

The Kennebec Estuary Land Trust's mission is to conserve, restore and instill appreciation of the land and water resources of the Kennebec Estuary to benefit today's communities and future generations.

Volunteer

KELT offers many volunteer opportunities to support a wide range of activities and interests including:

- + trail work
- + public preserve stewardship
- + events
- + water quality testing
- + phytoplankton sampling
- + alewife counting
- + bird monitoring
- + fundraising
- + office help

Contact info@kennebecestuary.org to find out how you can help!

Join us!

Support from our members means KELT can maintain trails and public preserves across our conserved properties. It enables KELT to collaborate with a variety of partners to protect farmlands, enhance water quality, provide educational programs, and serve as a resource for our local towns.

Become a member today.
Visit www.kennebecestuary.org to join!

Directions

Take Rt. 127 north from Rt. 1, to Rt. 128. Follow Rt. 128 for 5 miles, turn left on Chopp Point Road. Parking area is 0.9 miles on the right.

Last updated Jan. 2019

Merrymeeting Fields Preserve

This 125-acre nature preserve is located on Chopp Point Road in Woolwich, Maine



LAND TRUST

Available to the public free of charge
 Open daily from dawn until dusk

92 Front Street, Bath, Maine 04530
 P.O. Box 1128
 (207) 442-8400
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History

6000 B.C.: Indians visited the banks of Merrymeeting Bay to harvest shad, sturgeon and other migrating fish species.

1607: Samuel de Champlain sails up the river to Merrymeeting Bay, initiating European fur trade with the Indians.

1604-1940: Land on East Chopps Point is farmed. In the early 1900s Dexter Baker raised horses, cows, pigs, sold milk and vegetables, and put up ice so that the family had no need to travel to Bath except for flour.

1720: Robert Temple runs a garrison on Chopps Point where he is granted 1000 acres in return for bringing 200 settlers to Cork Cove, Dresden.

1860-1936: A public road (the wide section of the North Loop Trail) leads to the range light tended by the Baker-Temple family to guide ice boats and steam packets away from the rocks.

1880s: Huge iron rings at the Overlook mark the spot where David Trott and his two sons moored their scows used to dredge sand from the river.

1930s: Portable steam-driven lumber mills harvest the old pine trees.

1942: The Baker-Temple family, stewards of the land for four generations, sell to George Reynolds.

1952: Reynolds sells the property to Walter A. and Eleanor B. Burke, who name their homestead Merrymeeting East.

2002: Eleanor Burke dies, leaving her beloved property to the Land Trust. She directed in her will to “remove all structures from my Chops Point homesite and restore the area to its natural vegetative state.” She gave instructions “to maintain the property’s open space, forests, woodlands and varied habitats. No hunting, trapping or motor vehicles allowed.”

August 2006: Merrymeeting Fields Preserve opening celebration.

Ecology

As you enjoy Merrymeeting Fields beautiful waterfront and forest, look for six natural features that support a wide variety of flora and fauna.

1. **Open Field** - The north slope of the ridge is maintained for nesting birds and small mammals. Once a farm pasture, fields are an increasingly rare habitat in Maine as family farms are abandoned and sold for development.

2. **Mixed Woods** - Two-thirds of the preserve is forest dominated by red oak, white pine, hemlock, big toothed aspen and white ash. Winter wrens, ovenbirds, black-throated green warblers, hairy woodpeckers, and barred owls favor this habitat.

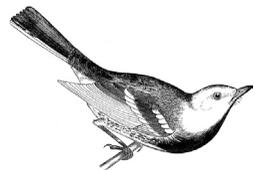
3. **Waterfront** - Bedrock ledge broken by mud beaches illustrates Merrymeeting Bay geology. Tidal erosion fells old trees, freeing silt that travels with the current until it settles on mud flats. This creates important substrate for aquatic plants, and becomes the feeding grounds for migrating birds. Mink and raccoon browse the shore. A forested waterfront prevents runoff that lowers water quality.

5. **Merrymeeting Bay** - A four by seven mile inland bay, the confluence of six rivers, is an outstanding habitat for black duck, blue-winged teal, Canada geese and many other species that feed on the abundant mud flats. This is also prime bald eagle habitat; seven nests are active around the Bay. A prime striped bass spawning ground lies off Merrymeeting Fields shore in the fast-moving river waters. Clean water supports nine anadromous species, fish that spawn here but live in the ocean part of their lives.

6. **Forested Wetlands** - Damp enough year-round to support sphagnum moss and amphibians. These ecosystems serve as a sponge to hold water and slowly release it to surrounding areas, protecting water quality.



Eastern Hemlock
(*Tsuga canadensis*)



Black-throated Green Warbler
(*Setophaga virens*)

Available Opportunities:



Please refrain from:



Don't Miss...

- + Interpretive signage explaining the history of the land and ecological importance of Merrymeeting Bay.
- + Osprey and eagles flying along the water's edge.
- + Displays of wildflowers in the open fields.