



**MAINE ISLAND TRAIL**  
ASSOCIATION

**2023**  
**Year in Review**

# A letter from Board Chair

## ROB NICHOLS

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the MITA Board of Trustees, I thank you for your tremendous support of our mission of access and stewardship over the past year. Whether through financial contributions or volunteering out on the Trail, our community gives so much to MITA and to each other.

2023 was another year of exciting progress for MITA, with an all-new digital home at [mita.org](http://mita.org) and the much-acclaimed debut of “The Crushtacean”, our portable hydraulic compactor used for crushing washed-up fishing gear, leading the way. While very different accomplishments, both represent significant steps forward in how MITA is able to connect with members and care for the Trail.

As I write this, our staff are already making plans for 2024. Before we get there, though, I invite you to take a look back at 2023 (which marked MITA’s 35th anniversary, if you can believe it) and celebrate all that we were able to achieve. Thank you for another great year, and we all look forward to connecting with you in 2024 either on the water, at a cleanup, or during one of our events!

Best wishes,



Rob Nichols



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# THE TRAIL AT A GLANCE

The Maine Island Trail has maintained incremental growth, enabling more access and stewardship on the coast.

**258**  
TOTAL SITES

**182**  
Island Sites

**76**  
Mainland Sites

Partnerships built on mutual respect with those who own the Trail's sites remain the key to success.

**107**  
LANDOWNERS

**21**  
Public Agencies

**33**  
Nonprofits

**53**  
Private / Families



**A word from Raspberry Island owner**  
**Alicia Heyburn**

**“Why put your island on the Maine Island Trail?”** There are as many reasons as there are islands. But here is one: it’s an easy way to provide access to special places. Islands inspire gratitude. Visitors will write notes in the logbook about deep rest, awe-inspiring sunsets and children’s tide pool discoveries. And MITA will transcribe these island-inspired words and share them with you in the depths of winter, when you are longing for the warmth of summer’s rocky shore. Words of gratitude for the privilege of visiting, when the privilege is really ours, to be able to give.

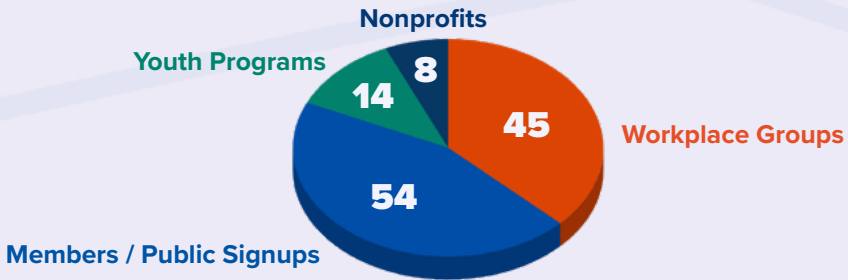


Who really owns an island? While nothing may be truly wild anymore, many of Maine’s islands come close. Let them stay that way. Learn their natural ecology. Learn their human history. Respect this history, even if you are the one now paying the property taxes. Our waters are shared, our islands can be too.”

# STEWARDSHIP

In 2023, MITA volunteers contributed over **7,300 hours of service** and made over **1,500 site visits** on the Trail.

We worked with volunteers from **50 different partner organizations** over **121 total project days**:



**In focus:** Making its debut in 2023, our hydraulic lobster trap crusher, dubbed **“The Crushtacean”**, helped us remove **1,300 derelict traps** from island shorelines. From these traps, we were able to take a total of **12.25 tons** of metal back to the mainland to be recycled.



**A word from member and volunteer Emily Ludolph:**  
**“MITA stewards more than islands.** They steward community. The organization is a map of good company—the staff are role models, neighbors become friends over shared trash bags and sunny boat rides, and the whole membership network serves as a recommendation engine on where to find adventure on the coast of Maine. From cleanups, to events, to keeping up with fellow members, I feel immense gratitude to be a part of a community powered by care, fun, and a love of being outside.”



MAINE ISLAND TRAIL



# MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

In addition to access and membership resources for exploring the Maine Island Trail, MITA members once again enjoyed a diverse range of programming and events in 2023.



MITA launched into spring with **WASTE WATER**, our collaboration with eco-artist **Mariah Reading** that began its three-week run with a sold-out, two-venue opening reception at the **Casco Bay Artisans** gallery and **New England Ocean Cluster**.

May saw the return of **Splash!**, MITA's annual fundraiser party and silent auction, where our members **helped raise over \$30,000** to support our programming.

For August, the festivities moved farther up the coast with **Toast to the Coast** at WoodenBoat in Brooklin for the second straight year—this time with all-you-can-eat artisan pizza.

# BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Our business partners understand that a commitment to MITA signifies a commitment to stewardship and access on the Maine coast.

**82**

Partners in 2023

**293%**

Growth in partnerships since 2020

**74**

Partners based in Maine

**\$115,000+**

In support for MITA from business partners in 2023

## **A word from Flowfold CEO Devin McNeill:**

“A highlight of the year was working with MITA to create custom products to support MITA’s conservation efforts, a cause that is especially meaningful to Flowfold since it aligns with our commitment to the environment and our use of sustainable, recycled materials. It was an example of two passionate Maine organizations bringing their communities together to support a common cause.”





leave no trace drop anchor beer first leave no trace

**rising tide**  
brewing company

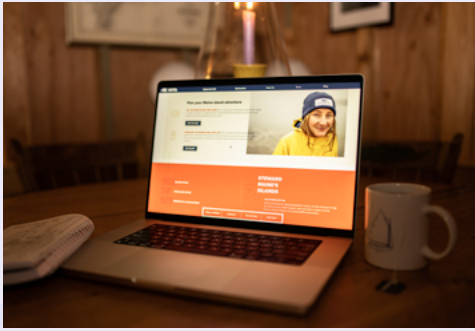
SESSION IPA  
**MAINE ISLAND TRAIL ALE**

N 43° 39' 55.16" W 70° 15' 25.06" Net WT 12.35oz



# GOING DIGITAL

MITA completed two major endeavors in the digital space in 2023: an **all-new website at mita.org**, and the establishment of the **MITA Gear Shop**.



MITA took another step in improving the member experience with the launch of an all-new **mita.org**, making it easier for members of the MITA community to access the information they're looking for while having a more beautiful user experience. We give our thanks to **Springtide Studio** and **side.sea** for their guidance and support in making our new website a reality!

2023 also saw the launch of the **MITA Gear Shop**, our new e-commerce platform at **shop.mita.org** that offers a wide range of MITA-branded apparel and other gear. We are excited that people now have this option for supporting MITA, and that our brand moves further into the world with each purchase. We are thankful for our partners at **Slalom** for their support in helping us create this platform!



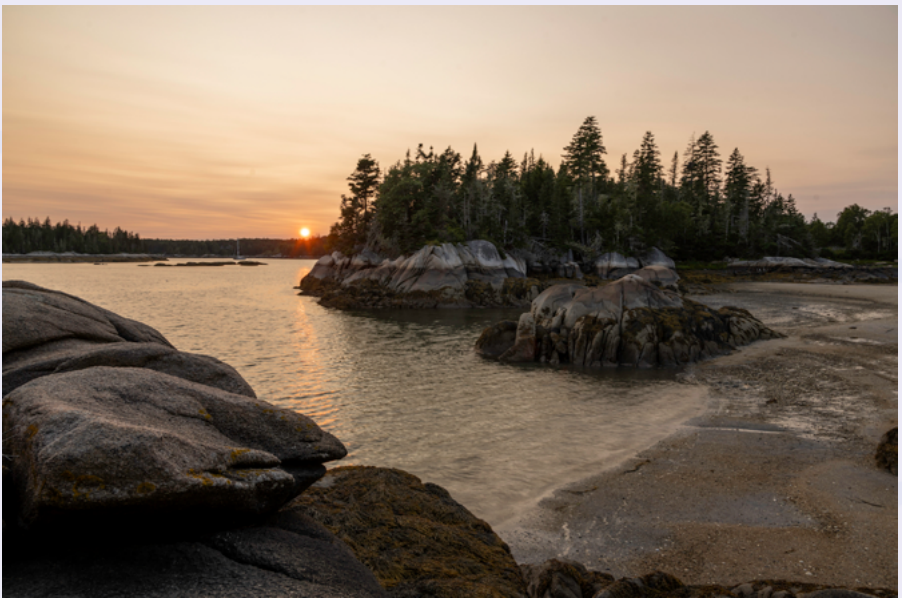
# AND THANKS TO YOU!

From all of us at the Maine Island Trail Association, we thank you for your enthusiasm, support, and hard work in 2023!

There are so many roles involved in maintaining the Maine Island Trail, and if you're reading this, then there's little doubt that you've played one (or might soon!)

We feel honored by the landowners who share MITA's vision. We are grateful for our volunteers who do the work in the field to keep the Trail clean and accessible. We are thankful to all of our business partners who support our work and help to shine a light on us. We are inspired by the thousands of Trail visitors each year who leave us tales of adventure and discovery as they reflect within the pages of our logbooks.

**To all of you, we give our thanks. See you in 2024!**



Learn how you can support MITA's work at  
[mita.org/donate](https://mita.org/donate)

