

## Newsletter Spring 2025



### Herring Aid Is Back!

<p>alewife <i>Alosa pseudoharengus</i></p>	<p>Herring Aid will return this spring when the river herring head back from the ocean to their birth places upstream to spawn the next generation. In 2024, over 100,000 fish passed through the Macallen Dam fish ladder and back to the Lamprey River, a record!</p> <p>How many will we see this year?</p>
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- Witness first-hand the great annual migration of the river herring.
- Ask the biologists all your fishy questions.
- If you are brave... handle the river herring.
- If you are *really* brave, hold a sea lamprey or let baby American eels swim around your fingers. (At last year's event, there were hundred of lampreys to see and handle. Maybe we'll get that lucky again!

**This event is free and will occur rain or shine.**

Date: Saturday, May 17, 10-noon

Location: Macallen Dam, Newmarket, NH

Free parking is available along Route 108 and behind the Newmarket Public Library. Follow the fish signs to the top of the fish ladder.



Scary(?) sea lamprey  
photo by RH Lord

**See you there!**



## Lee Public Canoe Access Updates

Last year, the LRAC provided funding and expertise for several projects to improve the popular Public Canoe Access on Route 152 in Lee:

- ✓ The Lee Historical Society made use of a LRAC community grant to create waist-high informational panels that invite visitors to learn more about the mills at Wadleigh Falls and the long history of Indigenous presence in this section of the river. The panels will be placed at the Lee Public Canoe Access parking lot off Route 152. Leaders of the Cowasuck Band of the Pennacook-Abenaki people and Lee Historical Society will be on hand to speak and answer any questions. Stay tuned for the date and time.
- ✓ After two years of weather-related delays, the canoe launch has been repaired and upgraded. The deep drop from the lowest step into the river has been corrected with the addition of a new granite step. Water boards have been added to the left side of the stairs to help move stormwater from the parking area into the woods while also providing a user-friendly area to drag kayaks and canoes without contributing to erosion. The parking area has been regraded and repacked, thus eliminating big puddles and muddy conditions. Everything is ready for summer fun!
- ✓ Ongoing work by the Lee Conservation Commission to remove invasive plants and encourage native plants was augmented by professional removal of abundant poison ivy last summer. Volunteers can now access the site to trim or remove unwanted plants and plant desirable plants without itchy consequences.

## Lamprey River Water Quality



*E. coli*

Last year marked the fourth year that the LRAC has commissioned bacterial tracking along the Lamprey River. This research included analyzing monthly samples from six recreational sites (Schanda Park in Newmarket, Piscassic Park in Newmarket, Wiswall Falls in Durham, the Lee Public Canoe Access, Epping Town Hall, and Carroll Beach in Raymond), as well as six samples along Moonlight Brook in Newmarket. Concentrations of fecal bacteria were determined and DNA technology was utilized to discern what the sources of the bacteria were (ex: human, dog, cow, horse, gull, Canada goose, bird, mammal).

Key take-aways from 2024 bacterial tracking:

- Overall, the average bacterial concentrations and the frequency of exceeding New Hampshire State threshold levels were lower in 2024, with little rainfall, compared to 2023 with more abundant rainfall.
- As in the previous years' research, the Moonlight Brook outlet at Schanda Park had consistently elevated levels of all bacterial indicators, including human *E. coli* on 5 of 9 dates and the highest average overall concentration.

- Epping Town Hall and Carroll Beach exceeded the 153 cfu/100 ml standard on 4 dates and remain a concern.

Updates:

- The LRAC will continue to fund bacterial tracking in 2025.
- The Epping Wastewater Treatment Facility has been operating without any discharges of partially treated sewage for over two years. While the town is currently in compliance with its permit, capacity is limited and no new connections to the sewer are allowed. Epping residents recently voted to raise and appropriate \$1.8 million for the purpose of engineering design for the wastewater treatment facility upgrade.
- Several sewer pipe upgrade projects in Newmarket have begun or will begin soon. We hope that we will see improvements along Moonlight Brook and at Schanda Park this year. Newmarket voters recently approved a \$5.5 million bond for Bay Road Force main replacement and pump station improvements.

## **Cool New Mapping Tools Available**

As part of preparations for a revised *Lamprey River Management Plan*, we are pleased to offer a powerful new mapping tool that you can access with your computer. The maps have been designed to be user-friendly and can be reviewed on-line or printed. The on-line maps are easily customized: You can add or remove data layers and you can switch among map styles such as simple, satellite, and topographic. You can also use the built-in ruler to determine distance in feet, miles, or kilometers, as well as determine area using square feet, acres, or hectares. You can zoom in to see details. Links to more information on many map features are available by clicking on the site. *Please note: the maps do not work with cell phones.*

The following data layers are included: FEMA flood maps, NH designated river corridors, water quality test sites, instream flow gages, public access points, contamination sites, Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act jurisdiction, rail and utility corridors, NH Wildlife Action Plan Habitats and NHWAP Habitat Tiers, conservation land, impervious surfaces, and wetlands. Type in your address on the main map and give it a try!




The maps are available through [Main Map \(All Data\) | LRAC Mapping Project 2025 - Map Viewer](#) and on the [www.LampreyRiver.org](http://www.LampreyRiver.org) homepage.



important to their continued presence. Of special note, when a development or redevelopment project is proposed along the river, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) requires a formal inquiry with the Natural Heritage Bureau. If any rare plant, animal, or natural community is identified, extra protections can be required, and in some cases, NHDES can refuse to issue a permit. The more reports available to support the case that a particular site is being utilized by a rare or threatened species, the greater the protections. Please do not assume that someone has reported a species at a particular location before. A report from this year is far more powerful than a report from 20 years ago. A dozen reports from this year are more powerful than a single report from this year.

Reporting a rare animal is easy. Take a photo with GPS enabled and note what the animal was doing or other readily observed details. Please send your documentation to [raarp@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:raarp@wildlife.nh.gov).

The following rare animals might be seen along the Lamprey River:

		
<p><u>Blanding's turtle</u> NH Endangered Look for the yellow throat and domed black shell. <i>Photo by Jon Bromley</i></p>	<p><u>spotted turtle</u> NH Threatened Note the yellow or orange spots on the shell and head. <i>Photo by images.fws.gov</i></p>	<p><u>wood turtle</u> NH Species of Concern Look for scultped shell and orange skin on neck. <i>Photo by Jonathan Mays, <a href="http://www.maine.gov">www.maine.gov</a></i></p>
		
<p><u>bats</u> All seven species of native bats are now listed as NH Threatened or NH Species of Concern. Photographing and identifying them is extremely difficult. When they are present, please take a random photo with GPS activated and try to count the number of bats encountered. <i>Photo by nps.gov</i></p>	<p><u>northern black racer</u> NH Threatened Note the narrow body and long, tapered tail. <i>Photo by Brendan Clifford</i></p>	<p><a href="http://www.wildlife.nh.gov">www.wildlife.nh.gov</a> lists many other species that are declining in NH. Several occur along the Lamprey River corridor, but identification by non-experts might be challenging.</p> <p>If you know your fish, birds, dragonflies, mushrooms, etc., and you see something noteworthy, please document it and share it with NH Fish and Game at <a href="mailto:raarp@wildlife.nh.gov">raarp@wildlife.nh.gov</a> or <a href="http://www.nhaudubon.org">www.nhaudubon.org</a>.</p>

## Turtlefest



*Basking painted turtles, photo by RH Lord*

The Newmarket Conservation Commission is hosting a family-friendly celebration of local turtles! Free!

**Saturday, May 10, 9:30 AM to noon**

**Location: Newmarket Jr/Sr High School,  
213 Main Street**

Adults can attend presentations, while kids can enjoy crafts and activities.

Lunch on your own, then Rockingham Rail Trail Field Trip from 1:00-3:00 PM

**Have a happy spring!**

