

ORLEANS
CONSERVATION TRUST



Annual Meeting Goes Live

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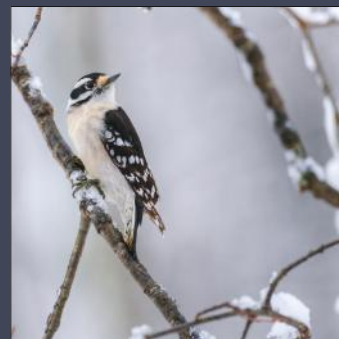
On Boland Pond

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■ ON THE COVER:

Caring for Our Lands

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Caring for Our Lands It Takes Teamwork!



Hear Andrew Gottlieb on the "State of Our Waters" **Talks & Walks**, page 7

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On the cover: Goats from Goat Green Cape Cod joined the OCT team to help control invasive vegetation at our Cullen Property. Photo by Diana Landau. Inset: Downy woodpecker © Hardie Truesdale.

Dear OCT members and supporters,

On a recent visit to Snow Library, I spotted a mom with her youngster-in-stroller along the new walkway, built as part of the Orleans Phase 1 Sewer Project. As they passed native plantings in their fall foliage, the mom was teaching her child how fall winds scatter the seeds of plants, which then rest and root new growth through the winter. The success of the Village Green pathway project grew from a partnership among the town, library trustees, contractors, and volunteers from the Orleans Improvement Association and the Nauset Garden Club. The results of this team effort speak for themselves.

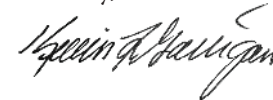
At the Trust, too, we recognize that we are stronger together when it comes to stewarding natural lands and the character of our community. Recently OCT and the Town of Orleans partnered to create new parking and access at the Greenbelt Gateway (aka 66 Portanimitic Road) and are embarking on a new effort with the Orleans schools to restore the trail network along Boland Pond, right downtown on school property (page 6). We do our utmost to care for OCT's 660 acres around town, but the health of local lands transcends property lines—so we're also educating private landowners who want to learn more about stewarding their own lands. We have even crossed species lines to recruit teammates: on our cover you met the crew of goats who munched invasives on our Cullen Conservation Area in Nauset Heights.

It takes strong teamwork to run OCT as well! Our amazing staff and trustees form the core of our team; on the staff side Executive Director Steve O'Grady,

Director of Land Stewardship Alex Bates, new Outreach Coordinator & Office Manager Abby Geisen (welcome, Abby!), and AmeriCorps Cape Cod member Lily Gooding. We are forever grateful to administrative assistant Pam Schultz, who retired in October. I want to thank every trustee, especially two who recently completed their board service: Rigney Cunningham, who served from 2019–2022, and Steve Gass, from 2016–2022. We will miss Rigney in every way possible (see page 11), and we know we'll see Steve out on the trails. I warmly welcome our incoming trustees, Mary Griffin and Deb Reuman (page 11).

Our most indispensable partners are the donors and supporters who sustain this local nonprofit land trust. You give to the Trust in many forms and through donations large and small. I'm always happy to see all of your names in this fall newsletter—and especially to recognize our White Cedar Society members and Red Oak Donors. (Speaking of acorns, don't we have a bumper crop this year?) As this season turns, nature turns inward to allow plants to rest and renew themselves. Let us also continue to strengthen our roots and generate new growth together.

Sincerely,



Kevin F. Galligan
President



Join Our Red Oak Donors!

Members and others who contribute to OCT for at least five years running, no matter the amount, receive special recognition in our GIVING section (see page 9). If you're not a Red Oak Donor yet, please give at least once annually to join their ranks. Keep an eye out for our year-end appeal letter, landing in your mailbox soon. And thank you!



The Trust Looks Back and Ahead

Annual Meeting Goes “Live” Again

With the greatest pleasure, OCT staff and trustees greeted members at our favorite venue, the Orleans Yacht Club, for the 52nd edition of the Trust’s Annual Meeting. The September 12 event was OCT’s first in-person gathering in three years—except for our outdoor walks, of course. At long last we got to properly celebrate our 50th anniversary!

Members greeted friends on arrival and enjoyed a slide show of old Orleans courtesy of the Snow Library collection, a reminder of the OCT’s long history in town. Board president Kevin Galligan opened the meeting, and Executive Director Steve O’Grady brought us up to date on the past year. After a spate of major land acquisitions, OCT’s work in 2022 has focused on land management projects that enhance the habitat value of our properties, and parking and trail improvements that make our trails more welcoming to visitors. Attendees also got a look into the Trust’s future, which will be guided by a newly adopted strategic plan. One key goal of the five-year plan is to expand our educational efforts, including programs for children and families and outreach to property owners about land stewardship. The strategic

“The Orleans Conservation Trust protects and restores natural lands — for people and wildlife, the health of our waters, and the character of our community.”

—Mission statement adopted in the 2022 Strategic Plan



OCT members hear Rich Delaney’s keynote talk. Below: One of the H.K. Cummings views of old Orleans, courtesy of Snow Library.

planning effort also produced a refined mission statement.

Most trustees had already cast their votes for the slate of trustees, several of them familiar faces: Kevin Galligan, Bob Granger, and Meff Runyon. We also welcomed two new trustees: Mary Griffin and Deb Reuman (see page 11). And we said farewell to a pair of exceptional trustees leaving the board: Steve Gass and Rigney Cunningham.

Our featured speaker was Rich Delaney, executive director of the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative and former head of the Center for Coastal Studies. It can be tough to wrap our minds and hopes around confronting the existential threat of global climate change. But Rich explained how the Cape is both a poster child for the impacts of climate disruption — we have “a front-row seat on the crisis,” he noted — and a potential beacon for effective action by communities, through collaborative



efforts among local groups such as land trusts. Among many takeaways, a key message is that it’s still possible to limit warming to 2 degrees C and thus forestall the worst impacts,

but this requires action by “every citizen, business, community and country.” On the individual and family level, positive steps include changes in how we get around, heat and cool our homes, and how we shop, eat, and dress—not to mention advocacy! If you missed Rich’s presentation, you can find it on the OCT website, along with Steve O’Grady’s annual recap.

LANDMARKS continued on page 6

Caring for Our Lands

It Takes Teamwork

by Alex Bates

Location, location, location. You've surely heard that common refrain and understand its significance. But what about *fragmentation, fragmentation, fragmentation*?

Habitat loss and fragmentation are among the greatest causes of wildlife declines globally. Critters need connectivity to feed,



find shelter, and reproduce. Orleans is home to birds that travel from the far northern Arctic or to the southern tip

of Chile, butterflies that overwinter in Mexico, and eels and herring that swim in both Pilgrim Lake and hundreds of miles out at sea. Less mobile but still impressive, eastern coyotes sometimes travel tens of miles in a single night, and the home range of eastern box turtles typically encompasses about ten acres.

OCT lands alone cannot provide

Over the next few years, OCT plans to educate landowners on environmentally friendly practices they can adopt for their home landscapes, be they five-acre or quarter-acre lots.

the habitat these species require; private properties need to be part of the puzzle. Over the next few years, OCT plans to educate landowners on environmentally friendly practices they can adopt for their home landscapes, be they five-acre or quarter-acre lots. We aim to effectively communicate how OCT manages land we control to maximize its value for local ecosystems.

Even with decades of experience, we're still fine-tuning our own management methods. After reading about successful efforts elsewhere, we recently experimented with "goat treatment" on the OCT property along Oliver's Way in Nauset Heights. Goats are known to eat just about anything (even poison ivy!), and they can be an effective tool in reducing underbrush and easing access for long-term management efforts. In this case, the goats fueled up on invasive privet, bittersweet, and multiflora rose. The only challenge was keeping the big ungulates in their pen—they seemed to be in search of greener pastures as the pickings got slim!

Closer to the heart of town, we're gearing up for a substantial habitat restoration project at 4 Braddock's Way, land recently added to the Henson's Cove Conservation Area. This project builds on the success of our warm-season grassland restoration at Henson's Cove in 2009; OCT actively



In September, a crew demolished two old cottages on OCT's Window on the Bay property at 109 Portanimiticut Road, as neighbor and supporter Rachia Heyelman looks on. At right, the now-expanded view from where one of the cottages stood.



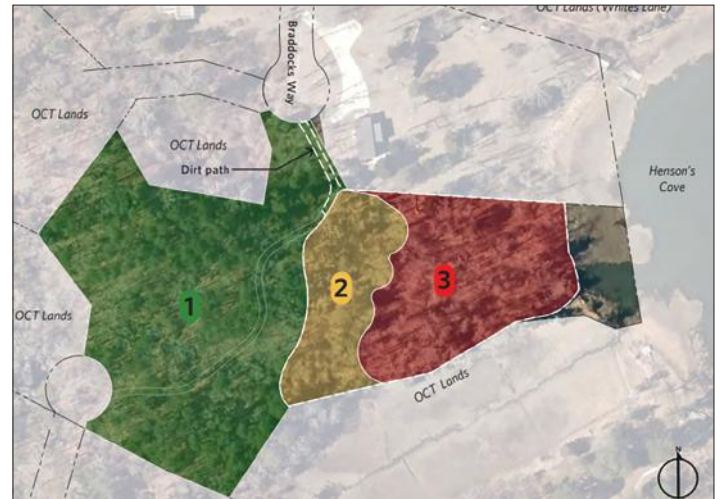
Above left: Aerial view of the 4 Braddocks Way property shows the derelict boathouse to be removed and behind it the wooded land to be restored. (The gray trunks are invasive black locust.) Photo by N. R. Trevisan. Schematic below shows areas to be restored: 1) woodland, 2) transition zone, 3) grassland. Below left: New parking at Mill Pond Valley. Right: Rounding up the goats on Oliver's Way.

manages this critical grassland habitat preferred by many species, including the threatened diamondback terrapin.

Over the past year, OCT and Wilkinson Ecological Design worked through the design and permitting process—no small feat—to arrive at a comprehensive restoration and management plan. The project aims to 1) remove invasive, nonnative, and aggressive vegetation throughout the designated area; 2) preserve tree snags as habitat for birds and insects; 3) restore a highly degraded forest community into a warm-season grassland; and 4) install and maintain nesting sites for diamondback terrapins. The restored area will enhance biodiversity of flora and fauna, provide critical habitat for threatened species, and improve flood control—all of which increase climate resiliency.

Private property owners don't need to undertake a big

restoration project to improve the habitat value of their land. One easy and cost-effective way to aid biodiversity is by using native seed mixes—if you're removing part of your lawn, say, or revitalizing flowerbeds next to your house. What makes seed mixes appealing and usually successful is the diversity of species they contain. If your growing conditions aren't right for certain plants in the mix, others will fill in the gap. Fall and winter is the perfect time to sow a seed mix, as



many require a cold dormant period to germinate. Watching pollinators and birds enjoy

habitat you have created is truly rewarding. If you plant it, they will come!



On Boland Pond

OCT Supports Outdoor Learning on School Land

by **Bob Granger**

Forty-five years ago, Richard Porter, a fifth-grade teacher at Nauset Regional Middle School, spent his summer cutting brush to make an “outdoor classroom” around Boland Pond, behind the school. He envisioned a trail network there, a living resource enabling teachers to get kids learning outdoors on a range of topics related to environmental education.

Rick, who retired from teaching in 2004, is still passionate about getting students into nature. But when he and the fifth grade moved from the middle school to Orleans Elementary in the early 1990s, the trails became neglected and finally inaccessible as trees fell and underbrush grew.

This November, OCT staff and volunteers from AmeriCorps Cape Cod will recut and clear a portion of the trails behind the elementary and middle schools.

Two classroom areas with benches—one near each school—will follow soon after, and there are plans for a platform over the water so students can collect samples from the pond.

“In cutting these trails for the third time, we are standing on some broad shoulders,” says OCT Executive Director Steve O’Grady. He explains: “Mr. Porter started the project in 1978, and in 2015 a team including the town and ACC worked on the trails as part of Orleans Green Week.” All these efforts shared the same larger goal: make it easier for students and teachers to get hands-on in the outdoors. “Those earlier efforts taught us a lot,” O’Grady adds, “especially the importance of wide trails and a maintenance plan to keep the trails safe for students and staff.”

OCT will be actively working to improve our support of environmental educa-



Sketch of the Boland Pond trail system showing proposed trail layout and features.

tion activities for Orleans children, youth, and families, and our education outreach in general. The Boland Pond project is a first step.

Bob Granger is an OCT trustee, now retired from a career in education and public policy. He chairs the task force guiding OCT’s current education initiative.

LANDMARKS continued from page 3

Comings and Goings

For the last time, Annual Meeting attendees were greeted by a smiling Pam Schultz, our



Pam Schultz

outgoing administrative assistant. Pam helped keep the Trust going strong behind the scenes for six years as staff and even longer as a volunteer, and she’ll be

greatly missed. But in October, we welcomed a new staff member: Abigail Geisen fills the newly created position of Outreach Coordinator & Office Manager. Originally from the Midwest, Abby has worked in outdoor and environmental education around



Abigail Geisen

the country, spending ten years as a seasonal park ranger for the National Park Service in Utah, North Carolina, and at Cape Cod National Seashore.

Most recently she was with the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy. Abby holds a writing degree from Purdue University Calumet, an MS in Parks & Resource Management, and an MEd in Environmental Education.

“This new full-time position is an important step for OCT; already we notice the difference it makes to have Abby here every day,” says Steve O’Grady. “We look forward to members getting to know her. A

bonus is her experience in leading walks at her national park jobs; she’ll build on those skills leading many OCT walks.”

Also joining the Trust in October as our latest AmeriCorps (ACC) member is Lily Gooding, who will work with OCT one day a week through next July. A recent graduate of the University of Michigan, Lily has been coming to the Cape since childhood and welcomes the chance to gain experience in



Lily Gooding

environmental work here. She’s aiming for a career in environmental planning and landscape design, focusing on ways to combat climate change.

Winter/Spring 2023 Speakers

Join us for the latest in our series of **entertaining and informative** talks by **local and regional experts**. Admission **free**. Events take place at the Orleans Yacht Club (39 Cove Road, Orleans) except as noted.

Speaking Out Through Film

Allison Argo

Filmmaker, ArgoFilms



What's the link between a rare sandpiper and a prehistoric crab? Award-winning filmmaker

Allison Argo will tell us and share glimpses of her work around the world to document threats to wildlife, from gorillas and chimpanzees to jungle frogs and tropical birds.

Tues. Jan. 10, 6:30 pm

Landscaping for Bird Diversity

Claudia Thompson

Founder, Grow Native MA



Create your own avian sanctuary by understanding birds' habitat needs. Learn about the im-

portance of providing water, the pros and cons of feeding birds directly, and the importance of native plants. Presented in partnership with Brewster Conservation Trust, Nauset Garden Club, and Garden Club of Brewster.

Thurs. Feb. 16, 6:00-7:30 pm via Zoom

State of the Waters

Andrew Gottlieb

Executive Director, Association to Preserve Cape Cod



As Orleans makes strides to sewer the town and regulate fertilizer use to protect our

waters, Andrew will share a regional perspective on confronting the degradation of water quality and an update on APCC's State of the Waters.

Tues. March 14, 6:30 pm

Coastal Erosion: What Can We Do?

Greg Berman

Coastal Processes Specialist, Cape Cod Cooperative Extension & Woods Hole Sea Grant



How will the Cape fare in the face of rising sea levels and more intense storms? What

options are available to coastal landowners and towns, and how do we prioritize where limited resources go? What will the Cape's coastline look like in 50 years? Greg will explore how our dynamic coastal environment intersects with community infrastructure.

Tues. April 11, 6:30 pm

Register for all programs at orleansconservationtrust.org/whats-happening

Winter/Spring 2022-23 Walks

Get to know the **natural lands** of Orleans on our **popular guided walks**. They're **free, fun**, and open to **all ages**. Find updates and maps, and register in advance (**required**) at our website. orleansconservationtrust.org.

Ice House/Reuben's Pond

1.5-mile walk around two freshwater ponds, focused on migrating waterfowl that stop there. Coincides with the annual Cape Cod Waterfowl Census; as citizen scientists we'll record data on birds observed. Great for novice and expert birders alike!

Meet at 245 Tonset Road, Orleans

**Saturday, December 3
10:00-11:30 am**



Baker's Pond

1.75-mile walk on adjoining conservation lands around the "great pond" that straddles Orleans and Brewster.

Meet at 80 Baker's Pond Road, Orleans

**Wednesday, January 11
9:30-11:00 am**

John Kenrick Woods

A historically rich walk of about 1 mile through a pine grove; see specimens of the rare American chestnut.

Meet at 35 Namequoit Road, South Orleans.

**Tuesday, February 7
11:00 am-12:30 pm**

Three Ponds

2-hour walk around Meadow Bog, Sarah's, and Twinings Ponds through more than 80 acres of OCT-protected land, highlighting the connection between lands and waters.

Meet at 135 Quanset Road, South Orleans

**Friday, March 10
1:00-3:00 pm**

Kent's Point

1-mile stroll, searching for signs of spring at the town's Kent's Point Conservation Area.

Meet at 39 Keziah's Lane, Orleans

**Monday, April 10
2:00-3:30 pm**

Beach Walk to Namskaket Creek

Walk about 1.5 miles (round trip) through soft sand on Skaket Beach to a saltmarsh habitat of 200+ acres, including the single largest land donation to OCT.

Meet at the south end of the Skaket Beach parking lot

**Thursday, May 18
9:30-11:00 am**

Gifts and Donations

From July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, Orleans Conservation Trust received support from its members and the community in the form of unrestricted donations and restricted gifts, which specifically support land acquisition, land management, or educational programs. The Trust also received special gifts made in honor or in memory of someone designated by the giver.

Unrestricted Donations & Restricted Gifts

\$10,000 and above

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Anthony and Barbara Caldamone
Cape Cod Coastal Realty
Michael and Sarah Ciampa
Thomas and Liz Coleman
Andy Cooper and Emily McKhann

Membership Year 2021–2022

Every gift, in whatever amount and for whatever purpose, demonstrates your commitment to conserving land and plays a vital role in helping OCT fulfill its mission: to protect and restore natural lands for people and wildlife, the health of our waters, and the character of our community.

Peter and Constance Deeks
Thomas and Anne Degnan
Helen Delano and Noel Potter Jr.
Michael and Karen Dunne
Phillip and Loretta Fair
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White Cedars and Red Oaks

Every member of the Trust is someone who shares its interests, supports its mission, and furthers its successes. Among our valued membership are two recently designated groups to whom we give special recognition and gratitude for their long-term commitment to securing the Trust's future.

Individuals who have included OCT in their estate plan or will are members of our

White Cedar Society:

Anonymous (8)
Gary Bowden and
Mark Ziomek
Rachia Heyelman
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Rigney Cunningham

1946–2022
OCT Trustee 2019–2022

The Trust, the environmental community, her family and many friends, her town, and the world



lost a bright light with the recent passing of former board member Rigney Cunningham. Most of us last saw Rigney at the OCT Annual Meeting this September, which she was instrumental in planning. It was one of many ways she served our organization with boundless energy and dedication: doing committee work in fundraising and communications, asking challenging questions, proposing outreach ideas, and spearheading events such as OCT's 50th anniversary observance. She was a force behind the formation of the White Cedar Society and the Red Oak Donors. Everything she did, from small to large, was marked by her intense interest in and commitment to the people and causes she cared for.

Rigney had a long and distinguished career in the nonprofit arena. Among her accomplishments: leading a mission to aid victims of domestic abuse, advocating for seat-belt legislation in Massachusetts, and serving as executive director of the state's Hospice & Palliative Care Federation. For more about Rigney's life, see dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/orleans-ma/d-rigney-cunningham-10980547

After retiring to Orleans with her husband, Robert, she threw herself into local public service in several capacities, including on the OCT board. She traveled widely, which brought out her gift for human connection. She loved the outdoors and the trails of Orleans.

Meet Our New Trustees

OCT is pleased to welcome two new trustees, elected at the Annual Meeting in September.

Mary B. Griffin brings to the Trust a lifelong career in environmental leadership, as an attorney, public servant, and volunteer. She received her JD from Cornell Law School and began her legal career at WilmerHale in Boston. She has held various positions in Massachusetts land conservancy, including regional director of Mass Audubon, commissioner for Mass Department of Fish and Game, and deputy commissioner for Mass Department of Environmental Protection. She has also served as general counsel for Mass Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and held legal positions in various government agencies. Currently she is a part-time hearing officer for the state Department of Fish and Game. Among Mary's awards and honors, she was named Conservationist of the Year by the Nature Conservancy in 2010. She lives in the Barley Neck neighborhood of Orleans.



Deborah Reuman has had a long career in nonprofit management and finance, having earned her MBA from the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School in Chapel Hill and passed the Uniform CPA examination. She joined Justice Resource Institute in 2003 as budget director and recently retired from the institute as chief financial officer. She has overseen budget and contract development, capital management, debt and cash structuring, investments, and financial reporting in the nonprofit field. Deb participates in designing business and leadership development strategies and is most interested in developing financial models that aid the creation of innovative programming in the challenging nonprofit fiscal environment. Deb and her husband moved to Orleans in the summer of 2020. She currently serves as treasurer of Barnstable Land Trust.



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Your generosity will protect land and water
for generations to come.

In its 50th year, OCT established the **White Cedar Society** to recognize, honor, and grow our relationship with those who wish to show their love of the land through a bequest. Please let us welcome you as a member. We'll help you explore how a legacy to the Trust can serve your goals — for your estate and for conservation. For details, call Executive Director Stephen O'Grady.

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