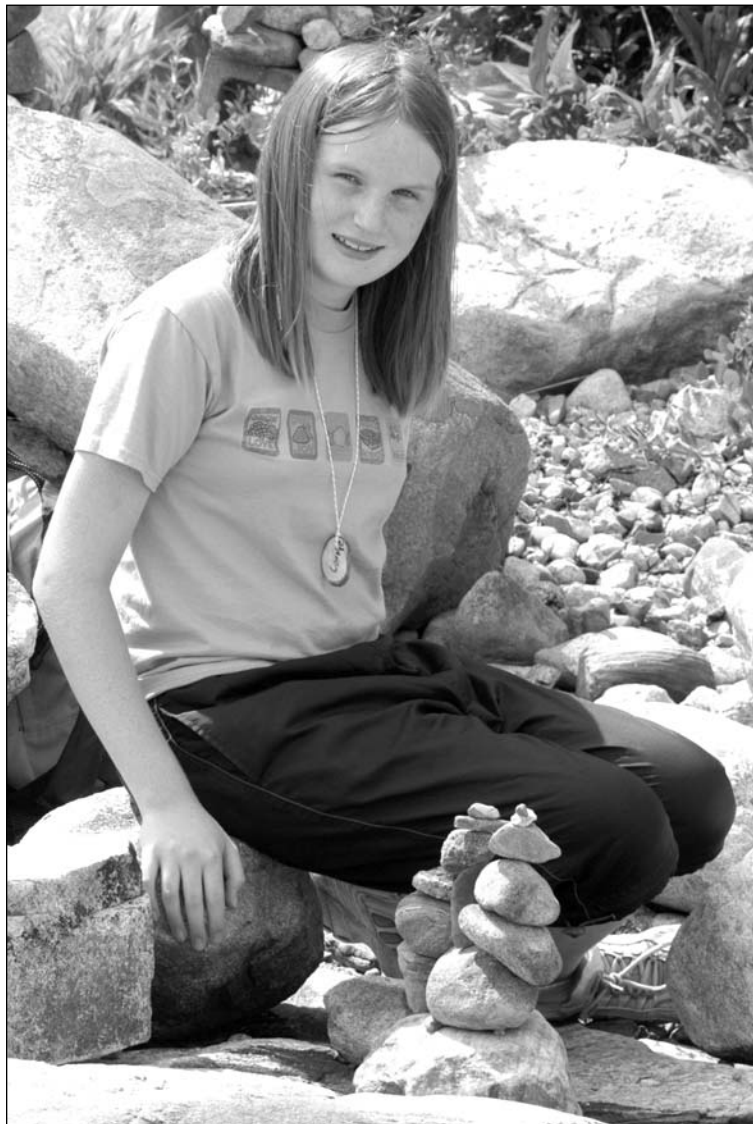


A Week in the Summer at Audubon Camp



Walden School 7th grader Carrie Harvey spent a week at Audubon Camp on Hog Island in July.

JIM ASHLEY

One day in January, Tammy Russell, the math, science and 8th grade home room teacher at Walden School, called for the class' attention. She had scholarship applications from the Northeast Kingdom Audubon Society for students interested in

attending Audubon Camp in Maine. The camp is on Hog Island. As Russell remembers, a 7th grader and several 8th graders expressed interest in the opportunity to spend a week at the summer camp.

The 7th grader was Carrie Harvey of Walden. She had always been interested in wildlife, particu-



Photos By: Jim Ashley

Located in Maine's Muscongus Bay, Hog Island is the home of the Audubon camp operated by the Maine Audubon Society. Since 1936 the camp has welcomed adults, educators and young people to its woodland trails and salty shores.

larly sea life. She likes sea animals, especially whales. She loves seashells. Each December she would wait with eager anticipation for the return of her grandfather from his annual Christmas trips to Florida. He would bring back sea shells. Lots of interesting sea shells.

It would be really fun for Carrie, a second year cadet in the Walden Girl Scout Troop, to go to camp on an ocean island. Certainly there would be interesting sea animals and maybe some sea shells. There would also be an opportunity to explore the habitats of an ocean island.

The summer camper scholarship program is the keystone of the Northeast Kingdom Audubon Society's educational programs. NEK Audubon was formed more than 35 years ago as a chapter of the National Audubon Society. The chapter was organized during the fight against construction of a flood control dam that would have flooded Victory Bog. Representing the three northeast counties of the state, the chapter encourages an increased understanding of birds, other wildlife and natural habitats.

Most popular among the members and the public are the bird-and wildlife-walks and special educational programs, which are usually held at the Fairbanks Museum. There are two special walks each year, the Christmas Bird Census and the Birdathon in late May. The Birdathon is a one day event to both take a census of birds in the Northeast Kingdom and to raise money for the camp program. Individuals, businesses and organizations are asked for sponsorships. In addition everyone has an opportunity to enter a competition to see who can come closest to guessing the number of different species seen during the Birdathon. This year the Birdathon was on May 28. Participants saw a total of 133 species and raised enough money to offer three \$850 scholarships. Campers have to come up with an additional \$200.

In late July, Carrie headed off for Hog Island. Located in mid-coast Maine's beautiful Muscongus Bay, Hog Island has 330 acres. It is part of the Todd Audubon Sanctuary, which since 1936 has been home to the camp

for adults, educators and young people.

Notables such as Roger Tory Peterson and Rachel Carson have visited and taught at the camp. Originally established with help of the National Audubon Society the camp is currently run by the Maine Audubon Society.

Headquarters for the camp where campers stay is at the northeast corner of the island, the site of a former hotel and cabins. Walking trails access the rest of the island. Low tide gives way to tidal flats, but dense forests of pine, spruce and balsam fir cover the island. At the southern end of the island is an historic oyster shell heap built by the Wawenock, a tribe of the Abanaki, as they harvested oysters. Nearby a milkweed field provides a feeding ground for monarch butterflies. The island is home to many birds species.

The camp motor boat, the "Audubon," transports campers the short distance from the mainland to the island and provides excursions to nesting colonies of cormorants, gulls, terns, petrels and guillemots. Campers also have an opportunity to visit Eastern Egg Rock where a colony of puffins was established as part of a seabird restoration program.

In 1935, John Hopkinson Baker, executive director of the National Audubon Society, said, "Only by securing a sustained,

genuine interest in nature on the part of children can we hope for a grasp of the acute need for conserving our natural resources before it is too late. And only by training teachers and other youth leaders in an understanding and appreciation of nature can children's native interest be developed." Hog Island and Carrie Harvey are examples of his vision making a difference.

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Join Carrie Harvey and two other Hog Island campers on Sunday, November 5 at 5:00 p.m. for a pot luck supper and presentation at the Knights of Pythias Hall in Danville. The hall is located a third of a mile north of the Creamery Restaurant.

Come and learn about their week at the camp. For further information contact Airie Lindsay at (802) 748-8515. ★



If you've never come face to face with hermit crab it's hard to imagine their nomadic lifestyle carrying their homes about and upscaling as they grow or their domestic tastes change.