



Join Us!

Please help KELT conserve land, preserve culture, and ensure wildlife habitat in the Kennebec Estuary. Membership support is extremely important. Become a member today!

Consider a gift membership for someone who appreciates special places.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Contributor | <input type="checkbox"/> Email event invitations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Steward | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporter | <input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Conservator | |

Mail to KELT, PO Box 1128 Bath, ME 04530

Gift from: (include address)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

email: _____

Directions

Take High Street north out of Bath to the end.

Parking lot GPS Latitude and Longitude:
N43°56.589 min. W069° 49.108min.

Thorne Head Preserve

High Street Bath, Maine



Dedicated to conservation of the natural, historic, scenic, cultural and agricultural resources of the Kennebec Estuary

P.O. Box 1128 Bath, Maine 04530
(207) 442-8400
www.kennebecestuary.org
info@kennebecestuary.org

Welcome

The Preserve is open free of charge to the public from dawn to dusk. Help us protect what you have come to enjoy. Natural areas are delicate; foot traffic only, stay on trails; no camping, fires or motorized vehicles. Hunting, fishing and trapping are permitted pursuant to state law. Dogs must be on leash, and please clean up after your pet. Enjoy your visit!

Ecology of the Preserve

Thorne Head Preserve protects over a half mile of shoreline along the Kennebec River and Whiskeag Creek. The Preserve's woodlands range from mature, mixed softwood forest along the shoreline to younger softwood and mixed hardwood forest toward the interior. Large hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) and tall white pines (*Pinus strobus*) dot the closed canopy forest along the shoreline, and a stand of red pine (*P. resinosa*) is located at the extreme northern tip of the preserve. The Preserve supports over 100 species of plants and most of the common wildlife species found in midcoast Maine. The preserve is defined by six distinct natural features.

AVAILABLE SERVICES AND
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



1. Palustrine Shrub Swamp

Located just north of the kiosk on the Overlook Trail, this pocket wetland provides feeding habitat for migrating songbirds, and breeding, feeding habitat for frogs and salamanders.

2. Mixed Woods

Old white pine, hemlock, oak and maple trees shelter migrating warblers and nesting birds requiring unbroken large tracts for protection. Owls hoot from woodland perches. Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), frequent tall trees at the water's edge.

3. Vernal Pools

Spring peepers (*Hyla crucifer*), wood frogs (*Rana sylvatica*), and spotted salamanders (*Ambystoma maculata*) utilize vernal pools as breeding habitat in the spring.

4. Brackish Tidal Marsh

Much of the tidal wetlands along Whiskeag Creek are state recognized as important waterfowl and wading bird habitat. Thorne Head's wetlands are home to two state endangered plant species: Parker's pipewort (*Eriocaulon parkeri*), and estuary bur-marigold (*Bidens hyperborea*). Wild rice (*Zizania aquatica*) is an important food for migrating ducks in the late summer and fall and fish fry seek protection from predation amongst the emergent vegetation.

5. Riparian Areas

Land adjacent to water ways is used by 85% of Maine's vertebrates. Amphibians populate the North Creek Outlet, a stream that can be viewed from the bridge along the trail. Bald eagles may be seen here.

6. Kennebec River Estuary

An estuary is the area of a river system affected by marine tides. The Kennebec Estuary supports nine species of anadromous fish, including striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*), now part of a world class fishery, and short-nosed sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*), a federally endangered species.

Land Use History

Thorne Head has been at the center of watershed activity since the Abenaki Indians traded along the river's highway and gathered wild rice along its shores.

1640 Indians deeded land to the first European settlers; one of the most important exports was great white pine logs, mast stock destined for the King's navy. Thorne Head was logged into the twentieth century. The Preserve became pasture land marked by the old stone walls you see.

1751 Michael Thornton, first resident to locate on Thorne Head.

1752 What is currently High Street is extended through Thorne Head to the first licensed Kennebec River Ferry, probably a rowed gundalow about 20 feet long. You follow the Overlook Trail past the palustrine shrub swamp and turn on to the Old Ferry Road.

1883 Ne'er do well sailors hide out on Thorne Head. Murderer's Cave may be visited today to recall the unfortunate killing of a Bath constable during a downtown robbery attempt. The culprit was captured and hanged.

1993 Critical Habitat Survey completed by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife designated Thorne Head as high value habitat, and the City of Bath's Comprehensive Plan recognized the property as a premier natural resource.

1998 KELT began a fundraising effort to purchase the property with many individual contributions and a grant from the Land for Maine's Future program.

2000 Thorne Head Preserve opens.