

MAINE BIRDING TRAIL

BOB DUCHESNE, 478 BEECHWOOD AVE. OLD TOWN, ME 04468

BEST NESTS Newsletter **Volume 13 – July 2011**

The Summer...so far



The birding season kicked into high gear this spring with three birding festivals on consecutive weekends. Deer Isle/Stonington's Wings, Waves & Woods Festival – May 20-22 – entertained another sell-out crowd at its local foods banquet on the Saturday evening of the festival. Then over Memorial Day Weekend, the Down East Spring Birding Festival in the Cobscook Bay area enjoyed another successful season. During the first weekend of June, the Acadia Birding Festival celebrated its 14th year by growing its participation levels nicely.

Following the Acadia festival, organizers conducted an online survey. Just over 50 participants responded and the results say a lot about the economic potential of birding tourism. Of the respondents, 40% said they had travelled between 100 and 500 miles to get to the festival and 30% came from over 500 miles away. Most stayed at local inns. About 9% camped. 91% used local restaurants. The festival was the main reason for visiting the area according to 70% of respondents and 60% say they will return next year.



Meanwhile, other groups have been sneaking into Maine. The Brookline Bird Club from the Boston area spent four days in the Rangeley/Kingfield vicinity in June and another four downeast in July. Mass Audubon went downeast for a long weekend in mid-July, and three more tours into Maine are scheduled later this summer. And over the first week of August, I'll be guiding a group from the New Mexico Sierra Club around the Acadia/Downeast Region.

I continue to work on customized guides for *Best Nests* innkeepers. I anticipate cranking out guides for the Portland and Acadia regions over the next week. Also, in recent days, I've been able to stop in on some of the more distant *Best Nests*. While doing some guiding, scouting, and research in Aroostook County, I squeezed in very pleasant visits with First Settler's Lodge in Weston and Eagle Lake Sporting Camps. I guided a small group in the Fort Kent area and spent two nights at the Northern Door Inn. I now have enough research done to customize some guides for these inns, as well, time permitting.



The **Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce** is sponsoring an Early Bird Breakfast on Wednesday, July 27th that is closely related to the tourism and marketing concepts supported by the Maine Birding Trail. One of our own Best Nesters - Matt

Polstein of the New England Outdoor Center – will be on the panel:

Topic: Bigger than Bangor...Leveraging the Region as an Economic Asset

Join Vaughn Stinson, CEO of the Maine Tourism Association; Kerrie Tripp, executive director of the Greater Bangor CVB and Matt Polstein, owner of the New England Outdoor Center as they discuss how the Bangor region is being marketed across the country and around the world and how our marketability is growing. Expect great ideas and thought-provoking concepts about how the region can become a top choice destination for tourists, conferences and so much more. This event is presented in conjunction with Mobilize Eastern Maine. 7:00 Networking, 7:30am Breakfast, 8-9am Program. \$15 Members/\$20.



In the January *Best Nests* newsletter, it was announced that the Maine Birding Trail web site had begun tracking visitors through Google Analytics. One major problem with current tracking is that innkeepers who also track their web stats cannot see traffic coming from www.mainebirdingtrail.com. That's because the old tracking system used a redirect script to keep track of the site visitors. This prevented www.mainebirdingtrail.com from showing up in most stats. Changes are now being made so that both the trail web master and *Best Nests* innkeepers should be able to see traffic. This improvement is expected to take place before August.

While birding near Fort Kent...

