



# Discover Your Inner Steward on the Maine Island Trail

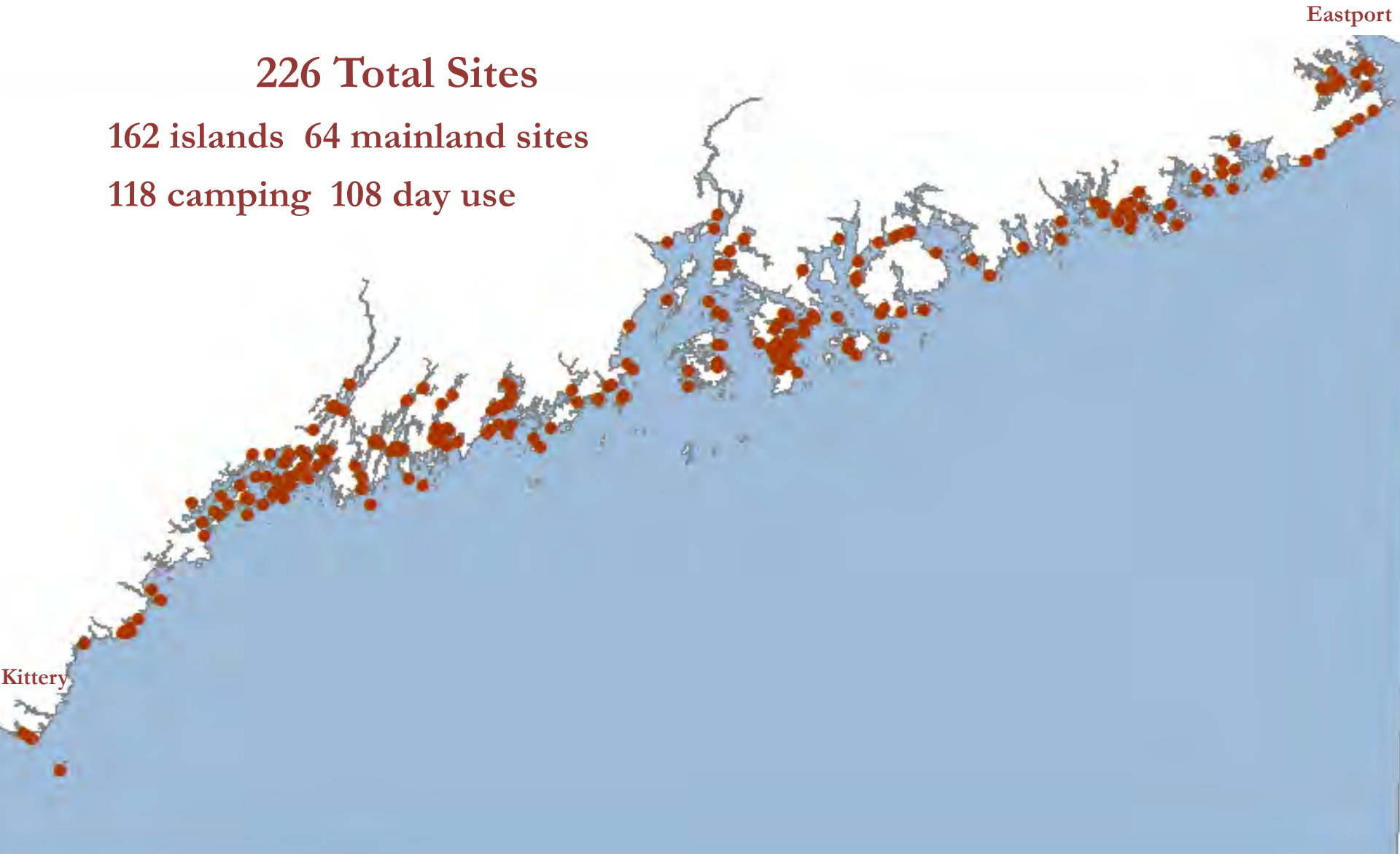
Brian Marcaurrelle – Program Director, MITA

# The Maine Island Trail

**226 Total Sites**

162 islands 64 mainland sites

118 camping 108 day use





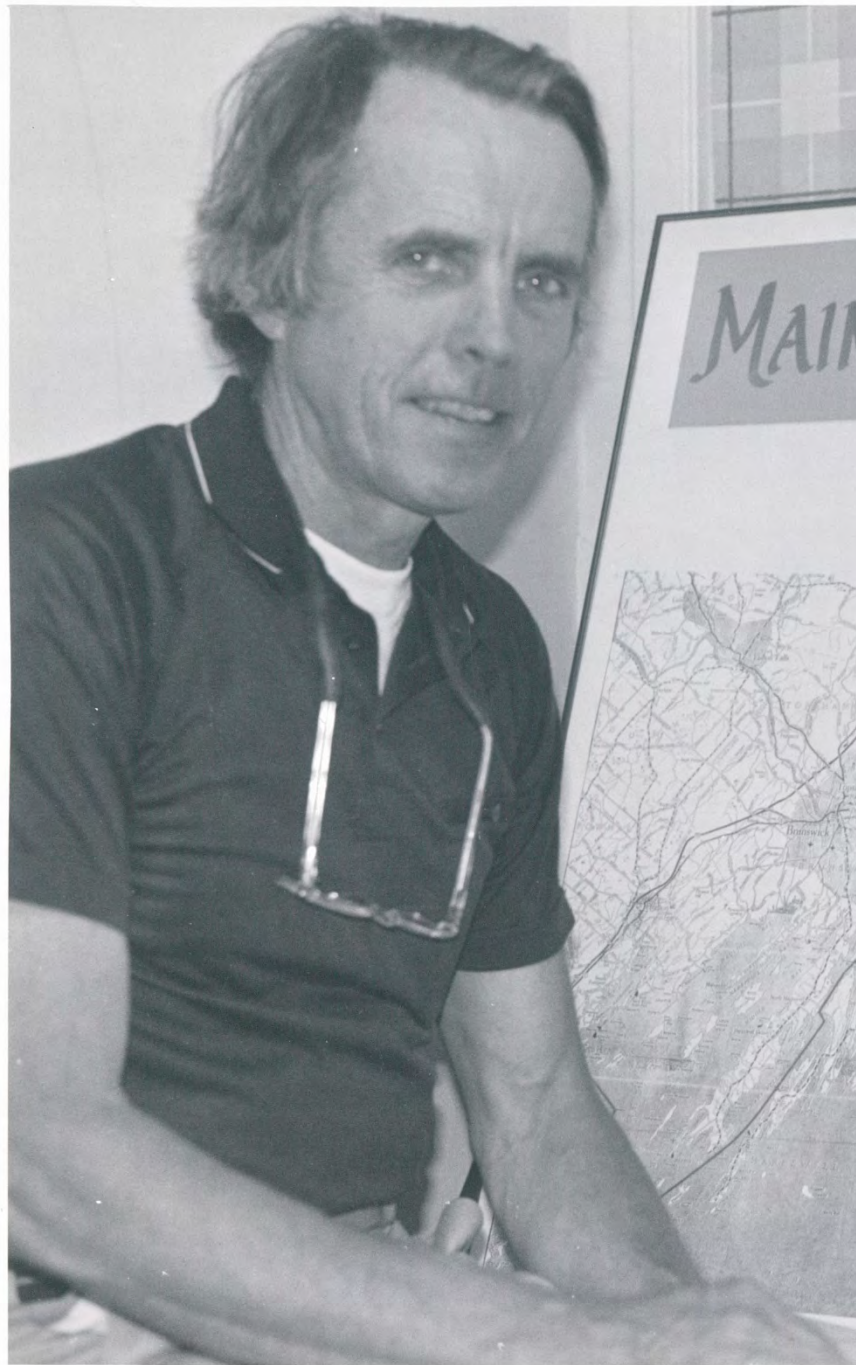




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- Acadia National Park
  - American Lighthouse Foundation
  - Appalachian Mountain Club
  - Blue Hill Heritage Trust
  - Boothbay Region Land Trust
  - Bowdoin College
  - Chebeague & Cumberland Land Trust
  - Chewonki Foundation
  - Citizens for Squirrel Point
  - City of Bath
  - City of Portland
  - Cuckolds Fog Signal & Light Station Council
  - Damariscotta River Association
  - Downeast Coastal Conservancy
  - Freeport Conservation Trust
  - Freeport Historical Society
  - Friends of Nature
  - Friends of Seguin Island Light
  - Georges River Land Trust
  - Harpswell Heritage Land Trust
  - Hurricane Island Foundation
  - Island Heritage Trust
  - Kennebec Estuary Land Trust
  - Kennebunkport Conservation Trust
  - Maine Audubon
  - Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands
  - Maine Coast Heritage Trust
  - Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge
  - Maine Dept of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
  - Medomak Valley Land Trust
  - Midcoast Conservancy

- National Audubon Society
- North Haven Conservation Partners
- Oceanside Conservation Trust
- Outward Bound
- Pemaquid Watershed Association
- Portland Trails
- Private Landowners (~100)
- Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge
- Rippleffect
- Royal River Conservation Trust
- Town of Bar Harbor
- Town of Brunswick
- Town of Camden
- Town of Cape Elizabeth
- Town of Harpswell
- Town of Kittery
- Town of Lamoine
- Town of Machiasport
- Town of North Haven
- Town of Saint George
- Town of Surry
- Town of Swans Island
- Town of Tremont
- Wells Reserve

# MAINE ISLAND TRAIL

















# GUNKHOLING

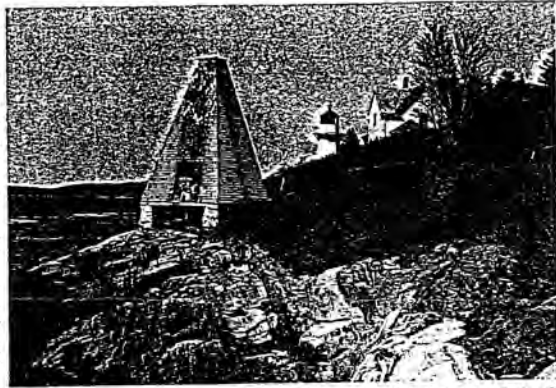
with David R. Getchell, Sr.

## The Island Trail



David R. Getchell, Sr.

Islands, as those who read this column know, have figured prominently in my life for the past two years. Working with the non-profit Island Institute, I have helped to survey several hundred state-owned islands in Maine to see if any have recreational potential (see Gunkholing *SBJ* #52-53). Our surveys have come up with a resounding "Yes." Scores of small islands, most accessible only by small boat, lie scattered along much of the coast. None of them is inhabited, and most show little or no signs of man. They have survived virtually unchanged from the days of the first explorers,



**Way Station.** Someday boaters may be able to use the tiny, state-owned islands along the Maine coast the same way hikers use mountain trails.

bits and pieces of wild land, some barren and rocky, some with grassy meadows rife with wildflowers and berry bushes, and some crowned by stands of tough, salt-tolerant spruce and fir.

That so many wild and beautiful places exist off a busy shore this late in the 20th century is amazing. More astounding is that until recently neither the state nor the public really knew they were there. Their "discovery" couldn't come at a better time.

As the U.S. population grows in size and affluence, two powerful forces are working in opposition. The first is the ever-increasing number of people with time on their hands and a strong desire to get away from it all. Their desire to "recreate" out-of-doors is subjecting all areas, especially public facilities such as state and national parks and national seashores, to greater strain.

At the same time, a second, counterforce is building. The amount of land we have access to is shrinking. Those with the money to do so have already bought the most attractive countryside and quite understandably, considering the investment, have little desire to share it with the general public. Now even less desirable and more remote land is being purchased by speculators, developers, or persons seeking privacy. In Maine, the vast northern woodlands, those owned by paper companies and other large landholders, have always been freely accessible to the public. Now even these regions are coming under tighter control with fees being charged for the use of roads and campsites. As for coastal property, 95 percent is privately owned, and of the remaining 5 percent, a sizable chunk is taken up by Acadia National Park.

The 1,300 or so state-owned islands are a very minor part of this 5 percent. They amount to only 800 acres altogether, or a little more than a half-acre each. A hundred or so usable ones dot much of the coast between Portland and Jonesport, a fact that gives them a special importance quite out of proportion to their size.

In studying this bounty, it occurred to me that here was a rare chance to develop an outstanding waterway for small boats that would use the state-owned islands for overnight stops, similar to the way hikers use pathways like the Appalachian Trail, Vermont's Long Trail, or the Pacific Crest Trail. The proposed Maine Island Trail would traverse the waters between Portland and Jonesport, an airline distance of about 140 miles, but would likely follow a route taking full advantage of spectacular scenery and exciting boating opportunities, a distance in excess of 300 miles. Trending along

protected saltwater rivers, among a myriad of islands, across imposing bays, and around intimidating capes, the trail would offer something for everyone. In its relatively short distance, there would be enough challenging boating for even the most jaded of small-boat cruisers.

Having recently covered the entire trail in my 18-foot outboard-powered boat, I can attest to the difficulties offered. Anyone attempting the entire Maine Island Trail in a sea kayak, rowboat, small sailboat, or motorboat is in for some tough traveling. There are inherent dangers — fog, wind, and long open or exposed stretches — that require experience, good judgment, and a boatload of common sense. To my way of thinking, it is these stiff requirements that make the trail special.

Most experienced boaters...already have a strong respect for the natural environment. Their example of creating and adhering to a pact setting forth high standards of use would go far toward convincing others to do the same"

I must reemphasize that a Maine Island Trail does not yet exist. There are many problems to be worked out with the state officials who manage the islands, decisions to be made on a final route and how the islands will be set up for public use, and plans drawn up on how the trail will be publicized.

Those in the Island Institute and others with whom I've talked feel that a proper job can be done only through a formal organization whose sole purpose is to develop and maintain a trail — a Maine Island Trail Association, so to speak, made up of members who believe an island waterway should exist and are willing to work toward that goal. Geography would have no bearing on membership; interest in the trail would be the only criterion.

For anyone involved with the association, this project offers a rare opportunity to establish guidelines for using the islands. Such guidelines would be aimed at reducing the human impact on the islands and thereby preserving their unique qualities for all time. Sound too restrictive? Not likely. Most experienced boaters who would find the trail of interest already have a strong respect for the natural environment. Their example of creating and adhering to a pact setting forth high standards of use would go far toward convincing others to do the same.

For those concerned that an island trail will bring the "Great American Public" swarming offshore, I feel safe in assuring them no such thing is apt to occur. Small offshore islands place strong demands on their users, both mentally and physically, and those persons looking for entertainment and conviviality will find little to suit them on a half-acre of rocks, trees, and grass surrounded by an indifferent ocean.

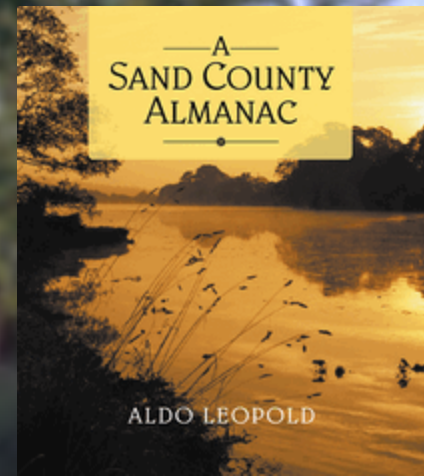
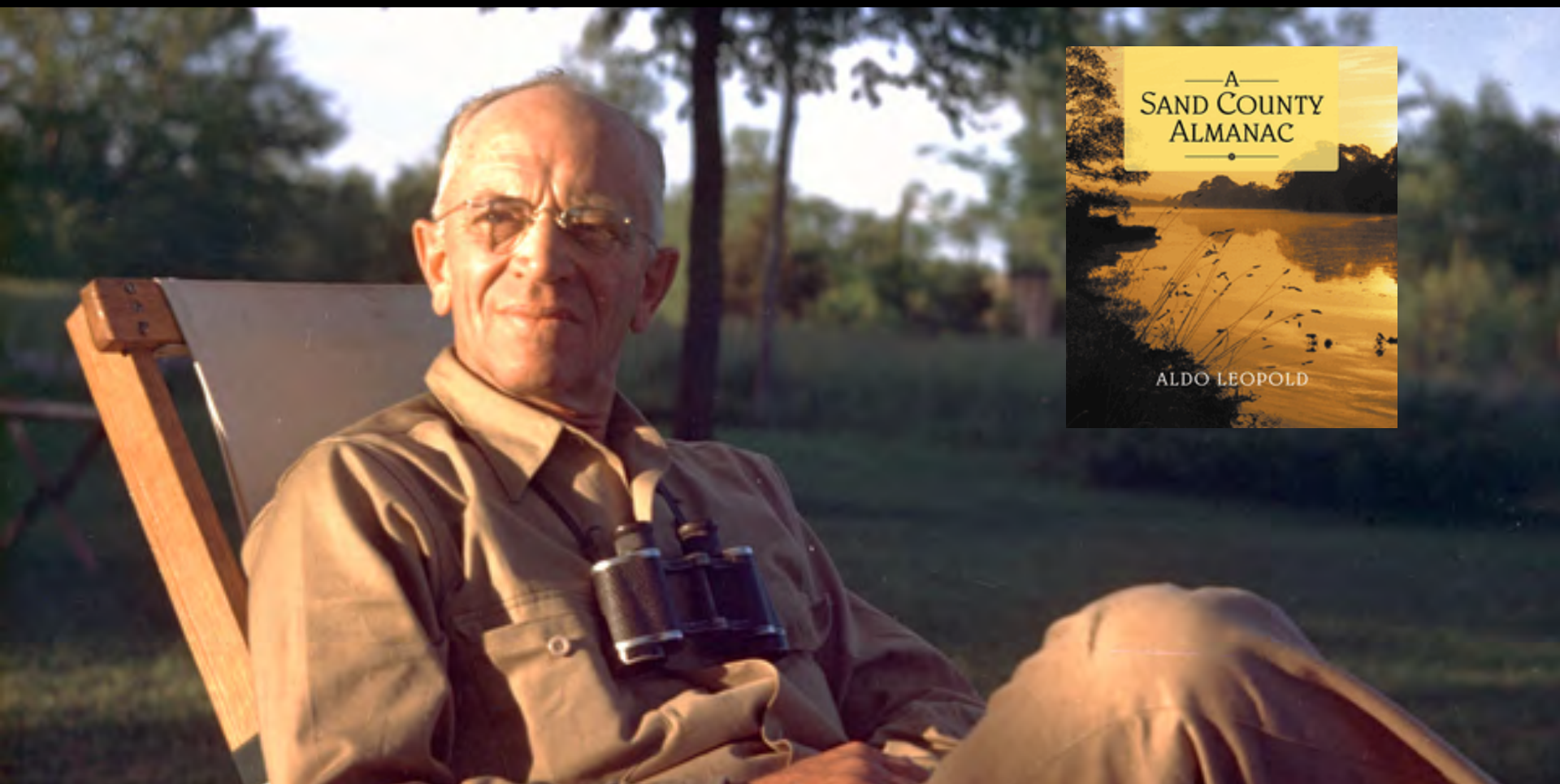
But for those in small craft seeking superb boating and solitude, an island trail along some of the world's most beautiful coastline may be just what they are looking for. □

*Author's note: I would like to hear from readers, pro and con, on this subject and to find out if they would care to join an association. Send letters to David R. Getchell, Sr., RR 1, Box 888, Union, ME 04862. I would prefer to have letters rather than phone calls so as to have a written record of interest.*

"opportunity to establish guidelines...aimed at reducing the human impact on the islands and thereby preserving their unique qualities for all time"

"Most experienced boaters...already have a strong respect for the natural environment. Their example of creating and adhering to a pact setting forth high standards of use would go far toward convincing others to do the same"

"a rare chance to develop an outstanding waterway for small boats...like the Appalachian Trail"



*The Mission of the Maine Island Trail Association is:*

To establish a model of thoughtful use and volunteer stewardship for the Maine islands that will assure their conservation in a natural state while providing an exceptional recreational asset that is **maintained and cared for by the people who use it**





# Stewardship



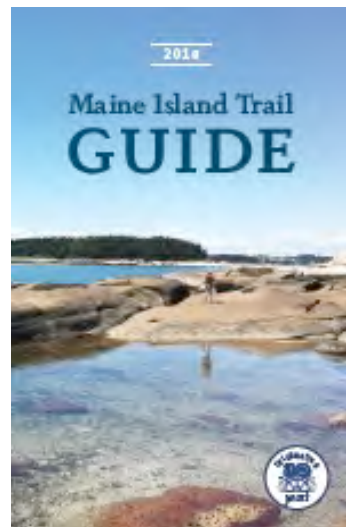
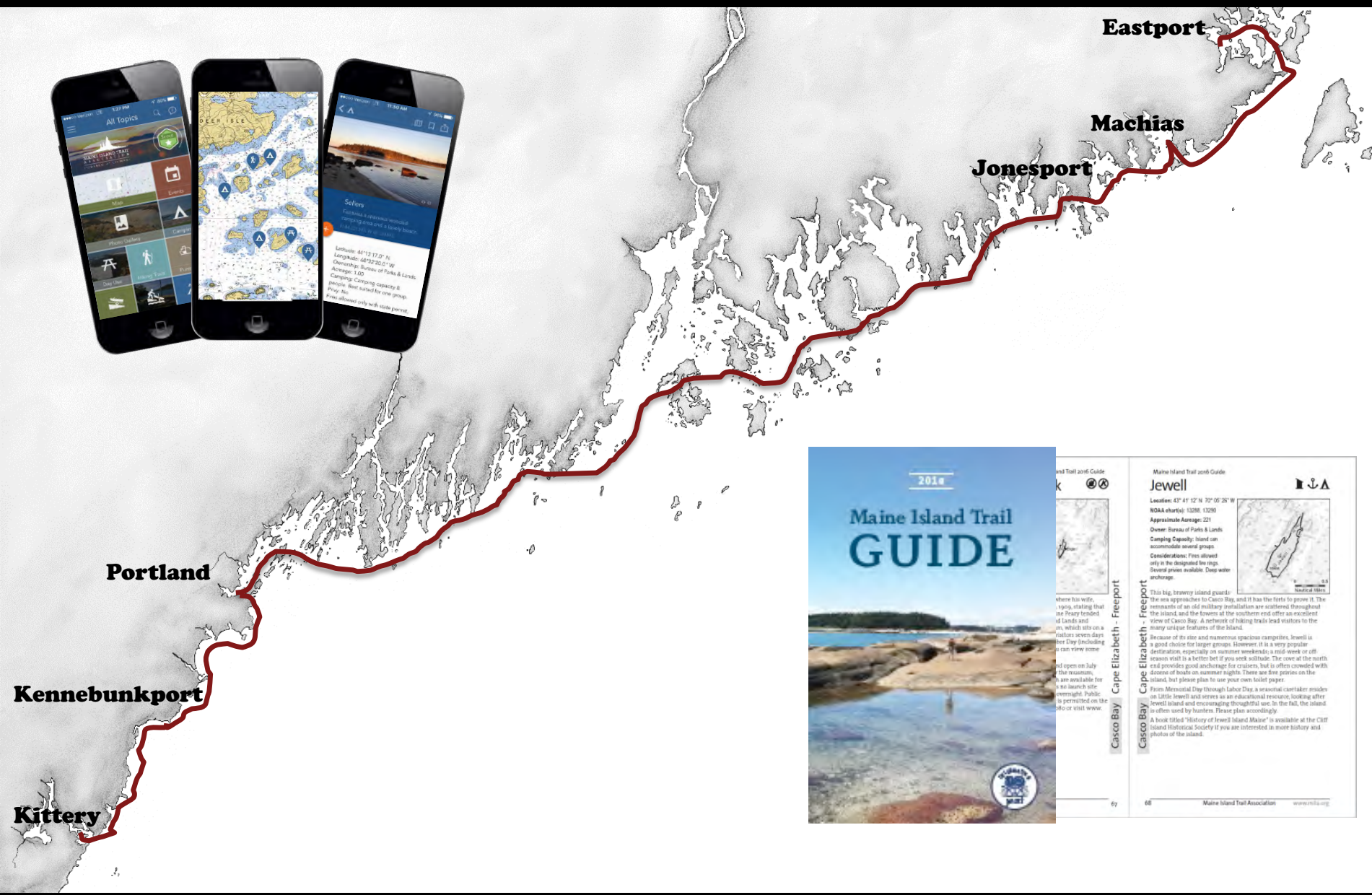
# Education



# “SEA”

# Access





2018  
Maine Island Trail 2018 Guide

## Jewell

Location: 47° 41' 12" N 70° 06' 25" W  
NOAA chart(s): 13208, 13209  
Approximate Acreage: 221  
Owner: Bureau of Parks & Lands  
Camping Capacity: 1000  
Considerations: Fires allowed only in the designated fire rings. Several picnic tables available. Deep water anchorage.

This big, brawny island guards the sea approaches to Casco Bay, and it has the forts to prove it. The remnants of an old military installation are scattered throughout the island, and the towers at the southern end offer an excellent view of Casco Bay. A network of hiking trails lead visitors to the many unique features of the island.

Because of its size and numerous spacious campsites, Jewell is a good choice for larger groups. However, it is a very popular destination, especially on summer weekends; a mid-week or off-peak visit is a better bet if you seek solitude. The cover at the north end provides good anchorage for cruisers, but is often crowded with dozens of boats on summer nights. There are five privies on the island, but please plan to use your own toilet paper.

From Memorial Day through Labor Day, a seasonal caretaker resides on Little Jewell and serves as an educational resource, looking after Jewell Island and encouraging thoughtful use. In the fall, the island is often used by hikers. Please plan accordingly.

A book titled "History of Jewell Island Maine" is available at the Cliff Island Historical Society if you are interested in more history and photos of the island.

Casco Bay - Cape Elizabeth - Freeport  
Cape Elizabeth - Freeport  
Casco Bay - Cape Elizabeth - Freeport

68 Maine Island Trail Association www.mitaa.org

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A Stunning Rhode Island Seaside House | The Return of Great White Sharks | New and Easy Lobster Recipes

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Boat Owners Association of the United States

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Magazine

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- Interstate tax surprises
- Will "ocean planning" affect boaters?

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# maine.

July 2016

COURTESY  
**50**  
MAINERS ISSUE

Dreamers and doers making the state better every day

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THE OUTDOORS ARE TOO WHITE. DISCUSS.

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THEY SAID WHAT? I INTERVIEWS WITH LINDSEY VORN WERNER HERZOG DEAN POTTER

15 MORE OUTSIDE ICONS

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SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

# ADVENTURE

nationalgeographic.com/adventure

DRREAM IT. PLAN IT. DO IT.

# 10<sup>TH</sup>

ANNIVERSARY

## A DECADE OF Adventure

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Back in Afghanistan

THE MYSTERY OF EVERETT RUSS: SOLVED  
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- ATTENDING THE BEAT AND JAZZ

APRIL/MAY 2009

SPRING '09 BUYER'S GUIDE  
TECH • GEAR • UPDATES

WORLD'S SCARIEST JOB

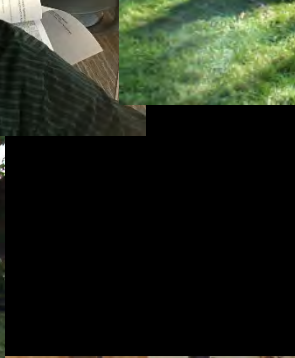
SOUTH AFRICA: THE ROAD TRIP













- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors



leave no trace  
CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS



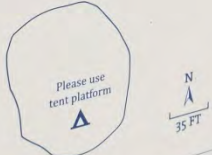
# Sparrow Island

Welcome & Enjoy Your Visit!

This privately owned property is part of the Maine Island Trail.  
Please follow Leave No Trace principles and observe the following guidelines:

-  **Camp in existing sites**
  - Island capacity 4 people
  - Limit stay to 2 nights
  - Avoid trampling vegetation
-  **Carry out solid waste**
  - Do not leave, bury or dispose of waste or tissue on island or in ocean
-  **Pack out food & trash**
  - Remove any debris found
  - Leave natural objects
-  **Kindle no fires**
  - Choose camp stoves for cooking
-  **Keep pets under control**
  - Carry out solid pet waste
  - Leash pets to protect wildlife
-  **Respect wildlife**
  - View from a distance
  - Secure your food
  - Let nature's sounds prevail

For more information, consult the  
MITA Trail Guide or visit [www.mita.org](http://www.mita.org)



MAINE ISLAND TRAIL  
2016 TRAIL GUIDE  
www.mita.org  
907.741.8225

*"Those who care about the islands will care for them!"*  
- Dave Gendron, MITA co-founder

# The Island Trail

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MAINE ISLAND TRAIL ASSOCIATION SUMMER 2016

## Tales of Trail Romance

BY KEVIN LOMANGINO, EDITOR

Islands for many members are all about solitude and introspection—a chance to disconnect from the rest of humanity and plug back into the life within.

But as many of you told us when we asked for tales of Trail romance in the MITA e-newsletter, the islands can also be a unique setting to make a new connection with that special someone. After all, what could be more romantic than a walk along an isolated island beach at sunset? Or lying in an amowose beneath a blanket of stars on a warm, moonless night in August?

Cliff Seymour, a MITA monitor skipper, knows well the islands' romantic potential. He says a picnic on tiny Erratic Island helped win the affections of Colleen, now his wife, when they were first dating.



Captain Moore displays plastic fragments skittered from Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Photo courtesy of Algalita Marine Research Foundation.

## Our Plastic Legacy

BY BRIAN MARCAURELLE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

"No matter where you are, there's no getting over it, no getting away from it. It's a plastic ocean now."

This is how Captain Charles Moore, the coordinator and founder of the California-based Algalita Marine Research Foundation, summed up the state of the marine environment in an interview in October 2009. The thought haunted me for weeks. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is a generated area.

### Eagle Island State Park

Location: 43° 42' 47" N, 70° 03' 12" W  
NADA chart(s): 11026, 11290  
Approximate acreage: 17  
Owner: Bureau of Parks & Lands  
Camping Capacity: Day use only  
Considerations: No camping. No fire. Entrance fee charged.

Eagle Island, the former summer home of Arctic explorer Admiral Robert Peary, is a state historic site open to the public for day visits. On the island you will find the house where his wife, Ingeborg, received the telegram on September 6, 1909, stating that her husband had reached the North Pole. Jeopards Island located from her island that the Bureau of Parks and Lands and gentians on the island that the museum, which sits on a handful of Eagle Island still remains. The museum, which sits on a high bluff overlooking over Casco Bay, is open to visitors seven days a week from an 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays).

### Jewell

Location: 43° 41' 42" N, 70° 05' 20" W  
NADA chart(s): 11288, 11290  
Approximate acreage: 225  
Owner: Bureau of Parks & Lands  
Camping Capacity: Island group accommodations several group accommodations available (no overnight anchorage)

Considerations: Free use only in the designated area. Island group accommodations available (no overnight anchorage).

This big island is one of the most popular summer spots on the island. Jewell is a gem of a place with a variety of activities and scenic views.

## Maine Island Trail 2016 Guide

## COBSCOOK BAY BOATING SAFETY & HAZARDS

## Store to Shore

Sea Kayaking Safety and Stewardship in Maine

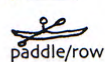
## KITTERY & PORTSMOUTH HARBOR BOATING SAFETY & HAZARDS



Date 8-28-04

Number of people in your group 4

Type of boat  
(circle)



Type of group

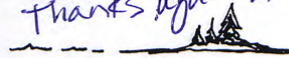
- outfitter    school    camp    club    scouts  
 friends    family    other \_\_\_\_\_

Type of visit

- day use    camping (1 nights)   *on board boat*

Comments/musings/suggestions

Have enjoyed visits to  
 this spectacular island  
 since '90. Always a treat  
 to be here. Thanks to MITA  
 for <sup>(privies!)</sup> improvements made recently.  
 MITA caretaking is evident.  
 Thanks again!! See you next yr.



please continue on back...

(optional) name & address

The Webers  
 Ann, Bill, Tim & Chip  
 Portland, ME







Island Adopters





Monitor Skippers











## Island Cleanups





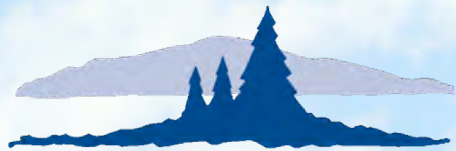
# Island Cleanups











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A S S O C I A T I O N

