



Lamprey River Family Fun Day May 20, 2012, Mary Blair Park, Epping



A crowd gathers for the start of a race.

There was no shortage of fun in the sun at Epping's Mary Blair Park on Sunday, May 20. Kids young and old could choose from an assortment of activities that ranged from tame to really wild:

- competing in 3 legged races, water balloon tosses, nature scavenger hunts, and sack races
- learning about and holding live turtles and snakes
- cheering on rubber ducks as they raced down a stretch of the Lamprey River
- practicing canoe basics
- walking among historic mill remains
- handling animal pelts and making animal tracks
- learning about the Lamprey River and how one person, every person, can make a real difference



Sneaking a peak at some of the little creepy crawlies that live in the Lamprey's clean water.



Young fisherman practicing to catch the big one.

The Epping Youth Athletic Association, which maintains the park, kept everyone going with their Snow Cones and other treats. Everything else was free, especially the smiles. The event was co-sponsored by the Lamprey River Advisory Committee, Epping Recreation, Epping Historical Society, and the Lamprey River Watershed Association.

The event was planned to celebrate the Lamprey River and its many assets: recreation, history, wildlife, and abundant clean water. The full river and five of its major tributaries are celebrating the one year anniversary of being nominated to the NH Rivers Protection and Management Program in June 2011. This summer is also the first in about 250 years that fish can potentially migrate from Great Bay back to their native spawning grounds far inland. (The Bunker Pond Dam in Epping was removed last summer and Durham's Wiswall Dam now has a fish ladder.) A protected, natural flowing river is a resource for us all, now and into the future. On that, people and fish agree. To learn more about the Lamprey River, please visit www.lampreyriver.org.

What's New with the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee?

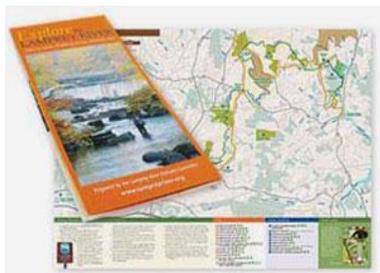
The full Lamprey River and five of its major tributaries have been in the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program for one year. After settling in and taking care of some of the basics of a new committee, the representatives from the fourteen towns are now in the process of doing a key responsibility: writing the rivers' management plan. This is no easy task. The members must look at current issues and forecast issues that will necessitate action in the next few years. They must look at the geographic, social, and financial issues of fourteen different towns: some small, some large, some far inland, some on the coast. They must carefully consider many variables:



- how to keep the good water clean and address areas that are not clean
- how to ensure adequate flow so that people and nature have enough water
- how to make sure people can access the river for appropriate recreation
- how to preserve important historic and cultural assets
- how to protect valuable habitat for a wide variety of creatures
- how to engage citizens and their governments.

Fortunately, the members do not need to create a management plan from scratch. The Wild and Scenic River towns of Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket created a management plan several years ago and revised the original plan in 2007. Please visit <http://www.lampreyriver.org/about-us-2007-mgmt-plan-revision> to review the existing plan. For those who have suggestions for the full river plan, please contact Sharon Meeker at 659-5441 or s-meeker@comcast.net.

Charting a Course for Fun



Summer and fall are splendid times to explore the great outdoors. The Lamprey River offers a wealth of activities to enjoy: fishing, bird-watching, canoeing or kayaking, exploring a flood plain or old mill site, or enjoying nice views from a bicycle or car. The Lamprey River Advisory Committee has a tour map and guide of river sites to visit in the towns of Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket. The maps are a terrific resource for long-time residents and newcomers alike.

The maps can be downloaded at http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/LampreyTourMap_page_1.pdf and the accompanying guide can be downloaded at <http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/LampreyTourGuide.pdf>. Maps/tour guides are also available for free at the Lee Public Library.

In the summer of 2011, the committee built a canoe launch just downstream of Wadleigh Falls on Route 152. This launch is for the public and offers a safe place to park and access the river. Have a nice paddle upstream and let the river carry you back to the canoe launch. Please be aware that Wadleigh Falls is just downstream of the canoe launch, and your canoe will not survive going over the falls and dam without damage. Wadleigh Falls is best enjoyed from land.

Have fun and “tread lightly” on our Wild and Scenic Lamprey River!

Help Wanted

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. ~Margaret Meade

None of us is as smart as all of us. ~Ken Blanchard

The Lamprey River and its tributaries run through fourteen towns. Each town must have at least one representative on the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee and may have up to four. Currently, Durham and Lee have four, but Northwood has none. Most towns have one or two representatives. By statute, the committee should also represent various interests along the river. Town governments, environmental specialists, and riverside landowners are well represented, but no one is giving a voice to agricultural or business interests.

If you or someone you know wants to be involved in the future of the Lamprey River, please contact Sharon Meeker at s-meeker@comcast.net for more information and your town clerk for an application. Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of every month. Please join us!

Let Us Entertain You

After a day of canoeing or fishing on the river, when you just want to kick back and relax, you can still enjoy the Lamprey River from the comfort of your favorite chair. The Lamprey River Advisory Committee has produced several films for your viewing pleasure:

- *River Story: The Lamprey River through History*
- *Streamwalk*
- *Wiswall's Mill: A Short History*
- *Mary Blair Park*
- *Connecting Lives on the Lamprey River*
- *Spring into Vernal Pools*

All are available at www.lampreyriver.org under the "videos" tab on the home page, or at your local library. Why not invite a friend to join you?

Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee Small Grants 2012

For the past three years, the LRAC has awarded small grants to creative, worthwhile projects that help educate residents of the Lamprey River towns about the river's outstanding natural, historic, or recreational assets. Three grants are being awarded this year:

- The Lamprey River Watershed Association will be creating an inventory of small dams in the towns of Epping, Lee, Durham, and Newmarket. In the process, owners of private dams will be interviewed to assess their interest in improving the ability of fish to get over the dams in the future. In some cases, fish passage could be improved significantly by adding something as simple as some well-placed rocks to form a small pool that provides smaller fish with a rest stop. The inventory will ultimately provide NH Fish and Game with identified opportunities for future dam modification or possible removal.
- The Epping Recreation Commission will be working on a plan to develop Mary Blair Park near the former Bunker Pond Dam. The park already has two nice baseball fields and the accompanying support buildings. Mary Blair Park is also the start of the annual Lamprey River Canoe Race. The planning project will involve mapping the area, creating a plan for a real canoe launch that will not result in erosion of steep river banks, determining where and how to install a "natural playground" that encourages kids to explore nature, and delineating a short nature trail.
- The Epping Historical Society will be working on a plan to develop a history trail and interpretation of historical mill remains at Mary Blair Park. The site was home to one of the earliest mills along the Lamprey River and significant granite foundations and canals still exist. The interpretive signs along the trail will tell the story of water power: how the Lamprey River drove not just machinery, but also the development of villages and towns along the river.

Newly Revised *Lamprey River Curriculum*

Debbie McNelly is passionate about teaching and the Lamprey River. She co-authored the original elementary school *Lamprey River Curriculum* in 2000 and her students know the river is their river. When Debbie retired from active teaching in 2011, she applied for and was awarded a Small Grant from the Lamprey River Advisory Committee to revise and update the curriculum.

Her hard work over the last year is winding down, and the fruits of her labor are now on-line and ready for the next generation of passionate teachers and river admirers.

The *Lamprey River Curriculum* encourages students to explore the river's history and meet some notable residents. It provides a detailed and engaging field trip that allows students to do hands-on, relevant science. The curriculum is primarily geared for elementary school teachers, but parents and grandparents will also find it useful for the children in their lives.

The curriculum also has a smaller middle/high school component. This has been updated with recent issues and research ideas. Like the elementary curriculum, the upper level curriculum invites students to view the river from historic, scientific, artistic, and social perspectives.

Go to www.lampreyriver.org and click on the education tab. Go on, explore!



Monkman photo

The Sun shines not on us but in us. The Rivers flow not past, But through us.
- John Muir