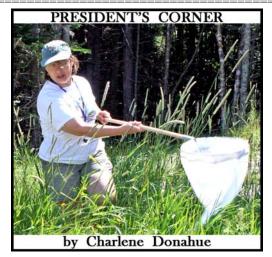
The Maine Entomologist A forum for students, professionals and amateurs

in the Pine Tree State



The Official Newsletter of the Maine Entomological Society Vol. 22, No. 3 **August**, 2018



Spending time at camp can be relaxing as well as bringing unexpected finds. I was 'upta' camp in T4 R7 WELS three times in July; once with my son, once with MES for the Katahdin Woods & Waters Monument field trip and once with Colleen Teerling (and her cat and my dog). We canoed multiple times on Peaked Mountain Pond (yes, with the cat and dog), especially in the early morning and evening when it was not so hot and/or windy.

Whirligig beetles, family Gyrinidae, are normally ubiquitous across the pond as they feed (so far Dana Michaud has identified Gyrinus spp. and Dineutus nigriori from the pond). But early one morning they were 'rafted' together in huge drifts. It was quite impressive to see the size of the groups, probably averaging 30 x 10 feet. *Dineutus* have been previously reported to raft up, and grouping together may help reduce predation when their reaction time is slower due to cool temperatures.



Rafts of large whirlygig beetles (Dineutus, family Gyrinidae) on Peaked Mountain Pond. (Photo by Charlene Donahue)

One morning, the lily pads were covered with tiny water striders, family Gerridae - Gerris sp., Metrobates hesperius and Rheumatobates rilevi have been identified from the pond. Later in the day we noticed cast skins littering some of the lily pads. It was interesting to see how the molting was synchronized across the pond.



Small water striders on lily pads on Peaked Mountain Pond (green is the side of a canoe). - Photo by Charlene Donahue

There's a great video about water striders on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2unnSK7WTE

Observing the synchrony of these diverse insects is fascinating.

On the KW&W weekend we collected a lot of deer flies, family Tabanidae, from around my dog - she was most grateful for our attention to her infestation. Dana has identified nine different species, with Chrysops lateralis being most prevalent. (On a side note, when at a disc golf course in Vassalboro I saw horsefly traps that appeared to be very effective. They just had a large black ball under a funnel going to a collection jar. No lures or pesticides needed as tabanids are visual hunters.)

And lastly, while taking a break from scrubbing out the newly acquired kitchen cabinets for the camp, a white-spotted sawyer, Monochamus scutellatus, landed nearby. I grabbed my phone and took a few photos. One was snapped just as the beetle was taking off - look at the wings! Interesting to see what they look like in motion.

Keep those cameras close at hand - it is amazing the quality of the pictures even amateurs can get! Plus, they can be used for documenting or identifying some insects. Feel free to send your stories and photos in to share.

#### **Table of contents**

- Luna Moth Pupae Emerge! (p. 2)
- Great Day in Katahdin Woods and Waters (p. 2)
- Wes Hutchins Wins Coleopterists Society Award (p. 3)
- The Importance of Habitat (p. 3)
- Ð New European Mullein Weevil – it is in Maine? (p. 4)
- Insects Tracks and Signs at Eagle Hill (p. 4) ÷
- Coming Field Days in Bowdoin, Rangeley (p. 5) Ð
- Some Recent Literature (p. 6)
- Have you seen this moth? (p. 6)
- Bug Maine-ia Coming to Augusta! (p. 7)
- Monica Russo Book Recognized (p. 8)
- Annual Meeting Announcement & Invitation (p. 8)



Cerambycidae) takes flight from the back of Charlene Donahue's hand at her camp, during the Katahdin Woods and Waters field event. (See her President's Column on page 1.)

# Cage-Raised Luna Moths Emerge! by Wes Hutchins

Last fall, I contributed to this newsletter a story about my luna moths (*Maine Entomologist, Nov., 2017; p. 4*). I caught a female, gravid luna moth (*Actias Luna*), and I raised the eggs in captivity until they became caterpillars and eventually pupae. The pupae spent the winter in the garage in one of those butterfly-raising, net cages.

The adult moths have just started to emerge. On June 1st, I was walking past the enclosure with the pupae in it, and inside were two adult luna moths. I was very happy to see that the hard work of caring for the caterpillars and pupae for months had paid off. To ensure that the moths had plenty of time for their wings to dry out, I left them in the enclosure for a few hours.

When I checked on them again, the two moths were mating. They were only about two hours old, and they were already focused on laying more eggs. I didn't want to disturb them, so I left them alone for a few more hours.

Finally, in the evening, I picked the moths up and placed them on the branch of a birch tree. Birch is one of the main food sources for luna moth caterpillars.

Overall, a total of five moths emerged from their cocoons over the weeks. Some were bound not to emerge (pupae have a lot of predators and parasites), but perhaps some of those that didn't emerge died because of the winter cold.

It was an amazing experience to watch these beautiful luna moths grow up, from egg to adult.

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One of the views of Katahdin, showing North Basin, that one sees driving through private forest lands to the KWWNM. - Photo by Bob Nelson

#### KWWNM Field Day Rewarding by Charlene Donahue

The field day at Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument (KWWNM) the weekend of July 14th was great. Six intrepid MES members trekked in to the Monument with collecting permit in hand and spent the day (actually weekend) collecting and documenting insects that live in and around the KW&W Monument.

This year we headed up Charlie's Way off the Sherman Lumber Road into the southern section of the northeastern part of the Monument (got that?). This consisted primarily of woods and roadside collecting, plus time spent on the banks of the Sebois River just outside the Monument and of course collecting on Peaked Mountain Pond.

There was lots of moose sign - scat and areas where they had bedded down - but no sightings.



One of the specimens encountered on the KWWNM field weekend was this larva of *Messa nana*, the early birch leaf edgeminer (Hymenoptera: Tenthridinidae) - Photo by Charlene Donahue

Once specimens get processed and lists complied from notes and photos, we will add significantly to the cataloging begun last year for the Monument.

(cont. on next page) August, 2018

Katahdin Woods and Waters (cont.)



Kathy Claerr, Pete Darling, Dana Michaud, Liz Mazurkiewicz, Charlene Donahue and Melyri the Wonder Dog (with her monster catch-and-release stick) at Charlene's camp for the Katahdin Woods & Waters field event. *Photo by Bob Nelson* 



Wes Hutchins (photo from the *Coleopterists Bulletin* announcement of his award)

# Wed Hutchins Wins Coleopterists Society Award by Bob Nelson

Wes Hutchins, currently raising Luna moths (see his piece on p. 2, as well as his earlier article in last November's issue), is certainly one of our rising young stars in the M.E.S. Wes was recently announced as Maine's first-ever recipient of a Youth Incentive Award (Y.I.A.) from the Coleopterists

Society, awards that have been presented to outstanding young entomologists wanting to study beetles since 1989.

Beyond learning what species of beetles are found within his 1/10-acre study area in Waldo County, Wes's project aims to determine the effects of those Coleoptera on 27 living and dead coniferous and deciduous trees. He's specifically investigating which species of beetles are associated with the decomposition of particular tree taxa, whether different beetles are associated with different trees, and how the beetles contribute to soil quality in the plot.

Wes's award was announced in the *Coleopterists Bulletin* (v. 72, no. 1, p. 96) earlier this year. He plans to submit his findings to the Maine Forest Inventory Growth Project and the Maine Entomological Society.

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# The Importance of Habitat: Being in the Right Place at the Right Time by Bob Nelson

Though I've tried to make most of the M.E.S. field days over the years, I'm sure a lot of people think of them as a less serious event than many other aspects of their lives. Maybe what follows will encourage a few more folks to join us on our monthly forays. You can never predict what you're going to find!

Consider that on these M.E.S. field events, although there's a lot of socializing, there's also some serious collecting going on. Last year at Kathy Claerr's, for example, I got to spend time collecting multiple habitat types in the forest behind her home, in a large stone quarry and gravel pit, and along a stream – all on a leisurely and very pleasant M.E.S. event with friends.

Along the stream, I found a number of things, most to be expected but including one that was a big surprise: the tiny (2-3 mm long) introduced (technically, adventive, since it wasn't an intentional introduction) Western European and African species *Asaphidion curtum*. In the 2014 synthesis of our knowledge of Maine ground beetles that Dick Dearborn and colleagues published, the only record of this species in Maine was a specimen from Camden that resides in the Canadian National Collection of insects in Ottawa. I have personally since found it along the Kennebec River in Waterville – but this Bowdoin record is obviously significant as well, helping demonstrate that the species is established and widespread in Maine.

Even more surprising was getting a specimen of Agonum ferreum, larger (about 10 mm long) and harder to miss by anyone even casually looking for ground beetles. This was in the moister leaf litter of the forest, down by the stream, but was something I'd never seen before. A quick check of the Dearborn paper showed that there were **no** records of this species in Maine at all!

I took this as a personal affront, since .... I had thought I had a pretty decent collection of *Agonum* from Maine and across the continent to the Pacific coast, south into California and north into Alaska, with scores of species represented, but I'd never even seen this species before. I mentioned it casually to Jim Liebherr, Curator of Entomology at Cornell,

The Maine Entomologist

#### The Importance of Habitat (cont.)

who did his Ph.D. dissertation decades ago on the genus and is now poised on retirement. His response was "As to Agonum ferreum, any chance the site was old-growth? I had never collected it until Cornell got an old-growth forest remnant from Weyerhauser in a land swap..... The species is thick as thieves in this 8-hectare patch ... "

That got me to thinking, and yes, it was old-growth forest behind Kathy's house, mostly white pine and northern red oak, big beautiful trees. And I was now excitedly looking forward to returning for the August field day (see p. 5). But when I mentioned this to Kathy, she threw cold water on my enthusiasm: almost all of the old-growth forest behind her home has been logged since we were there last year. It's gone.

I'm still looking forward to the August field day, and hopeful against odds that I'll be able to find at least one more specimen of this elusive species. Maybe it, like the forest, is now a memory of the past, not to return here for another halfcentury or more. But had I not gone on that M.E.S. field day last summer, and collected it then, we would never have known that it was here in Maine at all!

Perhaps obviously, this note also pays homage to the efforts of many to preserve what old-growth timberlands we still have, to maintain the necessary environments for specialist taxa that live only in these seasoned, mature environments.



What could potentially be Maine's biggest mosquito yet found was spotted recently at rest along State Route 195 (the Corea Road) on the way out of Prospect Harbor to Corea, on the coast. -Photo by Bob Nelson

# **European Mullein Weevil Found in NH:** Is it in Maine as Well? by Marc DiGirolomo, USFS, Durham, NH

Recently we discovered a species of weevil, Rhinusa asellus, native to Europe and new to North America. They feed on all species of mullein (Verbascum) and it doesn't look like it will be a major pest.

Rick Hoebeke (U. of Georgia) and I will be writing a paper to document this new species in the literature, and we would like help finding more localities for the range map.

The earliest record we have found was an unidentified pinned specimen from bycatch of a trapping project in Massachusetts in 2013. I have been checking mullein plants over the past month or so, and have been finding it pretty easily. I have over 2 dozen specimens, but only from the areas that I have been working (NH, MA, NY and one specimen from VT). It seems as though it is pretty well established, and I would love to have records from other states.

Some info and images of the species can be found at: https://bugguide.net/node/view/1517316

Typically I have been finding them in the flower heads, and sometimes on the stem in the leaf axils. There is a more common, related beetle (*Rhinusa tetra*) which I've often been finding together with R. asellus on the same plant. R. asellus is darker, larger, and has a very long rostrum.



The size range is 2.6-4.5 mm; the ones I've gotten have been on the larger end of that range (see photo).

If you are out in the field and happen to notice some mullein, would you kindly check them for weevils, collect them and contact me (mfdigirolomo@fs.fed.us; or by phone at 603-868-7738) if you happen to find some. It will be greatly appreciated. I plan on submitting the manuscript this winter.

# A week at Eagle Hill with Charley Eiseman, naturalist and author of Tracks & Sign of Insects & Other Invertebrates by Charlene Donahue

It was a great week of being immersed in the natural history of insects and putting names to some of the things we see every day and just walk past. This time of year was excellent for this class, as there are lots of insect signs out there and many still had their denizens present. Some of the leaf samples we brought back to the lab had adults emerge, or more often their parasitoids, which was just as interesting. Mornings were spent with classroom time, afternoons were field trips and lab work. Evenings allowed for more lab time. Just as an aside - food and location at Eagle Hill are awesome!

Charley is an amazing person with a great depth of natural history knowledge and a memory for scientific names. He is working with taxonomists across the world identifying what he finds in leaf mines and galls. He is filling in the life

#### Insect Tracks and Signs (cont.)

history of many species of insects that were known only from adults, and matching the adults to their structures. He is also helping with naming hundreds of new species as he rears them from their mines and cocoons.



*Coleophora* sp. larva (Lepidoptera: Coleophoridae) on *Alnus*. The case was constructed from part of a leaf; the larva carries it around and mines small portions of the leaf, sticking its head between the leaf surfaces to feed. Note the hole in the feeding patch to the right of the current feeding patch, which marks where the casebearer previously attached and fed. This was one of the many signs of insects seen during the course at Eagle Hill.

The class was composed of 14 naturalists, some with insect ecology background, and others with more bird/plant knowledge. They came from Canada, Florida, New York and New England, including Maine.

With 15 people looking for invertebrate signs, we had lots to observe. Charley was able to engage with people of all levels of background. What they took away depended on where they started. Two of the students had just taken the Microlepidoptera course (MES member Pete Darling also took that class) and were excited to put that knowledge together with the leaf mines. This is good, because Charley says the estimate is now that one in ten moths is a leaf miner! Check out Charley's website (http://charleyeiseman.com), his blog and/or book for an idea of what we spent a week investigating.

Eagle Hill finds incredible instructors for the courses it offers. If you have the time and money to attend any of them, I would highly recommend it.

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### **August Field Day in Bowdoin**

August in Bowdoin is not to be missed: sun and warmth are guaranteed! Our field day is scheduled for Saturday, August 25th, at 214 Lewis Hill Road in Bowdoin.

There'll be plenty of shady forest to cool off in, and sandy streams, too. Plus, we have an extensive gravel pit, sand banks, small ponds, mown fields, forests of variable successional stages – and backyard flower and vegetable gardens, too. So many options, so little time – and all are available within a short distance of my country estate, where afterwards we can debrief on the day's haul!



Plan to show up at 10:00 a.m. with collecting gear, appropriate clothing, and your lunch, and we'll make plans as to where to go on-site. *Please let me know* if you're planning to join us, so we don't leave without you! You can e-mail me at kclaerr1@comcast.net or call at 207-666-3551.

<u>To get here</u>, Take I-295 to Exit 37. If you're headed south, turn right at the end of the offramp; if you're headed north, turn left and go beneath the Interstate. Just to the west of the Interstate, turn right onto State Route 125. This will come to a "T" when you get to U.S. Route 201. Turn right, then take the first left again, to remain on State Route 125. The first road on your right is the Lewis Hill Road. Turn right onto this, and go one mile. The drive rises up to your left – and we'll have an M.E.S. sign out so you can't miss us!

#### **September Field Day in Rangeley**

Dana Michaud invites all adventurous M.E.S. members and potential members to join him collecting in the Rangeley area on **Saturday, September 8th**. A whole host of options remains open for collecting – from lakeshores to streams to forests, clear-cuts, meadows and alpine slopes. Precisely *where* we'll go will be determined by the preferences of those who show up!



Google Earth street view of the Rangeley Lake overlook, as seen looking north from Maine State Route 4.

(cont. on next page)

#### Rangeley Field Day (cont.)

We'll gather at <u>10:00 a.m.</u> at the Scenic Overlook over Rangeley Lake (see photo on previous page). This is on Maine State Route 4, on your left (if you're coming from the south) immediately before the turnoff to the Saddleback Ski Area on Dallas Hill Road. There's ample parking here, and we'll have an M.E.S. sign at the entrance.

Bring your lunch, appropriate clothing (it can be chilly if it gets wet), and all collecting gear.

**DO** let Dana know if you're planning to come by calling him at 207-872-7683. Dana doesn't have a cell phone, nor e-mail access – so there will be no way to contact him at the last minute if you wake up Saturday morning and decide that you want to go.

Worth noting is that the last time we had a field day in this area in 2011, the weather forecast was for showers statewide. Bob Nelson and Dave Bourque were the only ones to show up ..... and had a very productive and rain-free collecting day, climbing nearly to the summit of Saddleback Mountain for a spectacular view of the western mountains including Sugarloaf, while everyone who stayed home got rained on!

# Recent Scientific Papers of Potential Interest

Several papers have appeared recently in the journal *Canadian Entomologist* that could be of potential interest to M.E.S. members.

The first is on the appearance of native bumblebees in Canadian commercial colonies of the Eastern Bumble Bee (*Bombus impatiens*) on the island of Newfoundland (Hicks, *et al.*). The concern here is spillover of pathogens from the introduced commercial colonies into the native populations; *B. impatiens* is native in Maine but apparently not in Newfoundland.

A second paper (Haavik, *et al.*) discusses observations of the European woodwasp, *Sirex noctilio* (Hymenoptera: Siricidae) and its effects on pine forests in Ontario over a 5year period. The wasp has not yet proven a major tree-killer in Ontario, but the authors caution that farther south, or as the climate warms, this may not continue.

A third paper (Sabbahi, *et al.*) reviews egg and larval parasitoids of Hemlock Loopers (*Lambdina fiscellaria* [Lepidoptera: Geometridae]) found in Labrador. Six different species of parasitoids were found, of which four were Hymenopterans and two were parasitoid flies (Diptera).

A fourth paper (Quicke, *et al.*) reports the results of DNA barcoding of Canadian specimens of the genus *Histeromerus* (Hymenoptera: Braconidae), which showed that at least some Canadian specimens belong to a species previously known only from the Palearctic. However, there is sufficient genetic differentiation from European populations to indicate that the species is native to North America and has been separated from the European population for at least several hundred thousand years.

Lastly, a fifth paper (Archibald, *et al.*) discusses the fossil record for the modernization of the Hymenoptera, with a focus on the Okanogan Fauna of Washington State and related deposits from multiple sites in British Columbia, materials dating to  $\sim$ 45 million years of age and older.

Anyone desiring a copy of any of these papers can e-mail Bob Nelson for a pdf digital copy.

#### **References:**

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- Archibald, S. B., A. P. Rasnitsyn, D. J. Brothers, and R. W. Mathewes, 2018. Modernisation of the Hymenoptera: ants, bees, wasps, and sawflies of the early Eocene Okanagan Highlands of western North America. *Canadian Entomologist*, v. 150, p. 205-257.
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- Hicks, B. J., B. L. Pilgrim, E. Perry, and H. D. Marshall, 2018: Observations of native bumble bees inside of commercial colonies of *Bombus impatiens* (Hymenoptera: Apidae) and the potential for pathogen spillover. *Canadian Entomologist*, v. 150, p. 520-531.
- Quicke, D. L. J., P. D. N. Hebert, and B. A. Butcher, 2018: DNA barcoding reveals the Palaearctic species *Histeromerus mystacinus* (Hymenoptera: Braconidae: Rhyssalinae) in eastern North America. *Canadian Entomologist*, v. 150, p. 495-498.
- Sabbahi, R., L. Royer, J. E. O'Hara, and A. M. R. Bennett, 2018: A review of known parasitoids of hemlock looper (Lepidoptera: Geometridae) in Canada and first records of egg and larval parasitoids in Labrador forests. *Canadian Entomologist*, v. 150, p. 499-510.

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A Lepidopterist has inquired about Maine records for the ghost moth *Sthenopis thule* (Hepialidae) for an upcoming article in the *News of the Lepidopterists' Society.* A check of state holdings did not produce any specimens. Has anyone seen this moth in Maine? If you have any records, a photo of the field sighting or pinned specimen would be helpful. Send information to Charlene Donahue at donahuecp15@gmail.com. Thank you!

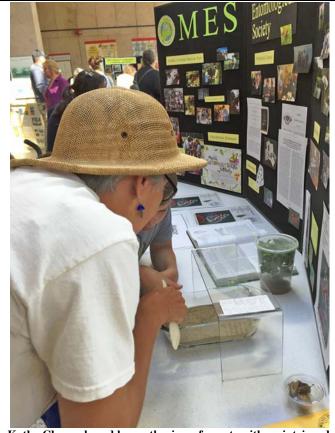
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The Maine Entomologist

### Bug Maine-ia at the Maine State Museum Tuesday September 11, 2018; 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. *Free Admission All Day for Human and Insect Visitors!* by Joanna Turow

It is that time of year again! Bug Maine-ia at the Maine State Museum is just around the corner, and the staff at the Maine State Museum education division is in full planning mode.



Kathy Claerr shared her enthusiasm for ants with an intrigued young visitor at the M.E.S. table at last year's Bug Maine-ia, one of the first displays people encountered as they entered the Maine State Museum.

- Photo by Joanna Turow

You may have heard of this insect extravaganza, which is the museum's largest annual event of the year. The museum sees over 1,000 people, hundreds of which are students, both public- and home-schooled, who come excited to learn all about insects! On that day, all the students are entomologists in training; they love the bugs!

Contributing to the heightened enthusiasm for insects on this day, are the many Maine entomologists who each year fill the museum with fascinating insect displays and hands-on opportunities allowing the public up-close and personal interaction with the bugs. Certainly we could not achieve such a successful event without the dedication and enthusiasm of all the entomologists and educators who participate. We extend a big thank you to all those dedicated presenters who join us year after year. If you have never been, we hope you will take the time to check out this amazing event!



The Maine Forest Service table is always busy at Bug Maine-ia, with hundreds of specimens from light traps for visitors to look through, as well as displays on major forest insects of Maine. - Photo by Joanna Turow

We are always looking for new presenters and new volunteers, so if you or someone you know has a great idea for an insect display or activity or if you would like to come and help out with an existing activity, please contact Joanna Torow at 287-6608 or e-mail her at Joanna.torow@maine.gov. We'd love to have you!



Dave Bourque and Colleen Teerling were part of the team that helped insect-collecting enthusiasts identify their catch on the Maine State Museum grounds at Bug Maine-ia 2016. - Photo by Joanna Turow

The Maine Entomologist

## M.E.S. Annual Meeting Call: October 6th

Bob and Nettie Nelson (BeetleBob2003@gmail.com or 426-9629) invite all M.E.S. members, potential members, and anyone else who'd like to join us, to their home at Rock Ridge in Clinton (in the NE corner of Kennebec County), for the annual M.E.S. business meeting, **on Saturday, October 6th**.

The grounds will be open for collecting, as usual – and sometimes yield surprising new discoveries. Lots of changes since last year, with more open ground to explore, including cleared trails behind the house. Our perennial sunflowers should be in full bloom at this time, and are usually a haven for late-season Lepidoptera, Hymenoptera, Diptera and other nectar and pollen feeders.

We'll have oven-roasted chicken and vegan chili available, and hot coffee especially should the weather be chilly, and invite everyone to bring something else to add to the pot-luck luncheon that precedes the business meeting. Lunch is *always* a culinary extravaganza of varied tastes and treats.



A bee hotel, such as this one won last year by Anne Mallett, will go home with some M.E.S. member attending the Annual Meeting in Clinton. (Not shown, but to be included, will be a facing of 1" mesh chicken wire to

Not shown, but to be included, will be a facting of 1 mesh chicken wire to help keep the woodpeckers from eating all your bees!)

**Please** do let us know if you're planning to attend, though, to help with our planning! Signs will be posted at the ends of the Clinton off-ramps from I-95 to guide you to the meeting. Please contact Bob (e-mail and phone number above) if you need directions from another route.

This year will mark our third annual bee-hotel **<u>drawing</u>**. Some lucky attending M.E.S. member will take home a *free*  Bee Hotel; Liz Mazurkiewicz and Anne Mallett have taken them in the past two years.

We'll be ready for guests by 10:00 a.m., so people can spread out across the fields and forest for collecting. Lunch will begin around noon, and the business meeting will start at 1:30. Dana Michaud will be in attendance, so this'll also be a good opportunity to renew your membership for 2019 (*hint!*).

Anna Court's detailed minutes of the 2017 Meeting were published in the November, 2017, issue of the newsletter, on p. 2-3. The agenda for this year's annual meeting will be distributed at the meeting; one key item will be to correct (if necessary) the minutes, or vote to approve them as printed.

#### Monica Russo's Treecology Receives Award

M.E.S. founding member Monica Russo's 2016 book, *Treecology: 30 Activities and Observations for Exploring the World of Trees and Forests*, with photos by Kevin Byron, received a National Outdoor Book Award Honorable Mention in the Children's category last year. This only just recently came to our attention, but congratulations Monica!



Charlene Donahue's son, Brian Mason, was playing disc golf with friends recently in Auburn. But when they spotted this cicada emerging from its nymph skin, they had to stop and watch the process.

-Photo by Brian Mason

#### **COMING M.E.S. EVENTS in 2018** (details of most events will be in future newsletters)

25 August field day at Kathy Claerr's, Bowdoin (see p. 5)
8 September field day in Rangeley area, Saddleback (see p. 5)
12 September Bug Maine-ia at Maine State Museum (see p. 7)
6 October M.E.S. Annual Meeting in Clinton
?? November Speaker from Maine Bumble Bee Atlas project (speaker and date still to be set)

(See http://www.colby.edu/MES/ for more detailed information; new information on any event will be posted as soon as received.)

The Maine Entomologist is the quarterly newsletter of the Maine Entomological Society. Dues are \$15 per year. Checks should be made payable to the M.E.S. and sent to Mr. Dana Michaud, M.E.S. Treasurer, at 3 Halde Street, Waterville, ME 04901-6317. Our records show your dues are paid through the year printed on your mailing label; please contact Dana if you believe this is in error. Individual articles reflect the opinions of the authors and mention of any specific commercial products or businesses should not be construed as formal endorsement by the M.E.S. of any such product or businesses.