

HODGDON ISLAND FLORA AND FAUNA

If you hike the trail counterclockwise, you will soon see a distinct stand of northern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*). In the winter in many parts of Maine, cedar is heavily browsed by white-tailed deer. Since very few deer swim to the island, their absence enhances native plant communities, particularly understory shrubs, which provide nesting habitat for many long-distance migratory birds. Common in wetlands, cedar is also found in upland sites that are rich in calcium. This species provides nesting cover for hermit thrush, Canada warbler, and many other migratory birds. The island has a number of other interesting plants that prefer calcium-rich environments, including wicopy (*Dirca palustris*) and broad beech fern (*Phegopteris hexagonoptera*).



A PARTIAL LIST OF HODGDON ISLAND BIRDS

American crow	eastern wood-pewee
American goldfinch	gray catbird
American robin	great blue heron
bald eagle	great-crested flycatcher
Baltimore oriole	herring gull
barred owl	mourning dove
belted kingfisher	northern flicker
black-and-white warbler	red-eyed vireo
black-capped chickadee	ruby-throated hummingbird
black-throated green warbler	song sparrow
blue jay	Swainson's thrush
cedar waxwing	turkey vulture
common grackle	veery
common loon	white-breasted nuthatch
downy woodpecker	wood duck
eastern kingbird	yellow warbler
eastern phoebe	

FOREST AND CONSERVATION HISTORY

In the 18th and 19th centuries, farmers on Cobbossee Lake used the lake islands as woodlots and sometimes as pastures. In the late 1700s and 1800s, island trees were harvested for lumber and fuel wood. Following this era, the forest regenerated into the stand you see today, with some of the white pines and red oaks now over 150 years old. Today, natural forces, including wind, climate change, and diseases, continue to change this forest stand.

When agriculture declined in central Maine in the mid-19th century, newcomers, some of whom were relatives of early residents, came to Cobbossee Lake to enjoy the quiet, beauty, and outdoor opportunities the lake provided. The southern part of Hodgdon Island was owned by one of these seasonal families, the Elliot Farris. In 1994 the Farr family donated seventeen acres of the southern part of Hodgdon Island to the Kennebec Land Trust. Ancestors of the Farris -- the Briggses and Baileys -- had generations ago farmed land on the west side of Cobbossee Lake.

Today, Kennebec Land Trust volunteers maintain trails and monitor these island properties so that they will be available to the public year-around for generations to come.



Sarah Fuller

ABOUT KENNEBEC LAND TRUST

Founded in 1988, The Kennebec Land Trust (KLT) works cooperatively with landowners and communities to conserve the forests, lakes, streams, wetlands, fields, and wildlife that help define central Maine. KLT protects and stewards land permanently, offers access to conserved properties, provides opportunities for people to learn about and enjoy the natural world, and works with partners to support sustainable forestry and farming. Our properties feature more than 50 miles of trails for everyone.

Protected properties include Vaughan Woods in Hallowell, Norris Island in Wayne, Mount Pisgah in Winthrop, Parker Pond Headland in Fayette, Howard Hill in Augusta, and the Wakefield Wildlife Sanctuary in West Gardiner. Most KLT conservation lands offer public access in all seasons for hiking, paddling, bird watching, skiing, and just enjoying nature. A full listing of Kennebec Land Trust properties and their recreational uses, and an interactive map with directions, can be found at our website: www.tklt.org.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Kennebec Land Trust
PO Box 261
331 Main Street
Winthrop, Maine 04364
207-377-2848

With thanks to the trail crew: Jon, Erik and Morten Lund;

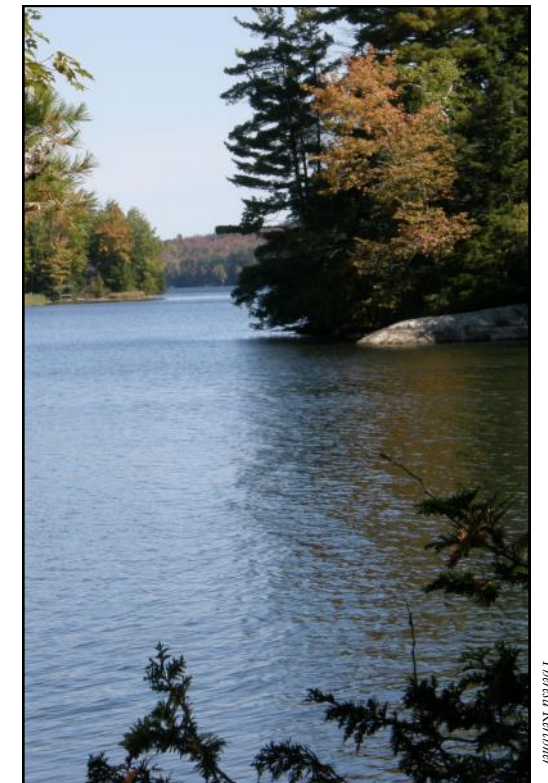
and those who contributed expertise and time toward this brochure: Jon Lund, Nick Lund, Howard Lake, Jim Hillier, Wendy Dennis, Robert Marvinyne, Ron Joseph, Bruce Bourque, Steve Brooke, Center for Community GIS; Janie Matriciano; Bird list: Nick Lund: July, 2009 Brochure Text: August, 2009, Updated, July 2020.



© Jon St. Pierre



KENNEBEC LAND TRUST HODGDON ISLAND PRESERVE COBBOSSEE LAKE WINTHROP, MAINE



Theresa Kerliner

*The **Kennebec Land Trust** works cooperatively with landowners and communities to conserve the forests, lakes, streams, wetlands, fields, and wildlife that help define central Maine.*

**KENNEBEC LAND TRUST
HODGDON ISLAND PRESERVE**

Welcome to KLT's 17-acre Hodgdon Island Preserve! We hope you enjoy your visit to the island's sandy beach and speckled granite rocks, the impressive interior forest, and the beautiful shoreline and wetlands along Cobbossee Lake.

In deeds from the early 1800s, Hodgdon Island is Eastman(s) Island and Cobbossee Lake is variously referred to as Front Pond, Lake Cobbosseeconte, Winthrop Pond, or Cobbosseeconte Great Pond. Although both the shape and the names of Hodgdon Island and Cobbossee Lake have changed over time, the natural resources - wildlife, wetlands, waters, and forests - have been valued by people, both resident and migratory, for thousands of years.

**PREHISTORY, HISTORY,
COBBOSSEE WATER LEVELS**

Archeological evidence suggests that as early as 7,500 years ago, during the Middle Archaic period, people fished and hunted on Cobbossee Lake from the shores of Hodgdon Island, the same way that residents and visitors do today. The name Cobbosseeconte is said to mean *place of the sturgeon*. This Native American name probably referred to the confluence of Cobbossee Stream and the Kennebec River, as it is unlikely that sturgeon have ever been in Cobbossee Lake.

Two hundred years ago, before dams were built at the Cobbossee outlet, the lake, streams, and islands looked very different from what we see today. Before the pond was dammed, early farmers harvested meadow hay along some parts of the shoreline.



Wendy Dennis, Oct 23, 2001

A photograph taken from the south end of the lake shows the "Dismal Swamp" as it might have looked hundreds of years ago when water levels were much lower.

The first dam on Cobbossee, constructed in the late 1830s, was two feet high. Today's dam, at nine feet, was built in 1917. Before the lake was dammed, Hodgdon Island and the YMCA Camp Island were one island, and KLT's lands on the northwest arm of Horseshoe were connected at low water to KLT's Sheep/Perry Island. When the lake level was nine feet lower, it would have been possible for farmers to move animals to Sheep Island from the shore of Cobbossee Lake just east of Horseshoe Island, or by boat from the west shore. Likely, this is how Sheep Island, an island pasture, got its name.

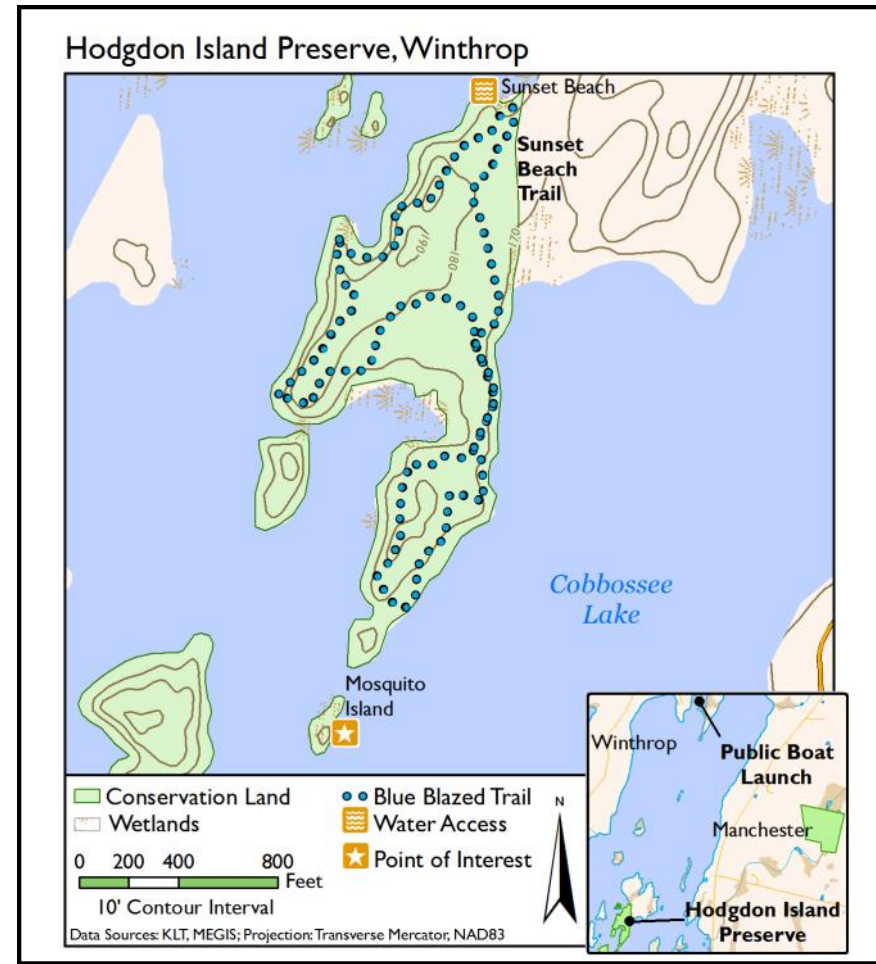
HODGDON ISLAND GEOLOGY

If you arrived at KLT's Sunset Beach trailhead by boat or skis, you are standing on igneous rocks that are roughly 400 million years old. These intrusive rocks are granites and pegmatites that are similar to rocks found in Hallowell's famous granite quarries.



Thorax Kerhner

All the islands of the northern part of Cobbossee Lake are underlain with a fascinating collection of geological units (including thinly bedded marble, thinly bedded schist, rusty units, and granite pegmatite) that are generally well exposed along the shores of the islands. The metamorphic rocks (marble and schist) are Silurian in age, meaning that the original sediments that formed these rocks were deposited around 416 to 443 million years ago. As marble weathers, it releases calcium and other minerals into the soil, a process that often creates botanically rich environments.



Access The island can be accessed by small boats or on the ice in the winter. Boaters can land at Sunset Rock on the west side, where a granite ledge and a sandy lake bottom provide an ideal spot for picnics and swimming. The one-mile Island Trail Loop starts at the sign-in box at Sunset Beach and features spectacular views of the shoreline and wetlands, an unusual northern white cedar stand, and an old white birch with a fire scar. Mosquito Island at the south end of the western arm, is a quiet, pleasant, picnicking spot.

Hodgdon Island Preserve This 17-acre parcel on the southern part of the island includes a sand beach at the trailhead. A KLT sign at the beach marks the beginning of a 1 mile loop trail that features impressive red oaks, a northern white cedar stand, and marble outcrops.

Perry Island Preserve This 6-acre island, the largest undeveloped island on the lake, is maintained as a nature preserve, no trails. A KLT sign is on the west shore at the "landing".

Horseshoe Island Preserve KLT owns four properties on Horseshoe Island totaling 23.5 acres: two 7.5-acre parcels on the eastern arm, a 5-acre lot on the west arm, and a 3.5-acre piece including the tip of the eastern arm of the island. The land at the northeast end of Horseshoe Island supports an impressive stand of large white pine trees. There is a KLT sign on the east shore of the eastern arm, no trails.