



AISSLINN SARNACKI | BDN

Signs mark the trail intersections of Patten Stream Preserve in Surry.

# Hike

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around through the woods, coming full circle back at the Connector Trail.

For information, including a printable trail map, visit [bluehillheritagetrust.org](http://bluehillheritagetrust.org). Specific questions can be answered at the Blue Hill Heritage Trust office, which is open year-round, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, at 258 Mountain Road in Blue Hill. The trust also can be reached at 374-5118 or by emailing [info@bluehillheritagetrust.org](mailto:info@bluehillheritagetrust.org).

**Personal note:** Between planning a Halloween party, trying to meet deadlines at work, feverishly painting woodwork at my house, installing a generator, shopping for snow tires and writing “thank you” cards for wedding gifts, (deep breath) it’s been hard to find time to get outside and explore new trails lately. And I’m sure most readers can empathize with me. Life gets crazy, and we often end up putting the things we enjoy most on the backburner.

In my opinion, it’s important we don’t let life go on that way for too long. Doing things we enjoy — whether

it’s going to yoga class or cooking great meals or hiking — is key to a healthy life. So on Friday, after a meeting in Bangor, I sped out of the office, picked up my dog Oreo from home and headed to Patten Stream Preserve in Surry — a place I had yet to explore and was less than an hour from my home. The sun was already sinking when I made it to the trailhead, but we had enough time for the 1.5-mile hike.

I was surprised at the ferocity of Patten Stream, churning and twisting, frothing even, foaming at the edges. It had rained a few days before, so I imagine it was flowing even faster and higher than usual.

Oreo wanted to jump in for a swim, but I was worried he’d get swept away, so I kept him at my side, on dry land. Farther down the trail, we found a calm bend of the stream, and I let him wade in and get his feet wet.

The forest itself was a beautiful variety of young and old trees. At that time of year, the oak trees stood out because they were still holding onto their orange and golden leaves. The maples and birch, on the other hand, had mostly dropped their leaves to the forest floor.

While it’s difficult to



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A wooden bridge on the North Loop Trail of Patten Stream Preserve in Surry helps hikers travel along the edge of Patten Stream without getting their feet wet.

photograph birds while walking Oreo, I did spot a number of birds, including a large pileated woodpecker, a bluejay picking bugs from a tall dead tree, chickadees and a number of plump brown birds I couldn’t identify. I also found and photographed the yellow tapering leaves of a gray birch sapling, which I later identified with my Forest Trees of Maine handbook published by the Maine Forest Service. I’m slowly learning, one tree, bird, insect and flower at a time. I think that’s the way to do it.

For more of Aislinn Sarnacki’s adventures, visit her blog at [actoutwithaislinn.bangordailynews.com](http://actoutwithaislinn.bangordailynews.com). Follow her on Twitter: @1minihikegirl.



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After a couple days of rain, the water rushes over the the rocky stream bed of Patten Stream in Surry in Patten Stream Preserve.

# Holyoke

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## Harvest estimate

Each year, the DIF&W studies a number of different factors, including the severity of the most recent winter, before issuing a number of any-deer permits that allow hunters to target does and fawns.

“We’re projecting a harvest of probably around 21,000 animals, give or take.”

KYLE RAVANA, DEER BIOLOGIST, MAINE DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

This year, the department took a conservative approach, dropping the total from 37,185 in 2014 to 28,870 after a snowy winter took a toll on the state’s deer herd.

“Because we reduced the number of permits, we are expecting a decrease in the harvest,” Ravana said. “We’re projecting a harvest of probably around 21,000 animals, give or take.”

Last year’s harvest was originally announced at 22,490, but Ravana said the department has been receiving tagging station logs throughout the summer —

after that total was released — and the actual harvest total from 2014 is around 23,500.

Ravana said that although last winter was snowy, much of the snow arrived late and didn’t limit the deer herd’s mobility for a long period of time.

“Last year was above average [for winter severity]. But in terms of how it actually impacted the population, it may not have had as severe an impact as what

our metric tells us.”

Ravana said that despite the winter toll on deer last year, biologists estimate the state has a herd of 211,000 deer, just below the long-term average of 214,000.

## Deer wearing collars

If you’re hunting in Wildlife Management District 17 — it stretches from the outskirts of Bangor to Madison and from Fairfield to Milo — you might come across some

deer sporting fancy neckwear.

Ravana explained that several adult does have been fitted with GPS collars in that zone as part of an ongoing research project.

“If someone does harvest

one, it would be great to be able to get the collar back so we can redeploy it,” Ravana said. “Don’t shy away from harvesting it. Understanding harvest rates is an important part of managing

the deer, so we want to capture that [data] as well.”

John Holyoke can be reached at [jholyoke@bangordailynews.com](mailto:jholyoke@bangordailynews.com) or 990-8214.

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