when it is less likely to be busy.
- If the parking lot is near full, consider another trail.
- Watch out for ticks...wear light-colored clothing and apply EPA approved bug repellent.

About ticks - they are out there waiting!



Some information and resources you may find useful:

"Nearly 40 percent of Maine deer ticks submitted to the University of Maine Tick Lab in 2019 tested positive for Lyme disease, according to the lab's first tick surveillance annual report. A smaller percentage tested positive for anaplasma and babesia, two other [common tick-borne diseases](#)."

[Bangor Daily News](#)

[2020 Tick Forecast for the Northeast \(Pests.org\)](#)

"The Northeast has been getting warmer over the past few decades, and this year is no exception, with the [National Weather Service](#), predicting a 70 to 80 percent chance of summer temperatures ranging above average this spring and summer. At the same time, however, some forecasters, including the National Pest Management Association, are forecasting a summer that's cooler than recent years and wetter than average. Since humidity is a big driver of tick populations and activity during the warmer months, this means that the northeast will see more tick activity in 2020 across the region, with tick season lasting from around April to mid-to-late October."

[Recommendations from the CDC](#)

[What to do if I have a tick bite?](#)

New on the Scene



W.McI

Hope and courage comin' right up outta the earth . . .

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

Has anyone ever said it better than Wordsworth . . .

Another most welcome spring offering from the

Jackson Memorial Library

[THE ST. GEORGE MESSAGE BOARD](#)



happening locally during the pandemic."

This new resource gathers up what's happening in four broad categories: NEWS AND INFORMATION (SGMSU, Town, CDC, etc.) RECREATION, BUSINESS, and RESOURCES - USEFUL LINKS.

Remember you will need to go to the JML website to access this [Message Board](#).

The new JML Message Board is not to be confused with the long time [St. George Message Board](#), an open Facebook page offering from the Business Alliance, a lively source of local offerings, requests, and information - like when fish is in at Fresh Catch!

This is a town that pulls together and continues to find ways to get us all through these pandemic times. Listen to the daffodils whispering hope and courage in this cold wet spring . . .

"The" Nest at Eight Bells



Carla Skinder

The battle has been engaged - Eagles vs Ospreys

The Ospreys have it!



Carla Skinder

This huge and much-watched nest down the end of Horse Point Road in the Eight Bells meadow, has been the site of a spring face-off for the last few years. Ospreys originally built the massive nest in the exposed and precarious clump of old Spruce where they happily raised several seasons of noisy broods - until the eagles decided they would like the place. Took it they did, but only for a couple of years until the latest turnover.

Port Clyde Post Office Lobster Buoy Garden -
to grow or not to grow. We shall see . . .



The invitation is out to the lobster fleet to fill the empty boxes in front of the Post Office with an array of bristling buoys in the many colors of the harbor to make this fishing town garden bloom.

The buoys can be reclaimed when the boxes are planted - or maybe they will become a Port Clyde "thing". . . .

Around the Peninsula

A Passive Solar Greenhouse Rises at Blueberry Cove

By Ryan LeShane, Camp Director at the University of Maine 4-H Camp at Blueberry Cove, St.

George Conservation Commission Alternate, frequently seen with a chain saw or blazing trails . . .



Waiting to be shingle clad - W.McI

At Blueberry Cove one of our goals is to teach lessons of our connections to the earth and how to live sustainably with limited resources. The concepts of “green design” and having a facility that also teaches, are a part of our core values of the organization. The benefits of constructing a passive solar greenhouse fulfill the educational needs and help us to become more sustainable.

You might be asking, ‘Aren’t all greenhouses solar?’

Don’t all greenhouses use the sun?’

The answer is, yes, but . . .

What makes a Passive Solar Greenhouse different from conventional greenhouses?

- uses no artificial heat source such as propane
- uses **ONLY** the sun to heat water, concrete, or some other heat holding thermal mass, to create warm year-round growing environments using, natural materials and energy-



- **What are the primary goals of our Solar Greenhouse?**
 - to extend the growing season allowing us to grow plants through those few extra months after the first frost in the fall and before the last frost in the spring.
 - to have more greens ready early in the spring and to have crops like tomatoes ready for the summer camp season.
 - Ability to grow plants full season, with plants in the greenhouse throughout the winter months.
 - to increase the percentage of camp grown produce for the summer season.
When the camp's gardens are at full production the majority of the produce served at our meals comes straight from the garden. The greenhouse will assist in increasing that percentage.
 - To serve the camp and community for years to come.

Important Design Components of our Solar Greenhouse

- **Sustainable Building Materials:** Lumber was harvested and milled in St. George and donated to the camp (by whom?)
- **Siting:** The greenhouse faces south, allowing the glazing materials, such as glass, plastic, or clear rigid plastics, to capture the maximum amount of sunlight.
- **Insulation:** Warmth is trapped during cold periods by the addition of insulation on every surface that is not needed for light collection. Since the north exposure gets very little and the east and west exposures only get a few hours of direct sun a day, they can lose more heat than they gain.
This is usually where traditional greenhouses fail: they collect just as much energy as solar greenhouses but can't retain that heat when temperatures drop.
- **Ventilation:** An off-grid solar array powers an active ventilation system, using an automated exhaust fan and controlled intake louver, and an automated vent that opens while the exhaust



The 30 raised beds that feed the camp at Blueberry Cove are coming alive just waiting for the warmer days of June - aren't we all! Garlic is already sprouting . . .

When the greenhouse is up and running, it will be a great addition to this well-established garden.

Jane Bracy is gearing up to organize the planting of this established garden.

No matter what is happening in the world, nature, the garden, and its volunteers will combine forces to provide food for either the camp season or to stock the CDC Community Cupboard with fresh produce.

If you would like to be involved, contact Jane at pcboathouse@gmail.com.

Jane Bracy and volunteers will be hard at work and all the beds will be blooming.

W.McI

Voices From the Peninsula



W.McI

An old farmer lady friend once told me that rocks were "The first crop to come up in the Spring." We make walls, houses, and sculpture of it. We ponder the solidity, mass and heft of it, the texture, color, and form of it and the long glacial travels that delivered it to Maine eons ago.

To learn more about the unique qualities of the bedrock of Marshall Point and Mosquito Head, view this video [No Stone Left Unturned](#), commissioned by the FOSG and the Marshall Point Light House Museum Committee.



Andy Goldsworthy - Arranged Stones

We assemble [cairns](#) and allow ourselves to bring a choice specimen or two home to sit on the sill, to become our totems, holding the memories of a place or a time.

For generations, the fortunes of the town of St. George have been bound to the bedrock of this peninsula.

A bit of history and reflection upon rock, read on.

The Sense of Place from Steve Cartwright. Steve, long time Maine roving reporter and photographer, is often seen running along the roads of St. George . . .

St.George in the Stone Age

Words and photos by Steve Cartwright



When I was a kid, some 60 years ago, I learned to swim at Wildcat Quarry, when three massive wooden crane masts were still standing. The last one, capped with an active osprey nest, recently toppled. In the 1960s, the last working granite quarry, Flat Ledge, better known as Hocking granite quarry, near Clark Island village, closed forever and filled with water. I remember our family visiting that quarry, staring down at the workers way below, cutting stone. Pumps kept the big hole dry.

Today Flat Ledge is a private preserve, as is [Hocking](#). Wildcat, more recently called Atwood's Quarry, was once a popular swimming hole. Today, swimmers enjoy Long Cove Quarry and the salty quarry on Clark Island. Most of the island, including two quarries, will soon be conserved forever through [Maine Coast Heritage Trust](#).

Nature has taken back much of Clark Island, but there's still plenty of evidence of its industrial past. Besides cranes, commercial buildings and wharves, Clark Island included a village with a post office. Granite foundations remain to remind us, as does the nearby Craignair Inn, once a boarding house for quarry workers.



Steve Lindsay - Cod I

To find out more about our town in the "stone age," I contacted local sculptor and musician [Steve Lindsay](#), who lives in what was originally a quarry worker's house. His interest in sculpting stone led him to interview surviving quarry workers in the 1980s, and he learned how to split granite using what's called feathers (shims) and wedges, made of steel. Steve has demonstrated granite cutting and talked about the industry at packed meetings of the St. George Historical Society. Granite, a silica rock that can be polished like glass, has great strength but can also be easily broken if mishandled.



Clark Island Quarry back in the day

Lindsay remembers stone cutters like John Olson, born in Lysekil, Sweden. "He showed me how to use the hand tools." Quarrying here began in the 1830s, mostly involving Scottish and English immigrants, hence the hamlet called Englishtown. At first, workers drilled a row of holes by hand, put wooden pegs in the holes with water, and covered them overnight. The swelling wood split the stone, hopefully in a straight line. Later, wedges and feathers were used to split stone without having to wait. Some of the first quarrying took place on Mosquito

For decades, granite was shipped on schooners, so island quarries were ideal for the trade. "You needed access to water, granite being bulky and heavy. There were no trucks or railroads. You needed to get it on a vessel," said Lindsay. When railroads were built, stone could be shipped from inland quarries. Granite continued to be quarried into the 20th century. What really brought the industry down was the advent of cement and steel for construction, and asphalt for roads. By the 1940s, most quarries were closed. Today there is still demand for granite curbing, kitchen counters, and landscaping. Hocking Granite provided granite curbing for the United Nations headquarters in New York. Now, there are no working quarries left in St. George.

"There was tremendous pride in what you did," Lindsay said. "You were building the Albany post office. You were building the Buffalo City Hall, the Rockland post office, and customs house." Workers were highly skilled. When the state tried employing prison inmates to quarry granite on States Point (hence the name), it was a complete failure. The workers didn't have the skills that can take years to master. That's why so many immigrants from Sweden and Finland came here, and Finnish names like Polky and Lehtinen, Swedish names like Skoglund and Ausplund, are carried on by descendants of those stone cutters. Skilled Italian stone cutters also made their way to St. George. Bicknell, a Scottish stone cutter's name, became the tool-making source for the trade as Bicknell Manufacturing Company in Rockland.

Lindsay tells the story of Italian immigrants who were recruited by granite company thugs to help break a strike the moment they landed in New York and were put on a train to Rockland. The stone cutters union got wind of the scheme and bought the men tickets for the train back to New York. Quarrying was rough, hard work. When pneumatic tools replaced hand tools, granite dust caused silicosis. Men died from it.

Hundreds of St. George men worked in the quarries for decades. Local historian Jim Skoglund, himself from a quarry family, said that nearly every family in town had at least one man working as a stone cutter, tool sharpener, supervisor, or laborer. When Flat Ledge was owned by Meehan Brothers, 50 railroad cars of granite were numbered, crated, and shipped to New York City, in 1922 for the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel, which is still in use today. In 1925, stone cutters at Flat Ledge produced three million street paving blocks. The late Albert Frederickson, born in Sweden in 1894 and a resident of Main Street in Tenants Harbor, remembered cutting "pavers." Lindsay talked with Frederickson, who was blind by that time and asked about a record number of blocks cut in one day. At first, the old stonecutter was dismissive, but finally acknowledged he cut 306 pavers in a single day, for a total day's pay of \$9. Speaking of pay, the stone cutters formed a union to bargain for fair wages, and their union hall still stands in Clark Island, converted to a home. Granite tycoons

In 2020, almost all the men who cut the stone are gone. The big granite roller by the town office, used to smooth the baseball field, was a local creation years ago. The giant pile of "grout," discarded chunks of Wildcat granite visible from Route 131 at Haskell Cove, is a permanent reminder of our industrial past. And the quarries, with their deep, clear water, continue to be a place to swim, sunbathe or, if you dare, jump from the high cliffs.



Taking in the Stone

By Brian Higley, [landscape architect](#), finish carpenter, furniture maker, "one part Maple."

In coastal Maine, stone is almost like the air. We breathe it in all around us. There's no way to avoid them. But why would you want to? They dictate where we put our houses, septic fields, and gardens, but our children also climb them, we sit on them, build with them, and simply admire their infinite patterns, colors, and textures. They are an iconic and interactive part of the landscape.

I don't go around talking to boulders, but they do indeed speak to me quite often; with their forms, faces, and personalities. Individually they can be interesting, beautiful or even funny. They are works of art randomly generated by the constantly churning earth, speaking to different people in different ways; conjuring feelings and memories from the depths of the soul.

anatomy and, in an instant, I want them. When I see a stone that I love, I stand there and think with all of my Yankee ingenuity, how do I get this stone home with me? The answer is almost always the same, I can't. So I go home alone thinking wistfully about what could have been on my own back forty. It's probably not a bad thing, as rocks have this special relationship with gravity that makes them a bit hard to deal with. They usually like to stay right where they are if they are much bigger than a watermelon. Unless I have some serious equipment and a really good plan, I am better off to leave them. Plus, I would actually have to use the rocks after they get dropped in my yard; and when would I do that?

I have worked with stone myself and, although extremely hard work, it can be very gratifying arranging these gems into something that becomes a real presence in the landscape. Placing even one nice stone so that it has the right look in the right place with the right feeling can take a lot of effort. Working with another person (the hands) can add another layer of complexity, but it can work well. There are stone workers, and then there are genuine artists who work with stone. If you find yourself working with the latter, it's best to let go the reins as much as possible. It is truly a personal expression.

There are the well-known works in stone by the likes of Andy Goldsworthy, and then there are others like Vermonter [Dan Snow](#), whose book "*Listening to Stone*" (2008) shows how listening to this ancient material and working together with it can result in powerful expressions on the land.



Andy Goldsworthy

Snow describes his process beautifully throughout the book, "*However broadly I wish to spread the*

knocked together can create enough energy to rumble the imagination.... They pull and tug at each other, stretching each other's meanings, slinging each other in tandem far across the universe of ideas."



Dan Snow

I've been so bored this COVID Spring that I'm considering full-on conversations with boulders, but maybe there's a bit of listening that needs to be done in my yard? It's nice to have plenty of these prehistoric voices nearby to keep me company. Their potential energy is inspiring, and being able to breathe them with the salty air of St. George is part of why I am living here.



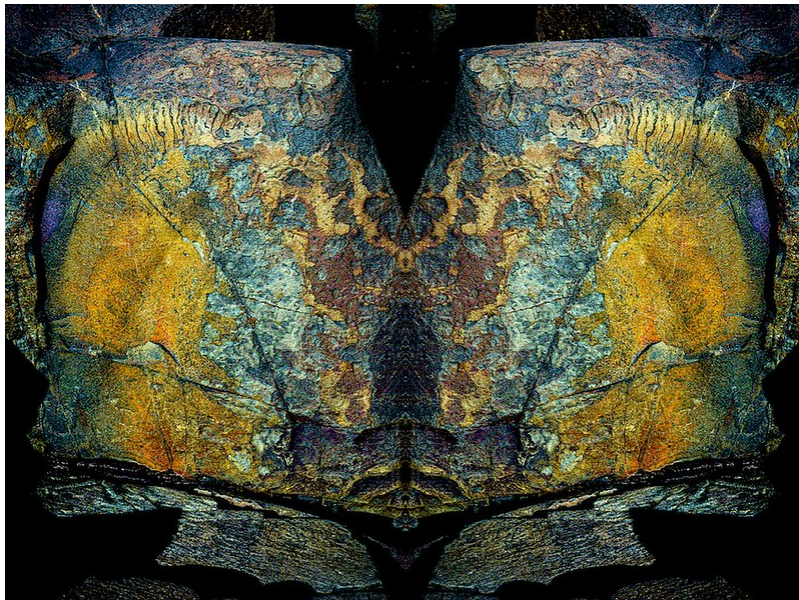
Alita with Rock - Brian Higley

Mirrored



These entirely imaginary creatures are looking right at you and inviting you to look back.

But what do you see in the new realities unfolding before us?



Does the symmetrical magic conjured from the rocks and trees around us suggest new possibilities,
new ways to construct and understand the world around us?



Do these beings make comments or pose questions that cast some light on our present circumstances, house-bound, and thrown back on our own resources as many of us are?



To some eyes, this mirroring procedure is simply a gimmick,
an obvious transformation
that adds little or nothing to the content of the seed image, and no new worlds appear.
But for others, the composite images open whole new realms for visual exploration and enjoyment
of emergent creatures and landscapes and meandering motifs.
I read them as graphic palindromes, perceptual ticklers,



Dare you talk back to these creatures?

Let us know at friendsofstgeorgeme@gmail.com

Reader Contributions

Walkin' the Roads of St. George . . .

Everybody is out there, taking in the spring air, walking dogs, getting some exercise, or just getting out of the house! It's hard to find a road in St. George that does not yield up some natural wonder.

What have you noticed and what has touched you?



A community, not to be denied but to be recognized
A look outside, a stroll in the woods, freedom of thought
Water rising, water receding, challenging the spirit
Clouds are gathering, air is moving, the mind is in discovery
A sound, a site, a ride, a walk; clarity it takes a hold
Awareness of us, seeing the possible, accepting the challenge
Carrying burdens, protecting what we love - care prevails
Let us be in service, believe it's our responsibility, and give it truth.

Jan Limmen



*Got lost on my way home
went past a marsh
heard the peepers singing
very loud that spring is here
the sun is out and it is raining
they're all mating and singing
feeling alive after a long winter
What a healing thing to hear them
to realize how no matter what else is happening
Spring is beautiful and familiar*

Jen Derbyshire

*A post office walk most days
Up down and around
All the same everything new*

W.McI



Horse Point Road, a normal day - John McIlwain

Plant Corner

NATIVE PLANTS - GOING NATIVE

As you dream and plan your gardens, it is an opportunity to create thriving habitats for pollinators, insects, birds, and other critters by incorporating native plants into your scheme.

The SGJ is most fortunate and delighted to add the voice of Dale Pierson.

Dale will write a regular column about Native Plants, selecting one plant each month, and providing information about its benefits in our lives and its place in the world of growing and living creatures.

Dale introduces himself:

You might ask, who are you to write about native plants

Native plants have always been a part of my plant pallet. Through my dealings with plants, interactions with smarter folks, lessons learned by doing and observing the results, I now believe that planting native plants is best for our ecosystem. Perhaps I can impart some wisdom gained by my many errors and experiences.

A few pieces of my puzzle first. Both sides of my family (Pierson/Dwyer) have deep roots on the St George peninsula. I was born in Tenants Harbor (Rockland) but moved away when I was just a few months old. I lived in southern Maine, on the North shore of Massachusetts and then back to southern Maine, where I finished my schooling. All the while I was fortunate that my parents kept our family property here and my whole family was able to stay connected to the community, I now call home.

While living in Saco and Biddeford I grew more interested in plants, mainly trees at the start but have expanded my interest from annuals all the way through the largest trees. I started my working career mowing lawns, worked at two Maine nurseries, and then started my business, Pierson Nurseries Inc. over 35 years ago. I have briefly experienced working in other industries but in truth, I have only ever worked with plants.



Native Plant of the Month:

Amelanchier canadensis

Canadian Serviceberry, Juneberry and Shadbush (reported to have bloomed when the Shad run)

If you look closely as you migrate through the countryside you may see them blooming on the edge of wooded areas in April and May.



Benefits:

May).

Small red to blue/purple fruits

(If you cover and keep the wildlife away from them you might even get to taste one or two)



Attractive Fall color



A good habit for winter interest.

- **A food source and habitat for many creatures**
- **Can be grown on most any property**

Succeeds in the shade to full sun, on moist to quite dry sites and it is available or can be pruned into many forms.

Remember it really wants to be a shrub and will work hard to revert to that form, but can be kept in check with pruning.

Often with some stress, it will lose foliage so the fall display may be reduced.

Amelanchiers are native to every state except for Hawaii.

- **Readily available at most any nursery in our area**

Some Maine native varieties to choose from:

Amelanchier alnifolia,

Amelanchier arborea,

Amelanchier laevis,

Amelanchier lamarkii

Amelanchier stolonifera.

Amelanchier X Autumn

(reported to be a natural cross between *A.arborea* and *A. laevis* and has excellent flower, fruit, and fall color)

The SGJ is also delighted to offer you "Reruns" of Jan Getgood's cherished "Native Plant Corner" columns from the St. George Dragon.

They are as relevant and inspiring as ever as we all plan our gardens.

Thank you, Jan for your expertise and to both Jan and Julie Wortman for sharing.

As you plan your gardens with creating a thriving habitat in mind, think of the Monarch Butterfly and the plant it needs to thrive.

Make room for:

- *asclepias syriaca* Common milkweed
- *asclepias incarnata* Swamp milkweed
- *asclepias tuberosa* Butterflyweed



Native Plant Corner hopes you have the opportunity this month to stand at the edge of a milkweed patch and be mesmerized by the bewildering array of bees, wasps, flies, ants, tiny crab spiders, beetles, day-flying moths and colorful butterflies who have either taken up residence or are nectaring in one of the species of milkweed we enjoy in mid-coast Maine. Attracted by the exceptionally sweet nectar, pollinators are drawn to milkweed blooms by day and night. And of course, there are monarch butterflies.

The iconic monarch butterfly has a co-evolutionary relationship with native milkweed and is totally dependent on milkweed for its reproduction.



asclepias syriaca Common milkweed
with eastern tiger swallowtail *papilio glaucus*

Common milkweed is a Maine native perennial which occurs in fields, meadows, and along roadsides. It typically grows in full sun to 3-6' tall on stout, upright stems with large, thick, broad, leaves. Drooping clusters of fragrant, purplish-pink flowers appear over a long bloom period in July and August. Common milkweed grows easily from seed, and spreads by underground stolons (runners) which may prove challenging in a more formal garden. Consider planting in a corner of your landscape where you can enjoy its spread and bounty.



asclepias incarnata Swamp milkweed with monarch butterfly and bumblebees

Swamp milkweed is an upright, clump-forming Maine native milkweed which, in spite of its name, adapts and thrives in a wide range of garden soils in sun to part sun. Swamp milkweed grows to 3-4' tall and its tidy, showy habit makes it a lovely addition to your pollinator garden and an important host for monarch butterfly larvae.



asclepias tuberosa Butterflyweed shown here with munching monarch caterpillars

Butterflyweed is no longer common in the wild in Maine. It is a clump-forming, low growing member of the milkweed family with bright orange blooms in July and August. Attractive to many pollinating insects and a host for the monarch, it grows 12 – 18 inches tall in full sun to part shade in

INVASIVES: WHAT'S NOT TO LOVE?

By John Knuerr, a long time conservationist back to the [bioregional movement](#) of the 80s, with an interest in old-growth forest, he serves as the President of the Tanglewood and Blueberry Cove 4H Camps and Learning Centers Board and as an alternate on the St. George Conservation Commission.



Here's the problem with some invasives: they are beautiful to look at!

Take Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). I've been guilty of stopping near a wetland to take a photo. And, I'm not only one. Purple Loosestrife was introduced accidentally in the 1800's in the northeastern United States. As it became established, it also became popular, not only for its looks but also for its medicinal uses. The pretty plant traveled in mud attached to wagon wheels moving west, seeds were collected, and the takeover of wetlands was begun by this plant that is so easily and quickly able to establish itself and so difficult to eradicate.

Purple Loosestrife became a favored species and at that point in time was not seen as a problem. In the 1980s in southeastern Michigan thousands of wildflower enthusiasts took guided tours of gardens and parks as part of the annual Purple Loosestrife Festival.

So, what changed our opinion on Purple Loosestrife and other plants now classified as invasive plants? Over the last 30 years, more and more invasives such as Japanese Knotweed, Multiflora Rose, and Himalayan Balsam (aka "Jewelweed", have made

not only in the loss of plant species but encouraged the infestation of destructive blights such as the Woolly Adelgid destroying vast tracts of Hemlocks in the east, the Ash Borer killing our Ash Trees, and the Asian Longhorned Beetle attacking maples, elms, and willows.

So, what's happening here on the St. George peninsula?

There are at least a dozen invasive plants that are well established here on the St. George peninsula. Some of them even with our help! For quite a while nurseries were selling invasives such as Norway Maple or Amur Honeysuckle for erosion control. These among others are now illegal to sell. As a homeowner on the peninsula, you may want to see if any invasives are thriving on your property.

The Conservation Commission is here to help you identify, control, and eliminate invasives and find native replacements you may want to plant.

The St. George Conservation Commission has been working for years to provide educational materials and workshops on the most common plant invasives to be found to help residents identify and root them out. "Know Before You Grow" brochure provides basic information and highlights the "Dirty Dozen" which are most pernicious. The brochure is available at the Town office and on the link below.

The Conservation Commission works with the St. George School on a project that identifies and maps invasives found on school and town property. This contributes to a statewide database that is used to control the spread of invasives.

As well, the Commission partners with the Town, the George's River Land Trust, and the Midcoast Heritage Trust on identifying and actively managing invasives on Town trails and on Land Trust properties.

It is the hope of the Conservation Commission to offer an invasive identification workshop at one of these sites in late summer/early fall. In the meantime, being at home is a good opportunity to learn more about our local invasives and how you might play a role in addressing the issue:

- Check out the Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District web site. They have some great material you can download. <http://www.knox-lincoln.org/invasive-plants>
- The Maine Natural Areas Program has an amazing amount of information including fact sheets on individual plants and how to deal with them. https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/features/invasive_plants/invasives.htm

- To learn more about Purple Loosestrife, check out UMaine Cooperative Extension Bulletin #2508 <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/gotpests/weeds/factsheets/purple-me.pdf>

"Know Before You Grow"/"The Dirty Dozen"

From the St. George Conservation Commission and
the Friends of St. George

This brochure will be available on the Conservation Commission webpage soon.



Himalayan balsam - Jewel Weed

What Is an Invasive Plant?

- A non-native plant that has naturalized and is reproducing in the wild
- That is harming ecosystems by out-competing native plants for sunlight, water, soil nutrients, and space

Why are Native Plants Better?

- Native plants support the local web of life. They are the “host” plant for pollinators, insects, birds and other species
- They leaf out and blossom in sync with area species to provide nectar, food, propagating material, and survival. For example, the in-sync hatching of insects and caterpillars provides irreplaceable protein for parent birds to feed nestlings. Nestlings cannot digest seeds.
- They provide the only “host” plant for pollinators like butterflies and moths for food and laying eggs that become the next generation. For example, Monarch butterflies use only milkweed.
- They are native to climate and natural conditions in our area resulting in healthy and hardy growth



Japanese barberry

How Do Invasive Plants Become a Problem?

- In general, invasive plants spread voraciously and choke out native plants that are beneficial
- Most are planted by people. For example, barberry was introduced for hedges. It escaped into fields and forests where its impenetrable thickets provide ideal homes for ticks. Norway maple's fast growth made it a favorite of developers.
- Some hitchhike to areas where there are no natural competitors
- Many bloom out of sync with area insects, bees, butterflies, and birds so needed food and propagating materials unavailable at the time it is needed.
- Some have root systems that release chemicals that make the adjacent soil inhospitable to other plants
- Some leaf out early and prevent sunlight from reaching native plants
- Many, like Morrow's honeysuckle, provide fruit that attracts birds with empty calories rather than the lipid-rich fruit of native plants. Seeds are then spread by well-fertilized bird droppings.
- Some invasive vines, like bittersweet, smother trees by cutting off sunlight.

What Invasive Plants Are a Problem in Maine?

Trees & Shrubs

*Norway maple**

Amur maple

Tree of Heaven

False indigo bush

*Japanese barberry**

*Common barberry**

*Autumn olive**

*Burning bush**

*Japanese knotweed**

*Glossy buckthorn**

Herbaceous Plants

Bishop's weed

Garlic mustard

Common mugwort

Cypress spurge

Dame's rocket

Himalayan Balsam/Jewelweed

Yellow iris

Purple loosestrife

Japanese stilt grass

Amur honeysuckle

*Morrow's honeysuckle**

Tartarian honeysuckle

Paulownia

Amur cork tree

White cottonwood

Black locust

*Multiflora Rose**

Vines

*Asiatic bittersweet**

Porcelain berry

Chinese bindweed

Mile-a-Minute weed

*Black swallow-wort**

** Dirty Dozen*

invasive plants

prominent in

in St. George



Asiatic bittersweet

Earth / Sea / Sky

SPRING EARTH

after a slow, wet, April start, spring search is coming alive with its promise in May.

Hedgerow Diary

A monthly reflection by Anne Cox, co-owner of [Hedgerow](#) plantswoman, landscape



Hedgerow Greenhouse - Anne Cox

All that is solid

So much that has seemed solid, socially, economically, is melting into air.

But here is what does seem solid: the advance of spring, the natural increase of light and warmth that brings on green growth and new life here in the northern hemisphere. Look around; listen to the peepers, the birds; feel the warming earth. Every year this happens, some years winter chill hangs on longer than others, but spring does emerge. Nature is solid, following certain rules, certain progressions, with variations, to be sure, but very solid.

Every year, starting seeds in the greenhouse (messing with nature by providing artificial heat and nurture) fills me with awe. Here are these tiny units of potential energy. Give them light, warmth, moisture, nutrients, and they sprout. Each seed has enough energy stored up to push a tiny root down and the first leaves up. At first, the growth in the greenhouse is slow, but as the true leaves emerge from those starter leaves, photosynthesis takes over, and the growth is exponential: the more leaves, the more growth. In a few weeks the little greenhouse, which had been empty all winter, is burgeoning with green growing things. It's stuffed.

The same thing is happening outside this rarified microcosm as the land heats up. One day the first blades of grass green up, dandelions pop out of their slumber, and the next, the dried stubble of late winter is green and gold. The trees start to leaf out, serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) blooms in our woods, ferns unfurl, and the world changes.

come, the rabbits look for treats to nibble, the cabbage moths and potato beetles show up in time. There are variations, but the general pattern remains. Yes, we may be getting warmer, and seas may be rising and there may be other changes to our world, but the patterns of nature remain right now.

This is what I hold on to. Paying attention to these rhythms, working with them to grow food we can eat, delighting in them. This is solid.

SPRING WATERS



Dianne Oelberger

Making a living from the sea has always been and continues to be a hard and uncertain thing . . . This spring, as in all others, gear is getting mended and boats readied for a season of epic uncertainty. This fishing place holds its collective breath . . . will the tourists come and markets stabilize?

"This is a quiet time for most Maine lobstermen, who don't usually start to set their traps until next month, and even then, it's usually more about laying claim to specific fishing turf than about the catch. Most don't land much until July, depending on weather and when the lobsters shed their shells."

[Portland Press Herald](#)

Meanwhile, at Fresh Catch, the fish, crabs, and scallops fly out the door.

"Even during the off season, my job at Fresh Catch involves multitasking at an insane level. I am

control purchasing, and so forth."

(Excerpt from CAUGHT by Glen Libby and Antonia Small)

Along with all of the above, Gary is cranking away on the next book. Part of buying fish has to do with talking about fish and the state of the fishery . . . from Gary's vantage point, one of the emerging takeaways from this pandemic is a growing awareness of the importance of " a focus on local food . . ." not just for the wellbeing of this little place but in the whole scheme of things.



W.McI

SPRING SKIES

Another Super Moon - The Flower Moon - May 7th

From *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, the full scoop . . .



The tradition of naming Moons is rich in history. Here at *The Old Farmer's Almanac*, we have long honored the Native American Moon names and the folklore of those who came before us. We follow the full Moon names that were used during Native American and Colonial times to help track the seasons—usually from the Algonquin tribes who lived in the same areas as the Colonists.

May's full Flower Moon reaches peak illumination at 6:45 A.M. (EDT) on Thursday, May 7. It will be below the horizon at this time, so plan to venture outdoors the night before (Wednesday, May 6) or on Thursday night to get the best view of the bright full Flower Moon! Find out what time the Moon will be visible in your area with our [Moonrise and Moonset Calculator](#).

The Final Supermoon of 2020

This year, we've been enjoying a [series of spring supermoons](#), which began with [March's Worm Moon](#), culminated in [April's Pink Moon](#), and will finish with May's Flower Moon on May 7.

When the full Moon appears this month, it will be ever-so-slightly farther away than it was in April and March. May's full Moon still qualifies as a supermoon, but it won't be as bright or as big as the others in the series, technically speaking. However, the difference in distance between its orbit and April's—about 2500 miles—is not much in the grand scale of space, so you will still see a bright, beautiful supermoon!

Fellow Beings - Critters & Creatures

Nature Bummin' with [Kirk Gentalen](#)

Kirk Gentalen has worked as a Maine Coast Heritage Trust land steward and naturalist since 2007. While his job focuses largely on Vinalhaven, he leads hikes throughout Maine and writes wherever he goes.

Nature Bummin' appears in MCHT newsletter monthly and is shared with SGJ.

Photographs are Kirk's if not otherwise attributed.



Staying local

About a month ago Maine Governor Janet Mills unveiled the “stay at home” order for the state. The order came with a sweet ‘exercise’ loophole that allowed for outside exploration (how else does one exercise?). And with that included, I felt like I was ready to do my part for the world by not wandering far. Still wandering, but just sticking to the ‘hood for the greater good. Not sure what the neighborhood thinks about that, but whatever.

When you grow up in New Jersey, you feel especially lucky to live on the St George Peninsula – and to be in Maine in general - where you are never far from observable and enjoyable wildlife/nature. One of a multitude of reasons we are all lucky to be here. I hope everyone is able to

Some of the recent local lessons I first learned years ago, and have repeatedly learned many times since. For example – the fact that ‘crepuscular’ is a great time to look for beavers, muskrat, and owls. You can rely on animals to be more active at dusk and dawn and that is a comforting thought. I feel relaxed just typing it. And so evening strolls have been reliably full of sightings, that much you can count on.

Days are good too, of course. Leif and I snagged a new basketball hoop when things started getting real with social distancing stuff. There is a wonderful old Estonian saying - “shooting hoops is a great time to look for raptors and other large birds” (or something like that) – and the month of April proved that to be as true a statement as can be made. Early in the month, games of ‘H-O-R-S-E’ and ‘1 on 1’ were routinely interrupted with Bald Eagle and Turkey Vulture flyovers. In mid-April, Cooper’s Hawks on the hunt cruised through as Osprey circled overhead. I have been told that April 15th is for taxes and Osprey returning to the peninsula.



Osprey - Carla Skinder

More recently, local pairs of Common Raven have been vocal and showy. I think we all get that way around egg hatchin’ time. And now Broad-winged Hawks have made their triumphant return adding that high pitched whistle of theirs to the daily mix. It’s a great time look up, but it takes away from my already porous defense!

Lessons in nature can be on more of a personal level at times, and may not be completely positive. Some of these are obvious – like the fact that Canada Geese are really loud and not my favorite

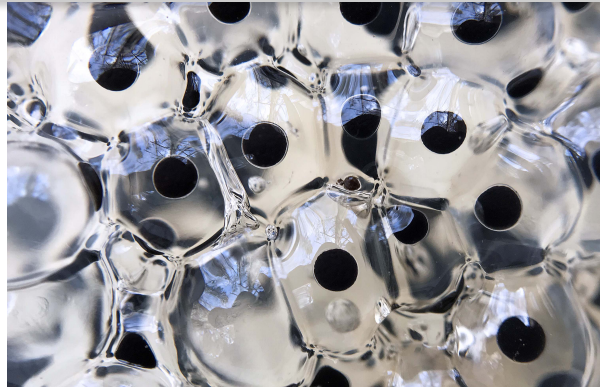
they are loud year-round, their intense aggressiveness and bravado have a particular edge in April. They lose that edge and chill after a bit and things get a little better. They remain geese though, some things just cannot be overlooked.

A tougher lesson this month had to do with local Hairy Woodpeckers. Let me start by saying woodpeckers are intrinsically cool and the concept of a bird slamming its head against a tree to access tasty critters hidden inside is wonderfully crazy. For years I have appreciated the random displays and calls that go along with Hairy Woodpecker courtship – the chases, the tail-spreads, and the “pik” or “pek” calls. But this April the woodpeckers bugged me. Apparently, I live at the edge of two Hairy woodpecker territories, and for a two week period, there was a never-ending series of battles and gamesmanship as jockeying for turf escalated. It was charming at first and sounds quite nice when I type, but for some reason, it got to me. As a bird watcher from the womb – I like to say I was born with binoculars – it was odd but it got to the point where simply hearing the sound of Hairy Woodpeckers inspired emotions of disdain. It made me question if I ever liked Woodpeckers at all! The answer was that I do like woodpeckers - just not Hairy Woodpeckers for about two weeks a year. Amy told me I was funny but it was a relief when the woodpeckers suddenly became chill again as if they were focused on eggs rather than arguing with their neighbors. I quickly went back to liking them, and look forward to watching their babies grow!



Wood Frog Eggs

And speaking of the next generation, being “homebound” in April means making daily (or so) trips to a few of the local vernal pools, and let’s just say that wood frogs and spotted salamanders never bug me! Not yet at least. April 2nd turned out to be a big night for amphibian migration (technically falling into the ‘late’ category in my head).



Spotted Salamander Eggs

A few days later wood frog egg masses could be found in pools throughout mid-coast Maine, and the first few spotted salamander masses also turned up. It was a full 9 days later (really late!) when the rest of this year's spotted salamander masses were laid. A reliable event every April, I always love seeing amphibian egg masses regardless of when they show up. Now that is comforting.

Exploring a Pond video <https://www.mcht.org/explore-springtime-wetlands/>

It's now been three weeks since the wood frog laid their clear eggs, and time is moving along as would be expected. Some eggs have been attacked by fungus, some eaten by caddisflies, but the embryos that have survived to this point are starting to unfurl and look more critter like. It's only a matter of time before they hatch, filling the pools with the tiniest of tadpoles. The spotted salamander embryos take longer, but aren't too far behind, and soon there will be aquatic salamander larvae swimming around with external gills, joining the tadpoles in the race to adulthood before the pool dries up.

They grow up fast because they have to.

And like the woodpeckers, the Brown Creepers and Golden-crowned Kinglets who unknowing serenaded me around the pools have stopped singing and changed behavior to focus on nesting, eggs, and the next generation. It's that constant flow of spring, with more and more life arriving and more and more life added to the next generation of critters. When you live in mid-coast Maine there is plenty of that life to see, and much of it can be found in your own yard or close to it. There are worse places to be told to "stay at home." That is something we all can feel lucky about.

Nature Nerd from Anita Siegenthaler

Songs of Spring

The ospreys are back. They announced their return with whistles and distinctive chirping. Several orbited the clear sky over Port Clyde. One hovered with flapping wings. Another dive-bombed a



Spring is a peak time for the competitive antics and melodies of our avian friends. "In spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." It's the same with male birds. The increase in daylight actually increases the production of testosterone which then triggers enlargement of the song centers in the male bird's brain. Voila. Male birds will then begin to use melodies and variation on themes to establish territory and to entice females. In some birds, the older the male, the more extensive his repertoire. The more extensive his repertoire, the longer he has lived.

Ornithologists speculate that this musical proof of longevity makes him more appealing to a female hoping for the longevity and strength in her chicks.

The extent of the repertoire depends on a number of variables besides years. Some species have brains that trigger the correct song, and others need training from another male of their species.

Some types of birds have only a couple of basic songs. Others have many tunes and variations.

Estimates for vocalizations of the brown thrasher range between 1,000 and 3,000 song phrases. As if that were not enough, brown thrashers can also mimic sounds from other birds.



Stock

Another variable for birds is the structure of the voice box or syrinx. The more complex the song, the larger the syrinx and more complex the supporting muscles. Some birds, like the wood thrush, can sing two notes at once using each branch of the y-shaped syrinx.

Other variables that fascinate scientists are regional differences among the same species, and even the different personalities of males of the same species. Think of how "car" is pronounced in Maine and how it is pronounced in New York.

When bent over weeding, or raking winter debris, this is a good time to identify birds by their sounds. No binoculars needed. The challenge is whether our listening vocabulary can match the musical themes and variations of our feathered friends.

[Maine Bird Song Video](#) - Listen to the sound of spring!

A couple of good sources of information on birds:

[Birding with Don Reimer Archive from the Free Press](#)

[Maine Audubon](#)

[All About Birds](#)

Kids' Corner

Follow St. George MSU

[St. George Municipal School Unit](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/stgeorgemsu/>



Apri 2020:

We CREATE from NATURE - the video!

<https://bit.ly/STG-WeCreateFromNature>

6th-grade students have been exploring their outdoor environment and looking more closely at the elements of our surroundings during their remote science learning. The natural materials, the early migrant birds, the daily changes in both the living and nonliving components of their surroundings have been the focus of attention. With these observations of what's around us, we've made art from found objects following the inspiration of artist Andy Goldsworthy. We've made drawings of robins, sound maps in our locations, compasses using shadows from the sun, and have begun nature journals through the first week of April.

Alliston England - Classroom Teacher 6th - 8th Grades

Reflections on Getting in Touch with Nature in the Springtime from the 8th Grade

As we walk I see the harbor with the lobstering boats in it, and I see trees, squirrels, and plants surrounding us. Walking makes me feel good because I know it is good for my body, but it also just makes me happier. I believe walking is good for your mental health. When I walk I just like to listen to nature and think. It makes me feel good and that's all that matters.

Brook Hoppe

When I walk my dog Bruiser I notice the rocks.

I have recently gotten into rock painting and need more flat rocks.

I feel happy when Bruiser and I run as he is the one being left behind. Bruiser and I play tons of fetch in our backyard.

I used to do it so I could get my arm back in shape for softball.

Now I do it too see the look on his face zooming around the yard. When I wake up I normally hear the birds singing.

It's so peaceful right now, barely any cars on Main Street and it's great to get outside to read, ride a bike, skateboard, anything.

Payson Day

I have been going for a mile-long jog every morning at six for the past three weeks. It takes me

and I do not stop. It feels like you are flying through the air. Every morning there are four male turkeys in a field and they always have their feathers fluffed up. It is amazing. There are hundreds of songbirds. Robins, Chickadees, Finches, Blue Jays, and Nut Hatches. All of them make a beautiful sound together. Along with the bird's song, there is a pond and the frogs will croak. No one is up that early so I never see anyone. I get to enjoy the birds and frogs all by myself. It is an amazing experience.

Dylan Lord

A few weeks ago my family and I were very very bored so we decided that we would try to go to the beach. We wouldn't have gone if there were people, which luckily there were not. When we first got there I smelled the air, because at this time I hadn't left the house in two weeks. It was a clear sunny day, minimal breeze and the fresh saltwater mist was glorious. We went directly down to a rocky part of the beach and stared out at the horizon. It felt amazing to just be outside and out of my house. The water was chilly but so very refreshing. There were also some gulls there, and I named them, Gerald and Gloria. They were a very happy couple. It was also very nice just to close our eyes and take in all the sounds and smells of the ocean, the waves, the seagull cries, the salty air, and the sound of water receding through rocks. Overall, it was a very relaxing day, and I wish to go again soon.

Leilani Myers

What's up at Herring Gut Learning Center

Kathy Barker

Executive Director



Herring Gut Learning Center students recently participated in a phenology monitoring project. Phenology is the study of seasonal change and timing. It's nature's calendar when cherry trees bloom, when a robin builds its nest, and when leaves turn color in the fall. This growing field of science examines cyclical events in animal behavior and plant growth. A plethora of organisms, including humans, depend on the predictable nature of seasonal turns. Animal migrations, insect metamorphosis, and plant growth cycles all rely on specific movements of nature.

same spot and document the change of the seasons. They could draw, keep a journal of observations, and take a photo in the same place each day. To see solo site examples, students were encouraged to visit <https://chewonki.org/phenology-sit-spot-project/>

CRITICAL APPLICATIONS OF PHENOLOGY INCLUDE:

- Management of invasive species and forest pests
- Predictions of human health-related events, such as allergies and mosquito season
- Optimization of when to plant, fertilize, and harvest crops
- Understanding the timing of ecosystem processes, such as carbon cycling
- Assessment of the vulnerability of species, populations, and ecological communities to ongoing climate change

Note:

These students are from Herring Gut's Middle School Intensive Program which provides a year-long science program to students of RSU 13 and the St. George Municipal School. Students are involved in hands-on experiential learning including a micro-business model utilizing our on-site aquaponics system, salt-water lab, and lobster pound for growing kelp. The curriculum aligns with Next Generation Science Standards with a focus on understanding the various water ecosystems, inhabitants, influences, and effects of changing the climate.

A Herring Gut student shares a journal entry and her photographs:



Solo Sit

By Isabella, age 12

I see rocks, a lot of them all huddled in their bunches.

I chose the only one that was not with another rock pal.

At the time I felt nervous because of this Covid-19 thing that was happening.

I heard a lot of birds like Chickadees, Robins, among other noises.

I feel like I don't know what is happening to me? I felt...

I see mostly forest around me. I feel surrounded by nature.



Factoids-Did ya know?

Little known facts to astound and impress

- **There are 12 times more trees on Earth than stars in the Milky Way.**
200 - 400 billion stars in our galaxy
1 trillion trees on Earth
- **Caffeine is a natural pesticide**
It overloads the nervous systems of insects that try to eat the plants containing caffeine, paralyzing, and even killing them.
- **It takes two years for a pineapple fruit to mature.**

Book Corner

A collection of recommendations for you to books that connect to some corner of the natural world

May Recommendations:

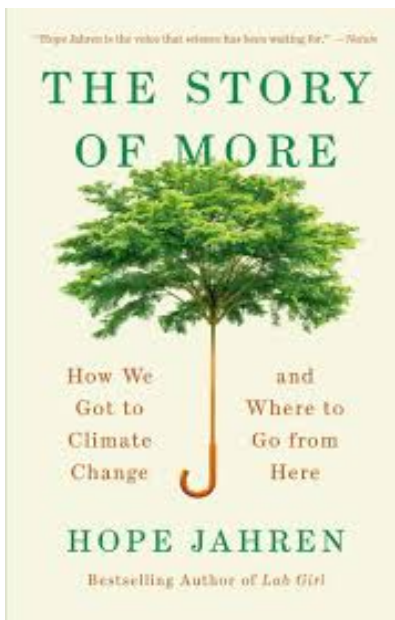
Compiled by Barbara Cross, avid reader, grandmother, who enjoys walking on the peninsula when not playing with her grandson, practicing yoga or volunteering all over

And an invitation to all readers. Send us recommendations of books that have connected you to some part of the natural world.

Keep your recommendation short and sweet and send to **friendsofstgeorgeme@gmail.com**

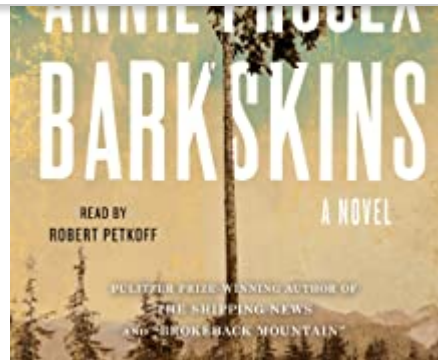
The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go from Here by Hope Jahren, the best-selling author of **Lab Girl** is a new April release.

[Click here](#) for an interview with Jahren talking about Lab Girl



Jahren, a scientist, and professor writing in a story-telling style traces a compelling history of how human behavior and lifestyle got us to where we are now. Changing consumption habits, she's concluded is the only way to alter the current disastrous course.

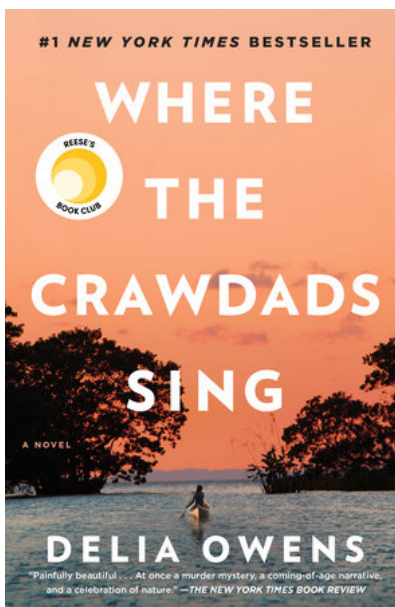
Barkskins, by Annie Proulx



Tells the story of two immigrants to New France, (Canada) René Sel and Charles Duquet, and of their descendants. It spans over 300 years and witnesses the deforestation of the New World from the arrival of Europeans into the contemporary era of global warming.

A brutal tale of blood and land and a [National Geographic series](#) premiering on Memorial day

Where the Crawdads Sing, a first novel by Delia Owens



82 weeks on the bestseller list, it's a coming of age story/ murder mystery involving a girl abandoned by her parents in the marshlands of North Carolina told by a renowned naturalist. The descriptions are so vivid and absorbing that you become immersed in this lush, lowlands environment, and in this girl's quest for independence. A great read.

[A fascinating interview with Delia Owens](#) at legendary Washington, DC bookstore, Politics & Prose.

Where in St. George? "The Contest"



W.McI

The prize for the first correct answer sent to friendsofstgeorgeme@gmail.com.

A Gift Certificate from [Ancho Honey](#).

NOTE: All items are clearly visible from a paved road . . .

All you have to do is pay attention!



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