

Protecting natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed since 1997

Partnerships are key to land conservation

by **Matt Howe,**
Executive Director

Land conservation takes time, money, expertise and a lot of patience. Negotiations can be delicate. Easements can be complicated. Surveys can encounter unexpected obstacles, encroachments and delays. And needless to say, land that is not donated can cost money, lots of it.

As the GMCG Board of Directors updates our strategic plan, it has taken a hard look at what it means for the organization to be a land trust and also a watershed protection organization overseeing an array of programs including water quality monitoring; classroom environmental

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GMCG Land Trust Committee Chair Dana Simpson and Executive Director Matt Howe walk along Hodgedon Brook on the 34-acre Thurston property abutting the GMCG Natural Area in Effingham. In collaboration with public funding agencies and the Lakes Region Conservation Trust, GMCG is working to acquire the property and create an expanded 75-acre preserve and wildlife corridor below the northern slope of Green Mountain.

Remembering Chris Kane



Chris Kane conducted numerous biological and rare plant surveys for governmental agencies, municipalities and organizations, including the NH and VT Natural Heritage programs, New Hampshire Fish & Game, the Army Corps of Engineers, the New England Wild Flower Society and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, among many others.

GMCG and the entire New Hampshire land conservation community have lost a dear friend and colleague. Chris Kane, who conducted baseline documentation and conservation easement monitoring for GMCG since 2016, passed away suddenly on September 25th while on vacation in California. A passionate conservationist and naturalist, Chris, through his firm Kane Conservation, worked with towns, land trusts and other conservation organizations across New Hampshire providing easement monitoring, conservation land inventories, natural resource inventories and numerous other services and guidance. Chris was the key force behind New Hampshire's [Big Tree Program](#) and was a lead organizer and a presenter at the 7th Eastern Old-Growth Conference in Moultonborough just a few days before he died.

Fellow conference organizer Mary Tebo Davis shared this message: "Chris was kind, giving, gentle, loving and dedicated to his wonderful family, friends, and of course the forest. His family is planning a memorial for him on Oct 28 and the forest and conservation community are now looking into how best to honor this wonderful human being who did so much for the forests, trees, and land he so cherished." Here at GMCG, we had just met with Chris to set the Fall 2023 easement monitoring schedule. Thanks to all he taught us and the detailed records and archives he built for us, we can carry on his work with deep gratitude for his friendship, his professionalism and his deep commitment to protecting New Hampshire's land and natural resources.

Partnerships are key to land conservation

education; and extensive advocacy to promote and defend groundwater protection ordinances, disseminate best land management practices, and, among other things, sound the alarm about how road salts are endangering water supplies and wildlife. Most land trusts do not have as much going on under one roof.

Given the cost and complexity of land conservation, what can and should be GMCG's role? In light of the organization we have become, what is the best way for us to help conserve the greatest possible amount of land across the Ossipee Watershed?

In the months ahead we will be reporting the full scope and outcomes of our strategic planning process. However, at its September 23rd meeting, the GMCG Board formally approved some specific shifts in the way we approach land conservation.

First, the Board decided to place a moratorium on the acquisition of additional conservation easements. To be clear, this is a moratorium on *easements*, not a moratorium on the acquisition of fee-owned lands.

Second, the Board placed a caveat on the acquisition of fee-owned lands

that new properties be considered only if they are donated or if their acquisition can be funded by private foundations or public sector sources. (For the time being, we must refrain from any major campaigns for land acquisition and focus on sustaining and developing the staff we need to lead our research, education and advocacy activities and also to finance the impending replacement of the Huntress House which is so essential to our AmeriCorps program).

Third, the Board stipulated that GMCG's land conservation program should focus on "the identification of high priority conservation lands, relationship building with landowners, and collaboration with neighboring and statewide land trusts that have the infrastructure to carry out land conservation projects."

In other words, in the years ahead GMCG will serve as a catalyst for land conservation through collaboration and new partnerships. With our knowledge of the watershed and our connections to the community, we can work in myriad ways to help



View of the Hodgedon Brook wetlands.

conservation-minded landowners produce conservation outcomes.

This shift is already underway as we work to complete current projects in Effingham and Madison in collaboration with the Lakes Region Conservation Trust and the Upper Saco Valley Land Trust, and pursue funding opportunities with the New Hampshire Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) and the NH DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund.

Have you been thinking about conservation options for land you own? Do you know someone seeking guidance on how to protect their land? If so, please give us a call. What matters is not placing our name on more land. What matters is placing more land under permanent protection.

Green Mountain Conservation Group

The Watershed News is a quarterly publication of Green Mountain Conservation Group, a nonprofit, 501 (c)(3) charitable organization established in 1997. The mission of GMCG is to promote an awareness of and appreciation for clean water and the wise use of shared natural resources across the Ossipee Watershed and advocate strategies to protect them.

The towns of Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Madison, Ossipee, Sandwich, and Tamworth comprise the Ossipee Watershed. This watershed includes one of the largest and deepest stratified drift aquifers in New Hampshire. GMCG also serves the towns of Maine's Sacopee Valley. Water knows no boundaries!

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GMCG in action



AmeriCorps members sort macroinvertebrate samples this fall for the 18th year of the Volunteer Biological Assessment Program.



Children ages one through six and their caregivers explore live animals found in the GMCG vernal pool during Nature Story and Discovery Time (NSDT) in July. Participants learn all about various nature themes, hear a story, be in the outdoors, do a craft and have a cool treat! This program is free and open to the public once a week in July.



Naturalist Barbara Bald led a Nature Journaling/Field Sketching program to share new ways start nature journaling. Participants were guided through the steps of making a journal and enjoyed some outdoors time in a guided sketching exercise.



AmeriCorps member Grace dives in Ossipee Lake to retrieve samples of freshwater mussels used in GMCG's microplastic research.



AmeriCorps members build and test a new foot bridge on GMCG's Blue Heron Trail.



AmeriCorps members Grace and Zack collect water samples on Ossipee Lake for the Volunteer Lake Assessment Program.



Friends of the Danforth Ponds hosted an educational event featuring Seth Turner of Turner Septic Services who performed a septic inspection that was filmed by GMCG.



Executive Director Mat Howe gives a welcome address to over 100 guests at GMCG's 2023 Annual Watershed Celebration on August 8th at The Preserve at Chocorua.



Experts Wendy Scribner, Natural Resources Field Specialist with UNH Cooperative Extension, Debra Marnich, Stewardship Director of Chocorua Lake Conservancy, and Catherine Dufault, District Manager of Carroll County Conservation District, lead a Pollinator Workshop at GMCG to share first-hand research experience and examples of how to create habitat for native pollinators.

by Jill Emerson

GMCG Water Quality Coordinator

Invasive species are becoming more and more of a prolific issue globally. An invasive species is a non-native organism that when introduced to a new location establishes itself quickly and typically to the detriment of native species. Invasives can be animals, such as the Burmese python (Southern United States); vegetative, such as cogongrass (North America); fungal, such as chytrid (frog killer of South America and Australia); or microscopic, like SARS-CoV-2—arguably the most extensive and famous invasive seen in the last three years.

Invasive species can outcompete native species for resources such as food, water and space, leading to a decline in native populations. They can also alter habitats, disturb ecological processes and introduce new diseases or parasites (i.e. COVID-19). In many instances, invasives develop the ability to reproduce rapidly and combined with the lack of natural predators or controls in the new environment, they grow and spread quickly.

In many cases, humans are responsible for the spread of invasives, sometimes intentionally. For example, cane toads were famously introduced to Australia in 1935 as a way to control pests that ate sugar cane crops, particularly beetles, without herbicides. As the cane toad is a hearty species, eats a wide array of things, is poisonous, and has no native predator, the number of cane toads in Australia now exceed 200 million – a two million-fold increase from their introductory numbers about 100 years ago. As a result, the cane toad has itself become a pest in Australia, and a classic example of how the use of non-native organisms to solve problems can backfire.



Variable milfoil (photo courtesy of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES)).

For those of you unfamiliar with the outcome of the cane toad decision: cane toads did not in fact help with the beetle issue, and in hindsight the interaction between the toads and the beetles was not studied enough (or at all) before releasing them into Australia. As most of the beetle issues took place at the top of the sugar cane, which routinely grows to about six feet high, the toads and their well-documented inability to fly or climb proved problematic in controlling the beetles. Also, the cane toad is nocturnal while most beetles are not, so their schedules did not really align. Another factor is that toads prefer wet damp habitats, while sugar cane is typically found

in much drier conditions, so the toads would move out of the sugar cane fields and into more hospitable locations and away from the beetles they were supposed to be eating. Unfortunately, Australia has numerous examples of introducing non-native species to (not) solve a problem only to create a new one in the process.

Invasives can also be introduced to a new region entirely by accident. Zebra mussels, which are native to seas in Central Asia, were introduced to the Great Lakes sometime in the 1980s by boats that traveled between the two regions through Europe. Since then, zebra mussels have been making their way around the United States, being found in Vermont in 1993, Connecticut in 1998, and Massachusetts in 2009.

While zebra mussels have yet to be found in New Hampshire, that does not mean the state has been immune to struggles with other invasive species. Arguably the most well-known invasive is milfoil (variable and Eurasian), an aquatic species introduced to the Granite State sometime in the 1960s. This plant is known for its ability to reproduce through fragmentation – small parts of the plant break away and spread to a new location by wind, boat action and/or water currents. Milfoil pieces can also act as “stowaways” on a boat and can get trailered to a new water body and establish there as well. This ability to populate from fragments makes mitigation of milfoil extremely hard, though not impossible. Recent data from 2022 shows that 84 water bodies in New Hampshire have known milfoil issues, and some of those water bodies are right here in our own Ossipee Watershed.

Milfoil is not the only known aquatic invasive impacting our area. This summer, Pine River Pond

in Wakefield experienced an infestation of swollen bladderwort, sometimes referred to as inflated bladderwort. Bladderwort itself is a genus native to New Hampshire while the swollen variety, a native to the southeastern coastal region of the United States, has unfortunately been introduced to the New England region in recent years. Swollen bladderwort is a free floating, rootless plant that, like other bladderworts, is carnivorous. The main veins (stolons) of the plant can be multiple feet in length and contain hundreds of small bladders (digestive sacs) that suck in their prey, usually zooplankton and other small macroinvertebrates. Here is a [great video](#) showing bladderwort's feeding in action.

Back on land, one of the more well-known invasives taking over large areas is the Japanese knotweed. This plant, native to Korea, Japan and parts of China, can grow up to 12 feet in height and its high, arching, smooth and hollow stems can resemble that of bamboo. Introduced to the United States during the late 19th century as both an ornamental and an erosion control plant, it was sold in plant catalogs until the 1930s, when attitudes towards it shifted to that of problematic pests. Today, knotweed can be found in at least 42 states and is continuing to spread. Knotweed benefits from being able to spread by both seed and fragmentation, and can send out shoots horizontally from the large system of rhizomes underground. This allows the plant to create dense thickets, which prevents native plants from growing established, it can be hard to eradicate. Control for knotweed is limited to mechanical control – which is very hard once the plant has established itself as grubbing is typically required – and chemical control, which can fail if the rhizomes are not disrupted.



Swollen bladderwort (courtesy of Department of Conservation Resources.

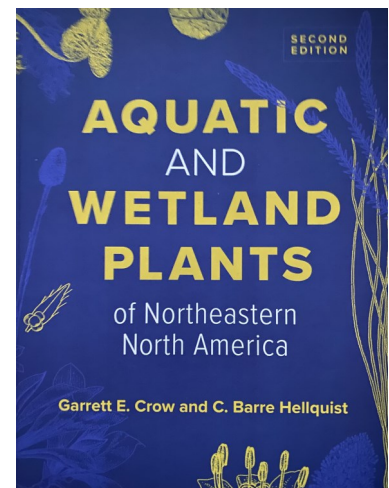
In most cases, the best way to control these and other invasives is through preventative measures and education. Having boat inspection programs at your local lakes is a great first step in stopping the spread of invasives. Aquatic and terrestrial plant surveys are also a good preventative measure; it is much easier to remedy a small infestation rather than allowing it to grow out of control. Finally, educating yourself and others on invasives (both plant and animal), what to do if you see them, and proper disposal techniques can help keep problematic pests at bay.

Acclaimed guide to aquatic and wetland plants donated to GMCG Library

by Matt Howe

Longtime GMCG friend and Ossipee Lake Alliance board member C. Barre Hellquist has donated a copy of his extraordinary 900-page work, [Aquatic and Wetland Plants of Northeastern North America](#), to GMCG. Barre is Professor Emeritus of Biology at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts and research associate at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas. He co-authored the book,

now in its second edition, with Garrett Crow, Professor Emeritus of Botany at the University of New Hampshire. It is an illustrated guide to the native and naturalized vascular plants—ferns, conifers, and flowering plants—found in aquatic and wetland habitats in northeastern North America, from Newfoundland west to Minnesota and south to Virginia and Missouri. In his review, John H. Wiersema of the Smithsonian Institution declares the work “An indispensable reference to wetland plants of the most aquatically diverse part of the continent, with a variety of natural habitats, including the entire Great Lakes watershed. The field experience of both of these aquatic botanists, especially in the Northeast, is immense, so the benefits of having all of this knowledge captured in this newly updated edition cannot be overstated.” In their introduction, the co-authors note, “As a taxonomic/floristic work, it is designed to be of value to biologists, students of biology, conservationists, environmental consultants, personnel of local, state and federal agencies, and any individuals with general ecological interests.” If you would like to peruse this volume – or any of the scores of books in our environmental library – you may do so by appointment most weekdays from 9am to 3pm.



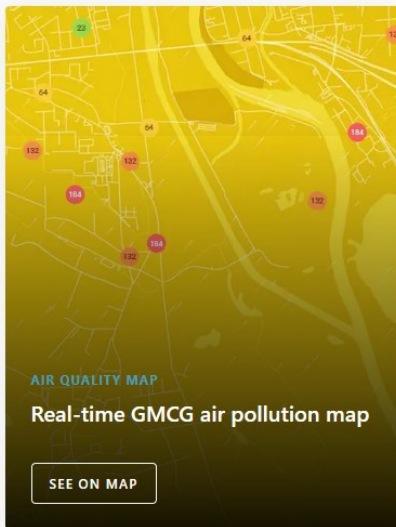
Book cover of *Aquatic and Wetland Plants of Northeastern North America*.

GMCG Joins Global Air Quality Monitoring Program

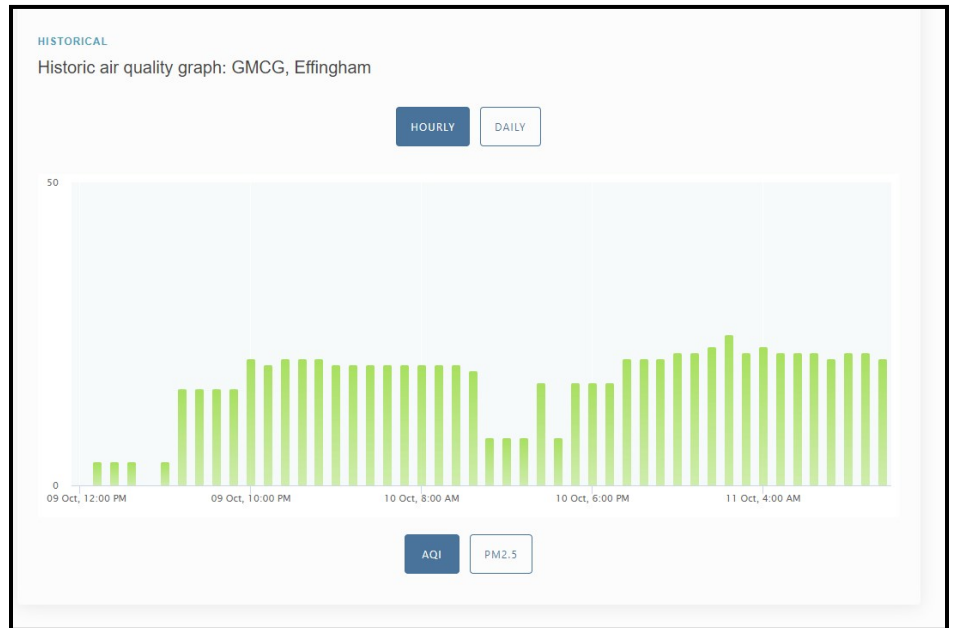
by Matt Howe

With inspiration and support from GMCG friend and neighbor Norm Dudziak, GMCG has filled a hole in IQAir’s global monitoring of the levels of airborne pollutants in the air we breathe. You can now click on [this link](#) and see how the air quality is – in real time – at the Blue Heron House in Effingham, NH! The primary readings are for general air quality and “PM2.5,” the more dangerous category of airborne particles that are explained in this discussion of [particulate matter](#) on IQAir’s website.

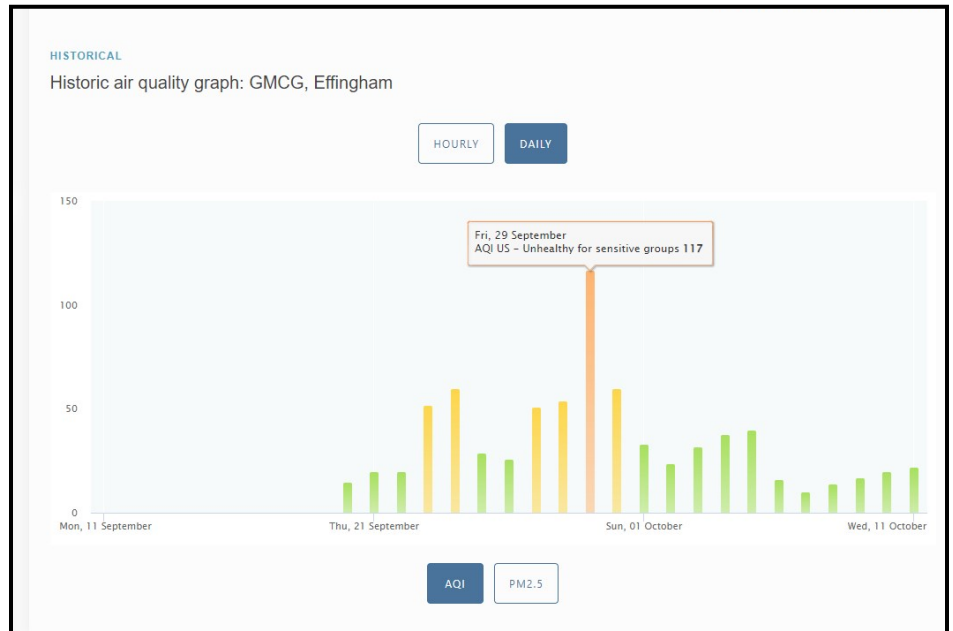
GMCG volunteer Tim Otterbach installed the monitoring device and it has been taking readings since September 20, 2023. So far we have had interesting and mixed results, ranging from “good” to “unhealthy for sensitive groups” on September 29th when our region was affected by a plume of wildfire smoke from Canada. We are pleased to be a part of this global project and to add air quality to our portfolio of data monitoring programs. We will be following our readings with great interest in the months and years ahead. Thank you Norm!



Visit <https://www.iqair.com/us/usa/new-hampshire/effingham/gmcg> to view real time graphs of GMCG air quality.



Screenshot of IQAir’s real time air quality graph taken on October 10, 2023.



Screenshot of IQAir’s real time air quality index graph taken on October 11, 2023.

Children Unlimited garden produces a preschool pizza party!

Grace Kennedy,
AmeriCorps Member Education & Outreach Assistant

In spring 2023, the Ham Charitable Foundation granted Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) funding for their environmental education programming in Conway schools. The spirit of this grant is to “improve the community life in the Mt. Washington Valley of New Hampshire, Fryeburg, and Bridgton, Maine”. The awarded programs would stay true to the spirit of the grant by bringing interactive environmental education to Conway elementary and preschool aged students.

A specific component of this grant included a community garden project in collaboration with Children Unlimited. Children Unlimited is a non-profit organization that promotes early intervention and inclusive education for students with special needs. The garden project took off with the help of Green Mountains AmeriCorps members who took part in designing, facilitating and implementing education programs and garden maintenance. Program topics included lessons about the water cycle, seeds, pollinators, dirt and worms, and much more. With these topics, students were able to learn more about their gardens and the silent processes that made vegetable growth possible.

GMCG AmeriCorps were not the only ones taking care of the garden, students and teachers had homework to weed, water, harvest and lookout for pests. These tasks allowed for students to take responsibility over their garden and prompted curiosity and critical thinking about previously discussed topics. Students could then keep track of these chores in their garden journals!



Students pick chives with AmeriCorps member Hailey.



Zach and Hailey read a story about pollinators while observing the herb garden.

With funding from the Ham Foundation Grant, GMCG will be able to inspire preschool students throughout the seasons with the hope of encouraging outdoor education and learning. Through spring, summer and fall programs the students will participate in garden activities, produce harvests and prepare meals with their herbs and vegetables. The summer season ended with a pizza party and plans to harvest more produce into the fall. Activities won't stop there but will continue into the winter months with a variety of program options. Snowshoeing, skiing, sledding and animal tracking are all possible program activities.



Students collect garden produce to create a pizza sauce.



Grace reads a story about how pizza sauce is made.



Sedona says “yes please” to more cheese.

GMCG launches “Sponsor a Book” in local libraries

by **Katie McCarthy**
GMCG Education Committee Member

What started as a collaborative endeavor between Effingham Public Library volunteers and GMCG interns to provide nature-based story hours with themes that promote watershed awareness in young children, has resulted in the successful launch of GMCG’s new Sponsor-a-Book program in libraries within the Ossipee Watershed.

In February 2023, a nature themed weekly story hour was initiated at the Effingham library with GMCG AmeriCorps interns, Hailey and Grace, and library volunteers connected to GMCG. During one story hour, a child asked to borrow a book that had been read, and volunteers realized that the book was not in the library’s collection. Thus, a pilot initiative was born. Karen Payne and Katie McCarthy set out to identify and gather quality children’s nature books for the Effingham Public Library. Books were donated by GMCG volunteers and a bookplate acknowledging the Green Mountain Conservation Group was created and placed inside each book.

In May, the GMCG Education Committee, including Peter Zack, Tara Shroeder, Wendy Scribner, Karen Payne, Nancy Walser, Katie McCarthy and Louise Wroblewski, met at the Effingham library to review dozens of books donated to the library on behalf of GMCG. The books were vetted by the committee for their message, accuracy, relevance to natural resource protection, richness, and inclusion of multiple perspectives and values. The committee then chose the “cream of the crop” —books that would be wonderful resources to enrich children’s understanding and appreciation of our watershed and the creatures, wildlife and plants that also call our watershed home. From that work session, the committee compiled a list of 29 exemplary children’s books



Education Coordinator Tara Schroeder creates a craft with a child during a nature story program at the Effingham Public Library this summer.

that support GMCG’s mission of protecting and conserving the natural resources of the Ossipee Watershed with an emphasis on water with the intention of providing these books for all of the libraries in Ossipee Watershed towns.

The next step in the process was to check collections in other libraries within the watershed. More than half of our choices were not available in area libraries. This information sparked an initiative to seek additional sponsors. At GMCG’s Annual Watershed Celebration in July, many of the selected books were on display along with an invitation for individuals to sponsor a book for their local library. There was an overwhelmingly positive response, with several books sponsored for Tamworth and Ossipee libraries. A supporter in Freedom volunteered to seek donations for the Freedom

library. GMCG continues to seek sponsors to fund the purchase of these books for all of the libraries in our watershed through the "Sponsor a Book" program.

A child’s interest and curiosity expressed in a simple question launched a pilot program which resulted in scores of high-quality, nature-themed and conservation-promoting books to be donated in the name of GMCG by town residents and volunteers. We ask supporters to check with your local library regarding this program. Contact GMCG about donating a book.

Let’s respond to curiosity and invite further interest with enriching, high-quality children’s books. Thank you for your support!

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The Sponsor a Book list includes:

1. *Bird Identification* by Peter Audubon
2. *Along the River Bank* by Petra Bartikove
3. *Water Hole* by Graeme Base
4. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
5. *The Very Busy Spider* by Eric Carle
6. *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson
7. *A River Ran Wild* by Cherry Lynne
8. *Crossings* by Katy Duffield
9. *My River* by Shari Halpern
10. *Ibis: A True Whale Story* by John Himmelman
11. *Luna & Me: The True Story of a Girl Who Lived in a Tree to Save a Forest* by Jenny Sue Kosteck-Shaw
12. *We are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom
13. *One Child, One Planet* by Bridget McGovern Llewellyn
14. *Where The River Begins* by Thomas Locker
15. *All the Water in the World* by George Lyon
16. *The Lost Words* by Robert McFarlane
17. *The Lost Spells* by Robert McFarlane
18. *The Poem Forest* by W.S. Merwin
19. *Over and Under the Pond* by Kate Messner
20. *Shark Lady: The True Story* by Marta Miguens
21. *Becoming a Good Creature* by Sy Montgomery



GMCG Education Committee members meet at the Effingham Library to organize the Sponsor a Book Program.

22. *Drop: An Adventure through the Water Cycle* by Emily Kaye Moon
23. *One Plastic Bag: The Recycle Women of the Gambia* by Miranda Paul
24. *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss
25. *Greta and The Giants* by Zoe Tucker
26. *The Water Princess—the childhood experience of model Georgie Badiel* by Susan Verde
27. *Follow the Moon* by Sarah Weeks
28. *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen



A display of some of the books included in the Sponsor a Book program list at the Effingham Library.

Your new buddy in the backyard: Getting to know your septic system

by Nancy Walser
GMCG Board Member

How friendly are you with your septic system?”

I can confidently say that is a question that I’ve never been asked until this summer when I listened to Andrea LaMoreaux, president of NH Lakes, talk about threats to water quality at the annual meeting of the Bear Camp Pond Association.

Septic system failures have consequences not only for lakes, rivers and streams and the people and organisms that enjoy and depend on them, but they can also pollute wells and homes, requiring homeowners to spend thousands of dollars for repairs or replacement.

Concerns about failing septic systems are also rising around the country as climate change raises water levels and increases flooding events. That is because a healthy septic system needs a dry environment to drain and filter effluent, in addition to regular maintenance and the kind of attention that you might lavish on, say, a friend.

As part of its mission to protect water quality in the greater Ossipee Watershed, GMCG and the Friends of the Danforth Ponds recently received a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to remediate water quality of the Danforth Ponds. Planned projects include actions to address septic adequacy and maintenance on shoreline properties.

As part of the project, and to raise awareness across the watershed, GMCG and the Friends of the Danforth Ponds recently sponsored a live inspection of a residential septic system conducted by Seth Turner of Turner Septic Services. ([You can watch it on the Green Mountain Conservation Group NH YouTube Channel, posted September 26, 2023](#)).

During the inspection, Turner discussed the different types of

systems he sees, what he looks for when evaluating the condition of a system – including the septic tank, distribution box, and field -- and how often homeowners should schedule pumping and inspections, among other topics.

Turner likened septic inspections and pumping – when the solids captured by the tank over time are removed – to maintaining a car. “No one understands septic systems, but everyone understands cars,” he said, adding, “The field is the engine; the tank is the oil; it has to be changed periodically.” Pumping every two years is typically recommended but that schedule could be longer or shorter depending on whether a home is used seasonally or for short-term rentals, he said.

It also helps to think about all the “bugs” or bacteria that naturally live in your system, he said. How are you treating them? Inundating them with anything other than human waste and toilet paper risks killing off these microorganisms that are needed to jump start the decomposition process before the final purification of the effluent in the septic (or leach) field.

And how are you treating your leach field? Keeping it clear of woody vegetation that can clog pipes in the system is recommended. NH Lakes publishes a handy summary of “Dos and Don’ts” for maintaining septic systems at nhlakes.org.

Every household is different in terms of the age and design of their system, number of people using it, and the load it is being asked to bear, which can change daily and over time.

Which is why you need to also become friends with a local septic service provider for the best advice. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) maintains a list of licensed septage haulers to call on the website, getpumped.nh.com.



Friends of the Danforth Ponds hosted an educational event featuring Seth Turner of Turner Septic Services who performed a septic inspection that was filmed by GMCG.

Resources:

<https://nhlakes.org/wp-content/uploads/Septic-Fact-Sheet-3.pdf>

<https://getpumpednh.com/getpumped/>

“You and Your Septic System: A Homeowner’s Guide to Septic System Maintenance, NHDES. <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/2020-01/ssb-13.pdf>

<https://www.epa.gov/septic/frequent-questions-septic-systems>

Editor's Note: *Conservation Conversations* is intended to provide a forum for the seven towns of the Ossipee Watershed to share news of their conservation and planning activities and an opportunity to find creative solutions to challenges.

Effingham Conservation Commission:

The Effingham Conservation Commission (ECC) hosted a presentation on Animals with Bad Reputations on Aug. 12 in conjunction with the Street Fair. It was well attended, with an audience of 45.

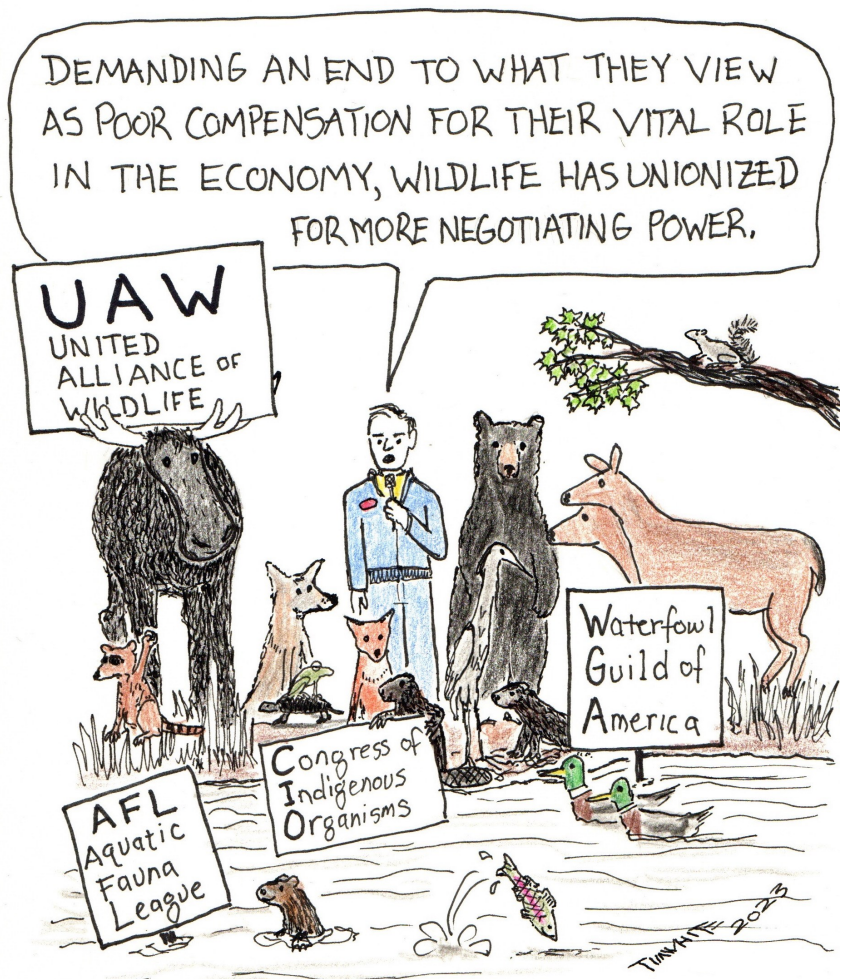
Squam Lakes Science Center brought a porcupine, a skunk, and a big brown bat, and explained why these animals have the reputations that they do.

Fall milfoil surveying and harvesting will proceed as usual. ECC continues to work with New England Milfoil on detection and control.

Move over, milfoil, the party just got more crowded. Observers have reported that Swollen Bladderwort (*Utricularia inflata*), has been found in Pine River Pond in Wakefield, and escaped into Pine River. Not just a hardy intruder, it is also carnivorous. Large mats of it have been known to skeletonize a small mammal in hours. Keep small children and pets clear of any concentrations. **ONLY KIDDING:** It really only consumes small insects and invertebrates, and occasional small tadpoles.

ECC is investigating mitigation strategies for this different species of undesirable water weed. Users of the Pine River should watch for signs of Swollen Bladderwort. There are native species of bladderwort as well. These are not a threat. ECC volunteers removed the last storm debris from the Larry Leavitt Preserve on Aug. 14. The trails had been cleared of obstacles and hazards, but the piled debris had remained by the roadside.

ECC continues to explore options for adding and improving trails in the Pine River Cherubini Preserve on Pine River Road.



We are recruiting! AmeriCorps members needed for 2023-2024 seasons

GMCG is excited to announce that we are recruiting candidates to fill two AmeriCorps positions beginning in January 2024. Chosen candidates will play an important role in advancing our mission and making a positive impact in our community. In these entry level positions, AmeriCorps members will get comprehensive training and mentorship to build valuable skills needed for a future career in conservation. All those interested in getting their hands dirty and feet wet with GMCG can learn more about the positions offered, including how to apply, on our [website](#).



2022 AmeriCorps members Bethany Mestelle, Education and Outreach Assistant and Caitlin Noseworthy, Water Quality Resources Assistant Conduct winter water quality monitoring on

Area libraries to assist with home radon detection: Test your home for radon gas

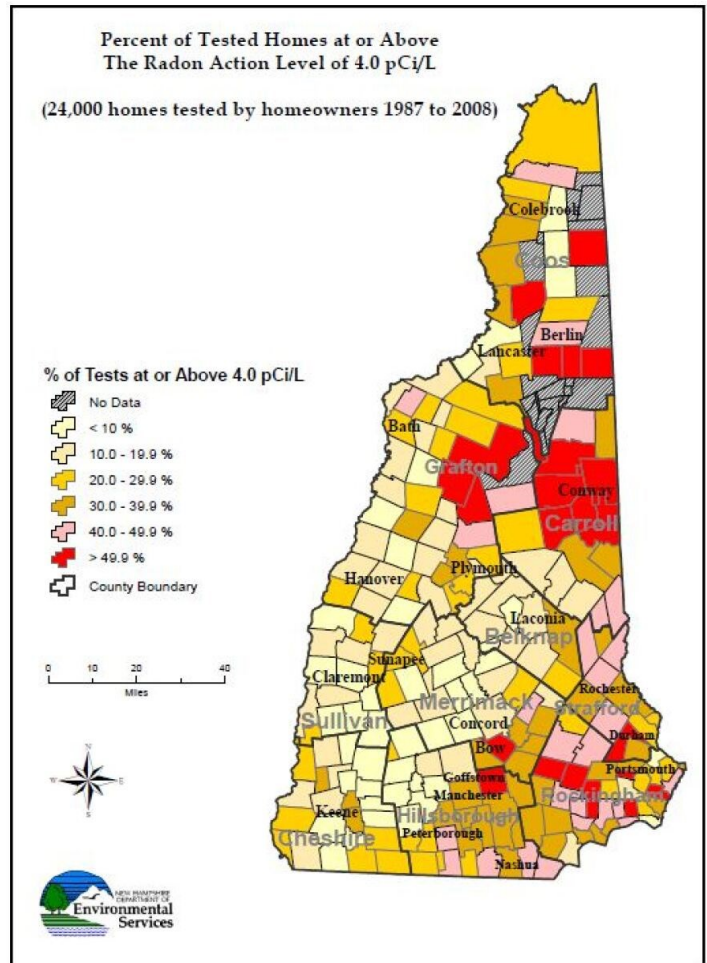
by Mark Longley

Sandwich resident and former GMCG Board Member

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that diffuses up from New Hampshire's granite-rich substructure and seeps into our living spaces and water. This gas can have harmful effects on human health. In fact, radon in the air is the leading natural cause of lung cancer in our country. The NH Dept. of Environmental Services (DES) recommends that all state residences be tested every two to three years for radon levels, and is so concerned about the health hazards that it now provides free home test kits for all NH residents. (You may fill out an application online at <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/environmental-health-and-you/radon> for a free radon-in-air test kit.)

Area libraries are now teaming up with GMCG and RadonLibrary.com to provide hand-held, electronic radon detectors that will be loaned out to their borrowers at no charge. The detection process is simple and the library will include clear instructions for sampling the air and interpreting the results. The website RadonLibrary.com has information about mitigating radon in the home if radon levels are above prescribed limits.

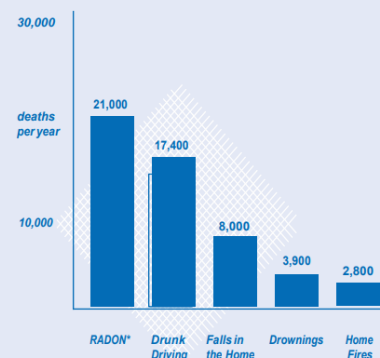
Here's a list of participating libraries: Chocorua Public Library, Cook Memorial Library (Tamworth), Effingham Public Library, Freedom Public Library, Madison Library, Ossipee Public Library, & Samuel H. Wentworth Library (Sandwich). Call your library or GMCG to reserve a detector. Or call GMCG if you have questions about the program.



EPA Recommends:

- ▶ Test your home for radon—it's easy and inexpensive.
- ▶ Fix your home if your radon level is 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) or higher.
- ▶ Radon levels less than 4 pCi/L still pose a risk, and in many cases may be reduced.

Radon is estimated to cause thousands of lung cancer deaths in the U.S. each year.



*Radon is estimated to cause about 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year, according to EPA's 2003 Assessment of Risks from Radon in Homes (EPA 402-R-03-003). The numbers of deaths from other causes are taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 1999-2001 National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Report and 2002 National Safety Council Reports.

Save the date! 2023 fall calendar

To register for all programs below email education@gmcg.org unless otherwise noted

GMCG Online Auction: This October local businesses across the watershed are coming together to show their support for our watershed protection work! GMCG's 2023 Online Silent Auction for Water Protection will go live on our website on October 19 at 9 a.m. and will close on October 29 at 9 p.m. Auction items will be a diverse offering from holiday gifts, to adventure experiences in nature. Proceeds raised will support GMCG's year-round research, education, advocacy, and land conservation to protect the Ossipee Aquifer and all the natural resources in the Ossipee Watershed!

Saturday, October 14 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Wild Mushrooms of Fall with Stephanie Doyle. Join mushroom enthusiast Stephanie Doyle at GMCG's Blue Heron House located at 236 Huntress Bridge Road in Effingham, NH for the annual mushroom walk. Participants of all ages can learn skills to identify wild native mushrooms, and Stephanie will teach which wild mushrooms are edible, poisonous and common in New Hampshire. Expect to walk up to 0.2 miles along a flat trail and be outside for approximately one hour. The event is free and donations are welcome. Please register for this event at www.gmcg.org.

Wednesday, October 25 from 6 - 7 p.m. Community VBAP Presentation at Sandwich Central School. GMCG and students from the Ossipee Watershed will present their water quality research findings from the eighteenth annual Volunteer Biological Assessment Program. Each year local schools present what they learned through participation in VBAP, a community science biomonitoring program that assesses stream health through macroinvertebrates. Students follow state protocols to sample a local river or stream and learn about their watershed. The community is invited to hear from the students what they learned through the program, as well as the results for bioassessments of local streams. Special thanks to the Alfred Quimby Foundation, Tamworth Foundation and Ham Charitable Foundation for their support of the program as well as local towns' support for this and other water quality monitoring programs.

Thursday, October 26 at 7 p.m. How Global Issues like Climate Change & Plastic Waste are Impacting NH's Water Quality. Tin Mountain will host Jill Emerson, GMCG's Water Quality Coordinator, who will talk about how two global issues - climate change and plastic waste - affect us right here in NH. She will go over the potential impacts of this past summer's flooding, and what proactive steps we can all take to better prepare for future flooding events. In addition, she will touch upon GMCG's new freshwater microplastics survey program using Nile Red staining and discuss how her group is bringing education about this problem to students across the Ossipee watershed. Visit tinmountain.org for more information.

Wednesday, December 13 from 6 - 7 p.m. Wildlife Corridors Workshop. GMCG will host a free, online workshop about wildlife corridors on December 13 from 6-7:00 p.m. on Zoom. The public is invited to join UNH Cooperative Extension Wildlife Conservation State Specialist Haley Andreozzi and Chocorua Lake Conservancy Stewardship Director Debra Marnich to learn about the importance of wildlife corridors and how people can take action on their properties and in their communities to protect these vital passageways for wildlife. Learn about what New Hampshire is doing to protect wildlife corridors, including the launch of a new brochure produced by UNH Cooperative Extension, with funding from the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, that focuses on wildlife corridors as part of the Habitat Stewardship Series and NH Wildlife Action Plan. Local examples of important wildlife corridors in the Ossipee Watershed will also be highlighted. To register, visit www.gmcg.org.



THE WATERSHED NEWS

A Quarterly Publication for the Ossipee Watershed

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In This Issue:

- Partnerships are key to land conservation
 - Remembering Chris Kane
 - GMCG launches sponsor a book in local libraries
 - Your new buddy in your backyard: getting to know your septic system
 - Children Unlimited garden produces a preschool pizza party!
 - Area libraries to assist with home radon detection
 - Conservation Conversations
 - GMCG fall events calendar
- ...and more!

Contributors:

Jill Emerson, Matt Howe, Nancy Walser, Tara Schroeder, Grace Kennedy, Katie McCarthy, Mark Longley. Cartoon by Tim White.

***Please renew your support today.
Every dollar makes a difference!***

*Make checks payable to Green Mountain Conservation Group
Box 95, Effingham, NH 03882*

You may also donate online at www.gmcg.org/donate

My/our gift of \$_____ is enclosed.

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Thank you!

