

A life devoted
to protecting
fisheries

You probably never met Dave Boucher. You probably never think of him when you reel in a trout or a salmon or when you hop off the boat after a beautiful day of fishing with family and friends. You probably don't realize he was a fisheries biologist for more than 30 years and devoted his life to protecting native fish and providing fishing opportunities for Mainers and those who love to visit here. Therefore, you surely never thought of thanking Boucher for a job well done. That's a shame, says retired fisheries biologist Dave Basley, who contacted me a few weeks back asking if I had any plans to write about the man he calls his best friend. Boucher died in March after suffering a heart attack. He was just 56 years old.



JOHN HOLYOKE

Basley knew Boucher for 30 years and worked alongside him for the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. Boucher's accomplishments were hardly noticed in the press, his pal said, and that was an oversight. In personal chats and email exchanges with several of Boucher's peers, it became apparent that all of his colleagues felt the same way. At the time of his death, Boucher was the fisheries management supervisor — he also had worked as a biologist in several of the state's regions, including the tradition-rich Aroostook and Rangeley areas — and continued to make a difference. "As the fishery division management supervisor, Dave was not only a key component in the fishery division hierarchy but the glue that held us together through some trying times," Gordon "Nels" Kramer, the regional biologist for the Penobscot region, said in an email. "In his eyes, his primary task was keeping the division focused and moving forward by reminding each and every one of us how important the inland sport fisheries of the State of Maine are to its anglers." Kramer said that even after Boucher moved up through the ranks, he remained a friend to all the biologists he'd worked with. And he never needed much of an excuse to abandon the halls of bureaucracy in Augusta, head for the woods and get his hands dirty. "His strong commitment to assisting the regions had him in the field and away from Augusta at every opportunity," Kramer wrote. "He loved nothing more than taking part in various field assignments with the regional fisheries biologists, whether it be netting brook trout in a small pond in Baxter, trapping and tagging salmon in Rangeley, electrofishing for bass in the Belgrades or radio-tracking toad in his native Aroostook County."

Fisheries biologist Scott Davis said it may take years before Boucher's impact can be fully measured. "Like many of us in this outfit, David lived his job. He took it home with him and never left it," Davis wrote in an email. "It's difficult to fully comprehend the importance and influence of David's work in fisheries at the present time. The magnitude of his legacy will be better understood somewhere farther down the road. Like

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Author Paul Doiron at his Belfast office.



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The visitor center at Merryspring Nature Center was completed in 1996 and is the location of presentations on nature and gardening.

1-Minute Hike:
Merryspring Nature Center

Difficulty: Easy-moderate. The preserve trail network travels through a variety of forests, across a powerline corridor and around the edge of a field. Some of the woodland trails travel over hills, exposed tree roots and rocks. The longest trail on the property, the Perimeter Trail, takes about 30 to 40 minutes to walk and is marked with little green signs displaying the number "1."



AILINN SARNACKI

How to get there: Merryspring Nature Center is located at the end of Conway Road, a residential street off Route 1 (Elm Street) in Camden. From the center of downtown Camden (the intersection of Main Street, Bay View Street, Elm Street and Mechanic Street). Drive south on Route 1 (Elm Street) 0.8 miles and turn right onto Conway Street. Drive about 0.3 miles, and you'll reach the sign and entrance to Merryspring Nature Center. **Information:** Located just outside the cluster of shops and art galleries of downtown Camden, Merryspring Nature Center is a 66-acre park that features gardens, fields, easy woodland trails and a visitor center where public programs on gardening and nature are held on a regular basis. Named after several naturally occur-



A wood frog blends into the forest floor at Merryspring Nature Center.

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Watch the video
bangordailynews.com

ring springs that dot the property, Merryspring was founded in 1974 by Mary Ellen Ross, a local horticulturist who had attained national recognition through her mail-order plant business, Merry Gardens. Ross wanted to create a place where nature and horticulture — a branch of agriculture that involves the science and aes-

thetics of growing plants and managing gardens — could be studied firsthand. To develop and maintain the park, she established Merryspring, Inc., a nonprofit member-supported corporation that is about 500 members strong today. While the mission of the park hasn't changed since then, the appearance of it has. In the 1970s, hiking trails were established through the property's woods and

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Heart of Penobscot plans recreation boost

BY AISLINN SARNACKI
BDN STAFF

BREWER — Heart of the Penobscot, a group from southern Penobscot County, recently announced plans to launch a website that will serve as a "one-stop shop" for anyone who wants to learn about trails, outdoor recreation resources and events in the area. The announcement was made at a Heart of Penobscot stakeholders meeting held Wednesday, June 1, in the Community Room of Machias Savings Bank in Brewer. "What we hear over and over again is that our area is very rich



in trails and conserved land, but the outdoor community lacks cohesion," Lauren Jacobs, Old Town resident and member of the Heart of Penobscot steering committee,

said at the meeting. Heart of the Penobscot, or HOP, evolved from the 2007-2009 work of the Penobscot Valley Community Greenprint, a plan to address land use and conservation on a regional scale in 12 Penobscot Valley communities: Bangor, Bradley, Brewer, Eddington, Hampden, Hermon, Holden, Milford, Old Town, Orono, Orrington and Veazie. This plan was created under the leadership of The Trust for Public Land, the Penobscot Valley Council of Governments and the Bangor Land Trust. Working with the same 12 towns, HOP plans to continue the land use and conservation work of Greenprint while addressing

new and evolving needs of the community. One of those needs, the HOP steering committee has decided, is greater public awareness of existing local trails, boat launches, outdoor events and other recreational opportunities. Their answer to the problem is an HOP website, developed by Center for Community GIS, a company based in Farmington that developed Maine Trail Finder, at mainetrailfinder.com, a popular website for finding Maine trails. "We're trying to create a rich and engaging interface that's going to stand apart," Stephen Engle, director of Center of Community GIS, said. See Penobscot, Page C4

Paul Doiron eager for release
of seventh warden mystery

BY JOHN HOLYOKE
BDN STAFF

BELFAST — In a cozy downtown office with a standing workstation that offers an obstructed view of Penobscot Bay — cock your head to the left and you can see a sliver of it — author Paul Doiron is already working on his eighth novel. Never mind that his seventh in the series of Mike Bowditch mysteries — "Widowmaker" — doesn't arrive on store shelves until June 14. There's always writing to be done, and a project to peck away at.

Doiron, who until 2½ years ago served as editor-in-chief of Down East magazine, said making a transition from spare-time novelist to full-time author has been a learning process. "The embarrassing thing to admit is that I was much more productive when I was writing in my spare time at Down East," the 51-year-old Doiron said with a laugh. "I've learned better work habits after [some time] on my own. When your day is essentially free, it seems like you can do anything. You find out that you really have to treat it

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