



BLUE HORIZON

Friends of Blue Hill Bay

Fall 2014

Issue 12

Friends of Blue Hill Bay's Shore Inventory Project



During 2014 Friends of Blue Hill Bay undertook a shore survey of clam flats in Blue Hill Bay. More than 100 participants became citizen scientist as they identified organisms with field guides and counted a variety of species in carefully measured plots along the shores of Blue Hill Bay. Among the species counted were soft shell clam, blue mussel, common periwinkle, dog winkle, surf clams, green sea urchin, green crab, hermit crabs, razor clam and amphipods. Once species were tallied on data sheets, participants had a good idea of what lived at their clam flat site.

It was now time for phase 2 of their shore inventory study, but some background knowledge needed to be shared. Students were asked to think about climate change and ocean acidification. Hands on ex-

Martha Bell is the program manager for this FOBHB project. She has previously worked for MERI, developing and directing education programs. Besides managing this program for FOBHB, she is on the staff of Island Heritage Trust.

Funding for this project was made possible by a grant of \$5000.00 from *Maine Community Foundation* and a grant of \$4000.00 from *The John Sage Foundation*.

To date: Staff: \$6700.00

Equipment: \$108.00

Project brochure: \$148.00

periments and visual demonstrations enabled students to see how the addition of CO₂ (carbon dioxide) can change sea water and how shells made of calcium carbonate thin or dissolve with the addition of acidic solutions. Scientific research projects were referenced and discussions continued. What might this mean for Blue Hill Bay? Change in species diversity or thinning of clam shells were answers often suggested by the young scientists.

Students continued their work by gathering baseline data on the shell thickness of soft shell clams within their plots using rulers and digital calipers to measure width, length and shell thickness at the clam midpoint. They recorded the data and now we have the data gathered by many dedicated citizen scientists that we can reference in the future. Might we see change over time?

Our Mission

The mission of Friends of Blue Hill Bay (FoBHB) is to conserve the natural ecology, sustainable marine fisheries and unique aesthetic quality of Blue Hill Bay.

Friends of Blue Hill Bay is a federal and state tax-exempt 501© (3) corporation.



The Shore Project Citizen Scientists:

*BHCS 8th grade-Cemetery Beach, Blue Hill
Bay School 8th grade-Curtis Cove, East Blue Hill*

Surry School 6th-8th grades-Surry Town Landing, Surry

Brooklin School 6th-8th grades-Naskeag Point, Brooklin

Deer Isle Stonington High School 9th-12th grades-Oceanville Bridge shore, Stonington

Island Heritage Trust interns-Tennis Preserve, Deer Isle

Downeast Audubon Members-Atlantic Boat Co. shoreline

Blue Hill STEM group-South Blue Hill Wharf beach, Blue Hill

Long Island Clean-up

On July 19th, eleven volunteers from *Friends of Blue Hill Bay*, joined by five volunteers from *Friends of Acadia*, were delivered to three beaches along the eastern shore of Long Island, a part of Acadia National Park. Three Friends of Blue Hill Bay board members, Don Eley, George Knapp and Bob Slaven, volunteered their boats, with Gerry Brache skippering for Bob. Supplied with garbage bags and gloves, they scoured the high tide line and collected 16 large bags of debris plus one large plastic crate, several lobster buoys and part of a grill.

The good news was that there was less to clean up than in the past, so we're heading in the right direction. We hope to target different beaches next year with new and veteran volunteers.



Donate today!

By check-

Or use your credit card at:

www.fobhb.org

Bagaduce Aquaculture Sites

There is continuing concern about the growing number of limited purpose aquaculture (LPA) leases which have been approved by the DMR for oyster cultivation in the Bagaduce River. Licenses for these LPAs may be issued without a public hearing or survey of the area to determine the impact on the site. An LPA allows a 400 sq. ft. area to be used for cultivation for up to one year; up to 3 sites are allowed per person. Their purpose is to test the feasibility of that particular area as a growing site prior to applying for an experimental lease (4 acres for 3 years)

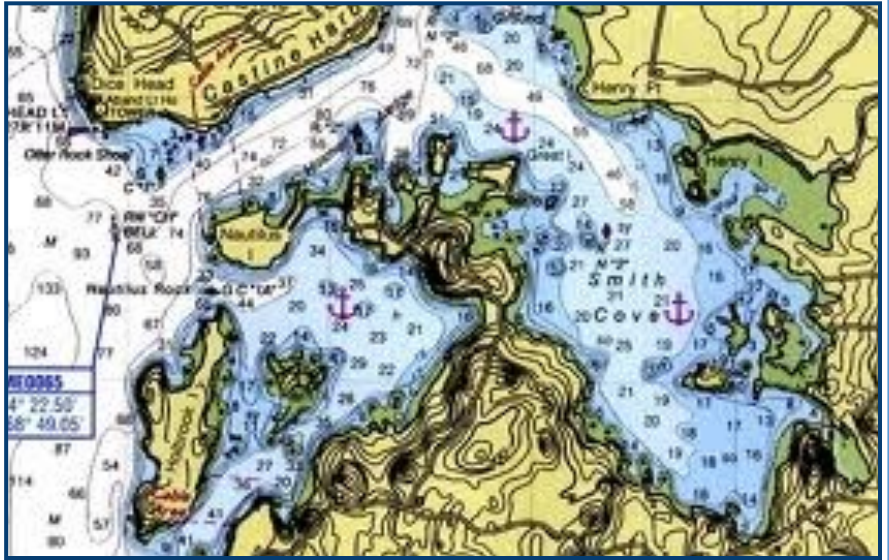
The concern is that there is not enough oversight of these LPAs and that gear, if not properly attended can break loose and cause damage to the eel grass bed-essential to the health of the river-as well as taking away from the natural beauty of the area.

Local residents want to be able to support oyster aquaculture as a livelihood so long as it does no damage to the environment. To date there are 38 LPA sites on the Bagaduce.

Two public meetings (April & July) were held in Penobscot with the DMR in an effort to come to an agreement between oyster growers and landowners.

At issue is how best to balance the needs of the oystermen with the general public's worry that without some sort of oversight the river could lose its value as a natural and scenic resource for everyone. There needs to be agreement on how to encourage responsible aquaculture and at the same time allow the river to be enjoyed by all.

An application for a new experimental lease (up to 4 acres with no hearing mandated unless there are at least 5 requests for one) has been submitted. The 4 acre site would be located near the Brooksville town landing.



Board of Directors

Don Eley, President

Dottie Hayes, Vice President

George Knapp, Secretary

George Fields, Treasurer

John Candage

William Matlock

Dave Danielson

Richard Seeger

Alison Dibble

Robert Slaven

Ronald Lesko

Patrick Wilmerding

Executive Director:

Bebe Moulton

Po Box 1633

Blue Hill, Me 04614

info@fobhb.org

bebe@fobhb.org



Friends of Blue Hill Bay

PO Box 1633

Blue Hill, ME 04614

Fewer Green Crabs?

Green crabs feed on soft shell clams and mussels and also destroy eel grass beds that are essential habitat for these shellfish and for maintaining water quality. Though green crabs (a non-native species) have been present in Maine since the mid-20th century, the recent increase in water temperature has given rise to a much larger population which has had an adverse effect on this state's fisheries. This past cold winter seems to have had the effect of reducing the population, though by no means eliminating the problem. A warmer winter and spring can return the population to its earlier higher levels.

Proactive means of elimination are trapping and habitat fencing. It is no longer necessary to have a license to trap the crabs or to keep those caught in lobster traps. Habitat fencing, in areas that have healthy populations of shellfish, has been successful in limiting the green crab population.. This fencing, however, requires a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers as it is considered a potential hazard to navigation.

It is hoped that the green crabs can be controlled so that they do little or, at least limited damage. Marketing the crabs for use in pet food or fertilizer or as bait is a possibility.

