



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 ongoing and one-time volunteer opportunities spanning a wide range of activities and interests.

- + trail work
- + preserve stewardship
- + events
- + water quality testing
- + alewife counting
- + fundraising
- + office help

Contact info@kennebecestuary.org to find out how you can help!

Join us!

The support from our membership means KELT can maintain trails and steward public preserves from our very first conserved land to the newest 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

Take High Street north out of Bath to the very end of the street, ~2.1 miles north of the intersection of High St. and Centre St.

THORNE HEAD PRESERVE

HIGH STREET, BATH, MAINE



LAND TRUST

*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

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THORNE HEAD PRESERVE

This 88-acre nature preserve is conveniently located in the waterfront city of Bath, ME.

Available Opportunities:



Please refrain from:



Don't Miss...

- Plant identification cards posted by the Bath Garden Club •
- The panoramic overlook of the shoreline at the end of the trail •
 - Murderer's Cave, a sordid piece of Bath history •
- The preserve's pocket wetlands and vernal pools, abounding with ecological diversity •

History

Thorne Head has been at the center of watershed activity since the Abenaki Native Americans traded along the river's highway and gathered wild rice and shellfish along its shores.

1685: First deeding of land to European settlers by the Abenaki; Thorne Head used as pastureland marked by stone walls which persist into the modern day.

1751: Thorne Head receives its first permanent colonial resident, Michael Thornton.

1752: First licensed Kennebec River Ferry makes port at the tip of what is now Thorne Head.

1883: Ne'er-do-well sailors hide out in Murderers' Cave on Thorne Head after killing a Bath constable during an attempted robbery downtown.

1993: Thorne Head recognized as high value habitat and chosen for conservation by KELT in 1998.

2000: The land comprising Thorne Head preserve was sold to KELT by Robin Foster, Bonnie Griffin, Frederick Griffin, Jr. and Barbara Ludwig.

Wildlife

This forested preserve protects over half a mile of shoreline on both the Kennebec River and Whiskeag Creek, providing vital habitat for wading birds and waterfowl.

Many important fish species live in the waters off the shores of Thorne Head Preserve, including *striped bass* and the endangered *short-nosed sturgeon*. These are anadromous fish, meaning that they live much of their lives in the ocean but return to a river to spawn.

Look out for bald eagles roosting in the tall trees along the waterfront!

Geology

From 40,000 to 12,000 years ago, Maine experienced its most recent glacial period as the Laurentide Ice Sheet carved out the landscape. The glacier's southward movement left behind glacial till (randomly-sized rocks and boulders of various origins) and glacial striations (long, thin, uniformly-oriented scratches), still visible all along the Maine coast.

New England's coastal area makes up the North American component of the Avalon Terrane, the remains of an ancient continent that was divided between modern-day North America and Europe during the formation of the Atlantic Ocean.

Ecology

Thorne Head's mixed forest uplands protect nearby wetland and riparian (river) ecosystems.

Spot these key trees:

White pine
(*Pinus strobus*)



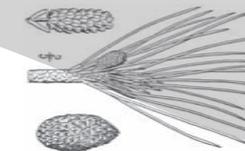
The official state tree of Maine, white pine is easily recognized by its long, thin needles that grow in clusters of five. White pine lumber has been a mainstay of the Maine economy for centuries, beginning with its use as ship mast material for the Royal Navy during the British colonial period.

Eastern hemlock
(*Tsuga canadensis*)



Usually found growing deep within shady forests, eastern hemlock can be identified by its short, flat, awl-shaped needles that become progressively shorter towards the tip of the twig. The needles are arranged so that the twig appears flat.

Red Pine
(*Pinus resinosa*)



Red pine can be distinguished from white by its needles which grow clustered in pairs. Its needles often appear to grow in a more bulbous, tufted fashion than those of the white pine. A stand of red pine can be found at the northern end of the preserve.