

**ENJOY  
LEARN  
PROTECT**  
2025 ANNUAL REPORT



hirundo

# ENGAGING HEARTS AND HANDS IN NATURE



Dear Friend,

As we close out our 60th year in 2025, we reflect on one of our most impactful and transformative years yet, made possible by the generosity of supporters like you.

Our team has worked tirelessly to turn your support into meaningful achievements that expand access to nature and outdoor learning. Our new Community Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator Kristen Buck has connected with communities across Maine, attending dozens of outreach events that introduce more people to the wonders of nature. Program Director Brianna Guy reached hundreds of children this year through day camps and school field trips, led citizen science activities, guided paddles and walks, and served as our Traveling Naturalist, bringing environmental education directly to schools and community groups. Refuge Manager Howard Corbett has improved trails, bridged wet areas, maintained gear and facilities, and collaborated with University of Maine Construction Engineering Technology students to build a large screened pavilion, tripling the Refuge's capacity for outdoor programs.

These dedicated staff members, and the many others behind the scenes, bring Hirundo's mission to life every day, connecting people with nature in meaningful ways.

Paired with supporters like you, Hirundo continues to thrive, inspiring and educating more people every day. We are deeply grateful for your commitment. Keep reading to learn more about the impact you helped us make this year, and we'll see you outdoors!



*Stephanie Larouche*

Board Chair





*Established in 1965*

## **MISSION**

To enjoy, understand, and protect Hirundo's natural and cultural environment for the mutual well-being of our human and wildlife communities.

## **VALUES**

Everyone living in balance with nature.

## **VISION**

We believe that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the people and the natural communities in which they live.

We believe that an understanding of nature stimulates an active involvement in stewardship.

We believe that all people regardless of origin, age, abilities or financial resources can benefit from an intimate association with nature.





# CELEBRATING CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

## Impact in Numbers

**8,000**

Lives enriched through free and inclusive nature experiences

**1,113**

Kids connected with the outdoors through immersive programs

**2,460**

Acres of woodlands and wetlands conserved for recreation and learning

**504**

People engaged at partner events for learning and connection

**200+**

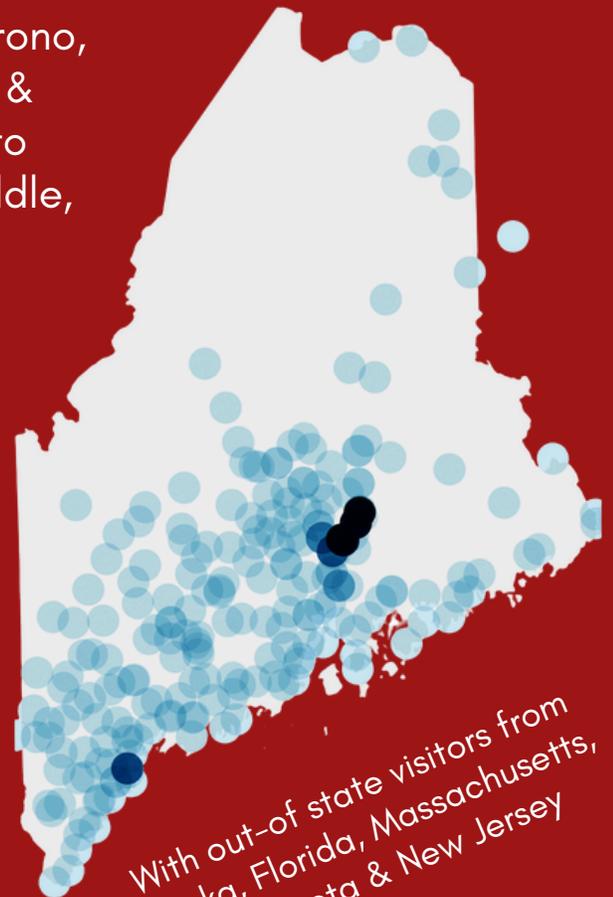
Communities throughout Maine—especially Orono, Old Town, Bangor & Portland—drawn to Hirundo to hike, paddle, and explore

**115**

Volunteers serving in conservation, education, and stewardship

**60**

Programs, events, field trips, and youth camps offered for people of all ages



With out-of state visitors from Alaska, Florida, Massachusetts, Minnesota & New Jersey

# CELEBRATING CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

## *Welcoming All*

### **Accessibility Trail Evaluation**

- Ty Perkins, a University of Maine intern, conducted a detailed accessibility assessment of Hirundo’s trails to support hikers who are deaf, low-vision/blind, or have other physical disabilities.
- His evaluation covered slope, width, terrain, surface type, and rest areas.
- Work completed includes trail updated descriptions, photos, signage, guide ropes with reflectors (*pictured here*), and example videos—providing a foundation for accessible visitor engagement and informing upcoming upgrades.

“ *True accessibility in nature requires both physical improvements and a cultural shift in how we think about who belongs outdoors.* ”

 [Read Ty's Blog Posts on Accessibility](#)





## EVENT HIGHLIGHT

**Fall Fest** in October provided another opportunity for community engagement. Over **140 people** came together at this annual event to enjoy family-friendly crafts, educational displays, and s'mores over the fire pit—experiences made possible by supporters who care about connecting people with nature.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT



During the **paddle season** from April to October, **406 people** explored Hirundo's waterways via free Saturday boat rentals, low-cost guided tours, and our public boat launch. Visitors enjoyed calm waters, spotted wildlife and witnessed the seasonal alewife runs—deepening their connection with natural spaces.





Hirundo is a **favorite for our whole family**. Annual events like the Fall Fest and Meet the Scientist Day have become traditions we look forward to every year. As a homeschooling family we are always seeking **high-quality, engaging, educational experiences** and Hirundo knows how to check the boxes on all those things.

- Nikki Cox

# BUILDING STRENGTH THROUGH COLLABORATION

## Screened Pavilion / Outdoor Classroom



- The new screened pavilion will hold 30-40 people, expanding Hirundo's outdoor classroom capacity from 12-15.
- Built in collaboration with **University of Maine Construction Engineering and Technology** students and funded by **Bangor GreenDrinks** and the **Old Town-Orono Rotary Club** and the **Bangor Breakfast Rotary Club**, the pavilion also includes picnic tables constructed by **Central High School** students.
- A plaque will honor all contributors who made this facility improvement possible.

## Earth Day Celebration

- Hirundo's annual Meet a Scientist event brought a dozen University of Maine scientists to share interactive displays with families.
- Heavy rain led to a last-minute move indoors at the **Indian Island Bingo Palace**, thanks to the generosity of **Penobscot Community**.
- The event successfully connected the public with science and nature in a collaborative setting.



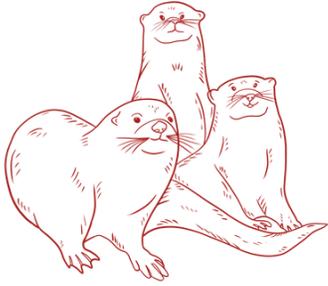
## Hirundofest



- Hirundo hosted an invitation-only supporter appreciation event in collaboration with the **Home Brewers of Greater Bangor**.
- Guests enjoyed a brew tasting competition and a charcuterie spread donated by Downtown Charcuterie.
- The event was a success despite the rain, and we plan to make it an annual celebration.

# BUILDING STRENGTH THROUGH COLLABORATION

## GRANTORS



Quimby  
Maine CF Community  
Robert Schumann Foundation  
Onion Foundation  
Bangor Greendrinks

## SPONSORS



### EARTH DAY HEROES

IGA  
Natural Living Center  
Maine Real Estate Management  
Owen Folsom Inc.  
Bangor Breakfast Rotary

### NATURE EXPLORER - BRONZE

Osborne Media  
State Farm - Kylie Bean

### NATURE EXPLORER - GOLD

Tyler Technologies

### TRAIL STEWARDS

Casella  
The Country Federal Credit Union

### INSURANCE SPONSOR

Varney Insurance



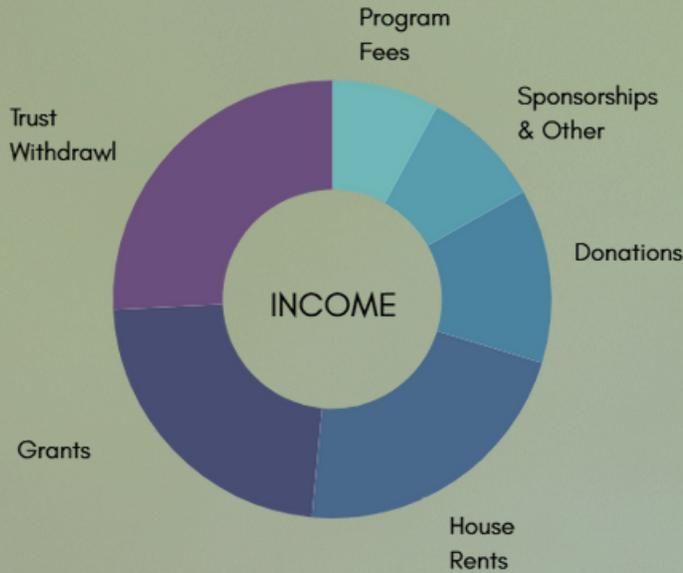
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The educational opportunities Hirundo provides enhances understanding and appreciation for our great state as well as the environment, which fits nicely into The County's goal of serving all of Maine wherever they may be.

- Kerri Watson-Blaisdell,  
VP of Marketing

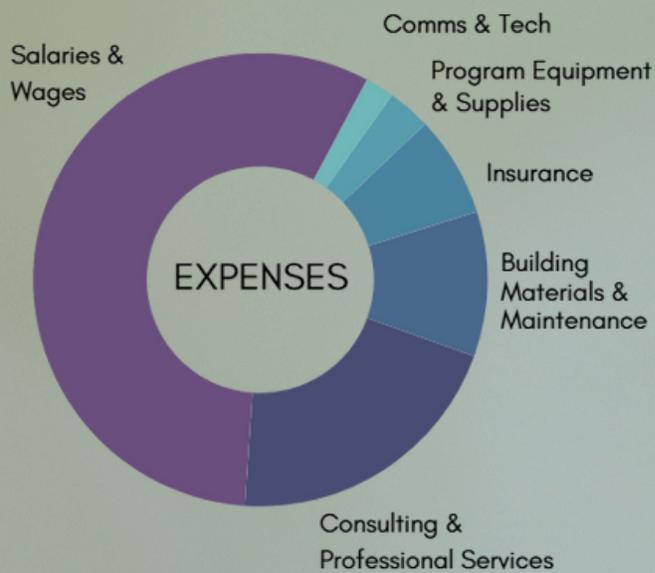


# INVESTING IN ACCESS TO NATURE



Every dollar we receive supports our mission to enjoy, understand, and protect Hirundo's natural and cultural environment.

Revenue beyond expenses is reinvested to enhance conservation efforts, strengthen educational programs, and sustain this special place for both people and wildlife.



Staff-led programming, outreach, and conservation account over 86% of our expenditures, demonstrating our commitment to hands-on stewardship and the direct care of Hirundo's lands, waters, and wildlife.



# HIRUNDO THROUGH THE YEARS

*Looking back on 60 years of conservation, education & recreation*

**1965**

Hirundo  
Established



**1970**

Lac D'or dug  
& Parker Reed  
Shelter Built

**1975**

Hirundo  
archaeological  
site listed on  
National Register  
of Historic Places



**1978**

Larouches deed land  
to UMaine solidifying  
longstanding  
partnership

**2012**

Officially  
registered as  
501c3 public  
charity

**2016**

62 acre parcel of  
land to add to  
refuge  
  
Receive Natural  
Resource Council of  
Maine's People's  
Choice Award

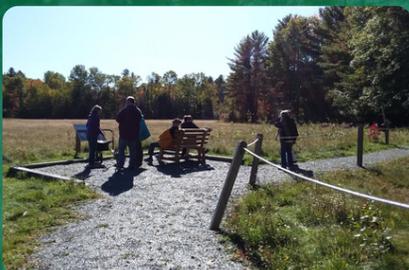
**2017**

'Trail of the  
Senses' ADA  
trail loops built

**2022**

Converted  
equipment shed  
into Visitor Center  
+ built Kid's Trail

**2025**





# LOOKING AHEAD: JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY

## *2026 and Beyond*

### **CELEBRATING WITH A RIBBON-CUTTING**

We will hold a ribbon-cutting for the new screened pavilion this spring with activities and refreshments. The pavilion will then host Hirundo programs and be available for private rentals.

### **INVESTING IN KIDS IN NATURE**

We will offer \$1,500 in camp scholarships, giving more youth a hands-on outdoor experience.

### **ENHANCING OUR FACILITIES**

We will increase Hirundo's facility capabilities with an additional solar battery, water catchment system, and other improvements.

### **BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS**

We will partner with more local businesses, schools, and organizations, co-hosting events, coordinating promotions, and linking field trips to classroom lessons to expand outdoor learning.

### **EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE**

We will bring back the fall raffle with earlier ticket sales, allow supporters to honor loved ones with memorial bench plaques, and consider a memorial walkway.

### **CHARTING THE PATH FORWARD**

We will advance strategic planning to guide Hirundo toward becoming a leading educational center for the region.



# LOOKING AHEAD: JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY

*Ways to Partner*



## Give, Volunteer, or Get Involved

Every contribution helps people of all ages connect more deeply with nature. You can give to **support Hirundo's ongoing work**, provide camp scholarships, or share your time as a volunteer or advisory council member.

 [Donate](#)

 [Volunteer](#)

## Local Partnerships, Lasting Impact

Join a network of local businesses that care about Maine's wild places. From sponsorships to collaborative fundraising, **your partnership helps sustain Hirundo's educational programs and natural spaces** for all to enjoy.

 [Sponsor](#)

# ROOTING PEOPLE IN NATURE

## Staff Members

- Brianna Guy, *Program Director*
- Howard Corbett, *Refuge Manager*
- Kristen Buck, *Community Outreach + Volunteer Coordinator*
- Jody Stevenson, *Grants Consultant*
- Debora de Paula Hoyle, *Marketing + Communications Consultant*

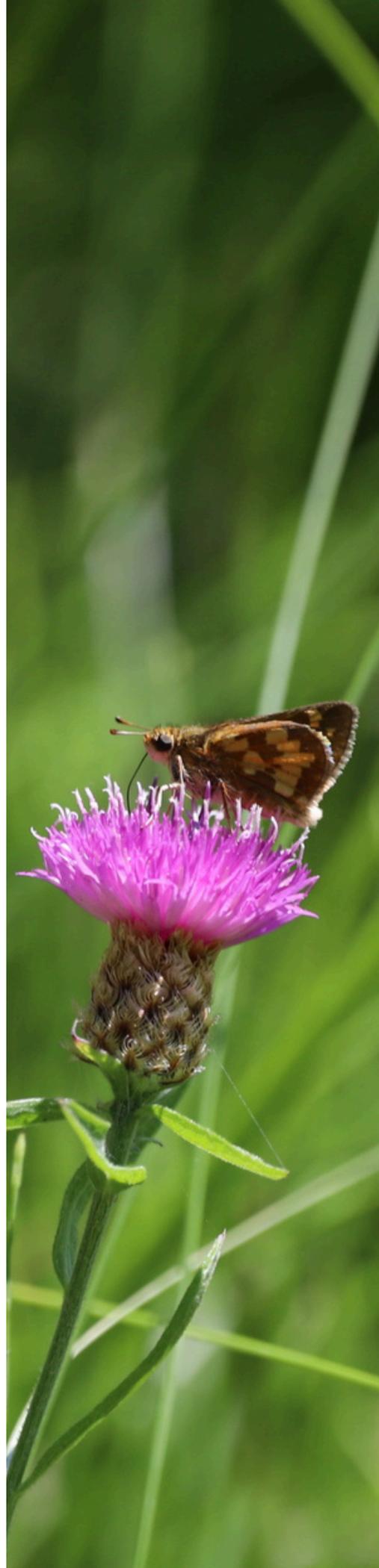
## Trustee Members

- Dick Andren, EdD
- Dan Day
- Roxane Larouche, RN, MSN, ANP
- Stephanie Larouche, MD, *Board Chair*
- Veronica Larouche, MA
- Laura Lewis
- Peggy LeClair, MBA
- Rad Mayfield III, EdD, *Treasurer*
- Diane Norris
- James Rohrbaugh
- Laura Sanborn
- Peter Schilling, PhD
- Rebecca Sgouros, MSc, *Vice Chair*
- Judy Walker, PhD, CCC-SLP
- Kailey White



Learn More

Visit [hirundomaine.org](https://hirundomaine.org)  
and contact us at  
[info@hirundomaine.org](mailto:info@hirundomaine.org)

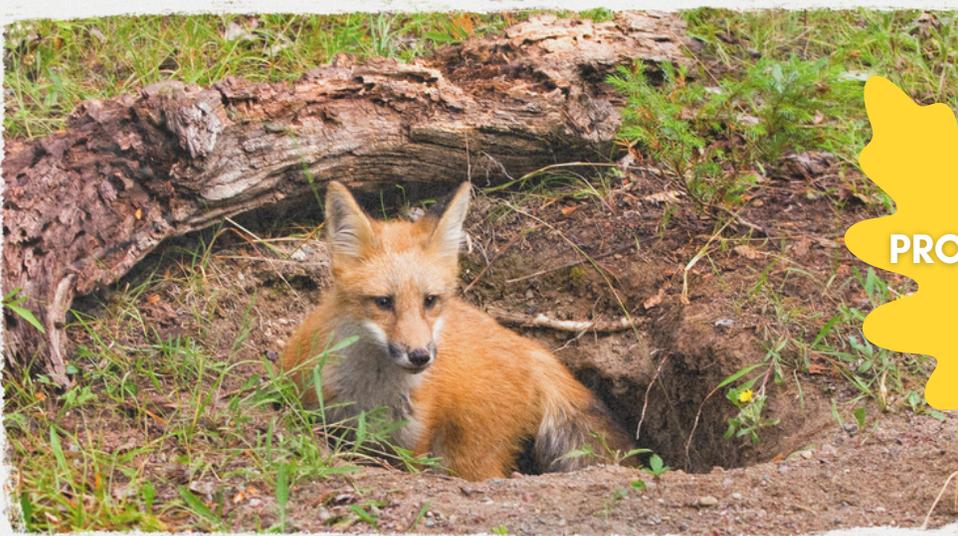




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