

# Orono Land Trust: Caribou Bog Conservation Area

The Caribou Bog Conservation Area (CBCA) encompasses over 2500 acres of conserved lands owned and managed in part by the Orono Land Trust, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife,



Part Six in an  
Occasional Series

Town of Orono, and the University of Maine. The land straddles the old Veazie railroad bed and is a mixture of up-land habitats consisting of mature softwood and hardwood forests, and areas harvested within the past 25 years. Ponds, beaver flowages, vernal pools, streams, and peatlands occur throughout the area. CBCA is a major segment of the Caribou Bog-Penjawoc Corridor, providing important wildlife habitat, as well as offering a variety

of recreational opportunities. Parking, a kiosk, and maps are available just off the Taylor (Dump) Road in Orono.

The State's 2000+ acre Caribou Bog Wildlife Management Area (CBWMA), lying north of the railroad bed, is central to CBCA and is open to non-motorized recreation including cross-country skiing, hiking, biking, and hunting. Early successional forests make it ideal woodcock and grouse habitat. It also comprises much of the Caribou Bog, the state's third most significant peatland. Access to the CBWMA is from Taylor Road and, hopefully soon, from Kirkland Road in Old Town. To the south of, and along the railroad bed is a vast network of single- and double-track trails reaching to the top of Newman and Bangor Hills. The Penobscot Valley Ski Club grooms many of the trails for classic and skate skiing. The outer loop is about four miles long with consider-

able terrain variation. On a nice winter weekend, as many as 50 skiers enjoy this wonderful location. OLT closes some trails in summer to protect important bird nesting habitat. Detailed trail maps are available online, illustrating seasonal closures and types of use.

OLT restored two small ponds, Pine Pond, on the property and they offer excellent wildlife viewing. Adjacent to the railroad bed is a large beaver flowage with a small great blue heron rookery. In 2016 MDIFW and students from Old Town High School captured a great blue heron, nicknamed "Mellow", in Pine Pond and attached a satellite transmitter to her. During the summer, she raised three youngsters, visited numerous wetlands in and around CBCA. She is now basking in Cuba thanks to Obama eliminating travel restrictions. We are hoping she will be back this spring. You can follow her



COURTESY OF GAIL WHITE

**Kris Sornberger of the Orono Land Trust building a bicycle bridge on CBCA trail system in 2016.**

exploits at [movebank.org](http://movebank.org), click on the browse map, then click on list for egrets and herons and locate "Mellow."

OLT members work with local bikers, skiers, and the Town of Orono to maintain this vast complex of trails and habi-

tats. Maintenance activities include marking boundary lines, clearing and mowing trails, regulating water levels in flowages and ponds, controlling invasive plants, and much, much more. We invite you to join OLT and help preserve

this very special area. Support to conserve these lands came from the Land for Maine's Future Program, the Outdoor Heritage Program, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program, the Town of Orono, MDIFW, and OLT.

To reach CBCA from downtown Orono, go northwest on Forest Ave., proceed half way around the new rotary on Stillwater Ave., and continue northwest for 2 miles to Taylor Rd. (at chip pile). Turn right (northeast) on Taylor Rd. for ½ mile then left into parking area. From Bangor or Old Town, take Stillwater Ave. to the rotary at Forest Ave. and head northwest.

*Trail maps can be downloaded at: [www.aronolandtrust.org](http://www.aronolandtrust.org). OLT is an All-Volunteer Accredited organization. Membership dues help OLT maintain trails. Please become a member online.*