

# Maine Wilderness Guides Org.

An Association of Registered Maine Guides



## MWGO eNews, vol 8: April 2021

### The Value of an MWGO Membership

Kevin Slater (Board Member and Past President)

MWGO is 15 years old this year, having been formed primarily to advocate for the protection of the remote underdeveloped areas we guide in. As I'm fond of saying, a good wildlife habitat is a good guide habitat. We also have a slightly different take on what constitutes a professional guide in terms of minimum qualifications and training. I would like to briefly discuss these three areas of difference: advocacy, guide standards, and training opportunities).

#### Advocacy

MWGO is the only guides organization that consistently comments, testifies and writes letters to protect the remaining wild country we have left in Maine from development and negative impacts from industry (mining, herbicides, etc) on wildlife and fisheries. As an organization of Maine Guides and sporting camp owners, our voice, I believe, carries a little extra weight.

#### Guide Standards

The state of Maine's minimum requirements to hold a valid guides license are too low in one key area, First Aid & CPR training. MWGO believes that:

1. Current First Aid & CPR certification should be required to renew a Guide license
2. The minimum standard should be the 2-day Wilderness First Aid (WEA) course, instead of basic first aid

MWGO will be meeting with Maine IF&W officials to raise this concern. Do I like having to take a 2-3 day first aid re-certification course every 3 years? NO. Is it my professional responsibility as a guide? YES. Can you imagine the PR black eye to the reputation of Maine Guides if someone on a guided trip became injured or sick and the guide did not provide the correct "standard of care" treatment for the condition and the media found out the guide hadn't taken a first aid course in 15 years? Need I say more? I will: it is the national standard for any and all types of outdoor guides to have current First Aid/CPR certification.

#### Education and Training Opportunities

MWGO is the leading organization supporting education and training opportunities for Maine Guides. MWGO will reimburse you \$50 (your membership fee) for successfully completing a WFA course. This is a no-brainer. MWGO also offers a diverse

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### Short Bytes:

#### Browntail Moths expected to be particularly troublesome this year

As the leaves begin to pop here in the Midcoast region, the browntail moth caterpillars emerge to feast on the budding leaves and experts are warning that this will likely be a particularly bad year for browntail moth infestations. Not only do the caterpillars damage trees as they munch on all of those fresh leaf buds, their tiny hairs are also toxic and can cause a rash similar to poison ivy, often treatable with topical hydrocortisone. More significant interactions with a higher density of hairs (around a nest or web) or when inhaled can lead to respiratory issues and may require a more advanced treatment. While they have been found in all Maine counties, they are most prevalent in Androscoggin, Cumberland, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo counties. So, if you see a small brown caterpillar with the tell-tale two orange spots on its tail end, don't touch! Check out the [Maine DACF Browntail Moth webpage](#) for more.



#### Maine Forest Ranger Awarded Nation's Highest Award for Wildfire Prevention as Governor Mills proclaims Apr 18-24 Wildfire Awareness Week and Maine surpasses 200 wildfires so far in 2021

"AUGUSTA - At a Blaine House Ceremony [on April 13], Maine Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Commissioner Amanda Beal presented Maine Forest Service Ranger Specialist Kent Nelson with the Silver Smokey Bear Award, the highest national honor one can receive for outstanding work and significant program impact in wildfire prevention. Ranger Nelson is one of two people to earn this national recognition in 2021." At the same ceremony, Governor Mills proclaimed Apr 18-24 as Wildfire Awareness Week. As of the ceremony, Maine had already seen over 100 wildfires in 2021 and passed 200 wildfires on Apr 22. Maine saw a record breaking total of 1154 wildfires in 2020. [Read the full DACF Press Release.](#)



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list of education and training opportunities for current guides who would like to improve their skills and expand into different guided activities and/or seasons. Regular offerings include: canoe river guide training, winter guide training, first aid training, and we are currently considering a weekend long fly fishing for guides training. We are very supportive of guides who have extensive experience in various aspects of guiding to offer skills specific training opportunities to their fellow guides.

Thanks for reading and I hope you will renew your MWGO membership if you haven't already, and of course for those non-members reading this, I hope you will join MWGO!

### Field Tested Recipe: Dutch Oven Cornbread

Credit: Jackie Stratton, MWGO Board Member

- 1/2 c butter, melted in pan
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 c flour (or cornmeal for GF)
- 1 1/2 c liquid (milk, water, buttermilk, or yogurt)
- 1 1/2 c cornmeal
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 eggs

Mix dry ingredients, make a well in the center, beat eggs and add liquid. Put in a hot greased pan, bake carefully in dutch oven for 15-25 minutes. Enjoy with a slab of butter!



### From the Field



Smalls Falls comes alive in spring time! The early and limited runoff this year was not enough for the annual "Smalls to the Wall" steep creek kayak race, which was moved to nearby Chandler Mills Stream.

Photo Credit:  
[Kyle Haley](#)  
[Photography](#)

**Do you have an article, recipe, tip, event, or photo to share in the next eNews?**  
**Send your submission to: [newsletter@mwgo.org](mailto:newsletter@mwgo.org)!**

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### Invasive of the Month: Japanese Knotweed



This non-native, invasive knotweed will sprout in open uplands and forest edges, along riverbanks and lake shores. If not controlled, Japanese knotweed grows into dense stands. It can clog small waterways and lower the quality of wetland habitats.

Plants have a 1-2 inch diameter round, hollow stem and can grow up to 10 feet tall. The leaves are oval or heart-shaped with pointed tips. In Maine, small white flowers appear on the stems in late July or August. Seeds are dispersed by wind. Knotweed also spreads from stem and rhizome fragments. New patches can be cut weekly throughout the growing season. Large patches are very difficult to control. Photo credits: Maine DACF (above) and Tomas Dundzila (right)



### Guide Tips: The 120° Rule

The air temperature may be starting to get warmer, but the water is still very cold! As a general rule of thumb:

***If Air Temp + Water Temp < 120°, then Wetsuit/Drysuit***

And of course, always wear your life jacket!



### Upcoming Events and Dates

- Feb 28-Jun 13: [Maine Recreational Guide Course](#) by North Star Adventures, Unity, ME. Module format, register by module or for the full course consisting of two days, four evenings, and one canoeing weekend. Contact Nancy Zane: (207) 956-0045 or [NorthStarAdventures1@gmail.com](mailto:NorthStarAdventures1@gmail.com).
- Apr 29 at 7pm via Zoom: [Guides Gone Wild: So You Think You Want to be a Guide?](#) Join Guides Gone Wild host Jen as she moderates a LIVE conversation and question-and-answer session with Jackie Stratton, licensed Maine Guide, owner of Waterways Guiding and Cedar Grove Sauna, as well as one or two additional newly minted guides.

*MWGO Professional Members are eligible for a \$50 reimbursement (\$25 for Supporting Members) for WFA, Wafa, WFR, WEMT or Recertification Courses.*