

## Things to Do Outdoors

GREENVILLE — Friends of Wilson Pond Area photo contest in celebration of its 25th anniversary as a land trust. Rules and information at [fowpa.org](http://fowpa.org). Prizes include dinner for two at West Branch Pond Camps, tickets for two for a Katahdin Rock and Roll Cruise and Indian Hill Trading Post \$50 gift certificate. Deadline for photo submissions Sept. 1.

BANGOR — Bangor Land Trust's July wildflower walk, led by Clare Cole, at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 9, at North Penjajawock Forest, will focus on how many types of wildflowers can be found.

FREEPORT — Michael Perry giving slideshow presentation about coast of Maine, from Penobscot Bay to Jonesport and Beals, 7-8 p.m. Friday, July 1, LL Bean, 95 Main St. 800-441-5713.

GRAND LAKE STREAM — Serious Skills for Boys and Girls series: free educational activities for children ages 10 to 16, 9:30 a.m.-noon Thursdays, Grand Lake Stream School Building. July 7, campsite construction; July 14, fishing on West Grand Lake; July 21, canoeing and poling; July 28, wilderness first aid. 796-2100 or [cbrown@downeastlakes.org](mailto:cbrown@downeastlakes.org).

GREENVILLE — Annual meeting of Friends of Wilson Pond 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, July 9, 44 Muzzy Camp Road. Open to all. Guest speakers Karin Tilberg and Erica Kaufmann of Forest Society of Maine speaking on "FSM Conservation Projects in the Moosehead Lake Region," including update on "branding" effort of the region — America's Crown Jewel — and the society's involvement; overview of hiking trail planning effort in partnership with the state arising from Plum Creek's Moosehead Lake Concept Plan — hiking trail work completed and planned; plans for other recreational infrastructure in partnership with the state arising from the Concept Plan — boat launches, trail head parking, etc.; new Moosehead Trails volunteer group; and update of conservation easement monitoring work. Lunch and social time after the meeting. [fowpa.org](http://fowpa.org) or call Kay at 749-3598.

INDIAN ISLAND — "Push-aw to Penobscot: A Paddle Through Time" canoe trip, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, July 16, 55 Wabana-ki Way. Paddle 10 miles downstream with stops along the way. \$25, \$5 Hirundo members. Canoes will raft together for wildlife observations and talks about archaeology, past climates, Penobscot Nation's use of the area, Penobscot River Restoration, fish migration and more. To register, [web@hirundo-maine.org](http://web@hirundo-maine.org) or 944-9259.

ORLAND — Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust invites the public to its annual meeting festivities Sunday, July 10. Hike Mead Mountain Path, 9-11 a.m. Meet to carpool at Wildlands South Gate, Route 1, near Route 176 junction. Bring water, sun and bug protection. Land trust's 23rd annual meeting, 6:30-8 p.m., Alamoosook Lakeside Inn. Cheri at 469-6929 or [cheri@greatpondtrust.org](mailto:cheri@greatpondtrust.org).

WHITING — Downeast Coastal Conservancy group paddle on the Orange River, 5 p.m. Tuesday, July 5. Meet at Orange River Landing. Bring a canoe or kayak, paddles and PFD, sun and bug protection, water and a snack. 255-4500 or [info@downeast-coastalconservancy.org](mailto:info@downeast-coastalconservancy.org).

For a complete listing of calendar items or to submit your event, visit [www.bangordailynews.com](http://www.bangordailynews.com).

# Maine paddler finishes 1,500-mile voyage

BY AISLINN SARNACKI  
BDN STAFF

After 70 days of paddling, through storms and sun, John Connelly of Falmouth kayaked into Kittery Harbor last week to celebrate the completion of PaddleQuest 1500, a 1,500-mile odyssey that linked four major water routes in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada.

The voyage, starting April 16 and ending June 24, may be the first time a paddler has connected the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, Saint John River, Bay of Fundy and Maine Island Trail, paddling all four in one continuous journey and traveling between waterways by portaging.

The trip took him through two countries, four states, 22 streams and 58 lakes.

"I experienced so many splendid, beautiful sunsets and sunrises," Connelly said in a phone interview a few days after completing the voyage. "And I will never tire of the cry of the loon, to hear that in the night and to wake up to it is a beautiful thing."

Connelly, who turned 60 in February, said the big trip was greatly inspired by the milestone birthday.

"I'm big on experiences as opposed to things," Connelly said. "A hot tub [for my birthday] would have been nice, but I decided I'd like to do something truly epic."

A highly experienced paddler, Connelly is the former leader of L.L.Bean's Outdoor Discovery Schools, a former member of the US Canoe & Kayak team and has accomplished numerous whitewater first descents.

For years, Connelly had wanted to canoe the 740-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail, as well as the Maine Island Trail, a 375-mile recreational waterway that spans the entire coast of Maine.

"I'd never had the time for it," he explained. "In life, it's always about timing."

As his 60th birthday approached, the timing seemed to be perfect for the long and ambitious journey. His health was great, and his job as president and CEO of Adventurous Joe Coffee would allow him to take the months off he needed for the journey.

"I was thinking, 'Well, I could paddle the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, then go to paddle the Maine Island Trail. ... But wouldn't it be far more epic to just keep going on the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, switch over to a kayak and do the length of the Saint John River, paddle through the Reversing



BRIAN THRELKELD

John Connelly of Falmouth paddles along a river in New York in the spring of 2016 during a trip that he calls PaddleQuest 1500, a 1,500-mile odyssey that linked four major water routes in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada.

Falls of the Saint John and into the Bay of Fundy, then do the Maine Island Trail?" "That got me excited," Connelly said.

As Connelly planned PaddleQuest 1500, it morphed into more than just a personal trip. It became what he calls "an expedition to inspire outdoor desire." By sharing his trip through social media and on his website, [paddlequest1500.com](http://paddlequest1500.com), Connelly hopes to inspire people to spend more time outdoors, citing the growing body of evidence that physical and mental health benefits can come from time spent in nature. Connelly also points out that outdoor experiences can lead people to develop a sense of stewardship for natural resources, such as clean, free-flowing rivers.

"I was really motivated to tell the story as I went," said Connelly, who paddled the vast majority of the trip solo, calling for companionship only the most dangerous sections.

To support the expedition, Connelly lined up an extensive list of corporate sponsors, including Cascade Designs, Garmin, GrandyOats, Hyperlite Mountain Gear, NRS, Shipyard Brewing Company, Stellar Kayaks, Wenonah Canoes and Werner Paddles, among others.

"Every time I looked down at my boat ... [I] saw the logos of my sponsors. Between that and knowing I had people following me in

real time on the web with my satellite tracking and knowing I had an engaged community following this, I never felt — I felt alone, but I never felt lonely," Connelly said.

Using the Delorme iReach satellite communication and navigation technology, paired with the Delorme mobile application EarthMate, Connelly was able to lay out his entire route, complete with waypoints and notations. The technology allowed him to identify camping options as well as safe landing spots along the route, where he could land in event of bad weather.

This technology also allowed the public to follow his progress on a map displayed on [paddlequest1500.com](http://paddlequest1500.com). In addition, Connelly posted photos and blogged about his daily experiences on the water on a regular basis.

"I typically arrived where I was going to camp late in the day, got the campsite up and my wet clothes hung up to — at least drip. Seldom did they dry," Connelly said with a laugh. "I'd make dinner, and I was pretty tired by then. But I'd crawl into my tent with my headlamp and do some journaling."

Connelly plans to write a book about his adventure, as well as produce a film using footage he took throughout the trip on his GoPro camera, iPhone 6S and Canon G10.

"John's expedition has been tremendously inspir-

ing to watch," Karrie Thomas, executive director of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, said in a prepared statement. "The Northern Forest Canoe Trail is grateful to be a part of his awareness campaign to get people to spend more time outside. He has certainly shared how beautiful and accessible the waterways of the Northeast are to all of us."

"Watching John develop and execute this plan has been truly inspiring," Doug Welch, executive director of the Maine Island Trail Association, said in a prepared statement. "Being able to watch John's GPS dot moving along in real time has made this journey so compelling. John has brought these recreational water trails home to so many people and hopefully inspired others to tackle an outdoor challenge of their own."

During the journey, Connelly switched off between two boats — a S18R kayak by Stellar Kayaks and his Voyager canoe by Wenonah Canoe — selecting the boat that worked best on the type of water he was paddling. Both crafts held up well throughout the entire journey, though both needed to be patched once. To navigate, he mounted an iPad Air 2, protected by a waterproof case, on his boat. And he charged batteries with a Goal Zero solar panel mounted on the back deck of his boats.

As with all long journeys,

PaddleQuest wasn't without its challenges. An intestinal bug laid Connelly low for 72 hours in the Adirondacks, and when it came to weather, Connelly often battled wind and rain.

"There was one time when I had an Armageddon-style thunderstorm chase me down the Saint John River to Grand Isle, Maine," Connelly recalled.

There, while trying to find shelter, Connelly came across a woman sitting on her front porch, watching the storm. She and her husband asked Connelly to stay for dinner and suggested he camp in their gazebo by the river.

"That was awesome," Connelly said. "I was sitting at their dinner table having a wonderful meal with them, with the light going out, lighting flashing and thunder crashing."

It being so early in the paddling season, Connelly met few people on the water, but he spoke with many people about his journey in the communities he stopped at along the way.

"My faith in people has really been renewed through this experience," Connelly said. "I had so many people offering their help."

To read about Connelly's adventures, visit [paddlequest1500.com](http://paddlequest1500.com), where he plans to post updates about his future book, film and any public presentations about the journey.

## Lures

Continued from Page C1

"I thought, well, I could do that. I could reproduce those and do the art and craft show circuit and have some fun with it. And I did!" Chris said. "To be honest, I'm a better woodworker than I am a fisherman."

Chris begins reproducing the lures by doing his due diligence on research. He has combed through dozens of books, periodicals, magazines and hundreds of articles online, and he takes all this carefully accrued foreknowledge to one place: the U.S. patent office.

Old fishing lure patents never say the name of the lure. They describe it in great detail, sure, but they never name them or include the colors. Those two things are decided by manufacturer. So in the search for a lure blueprint, there's a lot of trivia and backstory Chris has to know about. It makes the search almost game-like. Matching the story of a lure with its original design is a delightful prize.

Once Chris has reunited patent with story, he'll try to obtain an original copy of the lure — if he can afford it. Remember, some sell for thousands of dollars. If he can't get the real thing, he'll obtain photographs or other reproductions.

His goal is perfection, to try and match the actual lure as close as humanly possible — size, color, pattern, parts — so people go "ah-ha! I know what this is." There was a significant learning curve. Apparently it's difficult to find all the parts. Chris says only about three companies in the U.S. make the components he needs.

"Sometimes parts aren't available and you have to be creative about how you're going to make them," he told me while hanging bits of lures to dry on a stand he handmade specifically for the purpose. "There are no catalogs with



tools for many of the things that I do. You have to be pretty innovative."

His attention to detail is a real killer on his time. His painting process? Wood sealer. Flat white. Gloss white. Color coat(s). Artwork. Wood sealer. He buys his glass lure eyes clear with only a black dot for the pupil, then painstakingly paints back with nail polish to get his desired eye colors.

Even on his mini wood lathe he strives for constant quality. Once he hand carves the size/shape of the lure he wants perfectly, he creates templates he can mount to his lathe later. No variation. Constant perfection.

Chris told me there's an old saying among fishermen that "fish lures are designed to catch fishermen, not fish."

"Frankly, when I go fishing I use live bait," he tells me, with a sly grin.



MICKY BEDELL | BDN

Christopher Augustus works to reproduce antique fishing lures at his studio in Southwest Harbor. For him, it all starts with a good story. Radium. Murderers. Ridiculously hilarious, blatantly unscientific claims about effectiveness. These are the things that draw him to, of all things, fishing lures.