



Director's Report
August 31, 2015
Elizabeth Migliore

Administrative

Dorothy Rowe Boyle Internship: Our summer intern Stephen O'Grady, the first Dorothy Rowe Boyle Intern, began with the Trust on May 28, and finished on August 20. Stephen worked directly with staff to advance the mission of OCT through a variety of land management and stewardship activities. His work included maintenance of walking trails, installing and repairing OCT property signs, installing OCT trail markers, maintaining turtle gardens and blue bird boxes, installing a wood duck box at Ice House Pond, and updating our property files. We are thankful for his help!

Annual Meeting and Election: The Annual Meeting was held on August 27th at 5:00 pm. The guest speaker was Dr. Jeremy Owens of WHOI, who gave a 30 minute presentation on climate change. During the meeting, voting for trustee nominations and next year's nominating committee was held. Our slate of candidates has officially been voted in under the procedures of the updated Declaration of Trust, with a meeting quorum of 56 members, a Trustee slate vote of 341-Yes, 5-No, and a Nominating Committee slate vote of 340-Yes, 6-No. Bios for the new Trustees and Nominating Committee members are posted online for review at <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/annual-meeting/>. Members also heard a recap of this past year from the President and Director, a financial report, and an overview of the pre-strategic planning process the Board has been undergoing. The meeting also included an acknowledgement of Trustee Beth Minear, who served on the Board for 15 years and is now retiring.



Orleans Water Quality Advisory Panel: For all the meeting materials, go to <http://www.town.orleans.ma.us/water-quality-advisory-panel/pages/workshop-materials>.

Land Management

White's Lane has continued to be mowed throughout August to create better Terrapin Turtle nesting habitat and allow easy access to monitor bluebird boxes. Volunteers from MassAudubon are monitoring nesting sites on a daily schedule. One wild nest has already hatched, with a terrapin hatchling being taken to the Mass Audubon lab for a week of monitoring, then released back at White's Lane.



The walking paths on Flint/Young and Mauch Gift continue to be maintained. Additional trails are having vegetation trimmed back as needed, and are being monitored for fallen or hazardous trees.

Summer intern Stephen O’Grady installed OCT trail signs on all of our trail systems, in order to avoid confusion and keep hikers walking on the designated trails.

We have been notified we will have another AmeriCorps placement next year, to begin October 6th.

Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee is planning two donor events this year. On September 8th there will be a Blue Claw boat tour touring Little Sipson Island and Hopkins Island, with a picnic lunch stop on the beach at Eelman’s Point. On October 4th, cocktails and a dinner will be held at the Narrows. Invitations have been mailed out.

Educational Meetings/ Programs

Recent Walks:

On Monday, August 17, a group of over 20 boarded kayaks, canoes, and even paddleboards to make the voyage from Quanset Pond to Little Sipson Island, which is owned by the OCT. The trip was led by OCT President Bob Prescott.



Upon arrival at the Island, Bob educated the group on a bit of history of the island and surrounding area. OCT purchased the property after a fall storm in 1991 swept away a three season home that had existed on the island, becoming the Trust’s first land purchase. The island and surrounding mudflats and shallows have been changing ever since, with constant erosion and movement of sand. Since Nauset Beach was breached in the spring of 2007, areas of Pleasant Bay saw tides of 1.5 feet more extreme with each high and low tide, and water quality improved. As a result, the area off Little Sipson has some of the healthiest eelgrass beds in Massachusetts and serves as a window into the past.

Attendees observed many shellfish, including horseshoe crabs, whelks, mussels, and a variety of clams. Bob explained that the majority of these shellfish were historically overfished and many still are overfished. He stressed the importance of understanding the life cycles and natural history of these species for better management in the future. These shellfish have a variety of uses, from food to pharmaceutical uses, but we must also understand their importance to the ecosystem. Shorebirds that were observed on the mudflats off the island feed on these shellfish, giving them the energy to continue their southern migrations.



Upcoming Walks:

- ***Namequoit Bog Conservation Area***
Thursday, September 10, 2015 from 10:00 am-11:30 am
Leader – Liz Migliore, OCT Director
Meet at the Town’s Paw Wah Point Conservation Area parking lot, located at the end of Namequoit Road just past Paw Wah Pond on your right.

- ***Pochet Island***
Sunday, September 20, 2015 from 9:00 am- 1:00 pm
Leader- Kris Ramsay, former OCT Director
Meet at southern end of the off-road vehicle trail head, farthest from the entrance of the Nauset Beach parking lot
Note: This walk is strenuous, given its length and that it includes walking over sand.

Upcoming Fall Lectures:

- ***Natives Are Nice! Using Native Plants in Landscape Design***
Thursday, September 17, 2015
Speaker – Barbara Conolly
Owner, Gardens by Barbara Conolly
In this program for both homeowners and professionals, Barbara will share her landscaping expertise; the focus is on using native species while accomplishing design goals.

- ***What’s Happening to the Trees?***
Thursday, October 15, 2015
Speaker – Ken Gooch
Director of Forest Health, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
Ken will share his insights about the health of our forests, and some of the threats and protection strategies being used across the state.

- ***Sea-Run Fish of Cape Cod***
Thursday, November 19, 2015
Speaker – Brad Chase
Senior Marine Fisheries Biologist, Mass. Dept. of Fish & Game, Division of Marine Fisheries

Marine fisheries biologist Brad Chase will discuss the diadromous fish of Cape Cod—these are fish that have evolved to migrate between freshwater and marine habitats for a survival advantage. Brad will give an overview of historic and present fish-run conditions, and highlight what’s going on in Orleans.