

*Distance reflects one way hike

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

From Rt. 1, take Rt. 144 south 10 miles to SECOND intersection with West Shore Road. Turn right, go 0.25 miles to parking lot and kiosk on left (just past Junction Road).

Last updated Jan. 2021

Bonyun Preserve

This 74-acre nature preserve is located on West Shore Road (Lower) in Westport Island, Maine



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
www.kennebecestuary.org
info@kennebecestuary.org

Available Opportunities:



History

6000 years ago to 1700: Abenaki tribes inhabit seasonal camps in the rich fishing and clamming grounds of the Kennebec Estuary.

1607-1676: European settlements that were established for fishing, lumber and fur trade, expand along the rivers and on islands like “Jeremysquam” -now Westport Island.

1735: Timothy Dunton, first permanent Westport Island settler, arrives.

1830: The Riggs brothers of Georgetown followed by William and Robbins Heal of Westport establish a successful tide powered saw and grist mill, later called “Heal’s Lower Mill”, on Mill Cove. These mills would function until the 1890s. Seamen and fishermen outnumber farmers 3 to 1.

1941: Eugenia and William L. Bonyun buy 120 acres from the Thomas family. The Thomas family, and their ancestors before them, farmed on Thomas Point since the island was first settled. The Bonyun family began truck farming, and raised three sons on the property.

2002: Heirs generously donate Bonyun Preserve to the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust. The mixture of shoreline habitat and old growth woodland makes this an ecologically rich and important property to conserve.

Geology

Westport Island is underlain by granite bedrock, covered for the most part with thin, relatively poor acidic soils. The general landscape was shaped by events that occurred during the Pleistocene epoch, which began about million years ago. There were at least four periods of glaciation during which huge ice sheets covered all of Lincoln County.

The last major glaciation spread southeast about 18,000 years ago. As it moved, the glacier ground up rocks beneath it and deposited this newly eroded material as a compact layer of glacial till. The sheer weight of the ice sheet depressed the land surface, while the large quantity of water tied up in the ice lowered the surface of the sea by as much as 350 feet.

As the ice melted the land began to rebound about 13,000 years ago and emerge from the sea. Since that time, a slow submergence of the land has brought the sea up to its present level.

Ecology

The surrounding area is part of a nationally-recognized habitat for birds and fish. This section of the east coast flyway is essential for the survival of migrating birds, and over 40 species of fish use these waters including striped bass, *Morone saxatilis*.

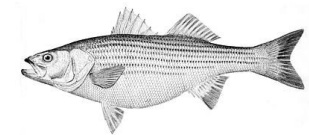
As you walk the trails look for four natural areas that support a variety of life:

1. **Tidal Inlet** - Mill Cove’s salt marsh supports wading birds such as the snowy egret and great blue heron, as well as migrating shorebirds. Low tide mud flats offer abundant crustacean and marine worm habitat. Fish fry (juvenile fish) shelter in the shallow waters.

2. **Mixed Old Growth Woods** - Great white pine, oak and hemlock are habitat for woodpeckers and songbirds. Two osprey nests are located on Thomas Cove shore. White-tailed deer, fox, raccoon, and mink use these forests for food and shelter.

3. **Fresh Water Marshes** - Wetlands nurture amphibians and birds. Mosses and ferns take root on the banks.

4. **Riparian Areas** - Land adjacent to waterways is used by 85% of Maine’s vertebrates. Amphibians find food and shelter along the small streams that drain into Mill Cove.



Striped Bass
(*Morone saxatilis*)



Great Blue Heron
(*Ardea herodias*)

Please refrain from:



Don’t Miss...

- + Spectacular pitch-pine forest at the lookout point.
- + Wide and ever-changing views of the water - you may spot a seal in a tidal inlet!
- + Ice formations on cliff faces along the Junction trail, only visible for a short time in the winter.