



# FOREVER WILD

Newsletter of Friends of Baxter State Park

Fall/Winter 2020

Vol. 19 No. 3



## Executive Director's Column

by Aaron Megquier

Snow is falling on Katahdin, the lakes are finally freezing over, and winter is in full swing. Somehow it's already time to take stock of another year. In so many ways, 2020 was like no other year in living memory. We sincerely hope that you and your family are safe and well amidst the pandemic.

In keeping with the times, Friends hosted our first remote annual meeting via Zoom on October 22. Thank you so much to the more than 100 people who joined us for the latest updates on our work and news from the Park. More than 20 years after our founding, we're still a grassroots organization that depends on the passion, expertise, and generosity of our members.

Baxter State Park opened for the winter camping season on December 1. For the many people (myself included) who are looking for socially-distant ways to get outside this winter, spending time in the wilderness during the winter months can be an incredible experience. Solitude, remoteness, challenge, and consequences are all significantly elevated. Before you venture into the Park in the winter, make absolutely sure that you are prepared. Your gear, skills, fitness level, team members, and planning must all be up to the challenge for a trip to go smoothly and safely. For your first winter trip, it's ideal to go with someone who has extensive prior experience.

Friends will soon be launching a new video series called #HowToBaxter that will tackle topics like preparing for a winter trip, as well as things like parking reservations, tips for hiking Katahdin, bear safety, and whole range of other useful topics. Our members will be the first to know when this series launches – stay tuned for details!

As always, please get in touch anytime with questions, concerns, or to get more involved in our work. We are so grateful for your continued support.



A black bear (*Ursus americanus*) takes a close look at a motion-triggered trail camera. Wildlife biologists at the University of Maine are using these cameras to shine new light on the abundance and distribution of mammal species across Maine's north woods, including Baxter State Park.

– Photo courtesy of Bryn Evans

## A Focus on the Wildlife of Baxter State Park

by Aaron Megquier

Many visitors consider wildlife sightings to be one of the highlights of a trip to Baxter State Park. Spotting an iconic animal like a moose or black bear is often a life-list event, particularly for visitors from other parts of the world. Trails to prime wildlife spots like Sandy Stream Pond often receive more foot traffic than trails on Katahdin.

Some wildlife species are so abundant that they seem to be everywhere. It's difficult to spend a day in the Park and not be chewed out by a red squirrel. Spotting a moose is tougher than it used to be, but their tracks are everywhere and they can be still found with relative ease.

For more elusive species, it takes lots of patience – and being in the right habitat, at the right time of day – to have any chance of seeing them at all. I've seen a total of six black bears on foot in the Park over the course of thirty-five years and hundreds of days of hiking. During that same time period I've seen just three martens, and zero fishers.

Bryn Evans, a PhD candidate in the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Conservation Biology at the University of Maine, is using motion-triggered trail cameras to understand trends in occupancy for multiple wildlife species native to Maine. Unlike many other wildlife research methods, cameras are completely non-invasive. They provide conclusive evidence of the presence of a species, and can be placed in par-

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Friends of Baxter State Park is a 501(c)(3) organization working to preserve, support, and enhance the wilderness character of Baxter State Park in the spirit of its founder, Percival P. Baxter.



## Membership Matters

By Sarah Holland,  
 Administrative Manager

### Member Profile: Howard Whitcomb

With an appreciation of history, a passion for teaching, and a life-long love of Baxter State Park, no one is better suited to be the official Friends of Baxter State Park Historian than Howard Whitcomb. Howard first climbed Katahdin in 1952 at age 11, and then again in 1953. At least once every decade through 2005, he tackled the Park's highest peak. As a young man in 1957, while working as a camp counselor at Camp Wavus on Damariscotta Lake, he met Percival P. Baxter and personally thanked him for his gifts to the people of Maine.

Howard went on to earn his BA at Brown University and a Ph.D. from Rockefeller College, University of Albany with a focus on Political Science and American Constitutional Law. He taught political science at Colgate University and Lehigh University for 35 years. During his tenure at Lehigh, he served as a Supreme Court Fellow in the Office of the Administrative Assistant to Chief Justice Warren E. Burger during 1973-74 which afforded him a front-row seat to history at the Watergate proceedings. After his illustrious academic career, he retired to Maine in 1999 with his wife, Annie Merrill, and reconnected with his love of Baxter State Park.

As a retiree, Howard worked tirelessly with others to garner support from like-minded Baxter enthusiasts interested in preserving and protecting Baxter's "Forever Wild" vision. This effort resulted in the founding of Friends of Baxter State Park in 2000. In order to help decipher Baxter's intentions from a scattered array of deeds, covenants, and notes, Howard undertook an ambitious project to compile all the original source documents into a single four-volume set: *Percival P. Baxter's Vision for Baxter State Park: An Annotated Compilation of Original Sources in Four Volumes (2005)*. This has been an invaluable resource for policy and management of the Park.

This project was followed by another publica-



Howard Whitcomb

tion for use by the general public: *Governor Baxter's Magnificent Obsession: A Documentary History of Baxter State Park, 1931-2006*, which was published by Friends in 2008. His other writings include *Baxter State Park and Katahdin (2012)*, co-authored with John Neff, and an article in *Appalachia*, the journal of the Appalachian Mountain Club: "What Happened to the Thoreau Spring Plaque?" (Summer/Fall 2015). And of course, he has made numerous contributions to *Forever Wild* as well.

As a Board member in those early years, Howard advocated and fundraised for the acquisition of the 4,000-acre Katahdin Lake property which was added to the Park in 2006, completing Percival Baxter's original vision. Although retired from our Board, he continues to serve on our Youth Programs Committee and as our official historian. Expanding his attention to the wider region, he has been serving on the Board of Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters for over four years. When he is not hiking, canoeing, or advocating for Baxter State Park and Maine's wilderness, Howard teaches and serves on the Executive Board at Midcoast Senior College in Brunswick. There he taught classes on Watergate and lectured on his trip with Annie to the Subantarctic in 2000 entitled, "In the Footsteps of Sir Ernest Shackleton."

We can not fail to mention that since attending his first game on June 21, 1949, at Fenway Park he has been a lifelong Red Sox Fan. Highlights include witnessing a three-run home run by Ted Williams and the infamous Curt Schilling's "Bloody Sock" World Series game at Fenway in 2004.

We are so grateful to have Howard as our official FBSP historian, storyteller, and documentarian as he continues to illuminate our understanding of the Park and Percival Baxter's "Forever Wild" gift to the people of Maine.

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A Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) rests after rolling in front of a wildlife camera in the Park. Lynx are federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act and are a species of Special Concern in Maine. This large cat is specialized for the deep snow and long winters of the boreal forest and reaches the southern limit of its range in Maine.

– Photo courtesy of Bryn Evans

## A Focus on the Wildlife *Continued from pg.1*

ticalar locations to meet a wide range of research objectives. Working with her advisor, Dr. Alessio Mortelliti, Evans has deployed a large network of motion-triggered trail cameras throughout northern Maine, including several sites in Baxter State Park.

Evans is focusing her research on carnivores, including marten, fisher, lynx, and black bear. Beyond simply documenting where species are present, she is assessing the impacts of human activity, climate, and other factors, and developing protocols for similar studies in the future. Evans is working in collaboration with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, which has also provided funding for the project.

My own experiences with wildlife cameras have underscored the challenges of Evans' research. I found it difficult to keep a single camera running below 15 degrees Fahrenheit, even when the camera was just fifty meters from home. It took me five troubleshooting visits and 16 AA batteries to capture some photos of a bobcat feeding on a deer it had killed.

When your camera is four hours away, followed by a long snowshoe – and you have dozens of similar locations scattered across remote northern Maine – those challenges are exponentially greater. Evans jokingly lists “driving for ages and ages to reach study sites” among her hobbies. She has successfully obtained over 800,000 wildlife images to date from her research, including the two that accompany this article.

This research will provide important insight into the distribution of wildlife species in the Park, and help to provide a baseline for species range shifts in response to climate change. Friends is profoundly grateful to Bryn Evans, Dr. Alessio Mortelliti, and all of the scientists working to understand and protect the biodiversity of Baxter State Park.



–Calendar cover photo © Ken Wadness

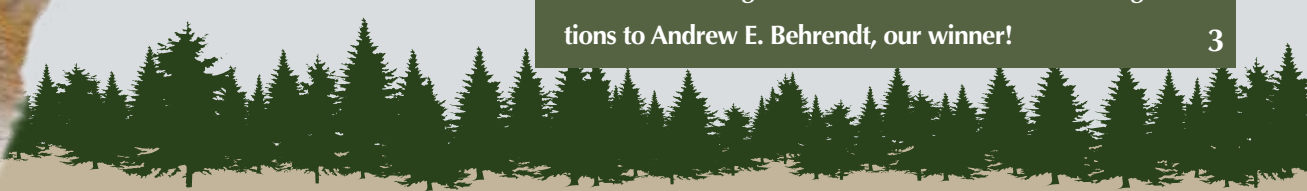
## 2021 Baxter State Park Calendars still available

Still need a calendar for 2021? We have a few 2021 Baxter State Park calendars in stock! The cost is \$17 including tax and shipping. You can order online at [www.friendsofbaxter.org](http://www.friendsofbaxter.org), mail a check to PO Box 322, Belfast, ME 04915, or call (207) 505-5779. All proceeds benefit Friends of Baxter State Park.

## Answer:

### Trivia Question in Summer Newsletter

In our summer newsletter, we asked “What is the geological term for a sharp, steep-sided ridge formed from the headward erosion of two alpine glaciers, such as the Knife Edge and Hamlin Ridge?”. The answer is an arête. Congratulations to Andrew E. Behrendt, our winner!







BSP Director Eben Sypitkowski, FBSP President Ellen Baum, FBSP Board member Nate Tefft & daughter Molly, and FBSP Executive Director Aaron Megquier gathered at the summit on August 8 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Percival Baxter's climb. — Photo courtesy of Ellen Baum

## President's Column

by Ellen Baum

When I celebrated the centennial of Percival Baxter's first ascent up Katahdin, I didn't follow the same route he had taken – the nearly re-built Dudley Trail from Chimney Pond, across the Knife Edge, down Saddle and back to Roaring Brook. Aaron had sent me a note with the schedule he and Eben expected to follow – a pace much more suited to two men in their 40s. With a two-hour head start, I was able to join them at noon, along with Nathan and Molly Tefft, who climbed the Hunt Trail. At the Katahdin sign, we unfurled the 100 Years banner and spoke to an assembled but not intending-to-be-an-audience of 40 to 50 people. What a great moment to share.

The route I did follow was the same as my first ascent up the mountain, with then-Maine Forest Service Director and Park Authority Member, Ken Stratton: Roaring Brook to Hamlin Ridge and Peak, down to Saddle, up to Katahdin. I followed the long slog on the Saddle Trail back to Roaring Brook, where I walked, hmm, like an old (er) lady protecting her knees. I was at least half my age last time I did that route. I had remembered how much I loved the Northwest Basin trail and the wide-open views on all sides; I had forgotten how much elevation I lost to get to the Saddle, or how the rockiness of the trail meant I had to pay more attention to my footing than to the spectacular landscape. I couldn't stop to enjoy where I was because I was on a schedule; we had actually planned an 11:30 rendezvous. Lucky for me we were all the same 30 minutes late.

A great thing about following my first route was how it took my thoughts back to an earlier version of myself, and 14 hours of walking gave me a lot of time to pay attention and think about how I had changed, how the natural world had changed and about people's interaction with the natural world.

My very with-it 97-year-old mother, who was born three years

after Percival's first ascent, tells me just how much pleasure she gets using her memories to link her to today's experiences. On August 8, I, too, was freewheeling across decades trying to make sense of the 2020 outdoor world, during COVID, from the vantage point of someone born in 1952, who has spent many times deep in the mountains. A few observations have stayed with me.

It was a hot day. I watched young people filling up water bottles directly from streams and ponds, without treating or filtering the water. I can't remember the last time that I drank directly from an open water source, anywhere, but I am pretty sure *Giardia intestinalis* has been on my radar screen since the early 80s. I know I have gone through a lot of pumps and filters, and I often carry iodine, just in case.

The night before my hike, a man was bathing with soap in Roaring Brook. I suggested he stop, but he told me it was fine because the soap was river soap. River Soap? If it's from the River Soap company, they may offer vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free bars, but nowhere in their advertising do they suggest it's ok for bathing in a river. Because no soap is.

And masks. Turns out we were hiking the day after the wedding ceremony in Millinocket that spread COVID throughout the state. We didn't know about it then, but the risks of COVID were well known along with what could be done to minimize them. The Park had sent out a reminder a week beforehand, asking us to review information, which included asking people to wear masks when passing people on the trails, and, as it turns out, in crowded places, like the top of Katahdin. Despite this, masks were not widely used.

These examples all speak to what we know to be the case: communication is hard. We live under a barrage of information and have become selectively skeptical about what we are willing to receive. The result is that we can't count on basic, reliable information getting to its intended audience. My kids grew up knowing about *Giardia*; it wouldn't occur to them to drink untreated water or use soap in a stream. What I saw along my route reminded me not to assume that such knowledge is universal. It's wonderful that COVID is getting a new cohort into the outdoors, but we need to make sure they enjoy nature safely. Surely, they would have treated the water had they read the Baxter material.

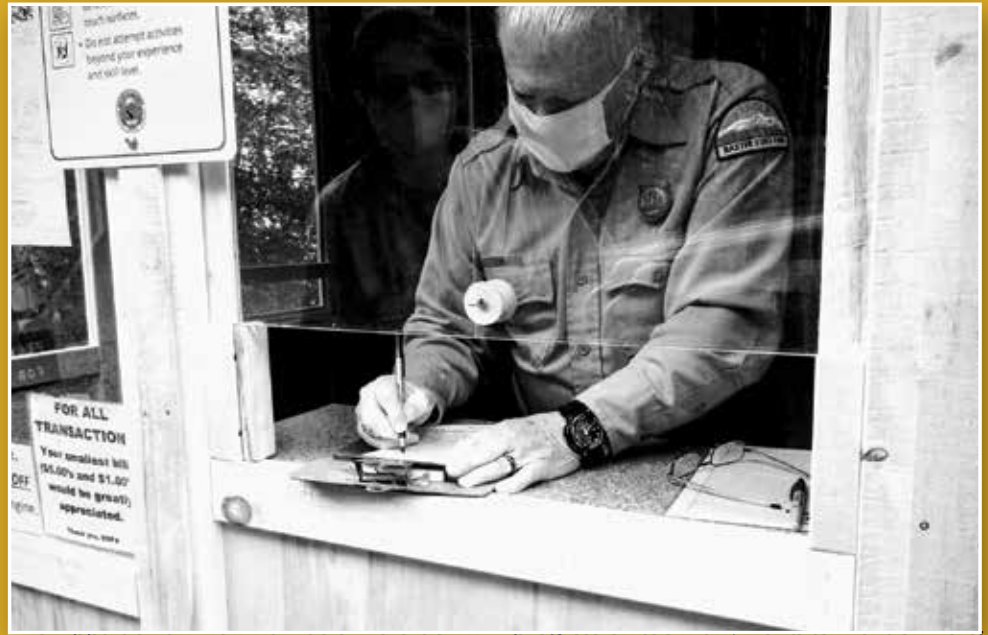
A challenge in these times is to help people have the best experience they can have, without hurting the ecosystems, themselves, and each other. Baxter rangers play a superb first-line role here, but they can't be expected to do it all. FBSP plans on doing a part as well. When I mentioned this column to Aaron, he told me our Membership Committee was planning on producing short videos to help people prepare for their Baxter trip. I offered to help with the water filter/treatment one. I expect there will be some ready takers for these videos.



Covid has filled the world with a baseline level of anxiety. As lovers of the Park and the natural world have always known, getting out in nature is the best anti-anxiety drug on the market. And what a market this year. Outdoor recreation was up nationally, not just here at the Park, but the Park was nonetheless at least as busy or busier than in recent years. This, in spite of our reduction in day use capacity by about fifty percent and the lack of visitors from Massachusetts and other states requiring a negative test or quarantine period. For the period of July 1 to October 1, day-use was only down seven percent despite our limitations. As we expected, trailheads became full earlier and more often, and folks interested in hiking the mountain were often displaced to the Brothers, OJI, or Doubletop.

Mainers were a greater proportion of those visitors in both day use and camping; resident visits were up about sixteen percent, while non-resident visits were down about twenty-one percent from last year. Camping was up a third for Maine residents, down twenty-five percent for non-residents. Overall, this shifted the balance of residents to non-residents from about fifty-fifty to sixty-fourty in favor of Mainers.

For the same three months, the Park was up ten percent in camping reservations over last year, even controlling for the closed bunkhouses. We saw many more folks finding the usually quieter north end to be a good respite from Covid anxiety and other people, and many more folks than usual tried camping for the first time. Backcountry reservations were up twenty-five percent, and that combined with the increased numbers of first-time campers made for some interesting lost person situations. Campground reservations in the north end were up twenty-three percent, while southern campgrounds that are typically filled more regularly were flat or down a bit from last year. Group areas were down by three percent, and we're hypothesizing that folks assumed that Roaring Brook was full and looked for other space.



BSP staff worked hard to register visitors safely during the pandemic this summer.

— Photo by Emma McGraw

more than sixty percent, contributing to flat year over year numbers at Katahdin Stream.

All in all, it felt busy, and it was. People needed to get outside, breathe some fresh air, and get away from virtual meetings and schooling and generally staying cooped up. We're so pleased to offer the chance at healing through connection with a rugged natural environment in these trying and anxious times.

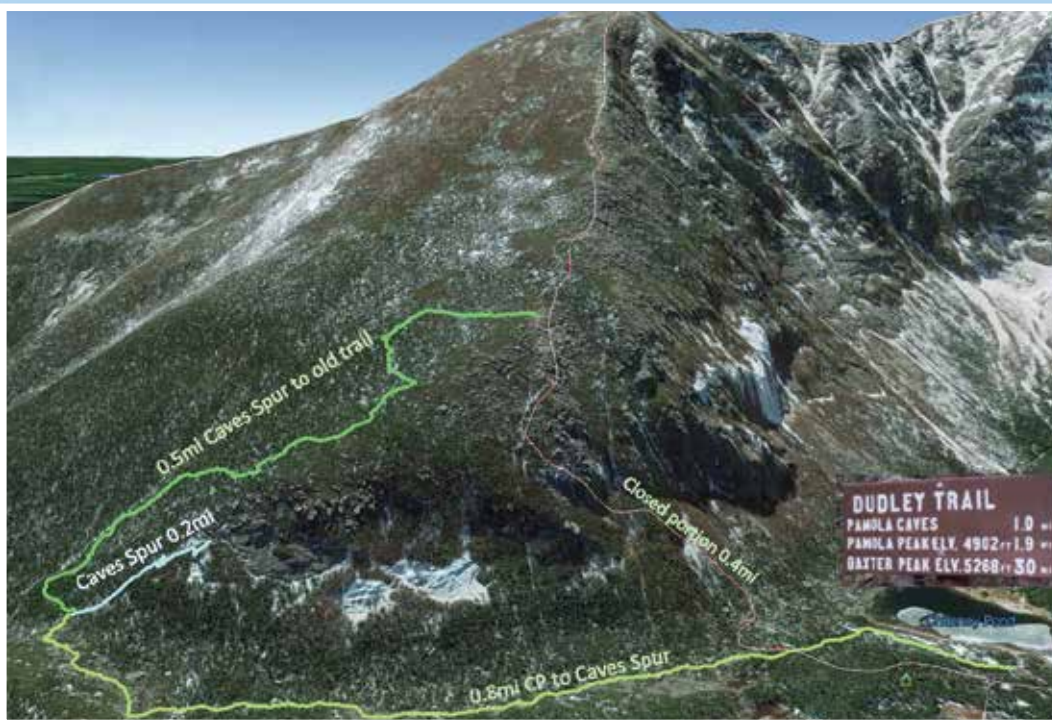
In terms of staff projects, it would have been enough to make modifications to ranger stations and gates to enhance our Covid safety factor, figure out new cleaning regimens and SAR protocols, and just handle all these visitors. Yet we accomplished lots as well. We replaced all of the bridges that we lost last year, including Katahdin Stream Falls, Sandy Stream en route to Katahdin Lake, and the bridge over Katahdin Stream that burned in the Abol fire this spring. We strengthened our ties with the Maine Forest Service in part by fighting that fire in spring. We improved four solar power systems within campgrounds, mainly there to serve our all-important radio communications. We made great strides towards fixing the drainage issues on Abol Hill, our steepest section of road, and by the time you read this will have installed two new bridges on the Roaring Brook road where large culverts had been failing from both an infrastructure and brook trout habitat perspective. We opened the Dudley Trail to visitors for the first time since 2015, extending it by half a mile and once again providing access to the Knife Edge from Chimney Pond. We've made

and the people of Maine are lucky to have such an engaged and effective staff to protect and preserve their wilderness Park.

In a normal winter, a few thousand visitors visit the Park on skis or snowshoes and stay mainly in cabins and bunkhouses. In the midst of the continuing pandemic this winter, these facilities will not be disinfected between parties, as cabins have been this summer. Instead, we are putting the onus on the visitor to disinfect their spaces and will supplement that effort on a regular, but not daily, basis, in addition to supplying the cleaning supplies. These facilities are too far apart for our limited winter staff to clean between parties, and we've come to understand that Covid transmission risk is much more likely to happen in close contact with other humans than with the surfaces on which they may have left viral droplets.

We are asking visitors to understand and take responsibility for this aspect of risk in wilderness warm winter camping this year. As with any trip into the wilderness, with remoteness comes risk. By venturing out into the frozen Park landscape in the winter months, visitors accept this risk and allow their safety to become their own responsibility. Covid introduces an additional risk. We ask visitors this winter to understand that risk and understand what we can and have done to mitigate it. The Park is a great place to escape from the day to day grind that has ratcheted up during this pandemic, and nonetheless, we must be careful as we seek the respite the Park can provide. Hope to see you out there!





This map shows the rerouted section of the Dudley Trail, which extends eastward beyond Pamola Caves before doubling back toward Pamola Peak. The caves will be accessible via a new 0.2-mile spur trail. – Map courtesy of Baxter State Park

I had an opportunity to hike the new Dudley Trail on August 8 with BSP Director Eben Sypitkowski, who wanted to check out progress on the reroute. I enjoyed the new trail immensely. It is longer and gentler overall, with more time below the treeline and extensive stonework to create a durable treadway. Although the steepest sections of boulder scrambling are gone, there's still some of that in the reroute, and plenty more on the original section above treeline. The rerouted section reaches the treeline right at the junction with the old trail. For hikers climbing via the Dudley Trail, the sudden and spectacular views at this spot will have major wow factor. For tired hikers on their way down from the summit, this spot will mark the transition to a gentler trail and some protection from the elements below the treeline.

Welcome back, Dudley! Many thanks to all of the trail crew members and park staff who worked so hard to reopen this iconic trail.

## Dudley Trail Reopens After Extensive Reroute

By Aaron Megquier

The Dudley Trail on Katahdin was closed for more than four years following a rock and debris slide in early 2016. On September 20, 2020, the Dudley Trail reopened to the public. The first hikers headed down the newly-opened trail just a few minutes after Ranger Jen Sinsabaugh took down the closed sign.

With much of the old trail obliterated by a rockslide and the entire area rendered highly unstable, an extensive reroute was necessary to reopen the trail safely. It took five seasons of hard work by the Maine Conservation Corps, Appalachian Mountain Club trail crews, and Baxter State Park staff to complete the reroute.

The 1.3-mile reroute loops out beyond Pamola Caves in a single, long switchback before swinging back toward Pamola Peak and rejoining the old Dudley Trail about 0.4 miles below Index Rock. The

Dudley Trail now measures 1.9 miles from Chimney Pond to Pamola Peak. Above the 1.3 mile reroute, the final 0.6 mile to Pamola Peak is the original trail.

For nearly a century, the Dudley Trail has had a reputation for steepness. At 1.3 miles and nearly 2,000 vertical feet – an average grade of about 29% – that reputation was well-deserved. The new trail is about 0.6 miles longer, so the average grade is now significantly lower at about 19.8 percent – although some sections are still much steeper than that.



BSP Director Eben Sypitkowski climbs a stone staircase along the new 1.3-mile rerouted section of the Dudley Trail.

– Photo © Aaron Megquier

## Update on COVID-19 Guidelines for Winter Season

Baxter State Park recently posted the following guidance on its website related to COVID-19 and the upcoming winter camping season. We are reprinting it in its entirety:

During Winter 2020-21, Baxter State Park (BSP) is following public health guidance and making every reasonable effort to make your stay safe—and we cannot do it all. We need your help. Vigilance against virus transmission comes down to individual responsibility. Visitors are expected to follow state protocols for social distancing and use of face masks, and if staying at cabins or bunkhouses, are expected to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces upon arrival and departure.

BSP staff will make every reasonable effort to provide additional disinfection in bunkhouses and cabins on a weekly basis. Bunkhouses will be booked as single-party only, as opposed to booking by individual space. A single-party refers to a family, or a group of friends and/or family that know each other.

As with any trip into the wilderness, with remoteness comes risk. By venturing out into the frozen Park landscape in the winter months, you accept this risk and allow your safety to become your own responsibility. Consequences are magnified; rescue response may be hours or even days away. Covid-19 introduces additional risk. Please understand that risk, learn what we have done to mitigate it, and recognize that your safety is your responsibility.





# Mushrooms of Baxter State Park

by Brady Kaelin, 2020 Conservation Fellow

Baxter State Park contains a wealth of diverse fungi to observe and appreciate, whether you're a casual visitor or a fellow mushroom enthusiast. Mushrooms are essential to a forest ecosystem. This article is about my project for this year's Baxter Youth Conservation Fellowship: to photograph, catalog, and describe many different species of mushrooms that can be found in the park. These pictures and descriptions will be compiled into a guide at the end of these six weeks. My hope is that this guide will give visitors one (of at least three) reliable references to use when identifying mushrooms.

This year's program is much different than the usual BYCC's trail maintenance, which could not happen this year due to COVID-19 complications. Each week I spend at least three days hiking trails and photographing any fungus I come across. On the first day, July 6th, a coworker and I spent some time on the Freezeout Trail (found across the bridge in Trout Brook Farm). There weren't many mushrooms to be found that day. But on Wednesday, July 8th, things really got interesting when we hiked into Chimney Pond Campgrounds to climb Katahdin. The hike-in alone provided around twenty different species of mushrooms to ID, including common Fairy Stool (*Coltricia cinnamomea*), False Morel (*Gyromitra esculenta*), the common white bracket fungus (*Trichaptum abietinum*), and more interesting finds which were harder to identify.

On July 14th, I hiked into Lower Fowler and snapped a few pictures of some mushrooms from the Bolete family. Later I tried some butter-fried King Boletes and was pleasantly surprised with their taste, but can't say the same for other less flavorful Boletes. The most exciting part of this hike by far wasn't the Bolete discoveries, or even the Orange-Gill Waxcaps (*Hygrocybe marginata*). At my feet, surrounded by moss, I found a puny cluster of purple coral fungus. It was one of the most



Purple coral fungus (*Clavaria zollingeri*)

– Photo © Brady Kaelin

beautiful things I have ever seen, something so vibrant and elegant that could have so easily been overlooked. While I could not find any such species in any of my guides, when I got home I found the species listed in an online collection: *Clavaria zollingeri*, the purple coral fungus.

The Baxter Youth Conservation Corps is an amazing program that provides a great opportunity for local high school students to gain experience in the outdoor career field, while also giving them the chance to earn good money for college. My first year in this position is what really sparked my interest in mushrooms. The weeks of BYCC are scheduled right when peak mushroom season occurs in Northern Maine. One day while using a tool called a swizzle stick to clear ferns, I stumbled across a huge patch of overgrown *Lactarius thynos* mushrooms. With my field guide and the help of a trail leader, I was able to identify them under their true name rather than the Chanterelles I assumed them to be. Before I ate them I checked with a

third source for good measure. Of course, you must follow safety precautions when trying wild mushrooms, as many poisonous species can be confused for edibles. Thankfully, these mushrooms were delicious and safe, and they fueled my interest in picking wild mushrooms to eat.

Returning to the Wadleigh Brook Trail that my crew maintained last year, I found many bright yellow and obviously-poisonous *Amanita muscaria*. While pretty to look at, all Amanitas are to be avoided. My most recent interesting discoveries were on the Freezeout Trail on the way to Northwest Cove on Tuesday, July 28th. Thanks to that trip, I was able to add Lobster Mushrooms (*Hypomyces lactifluorum*) to my list along with Blushing Waxcap (*Hygrophorus pudorinus*).



Orange amanita (*Amanita flavoconia*)

– Photo © Brady Kaelin

All of us as Baxter Youth Conservation Fellows are very grateful for this opportunity to pursue our interests and independently create projects for the park. I hope that the work I have done will be used to help people identify some of the park's beautiful mushrooms and teach respectful practices to keep them abundant and flourishing in our ecosystem. And perhaps most importantly, keep people safe from poisonous species.

## Our Readers Write

### Brother and Sister Summit Again - 70 Years Later

John Brower from Rome, ME, and his sister Lori Brower McCarron from Saratoga Springs, NY climbed to the summit of Katahdin on October 1, 2020. They both grew up in Augusta, attended Cony High School and the University of Maine in Orono. John and Lori are both enthusiastic members of Friends of Baxter State Park. Katahdin holds a special place in their hearts. John aged 80 and Lori, 77, first climbed Baxter Peak with their parents Auburn and Lurana Brower in 1950. Thus this was John and Lori's 70th Anniversary Hike. They climbed the "new" Abol Trail to the tableland, then on to Baxter Peak for lunch before descending the Hunt Trail to Katahdin Stream where they had camped. They were accompanied by friends Suzanne and Gary Cole of N. Monmouth, ME. John and Lori are tentatively planning a 75th Anniversary Hike in five years.

## 20th Anniversary News

By Aaron Megquier

We marked a milestone in 2020: the 20th anniversary of the founding of Friends of Baxter State Park! From a small group of committed citizens around a kitchen table, we have grown over the past two decades into a thriving organization with members around the world. We are so incredibly proud of our members who have made Friends such a vital source of support for Baxter State Park and its wilderness values.

Like so many events, our planned 20th anniversary celebration this summer was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, we've decided to hold a 21st birthday gala and "coming of age" party next summer. Our celebration is scheduled for September 9, 2021, in Hallowell. We will share more information as it becomes available, but in the meantime, we have a request:

Please take a moment to reflect on your experiences in Baxter State Park – the places in the Park you have visited, and the memories that have stayed with you. Pick one special memory and tell us about it in a few sentences or a few paragraphs (we're planning to use 3"x5" or 4"x6" cards to display these). You can include a photo if you have one. We are planning to share these memories at our celebration next summer, and possibly in newsletters leading up to the event.

Please send memories to [sarah@friendsofbaxter.org](mailto:sarah@friendsofbaxter.org) or PO Box 322, Belfast, ME 04915.

## Baxter State Park Trivia

– Puzzle Master Al Howlett

About how many years does a Katahdin summit sign last before it needs to be replaced? Please send trivia answers to Sarah Holland at [sarah@friendsofbaxter.org](mailto:sarah@friendsofbaxter.org).



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- \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 Knife Edge
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Traveler

Join our Governor Baxter Society:

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 Pamola Peak
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$2,500 South Peak
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$5,267 Baxter Peak
- \_\_\_\_\_ \$10,000 Katahdin

Please make checks payable to Friends of Baxter State Park, or join online. Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Send to:

**Friends of Baxter State Park**  
**PO Box 322**  
**Belfast, ME 04915**

*Thank you!*

**Thank you to all of our members!**

**Despite the many challenges of 2020, Friends finished the year with over 1,400 members – a new record! We are ending the year stronger than ever thanks to your generosity and loyal support. We would like to extend a special welcome to the 363 new members who joined us this year. We are thrilled to welcome you to our community of support for the Park. More than 20 years after our founding, we remain a grassroots organization powered by the passion, dedication, and generosity of our members. There are so many ways to get involved in our work. Please contact us anytime if you would like to learn more!**