



MAY 2025

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

EXPLORING BAXTER STATE PARK

VANESSA LEMANSKI

Baxter State Park is located in Northern Piscataquis County. The park was founded by Percival P. Baxter, who served as Maine's 53rd Governor. He purchased and donated the first parcel of land in 1931 and continued to add to it for over 30 years. His goal was to protect and preserve the land and wildlife so that it could be kept "forever wild." Percival considered this his life's "magnificent obsession." Baxter State Park now encompasses 209,644 acres of woods, rivers, and mountains, teeming with vibrant plants and animals. It boasts over 220 miles of trails, 10 campgrounds, and is home to Mount Katahdin, Maine's tallest mountain. The park offers endless opportunities for enjoyment, and there is something for every kind of person to appreciate about this land.



Entry: You do need a pass to enter Baxter State Park. Maine residents get free access to the park, while non-residents must pay \$20 per vehicle or purchase a season pass for \$50. Baxter State Park is independent of the Maine state park system, so you cannot use a Maine State Park Pass. You can drive through the park, but the roads are narrow and unpaved. The entire ride takes about two hours, and there is no gas available for purchase in the park, so plan accordingly.

Hiking and Climbing: There are dozens of trails available at Baxter State Park. They range from easy for beginners to difficult for skilled enthusiasts. Baxter State Park offers some of the most remote and challenging climbing experiences in the Northeast United States. The most sought-after climb in the park is the summit of Mount Katahdin, which is also known as **Baxter Peak** and the highest place in the state. There is a 4,000ft elevation gain when climbing Katahdin. There are multiple trails and ways to hike this mountain, a lot of which are the most challenging trails in the park. **The Knife's Edge Trail** is the most popular because of the challenge of crossing the rocky ridge and the views from said ridge. **The Cathedral Trail** is the most difficult summit, and it is recommended to only use the trail to ascend because it is too hard to travel down the mountain this way. The easiest trail to summit Katahdin would be the **Saddle Trail**. The summit of Mount Katahdin is also the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. If you do wish to hike Katahdin, you must make reservations ahead of time. There are plenty of other hikes to enjoy in the park, a lot of which are easier. There are over 40 other mountains to experience and countless other sights to see. Alongside Katahdin, some other notable climbs in Baxter State Park include **Doubletop Mountain**, the **Mount Coe-South Brother Loop**, **South Turner Mountain**, **OJL**, and **Horse Mountain**. During any hike, it is important to stay on the designated trails and prepare ahead of time, as there is nowhere in the park to purchase equipment. The weather can change rapidly on mountains in Baxter State Park, and some climbs can be dangerous, so respect the terrain and don't try to shortcut the trails. Rescue can be hours away due to the remoteness of some hikes.

Flora and Fauna: Baxter State Park is a wilderness haven full of life, untouched by humans. You can spot wildlife anywhere, anytime in the park, but you have better odds in the early morning or evening. You have the possibility of seeing moose, bear, deer, beavers, birds, and more. **Sandy Stream** and **Strump Ponds** offer good odds for catching some animals in the open and make for good photo ops. Besides the animals, Baxter State Park is home to an array of plant life, including an impressive collection of wildflowers. The Visitor's Center and Park Headquarters have handouts detailing the wildlife and plants located in the park, and their team can help point you in the direction of what you are looking for. It is important not to disturb or feed the animals in the park and certainly do not leave any trash behind.



Camping: Baxter State Park offers various kinds of camping experiences. Each campground has different perks and opportunities, and you can choose to stay in tents, lean-tos, bunkhouses, or private cabins. **Katahdin Stream Campground** is easily accessible and popular. **Kidney Pond** and **Daicey Pond Campgrounds** offer private cabins. **Russell Pond** and **Chimney Pond Campgrounds** have to be hiked into and offer more of a backcountry wilderness experience. There are also group camping sites. You have to make a reservation to stay at the park, and you have to check in to your site no later than 8:30 pm. Quiet hours are from 9 pm- 7 am. Baxter State Park has no running water, only outhouses, and there is no potable water or supplies for purchase, so you must bring drinking water, food, and supplies in with you, and bring your trash out with you.

Boating and Biking: Canoes and kayaks are available to rent in multiple areas of the park. The rental fee is \$1 per hour. Most of the waterfront campgrounds have docks or launches into ponds, and the ponds are easy for beginners. **Webster Stream** offers a more challenging experience with class 1, 2, and 3 whitewater and a class 5 drop at Grand Pitch. Biking is allowed at Baxter State Park in designated areas. You can bike on **Park Tote Road** and **Dwelley Pond Trail**.

Fishing: Baxter State Park is home to over 50 lakes and ponds. Most bodies of water can be fished and are full of brook trout, salmon, lake trout, and more. A Maine fishing license is required, and if you do not have one, you can get one at Matagamom Gatehouse, the Visitor's Center, and all Ranger Stations within Baxter State Park.

Hunting: Approximately 25% of Baxter State Park is open hunting grounds, at certain times. Most of the hunting ground is in the Scientific Forest Management Area located in the northwest corner of the park. Moose hunting and hunting over bait are not allowed, and local hunting regulations do apply.

Regardless of how you prefer to enjoy nature, Baxter State Park has something to offer everyone. The gift of being able to experience this vast piece of unadulterated nature is exactly what Percival intended to leave the State of Maine. This luxury shouldn't be taken for granted. If you have the chance, don't miss out on enjoying this wonderful part of Maine.

WATERFALLS IN THE MAINE HIGHLANDS

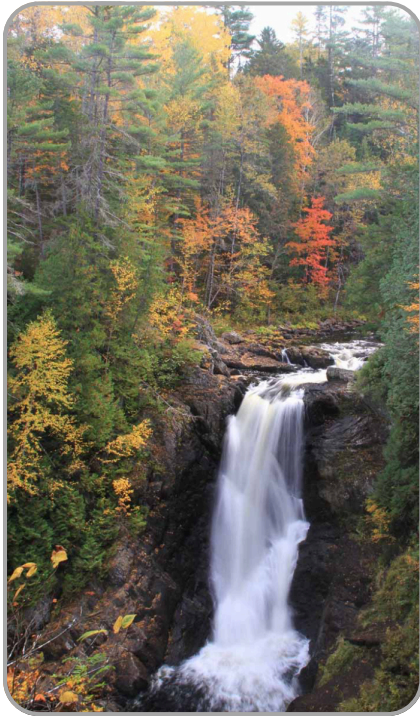
VANESSA LEMANSKI

The Maine Highlands offer an array of waterfall adventures to experience. You can find everything from small falls with roadside access to tall plunges and exciting hikes. Late spring is a great time to visit the waterfalls because the melted snow and ice give the falls heightened volume. As the months go by, the water might not be rushing as hard, but the falls are still worth the visit!

Little Wilson Falls is located in Ellitsville and is fed by Little Wilson Stream. The set of waterfalls has cascade-type and slide-type lower and middle falls, and horsetail-type upper falls. The lower falls are 18 feet high, the middle set is 25 feet high, and the upper falls are 40 feet high. The lower falls are visible from the road. The lower and middle falls are great for swimming, and there are multiple areas to access the water. To get to the upper falls, you have to hike in. The trail leads you to a section of the Appalachian Trail. The walk totals about 2.4 miles round trip and is a moderate hike. The trail has plenty of pretty views to enjoy along the way!

Big Wilson Falls is next to Little Wilson Falls in Ellitsville and is fed by Big Wilson Stream. This set of waterfalls is one of the most accessible in the state. The falls are classified as a mix of cascades and small plunges. You can drive up to the falls, no hiking required. These falls are much shorter, as they are only 15 feet high. There are many pools of water to swim in, and the easy access makes Big Wilson Falls a great family-friendly place to visit. *(continued on page 3)*





Tobey Falls is located in Willimantic and is fed by Big Wilson Stream. Tobey Falls is a slide-type waterfall at a 45-degree angle. The falls are only 8 feet high, but are a much more majestic sight than you would expect. Big Wilson Stream condenses down from 30-50 feet wide to 8 feet wide, resulting in high-pressure whitewater. Therefore, unlike some waterfalls, Tobey Falls runs year-round. It is an easy walk to the falls and only takes around 10-15 minutes.

Moxie Falls is located in Moxie Gore, near The Forks. It is fed by Moxie Stream and is a mix of plunges and cascades. The main plunge is 90 feet high and is one of the tallest waterfalls in Maine. The first half of the trail to the falls is an easy walk. The second half gets a little steeper and involves some stairs, but it is worth it to see the beautiful waterfall. Moxie Falls is very popular and considered a must-see attraction in the area.

Houston Brook Falls is located in Pleasant Ridge and just minutes away from the Old Canada Road Scenic Byway. The falls are fed by Houston Brook and consist of plunges and horsetails. The hike to get to the falls is a short 15-minute walk and is relatively easy. The falls are 32 feet high and there are lots of pools for swimming. This set of falls has areas where you can climb up the rocks of the waterfall. This is easy when the water is low, but very dangerous when it is high, so be careful! Houston Brook Falls is an exciting place to visit during the winter as the falls completely ice over, but are still accessible.

THE 2025 PISCATAQUIS RIVER FESTIVAL

Presented By McKusick Petroleum Company

JULY 26, 2025

7AM - 10PM

Guilford, Maine



This family-friendly annual event is a celebration of Guilford, Maine - the Chickadee and Lilac capital of Maine, and everyone who works so hard to make this quiet mill town a special place to call home. This year's event will be bigger and better than ever showing how this town can come together for a weekend of fun, festivities and fireworks.

The day begins with a 5K & Fun Run produced by Guilford's own **Community Fitness Center** followed by a hearty breakfast at the **Guilford United Methodist Church**. After some exercise and full belly, everyone can enjoy a festive parade that runs through downtown Guilford, concluding at the Festival grounds where kids and adults can enjoy food and craft vendors, live music all day long a new kids zone packed with pony rides, magicians, face painters, and balloon makers. We will have an obstacle course, a 3-point throw contest thanks to the **Recovery Wellness Center** of Sangerville, and a plethora of oversized yard games (corn hole, checkers, connect-four, etc.)

We will have a duck race down the Piscataquis River, a Car Show, an expanded beer garden for adults, and all of the day's activities will conclude with a dazzling fireworks display in the beautiful Guilford sky.

Come one, come all to celebrate Guilford, to celebrate Maine life, and to celebrate friendships!

For more information, schedules, or to get involved, visit:

www.piscataquisriverfestival.org



MOOSEHEAD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LUKE MUZZY

Preserving the Past, Shaping the Future. The Journey of the Moosehead Historical Society began in 1962 when the Moosehead Historical Society began preserving and sharing the rich history of the Moosehead Lake region in Maine. Over the decades, we have grown into a multifaceted institution with two campuses, multiple museums, and a proud reputation as one of Maine's premier small-town cultural landmarks.

Eveleth-Crafts-Sheridan Historical House – A defining chapter in our story began in 1976 with the acquisition of the Eveleth-Crafts-Sheridan Historical House. Built in the early 1890s by Greenville entrepreneur John Eveleth as a wedding gift for his daughter Rebecca, this stunning Victorian home became a cornerstone of local heritage. Rebecca's husband, Arthur Crafts, was both a successful businessman and a Maine Senator, and together they created a refined yet welcoming space, filled with original furnishings that remain on display today.

The house's legacy continued with Julia Crafts-Sheridan, the last family member to reside there. Known for her community service and timeless grace, Julia ensured the home's preservation by bequeathing it to the Moosehead Historical Society in her 1970 will. Her generosity is a lasting testament to her deep connection to the community. After extensive renovations, the Eveleth-Crafts-Sheridan Historical House opened to the public in 1981. Visitors can now explore this 134-year-old masterpiece through guided tours. We are open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from June 17 to October 3. Our Tour times are 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, and Admission is \$12 for Adults, \$10 for Seniors, and \$5 for everyone under age 17.

Lumbermen's Museum – The Lumbermen's Museum, located in the carriage house adjoining the Eveleth-Crafts-Sheridan Historical House, celebrates the Moosehead Lake region's rich lumbering heritage. This engaging museum showcases the tools, techniques, and stories of the hardworking lumbermen who shaped the local landscape and economy. Visitors can immerse themselves in the history of one of Maine's most iconic industries and gain a deeper appreciation for the legacy of the region's forests. We are open Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from June 17 - October 3 (closed July 4), from 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM. Admission is \$5.

Center for Moosehead History – In 2005, we expanded our reach by acquiring the historic Community House, now known as The Center for Moosehead History, located in downtown Greenville near the shores of Moosehead Lake. A cherished part of the region's cultural fabric for over a century, this venue houses engaging exhibits, administrative offices, and a vintage auditorium that continues to host lively community events. Our Winter hours (November – May) are Tuesday – Thursday, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Our Summer hours (June – October) are Tuesday – Friday, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. Admission: By donation.





THE SOUTHERN BELLE

LISA MCNAMARA

♫ **MOCK (YEAH)...ING(YEAH)...BIRD(YEAH)... MOCKINGBIRD...** ♫

I loved this song when I was a kid. But this article isn't about the cool harmonies of James Taylor and Carly Simon. It's about a yearly conference I attend each Spring with my bestie of besties, Ciara. Mockingbird is a ministry that seeks to connect Christianity with the realities of everyday life in an accessible and understandable way. For me it's a way to apply the scriptures to my chaotic and imperfect self. I was hooked at my very first conference nine years ago. And anyone who knows me well, knows all about my love for this special weekend.

My path to Mockingbird is as absurd and humorous as any of mischief making fun Ciara and I would create for the Cathedral "nuggets" (the children). Ciara was my sidekick back then as Coordinator of Children's Ministries. We instantly connected over our love for children and the Church. We constantly worked to make the Church a place of love and acceptance for all children — a place they had fun, and where they wanted to be. Ciara and I shared a hope that the Church would be a place that provided warm and happy memories for the children — for everyone. We also shared a love of all things silly and absurd.

One of the perks of working at a thriving parish is they encouraged me to continue my Christian growth and education. So this led Ciara and I to search for a conference that would fit our love of God, Church, and FUN! And in true Lisa and Ciara fashion, we found a conference in NYC, complete with an EPISCO-DISCO! We were fully committed to this experience. We were not sure the Church would send us on such a fun-filled adventure so we ran it past one of the Canons (a very good priest who was also known for mischief). He immediately gave his endorsement, and in fact he was interested in attending, as well. It turned out the Executive Director of Mockingbird Ministries, was his roommate while attending Yale Divinity School. This conference with an Episco-Disco was in fact a very valid conference. Who knew? That Cannon, Wallace, did not attend after all — it turned out he already had tickets to see Def Leopard.

From the very first opening talks at the Mockingbird conference, I was hooked... everything spoken connected with me. The longing for peace, and the constant search for grace. The need for forgiveness of myself and others, the absurdity of my judgements of others. It was a weekend filled with laughter and tears. I left feeling refreshed, renewed, humbled, with tired feet from dancing, and ready to share my new found outlook with my beloved Cathedral community. I have looked forward to this event every year since then. Ciara and I would begin looking at the schedule and speakers as soon as they were released each year. We would meticulously map out our schedules for the day. The anticipation was almost as fun as the actual event. We would speak about this event with such excitement that we ended up recruiting more and more people to join us each year, and every year was better than the previous. Even the years when NYC was waterlogged with torrential rainfalls. In fact, one year that was particularly stormy, we found umbrellas at a bodega that said "NYC ♥ Me". That became our motto for the weekend. It was so fitting. We raced across the state line to the first pharmacy that made vaccines available to us so we could attend the conference in 2021. We were, and are dedicated attendees.

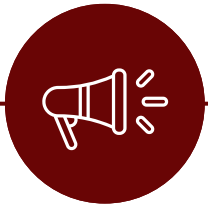
Last year, when I attended the conference, my heart was heavy. Knowing we were purchasing the bed and breakfast, I wondered if it would be my last Mockingbird experience. Would it be the last time Ciara and I would run down the NYC streets trying to get to the first talk on time... maybe a little tired from the after conference fun the previous night? My last time skipping the yo-yo show to squeeze in a little shopping time? My last time hearing the words that filled my soul with encouragement and hope for grace? I was determined that it would not be my last Mockingbird Conference, and so Ciara and I pledged that we would return in 2025. *(continued on page 6)*





It is with great joy, I can share that next week Ciara and I will be returning to the best weekend in NYC. Once again, we have mapped out our anticipated talks. We have talked about all the things we want to do while we are in the city. Most of it we won't do, like we still haven't done the tandem bike in Central Park that we planed eight years ago. But it doesn't matter if we get to everything — do everything, I am just so excited to catch up with the friend that I have laughed with nonstop since we met. The friend that shares my love of this Mockingbird Ministry. Who knows... maybe next year we can recruit some Mainers to join us?

*** This month's blog article is dedicated to St. Ciara, who always gives me the courage and permission to just be me. ***



HAPPENINGS

AT THE GUILFORD BED & BREAKFAST



HAPPY HOUR

4P – 7P (MON-FRI)

Join us every weekday afternoon from 4 PM to 7 PM for our Happy Hour. Enjoy a variety of wines, beers, spirits, and light bites while relaxing on our screened porch (weather permitting), cozying up in our library by the fire, or enjoying a roaring fire pit (weather permitting). Reservations aren't necessary, but a phone call in advance is appreciated.



BUNCO NIGHT

2ND THURSDAY (5P – 7P)

Join a growing group for a fun-filled evening of BUNCO every second Thursday of the month from 5 P.M. to 7 P.M. This action-packed game involves player rotation and mingling, making it an ideal opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. Light bites and alcohol will be served throughout the night. Come and experience a night of entertainment and camaraderie!



PISCATAQUIS WRITER'S GROUP

1ST & 3RD TUESDAY (1P – 3P)

Join the Piscataquis Writer's Group on the third Tuesday of every month from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M. to share your poetry or prose. Engage in conversations with other published authors and aspiring writers who are eager to share their stories and receive constructive criticism of their works. The group welcomes writers of all levels for a fun afternoon of conversation and learning.



LOCAL EVENTS



WHOOPIE PIE FESTIVAL JUNE 14, 2025

The Maine Whoopie Pie Festival will be held at the Piscataquis Valley Fairgrounds on June 14, 2025 (rain or shine). Join thousands of people sampling hundreds of varieties to whoopie pies at this annual tradition. The festival has fun for the whole family. \$6 entry per person. kids under 12 are free! For more information, visit their website: www.mainewhoopiepiefestival.com



MOOSEHEAD LAKE ARTISANS SHOW JUNE 21, 2025

Come out and enjoy original works by local artists and get involved in a number of fun, creative programs from 9A-3P on June 21st. This annual event will be hosted in the beautiful Greenville Junction Depot in Greenville, Maine. For more information or to rent space, visit their website: www.greenvilledepot.org/events/artisans_artshow



MAINE RED HOT DOG FESTIVAL AUGUST 9, 2025

Dexter, Maine, hosts an annual tradition that's a must-attend for Maine red hot dog enthusiasts. From a 5K run to food, music, and entertainment, this event offers a delightful experience. Join us for crafts, a kids' zone, live music, a magician, and of course, an abundance of W.A. Bean's renowned Red Hot Dogs. This year our festival will include a performance and meet & greet by Maine's own American Idol Season 22 Top 7 finalist **Julia Gagnon**, sponsored by Maine Highlands Federal Credit Union.



PISCATAQUIS VALLEY FAIR AUGUST 21-24, 2025

The 138th Piscataquis Valley Fair will open on August 21st at the Piscataquis Valley Fairgrounds. From animals to tractors, amusement rides and music, this annual event has something for everyone. For more information, visit www.piscataquisvalleyfair.com



INTERNATIONAL SEA PLANE FLY-IN SEPTEMBER 3-7, 2025

The fly-in attracts thousands of people to Greenville and the Moosehead Lake region every September to enjoy the spectacular aviation event, poke around the unique shops, enjoy the abundant outdoor adventures and celebrate fall in Maine. Come and watch your favorite pilots compete in the contests and enjoy the sights and sounds of the seaplanes! Learn more at www.seaplanefly-in.org



FROM OUR KITCHEN

This may sound like a simple breakfast treat, but there's nothing more comforting than a big plate of thick, sourdough French toast splattered with confectioners' sugar and covered with our favorite barrel-aged, bourbon maple syrup from our friends at G&M Sugar House in Charleston, Maine.

This is a favorite of our guests year-round. From the flavored, local maple syrup to fresh raspberry puree from our garden, or diced strawberries, there are so many great ways to enjoy this delectable breakfast treat.



SOUR DOUGH FRENCH TOAST

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of whole milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of salt
- 4 teaspoons of ground cinnamon
- 3 teaspoons of vanilla extract
- 10 thick slices of sour dough bread

While we typically will buy a couple of loaves of freshly baked bread from the local bakery, you can use any store bought bread so long as it is sliced thick, or unsliced allowing you to cut it thick. You want the bread to be close to an inch thick.

The above ingredients are for 8-10 slices of bread, and we tend to double the recipe because we will make this for a large number of guests.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat your griddle to 350 degrees, or if you prefer to cook directly on the stove, get the skillet hot enough for water to dance across it
- Whisk the flour and eggs together in a large bowl
- Mix in the brown sugar and salt
- Mix in the whole milk
- Mix in the vanilla extract
- Mix in the Cinnamon — add more to taste, as desired
- Add two chips of butter to the griddle or skillet
- Dip two slices of bread into the batter, flipping to get both sides drenched in the batter
- Place the battered bread onto the griddle or skillet
- Allow each side to cook for 2-3 minutes. You want to see the bottoms of the bread browning slightly
- Flip the bread to brown the other side
- Move to a warm plate and repeat until all of the batter is gone

We freeze any left overs and reheat them in the toaster for a quick, eat-on-the-go snack.



GUILFORD BED & BREAKFAST

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