

## **Newsletter Winter 2017**



### **Lamprey River Elementary School Nature Trail Opens in Raymond**



Photos by Dick Lord

On December 9, as temperatures started to plummet and winds picked up, a group of ten children and about twenty adults formally opened the new Eco-center nature trail. As Raymond Town Manager Craig Wheeler noted in his opening remarks, this venture involved cooperation and support from all levels of government and local business in hopes that the youngest among us will learn about and protect the land and river that have sustained people and wildlife for longer than anyone can remember.

Teachers at the school have had an informal trail for many years, but now they, the students, and the whole community have a guided tour. The main kiosk welcomes visitors and puts the park in to the context of the Lamprey River as it runs to Great Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Signs at twelve stops along the path describe ecology, reptiles, amphibians, birds, soil science, habitat types, wetlands, water supply, and geology. In addition to the trail and signage, the eco-center also features a beautiful gazebo built this past summer.

The funding for the project began with a Wild and Scenic Lamprey River Advisory Committee grant for \$5000. A matching award from the Raymond Conservation Commission quickly followed and then a \$1500 community grant from Walmart and \$1500 of in-kind labor and materials from Bemis Construction. In the end, numerous partners and volunteers came together to enrich the outdoor experience of children and families and to protect the Lamprey River and the larger environment. In addition to the funders noted above, the following also played a role in the success of the project: Raymond School Board, Raymond

Planning Department, UNH, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, NHDES, and staff at the Lamprey River Elementary School.

The nature trail is open to the public on weekends and school vacations. Future plans for diverse forms of passive recreation and overall site improvements will make this eco-center a destination and showpiece for the whole Lamprey River watershed. Stay tuned!

## Nature's Ice Sculptures

Have you ever noticed that ice can assume some bizarre shapes? Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee member, Dick Lord, has. As the resident photographer of the group, Dick finds much to see and record as he visits the river. When you go outside, see what you can see, and please share your photos with us!



This photograph is of a twig sticking out of the water in a stream. The bulge of ice around the twig has melted and refrozen, resulting in ice that is so clear that it looks like glass and acts as a lens to bend the appearance of the water behind the bulge.

This photograph shows the underside of an ice shelf that formed along the shore and was then left suspended after the river level fell. The bulges in the icicles probably show where the surface of the stream level changed over time.



We have a few hypotheses about how these ice forms came to be, but if you know for certain, please contact us at [www.lampreyriver.org](http://www.lampreyriver.org).

## Who's That Knocking on the Birdfeeder?

Woodpeckers are among the winter residents that make frequent visits to bird feeders. The species most commonly seen in this area are downy and hairy woodpeckers. The two are very similar in appearance; they differ mainly in size and beak length. The males of both species have an obvious red patch on the back of their heads, whereas the females lack this splash of color. At your backyard feeder, the downy is much more likely to be seen. It is about the size of a sparrow (versus the hairy which is about the size of a robin) and it has a small beak compared to the much longer bill of the hairy. Downy woodpeckers are the smallest American woodpecker and they are also the most common on the East Coast.



downy  
woodpecker

[www.ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov)



hairy  
woodpecker

[www.ct.gov](http://www.ct.gov)

In the summer these woodpeckers, like other woodpeckers, forage for insects and larvae and take advantage of nuts and seeds when available. In winter, they enjoy supplemental feedings of suet and sunflower seeds.

### Did you know...?

- Most woodpeckers have two toes pointing forward and two pointing back for exceptional grip on vertical tree surfaces.
- Woodpeckers have a pad between their brains and their skulls to absorb the impact of pounding their beaks against wood.
- Woodpeckers generally peck slowly to feed, but drum quickly to attract a mate or communicate with other woodpeckers. They typically peck 8-10,000 times per day.
- Woodpeckers have long barbed tongues with which they can spear their insect prey.
- New Hampshire has 8 species of woodpecker: downy, hairy, pileated, red-bellied, red-headed, yellow belly sapsucker, northern flicker, and American three-toed.
- The largest North American woodpecker (16-19 inches tall) is the pileated woodpecker. It excavates rectangular holes for feeding but round holes for nesting.
- Northern flickers eat lots and lots of ants, often from the ground. One bird was found to have over 3000 ants in its stomach.

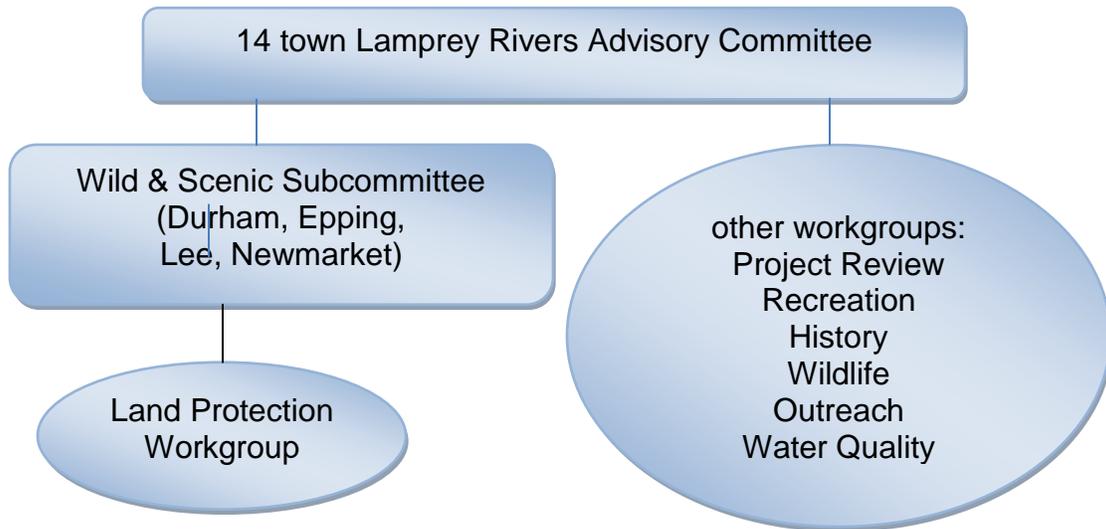
## Sullivan Falls Archaeology: What's Old Is New Again

The Lamprey River has a rich industrial history. Up to 100 mills once operated along the river. In the summer of 2016, the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee commissioned an industrial archeologist to locate and document features associated with the General John Sullivan Industrial Complex built in the late 1700s on the Lamprey River in Durham. The project included the following components: visual inspection, mapping and photography of archeological resources; review of background research compiled by the Durham Historic Association; informant interviews; excavation of subsurface tests; and synthesis of information into a report. The site has been subjected to flooding, erosion, reforestation, and elapsed time, but what remains offers important information about Durham's industrial past. To view the report, please visit [http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/Sullivan Mills Redacted 102116.pdf.pdf](http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/Sullivan_Mills_Redacted_102116.pdf.pdf).

## Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee Structure

Many people have questions about Lamprey River groups. Who is who and what does each group do? Maybe a picture with some simple descriptions might alleviate some of the confusion...

### Structure of the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee



The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee (LRAC) is the entity that is responsible for the local side of the Wild and Scenic Rivers partnership with the National Park Service and the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. Each town connected to the Lamprey River is allowed to nominate up to four volunteers who represent various interests in each town. Representatives are

officially appointed by the commissioner of the NH Department of Environmental Services.

The Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee has a related but separate partner, the Lamprey River Watershed Association (LRWA). The LRWA is a 501-(C)-3 registered non-profit. It is a membership organization, meaning that anyone who pays dues is welcome. The LRWA supports the LRAC by serving as its fiscal agent, conducting water quality monitoring, and partnering with occasional projects in research, outreach, or recreation.

Both groups are always looking for new members.

For the Lamprey Rivers Advisory Committee, visit [http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/join\\_us.pdf](http://www.lampreyriver.org/UploadedFiles/Files/join_us.pdf) or call 659-5441.

For the Lamprey River Watershed Association, visit <http://www.lrwa-nh.org/get-involved/volunteer/>.

## **Yours, Mine, and Ours: The Lamprey River Watershed**

By definition, a watershed is the land/drainage area around a body of water. When rain falls on this area, it ultimately goes to a river, lake, or estuary. The Lamprey River is approximately 50 miles long and its watershed is approximately 212 square miles. This subwatershed of the Great Bay Estuary delivers more fresh water to the bay than any other. A healthy Lamprey River is essential for a healthy Great Bay. It's all connected!

