

## Kennebec Estuary Land Trust Fall 2020 Storybook Walk Programs

The Kennebec Estuary Land Trust will host three storybook walks with the objective of engaging preschool to early elementary aged children in fun, educational activities that will instill appreciation for the natural environment around them. KELT will be presenting age-appropriate, nature-based stories that will work in tandem with related activities to employ observational skills in natural locations. In completing these programs, children will gain an introductory understanding of broader themes surrounding estuary education. With a focus on habitat, ecology, and environment, these programs will fulfill Goal Three of the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership's *Casco Bay Plan (2016-2021)*: "Foster resilient communities and their connections to Casco Bay." Within this goal, we will focus on Strategy 3.1: "Strengthen appreciation for the cultural, ecological, and economic values of Casco Bay."

### *I. Themes and Activities*

The first program will take place at the [LOCAL Garden](#) and feature the book, "[Flowers Are Calling](#)" by Rita Gray. With the theme, "Pollination Power: Life Inside a Garden," families will be introduced to the basics of the pollination process while learning about the ecological and economic benefits of the Garden. The book and activities that go with it will teach about the connections between pollinators, plants, and local people.

#### Learning Targets:

- Gain a basic understanding of how bees, butterflies, and other organisms help plants grow.
  - [Resource for Pollination Lesson](#)
- Connect pollinators to the production of food that goes to people in the community.
  - [The Garden Story](#)

#### Activities:

- Make sounds or movements associated with various pollinators.
  - Buzz like a bee carrying pollen from a flower.
  - Flap your arms super fast like a hummingbird and have someone count how many times you can flap in 30 seconds! A hummingbird can flap up to 80 times per second, which is 2400 times in 30 seconds. How close to that can you get?
- Imagine if you were a pollinator.
  - Which fruit or vegetable would you want to help grow? Where in the garden would you like to make your home?
- Write a thank you note to a pollinator for helping provide food.
- What pollinator could best fit with which plants?
  - [Pollinators, Meet Your Plants](#)

The second storybook walk will take place in [Bath's City Park](#) nearby the Patten Free Library in Bath and present the book, "[Count Down to Fall](#)" by Fran Hawk. The theme of this program will be "Falling Leaves: Identification and Understanding." We will take participants through the process of leaves changing color in the fall as they identify key characteristics of leaves they may encounter.

Learning Targets:

- Be able to identify different types of fall leaves based on color or shape.
- Engage your senses and observational skills.
- Have a basic understanding of how/why trees shed their leaves before winter.

Activities:

- Movements and actions in between book panels that replicate falling leaves.
  - Twirl, spin, or float like a falling leaf to the next page of the story.
  - Can you make your body into the shape of a leaf you've found?
- Use color and shape to identify different leaves.
  - [Printable Leaf Identification Chart and Cards Set](#)
- Collection of leaves to trace, press, or keep in a book.
  - [Why do leaves change color in the fall?](#)
- Use your senses in the search for fallen leaves.
  - Can you hear the wind rustling through the trees? Do different trees sound different? Can you listen very closely and hear leaves hit the ground?
  - What do different leaves feel like to your fingers? Can you feel a difference between a leaf that's been on the ground for a long time and a leaf that just fell?
- More to be determined when the book is acquired.

The third program, taking place at KELT's [Green Point Preserve in West Bath](#), will present the book, "[Down East in the Ocean: A Maine Counting Book](#)" by Peter and Connie Roop. With a theme of "Experience Maine Animals: Land and Sea," we will introduce participants to a variety of species that live in the estuary region. As families walk the trail, they will follow along with the book and acquaint themselves with animals that are integral to the Casco Bay Estuary ecosystem.

Learning Targets:

- Be able to name ten species that live on Maine's coast.
- Understand the types of animals that live here and why they are important to the ecosystem.
- Learn characteristics of various local species.

Activities:

- Movements between book panels that imitate the species being learned about.
  - Hop like a harbor seal on the rocks.
  - Flap your wings like a seagull to the next page.
  - Do your best whale song!
- Imagine being specific animals to engage in thoughts about diet, habitat, etc.
  - If you were an osprey, what do you think you'd like to eat?
  - If you were a lobster, where would you hide to blend in and avoid predators?
- Connect animals to each other, i.e. who eats who?
  - [Ocean Food Web | Science project](#)
  - What happens if one species disappears?
- More to be determined when the book (with the list of animals) is acquired.

## II. Frame Design

There are countless resources and designs for storybook walk frames, so here we will highlight two of those possibilities. For organizations looking for a temporary, low-cost option, we will provide plans for a simple frame that can be moved between locations and whose display can be easily changed.

### Materials:

- Wooden stake
- Thin plywood backboard, size to be determined by sizes of books
- Laminated book pages and activity instructions
- [Industrial-strength Velcro](#)

### Procedure:

- Fit backboards to the size of a single book page or side-by-side pages. Leave room for activity instructions or prompts underneath.
- Cut wooden stakes to desired height, ideally at eye level for small children.
- Attach backboards to stakes, ideally with sturdy screws.. Paint if desired.
- Apply velcro strips on the backboards where pages and activity instructions will go.
- Laminate each book page and activity prompt or image. Attach velcro to the reverse sides.
- Attach laminated materials to the backboards, lining up the velcro strips.
- Set up the frames in the desired path at the chosen location. They can be moved to another location easily.
- If needed, detach the pages or activity instructions and replace them with new laminated sheets.



For organizations looking for a more permanent, high-end option, we will provide plans for a sturdier frame that serves as a long-term installation at a location.

Materials:

- Wooden post, 4x4 and cut to desired height
- 1 in. thick wooden sheet for backboard, surface size determined by size of books
- Clear plastic sheet sized to fit backboard
- Printed book pages and activity instructions/prompts
- Additional supporting wooden beams/pieces

Procedure:

- Fit backboards to the size of a single book page or side-by-side pages. Leave room for activity instructions or prompts underneath.
- Place book pages and prompts as desired. Set plastic over the backboards and secure with bolts or screws.
- Seal the edges of the displays to prevent water damage. This can be done by creating a thin wooden frame around each display, or more simply with hot glue or other sealant.
- Cut the top of the posts at a 45 degree angle.
- Install the posts into the ground in desired locations, ensuring sturdy foundations.
- Attach the display to the post, using supporting pieces as needed.



*III. Timeline as of 9/21/2020*

LOCAL Garden: September 30th - October 14th

Patten Free Library Park: October 15th - October 29th

Green Point Preserve: October 30th - November 13th