

# Bangor to kick off Maine’s ski sale season

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BDN STAFF

Looking for ski gear for the upcoming season? The Penobscot Valley Ski Club will hold its annual ski and snowboard equipment sale in Bangor on Oct. 17, kicking off Maine’s ski sale season. This is one of the first of events held throughout the fall where organizations around the state host events where people can purchase and sell discounted new and used winter equipment before the snow starts to fly.

“Our sale is one of the first in the state,” Sally Burke, PVSC membership and publicity coordinator, said. “It’s our fundraising kickoff, the thing that we rely on so we can establish our budget and know where we can earmark funds to support skiing in this area. We depend on that fundraising money to get our pro-

grams going.”

This year’s PVSC ski sale will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17, at the Bangor Parks and Recreation building at 647 Main St. in Bangor. Merchandise at the sale will include new and used Nordic and alpine skis, boots, poles, ski clothing, helmets and snowboards. At least 15 vendors will bring about 4,000 pieces of discounted equipment to the sale. In addition, area residents will be selling used gear.

“There are a lot of really good deals out there,” Burke said. “When I was getting my family into skiing, I couldn’t have done it without the sale.”

If looking to sell your own equipment, bring it to the Bangor Parks and Recreation building between 5 and 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, and submit it for \$1. Name your price, and the club sells

it for you, less a 15 percent commission.

“One of our efforts over the past five years has been to expand Nordic skiing in the greater Bangor area, and now we’re providing groomed trails at Bangor Municipal Golf course and also at the Hampden and Orono schools and Caribou Bog,” Burke said. “It’s been really exciting to watch it grow.”

The ski sale will help raise funds for this Nordic ski trail grooming, as well as the club’s many Nordic and downhill ski programs for children and adults. Next year, PVSC will be celebrating its 80th anniversary, and the sale has been supporting the club for many of those years.

For information about PVSC and the ski sale, visit pvsclub.org or find the club on Facebook.

Other Maine ski sales

planned for this fall include the following:

— The 35th annual Bethel Outing Club Ski Sale, 6-9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 30, and 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Oct. 31, at Gould Academy field house, 39 Church St., Bethel. For information, visit bethelouting.org or call

— Brunswick 48th annual Ski and Skate Sale, 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8, at Brunswick Recreation Center, 220 Neptune Drive, Brunswick. For information, visit brunswickme.org or call the town’s parks and recreation department at 725-6656.

— The 52nd annual Auburn Ski Association Ski Swap, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 15, at Auburn Middle School, 619 Court Street, Auburn. For information, visit auburnskiassociation.com, email info@auburnskiassociation.com or call 786-3783.

— Pinnacle Ski Club annual ski sale, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 21, at 271 Waverly Street in Pittsfield. For information, visit pinnacleskiclub.wordpress.com or call the club’s president, Jim Cianchette, at 487-4354.

— Yarmouth Ski Club 26th annual Ski Sale & Swap, 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, Nov. 21, at Yarmouth Elementary School, 121 McCartney Street, Yarmouth. For information, visit mainehighschoolskiing.com.

— Camden Snow Bowl ski swap weekend, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Nov. 21-22, at Camden Hills Regional High School, 22 Keelson Drive in Rockport. For information, visit camdensnowbowl.com or call 236-3438.

— Down East Ski Club Winter Expo and annual ski sale, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28, at the Portland Expo. For information, visit downeastskiclub.com or call 406-0248.

## Things to Do Outdoors

**BAR HARBOR** — Atlantic Brewing Co.’s 12th annual Belt Sander Races, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, at the brewing company, 15 Knox Road, to benefit the Muir Fund for Local Cancer Support and the Beth Wright Cancer Center in Ellsworth, and to honor the life of Ron Muir. Belt sander racing involves decorated belt sanders racing down two wooden planks in a double elimination bracket. The 2015 theme is Mardi Gras. Entry fee of \$20 includes barbecue dinner and pint glass for beer. Official race time is 3 p.m. Sign up for the annual War Canoe Biathlon, which begins at 11 a.m. at Pond’s End, Long Pond. Racing starts at noon. Canoes, paddles and personal flotation devices provided.

**BLUE HILL** — Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife’s free Firearms Safety Course for hunters, 6-9 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24, at Blue Hill Public Library. You must attend every day of the class to receive your certificate, which is required with first-time license applications. Participants must be at least 10 years old and all minors will be required to have a signed parental consent form, available at the first session. Registration required at [www.bhpl.net](http://www.bhpl.net) or by calling the library at 374-5515. For information, check [maine.gov/ifw/education/safety/firearm.htm](http://maine.gov/ifw/education/safety/firearm.htm).

**CAMDEN** — Midcoast Audubon Society will host bat enthusiast Annie Kassler with an update on how bats are doing in Maine, 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, at Camden Public Library, 55 Main St. For information, call 236-3440 or go to [librarycamden.org](http://librarycamden.org).

**DEDHAM** — Enjoy a paddle among the islands on Phillips Lake in Dedham, and help with a little end-of-season trash pickup on a couple of islands, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, meeting at the public landing on Poplar Road. Bring a boat, paddle and life jacket. For information, call John Wedin, 659-3326 or [lagolucerne@gmail.com](mailto:lagolucerne@gmail.com).

**ORRINGTON** — King’s Mountains corn maze, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, through Oct. 31, 789 Center Drive. Pumpkins and plants from Ledge-wood Gardens available for purchase. Briana Daily Photography is offering mini-photo sessions by appointment.

**ROCKPORT** — Midcoast Lyme Disease Support and Education group guest speaker Dr. Deb Moskowitz talking about art of Lyme disease diagnosis, 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13, Midcoast Recreation Center, 535 West St., Route 90. For information, call Paula Jackson Jones at 446-6447 or go to [midcoastlymedisease.blogspot.com](http://midcoastlymedisease.blogspot.com).

**STEUBEN** — “Introduction to Mosses and Their Allies” workshop with Fred Olday, 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9, to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11, at Eagle Hill Institute, 59 Eagle Hill Road. Course details and registration at [eaglehill.us/fall-workshops](http://eaglehill.us/fall-workshops). Cost includes tuition and meal plan, with optional overnight accommodations available at \$30 per night. There is a 20 percent discount on tuition for Hancock and Washington county residents. Call Marilyn Mayer with questions at 546-2821, ext. 1, or email [office@eaglehill.us](mailto:office@eaglehill.us).

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

## Hunting

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Ten shotgun shells. Two days. A daily bag limit of four birds. Simple math — and past experience — should have indicated that Billy would never have occasion to fire so many shots during our trips afield.

Right off the bat, Billy had jinxed us. Of course, we didn’t know that yet. And, truthfully, I was giddy, too.

“If you run through your 10 shells, I’ll be glad to hand you my shotgun any time you want it,” I may have said, unwittingly adding myself to the list of things that conspired against us. “I’ve got a boxful.”

Go ahead. Add my quote to the list. We’ll add plenty more excuses as this tale progresses.

Before long, we learned that our optimism had been misplaced. Birds showed up on the sides of roads — just like they always have, more or less. Perhaps not as many as in some past years but all in all a good, average year.

But these birds? They were different, and they taught us a few lessons. In the process of learning those lessons, our list grew.

Like this entry: John is not too stealthy.

Before long, Billy spotted a bird about 100 yards ahead of us, standing on the side of the road. He pointed it out, and because it was my birthday, he gave me a birthday boy shot at our first partridge.

Before I could dismount and load up, the bird had scooted into the woods. After a more thorough search, I could see the little critter slinking between trees, always in shadow, never fully visible.



Billy Lander (from left), Earle Hannigan and Chris Lander stand by the truck and wait for a moose to show up during a moose-watching and bird-hunting trip to Brassua Lake, near Rockwood, recently.

Ruffed grouse? Spruce grouse? I kept asking myself that — a classic question of good vs. evil or, at the very least, legal vs. illegal — until the moment the ruffed grouse flew away.

Add it to the list: John had a shot and didn’t take it.

Meanwhile, while Billy and I struggled to find birds, Chris and Earle — riding in another truck, miles away — were having no better luck.

Over dinner that night, we added to the list. One member of our gang wasn’t there this year. As superstitious hunters, we recognized that any kind of change in the group could have disastrous consequences. At least, that’s what we convinced each other as we sat around looking for scapegoats.

So we blame our failures on the guy who couldn’t come: The Game Hog.

To be truthful, my BDN colleague Pete Warner does not really deserve that nickname. He caught two big trout one day, and the name was born. But even though he may not deserve it, he did earn it — and he’s keeping it, if we have anything to say about it.

Add it to the list: Without a game hog, your hunt is doomed from the start. Though we hadn’t realized it, Pete must have been our good luck charm on previous hunts. (Don’t tell him we said that; it’ll make him insufferable.)

On Saturday, our frustrations built. Any birds we saw didn’t linger long enough for any of us to get off a shot. In fact, few of them even let us get two feet on the ground while dismounting from our trucks before they ran or flew away.

As you may have guessed, we had enough time to formulate another perfectly plausible excuse or two.

Added to the list: It was just too windy. Also, that torrential rainfall earlier in the week must have had some kind of effect.

Chris also mentioned the fact that on at least one of the days, he thinks he put on his left boot before his right — a clear miscue.

Billy and I suspected that sasquatches may have eaten all of the grouse, and thought we were kidding until another passing hunter — unprompted, I should add — made the same observation.

With independent confirmation, we added “Sasquatch Invasion” to the list, too.

In between our fruitless forays, the trip was not a total loss. We have found that if you make a good, honest ef-

# How birds are named and sometimes renamed

Marbled godwit. Ruddy turnstone. Red-necked phalarope. Pine siskin. Who on earth is naming these birds?

Meet the American Ornithological Union, or AOU. This association of professional bird scientists was established in 1883 and was modeled after the British Ornithological Union, established 24 years earlier. The AOU does many things to advance the study of birds in North America, but there is one thing it does that delights and frustrates amateur birders. It names the birds, then sometimes re-names them.

To be fair, somebody’s got to do it. Without a common standard for naming birds, chaos would ensue. The same bird would have different names across the globe. That already happens, of course. Maine’s common loon is known as the great northern diver in Britain. But at least we birders are consistent on this side of the Atlantic, thanks to the AOU.

Scientists are constantly tinkering with their understanding of species distribution and evolution. The AOU receives tons of evidence every year, asserting that certain birds should be taxonomically reclassified and that certain bird populations should be split into multiple species or lumped back into one. That’s a topic for next week. For this week, it’s enough to grasp that somebody is actually in charge of naming birds.

But long before there was an AOU, birds had names. Many of the names come from England and often reflect archaic words, especially if the bird was edible. Partridge and ptarmigan are examples. Because they gather in large flocks, shorebirds were long hunted for food, and so plover, dunlin, and curlew are more examples of Old English names. Phalarope comes from the Greek, meaning coot-footed. Dowitchers are shorebirds with a name that originates from the Iroquois tongue, probably as an imitation of its call.

More recently, whoever discovered the species got to name it. It might be named after a person or named for conspicuous behaviors, sounds, field marks or color. Some color names are particularly amusing. The hepatic tanager is a southwestern bird with a name that means liver-colored. The plumbeous vireo in western states is lead-colored. Like the scarlet tanager, the vermillion flycatcher of the southwest is just too red to be called merely red.

So it has been AOU’s job to update names whenever appropriate, such as when species are reclassified. The



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Pileated woodpecker.

AOU also tries to simplify names and make them more consistent with English names used worldwide. Thus, the oldsquaw was renamed the long-tailed duck in 2000. In 2010, the greater shearwater name was shortened to great shearwater, conforming to what the rest of the world was calling it. With a change so small, why bother?

But, hey, if they’re going to tinker with simple changes, there’s a lot of names that make me scratch my head. Why is it named a northern cardinal when there is no southern cardinal? In fact, there are northern mockingbirds, shrikes, gannets, shovelers, flickers,

fulmars, pintails, waterthrushes, harriers and goshawks but no southern birds of those names.

There are eastern and western bluebirds, kingbirds, screech-owls, woodpeckers and meadowlarks, so the geographical references in those proper names make sense to me. But there are eastern phoebes and no western phoebes. There are eastern towhees but no western towhees. So what clarity does the “eastern” bring?

When I was growing up, our eastern towhee was called the rufous-sided towhee, which was certainly a more helpful name to a neophyte birder. It was split into

two species in 1996, and because the spotted towhee out west also has rufous sides, something had to give. But eastern towhee is the best they could come up with? Its range goes all the way to Texas, for goodness sake.

Likewise, there are western sandpipers, grebes, gulls and tanagers but no eastern-named equivalents. Along the upper Pacific coast, there is even a bird called the northwestern crow.

Some names are hopelessly obscure. The name of our pileated woodpecker refers to the crest on his pileum, which is Latin for the top of his head. Out west, the flammulated owl name refers to flame-shaped markings in the plumage.

WWBD: What Would Bob Do? I’d start by renaming the short-billed and long-billed dowitchers. These shorebirds have absurdly long bills with little actual difference in size so the current names are unhelpful. In 1983, the AOU changed the name of the short-billed marsh wren to sedge wren and shortened the long-billed marsh wren to marsh wren, so why not?

To paraphrase: “What’s in a name? A rose-breasted grosbeak would sing as sweet.”

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