



# Orleans Conservation Trust

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## SAVE THE DATE!

*Our Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, August, 29, from 5–7 pm. Please join us at the Orleans Yacht Club as we recap the past year, report on our strategic plan, elect trustees, and celebrate Bob Prescott's leadership as president and trustee. And you won't want to miss the delicious hors d'oeuvres provided by our friends at the Land Ho!*

## from the president

Dear OCT members and supporters,

As I write this message, spring is slowly making its way onto our fragile peninsula. Spring peepers and wood frogs have been calling regularly, and a few spadefoot toads have emerged, heading for their ephemeral pools. Residents are getting outside to plant—as are the students at Orleans Elementary School, guided by volunteers from AmeriCorps and our OCT staff (see page 4).

It's been a busy six months for the Trust. Thanks to many of you, we have received some very well-considered comments and responses to our strategic planning survey. You can read more about the whole process on the next page. We've also had specific and helpful feedback from community leaders during our in-person interviews. All the people we met with were extremely generous with their time. We will share some details from the draft plan at our annual meeting on August 29. Together we'll shape the future of the Trust.

Everyone agrees that buying and saving land should be OCT's number-one priority. One of the underused mechanisms for land conservation is the conservation restriction (CR). Be sure to read the article by Mark Robinson on our website about how valuable this conservation tool is—both to us and to landowners. We are the only organization in Orleans that can proactively reach out to property owners to encourage them to protect existing open space with a conservation restriction.

For me, one early takeaway from the survey was how highly members and the community value our educational programs. Whether it's lectures or outings, everyone felt that these are important opportunities


for OCT to spread our message. We're working to further develop this outreach, especially to younger audiences, and even in the schools.

Our survey and interviews also elicited gratifying comments about how well we manage the lands we own and how much people enjoy our trails. An enormous amount of work goes into maintaining trails, removing invasives, and managing for specific habitats. Property maintenance is an ever-increasing line item in our budget and will only become more important going forward.

This is my last letter as president, after two years in that post. My current term as a trustee is up this August. Ten years seems like long enough, so I'll go off the board as well. I want to take this opportunity to thank all our members and trustees for your indispensable support and commitment to the Orleans Conservation Trust. I've also had the great pleasure of working with two terrific young directors, Kris Ramsay and Liz Migliore. I'm happy to have taken part in a rewarding two years of exciting projects and organizational growth.

I plan to stay closely involved with the Trust and hope to see you on one of our upcoming walks, events, kayak outings, and at the annual meeting.

All the best,



Bob Prescott  
President



On the cover: AmeriCorps member Jake Garringer, from Idaho, and Orleans Elementary School students take part in planting a pollinator garden at the school. See page 4.  
Photo by Cirrus Farber



# Planting Partners

OCT, AmeriCorps, and Schools Team Up for Native Plants

by Leah Mould

*On Arbor Day 2016, fifth graders at Orleans Elementary School planted a “pollinator garden” of native species such as serviceberry, cardinal flower, and coneflower behind their school. Helping the 36 students, both on the scene and behind the scenes, were volunteers from Orleans Conservation Trust, the Town of Orleans, and members of the Barnstable County AmeriCorps Cape Cod, including this writer.*

“I can’t help but feel like there’s a symbiotic relationship between us and the students,” says AmeriCorps member Emily McDermott, originally from Brockton, Massachusetts. She and her fellow workers, who hail from all over the country, are living in Wellfleet during their sojourn on Cape, and on the drive down to Orleans they were abuzz with anticipation. We had started work early that Arbor Day morning, making plastic flowers out of recyclables—complete with powdered-sugar “pollen” and pipe-cleaner “stigmas”—for the pollination lesson with the kids.

Though we often interact with kids during regular education events, it’s a special treat to combine teaching with hands-on work based on the lesson, all in one day. “It’s a win-win situation,” Emily continues. “The students gain a better sense of place and stewardship of the natural world, and we as AmeriCorps people remember why we became so passionate about conservation.”



Above: Emily McDermott of AmeriCorps gives planting tips to elementary school students as they start their work. Page 5: Leah Mould (at right) and her AmeriCorps partners in the raised beds they built at the school.

At the school we met Cirrus Farber, the teacher who had helped plan the day with me. (If you’ve happened on a small geocache box on one of OCT’s many trails, she and her class were the ones who put them in place.) Learning about the environment is clearly part of Farber’s education plan—en route to her classroom we saw some “trash turtles,” a craft project to teach students about the hazards of marine debris.

To Farber, bringing AmeriCorps youth into the schools is a great way to introduce students to future service jobs. “It’s wonderful for the kids to learn about the young adults volunteering their time through AmeriCorps,” she notes, “getting exposure to different fields of study and how life experiences can shape occupation choices.”

## In the Classroom and the Garden

Then it was show time. We began inside, with a lesson about pollinators and what they do for us. Bees, butterflies, and bats, among other pollinators, are essential to growing many foods we love—including strawberries, chocolate, and coffee—and to many native perennial flowers. Using our newly made flowers, we explained the basics of how flowers reproduce. Each student got pipe cleaners to bend into pollinator shapes, like a butterfly, a hummingbird, and a mailman worm. Then they tried to get the “nectar” at the bottom of the flower, distributing “pollen” in the process. It was easy for the kids to see how different-colored pollen ended up on various flowers.

Moving outside, students had a chance

to get their hands dirty in the gardens behind the school building, where there are some raised beds and a gardening shed. Two small plots were set up to become pollinator gardens. Thanks to the staff of Orleans Tree Warden Dan Connolly, they were pre-tilled and amended with rich soil, making it easy for the kids to work in. We led off with a planting primer: how deep and wide to make the hole, how to “tickle” the roots to stimulate growth. With shovels and trowels, students dug holes for the small perennials: flowering phlox, coneflower, and tickseed; and for shrubs like serviceberry and spice-bush—all provided by the town.

The AmeriCorps mentors fielded lots of questions about which animals pollinated which plants, and about their other experiences in the Corps. After all the plants were bedded, the students headed back to class, chattering proudly about their work. As the weather warms, they’ll get to watch their garden grow. It will continue to be a teaching tool as well as a great habitat for the pollinators that call Cape Cod home.

### Arbor Day and Beyond

AmeriCorps members stayed on at the school that afternoon to build five raised garden beds, and to plant additional natives

### Plant Your Own Pollinator Garden

Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Choose species with varying bloom times so you’ll have flowers from April to September.
- Incorporate a variety of flower shapes and colors, to attract different pollinators.
- Try to avoid hybrids, as scent or nectar have often been bred out of these plants.
- If space permits, consider host plants on which butterflies like to lay eggs, such as willow, New Jersey tea, and hackberry.
- Clump like species together so pollinators can forage more efficiently.
- Leave open space and some bare dirt:

many native bees burrow and butterflies like to drink muddy water. Dead limbs and stumps are great habitat for wood-burrowing bees, like carpenter bees.

- Avoid pesticides, which are harmful to pollinators, especially bees!



And mainly, enjoy the garden, knowing you’ve created a beautiful space and important habitat for bugs and critters that are vital to our own survival.

donated by Wilkinson Ecological Design. It was all part of a townwide Arbor Day project that included improvements at the Eldredge Park playground, where several new trees were planted, and a shade structure, handicap-accessible picnic table, and new benches were installed.

In mid-May, AmeriCorps Cape Cod will be back in Orleans, partnering with Nauset Middle School to plant natives around the greenhouse. This project will again focus on attracting pollinators and will include a lesson plan for the students.

OCT is also planning native plantings

on a few of our own properties, with the help of volunteers—and a \$200 gift card from another generous business partner, Agway of Orleans. Keep an eye out for information on these upcoming workdays!

*Leah Mould is the current AmeriCorps Cape Cod Individual Placement for OCT. A recent graduate of the University of Rochester with a degree in Environmental Science, she loves being outdoors: gardening, hiking, but especially birding. Leah serves with OCT two days a week from October 2015 through July 2016.*

### Partners for Clean Beaches

On May 7, volunteers from the Friends of Pleasant Bay, the Town of Orleans, Orleans Pond Coalition, and OCT gathered at several waterside sites around town to pick up marine debris, and record the amounts for a Center for Coastal Studies research project. Leah Mould, our AmeriCorps member, helped organize the clean-up day, with sites including public land (Rock Harbor and Town Cove), and OCT properties (Wood’s Cove and Tovrov Landing). Lunch for the volunteers was generously provided by Friends’ Marketplace.



# Legacies to the Trust

Our donors and supporters are the lifeblood of the Orleans Conservation Trust. There are many ways to support our land conservation work: through gifts of land or an interest in land, responding to our twice-annual appeal (which should land in your mailbox any day), or special gifts to fund a program or build our endowment.

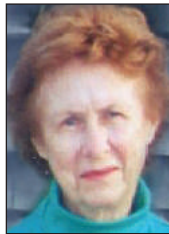
Giving in the form of a bequest is one of the best ways to support OCT, and donors benefit, too. A bequest can be directed toward a specific need, such as strengthening our staff capabilities—like the Dorothy Rowe Boyle Internship Fund. It may be a gift of property, like the Cullen bequest shown on the map. Or it may be an unrestricted gift we can use wherever funds are most needed. We're enormously grateful for the two recent bequests described below. Please contact Director Liz Migliore to discuss planned giving opportunities.

## The Cullen bequest on Oliver's Way



## Clare Forbes Bequest

In December 2015, OCT received a generous \$163,000 bequest from the Clare E. Forbes Trust, designated as the Clare E. Forbes Trust Endowment for the purchase of



Clare Forbes

open space under OCT's Land Acquisition Fund. Clare passed away in October 2014. Her successful career as a nutritional scientist included serving as director of nutrition for the Maryland Department

of Health and Mental Hygiene; a panel appointment for the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health; and serving as chair of the American Academy of Dietetics and Nutrition Committee. After she retired, Clare served on the Orleans Conservation Commission and the Water Quality Task Force. Passionate about preserving the health and beauty of Orleans, she didn't hesitate to remind her friends and neighbors to join her in this endeavor.

## Leslie Pike Bequest

Also last December, OCT received a \$50,000 unrestricted bequest from the Leslie Pike Estate. Leslie, who passed away in October 2014, spent most of her life in Connecticut, working for the Hartford Insurance Company and as a real estate broker. After moving to South Orleans with her husband, Bob, in 2000, Leslie became active in the community. She volunteered as an usher at the Academy of Performing Arts and a board member of Orleans Snow Library, and participated in the Nauset Newcomers.

## Boyle Internship Fund Brings OCT a New Intern

"Dottie adored being outside and all things related to nature." That's how her husband, Kevin, described Dorothy Rowe Boyle, of Concord and East Orleans, who passed away on May 27, 2014. Dorothy especially enjoyed walking, running, and biking in the conservation areas of Orleans.

When the family asked that that memorial donations be directed to OCT, Dorothy's family and friends responded generously. In particular, Kevin hoped that those gifts could support an educational program or initiative, and so the Dorothy Rowe Boyle Internship Fund was created. The annual program brings in young professionals with enthusiasm, energy, and diverse talents, who work with staff to advance OCT's mission through land management and stewardship activities. They gain valuable experience, and OCT and the wider Orleans community benefit.

We're fortunate that enough money remains in the fund to hire an intern for the entire summer of 2016. Please join us in welcoming Samuel Chapman as our 2016



Sam Chapman

Dorothy Rowe Boyle Intern. A recent graduate of Whitman College with a degree in environmental studies, Sam previously interned at North Coast Land Conservancy in Oregon and Blue Mountain Land Trust in Washington. He hopes to pursue a career in the land trust world, ideally working in maritime environments. What could be better, then, than a summer in Orleans?

OCT needs ongoing contributions to keep the Fund going and the summer interns coming. Please consider a donation to the Dorothy Rowe Boyle Internship Fund.

Continued from page 3

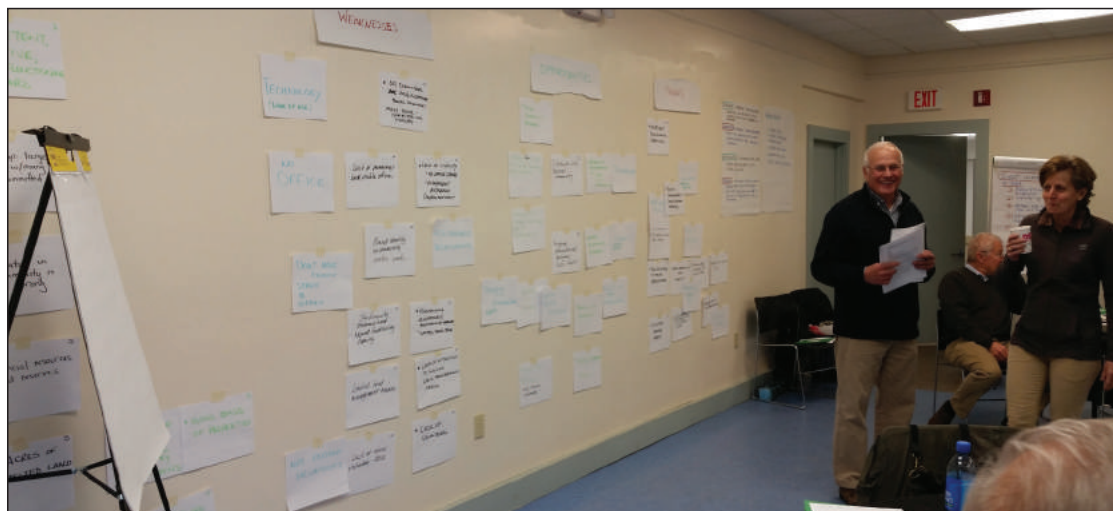
more effective. Trustee Karl Goldkamp, who chaired the ad hoc committee, observes, “There’s nothing better than getting firsthand information from other land trusts. These organizations are as varied and individual as people are, yet collectively they provide a vision of what we may be able to accomplish at OCT.”

Over several months, from late last year into early 2016, committee members met with representatives from six other land trusts, both on and off Cape Cod. They visited trusts as far away as Essex County, north of Boston, as well as in Dartmouth, Plymouth, Barnstable, Falmouth, and Harwich. At each stop they gathered valuable data on how other trusts articulated their mission, how they were organized and financed, and what kinds of programs they offered.

Concurrently we surveyed OCT members to get their thoughts on conservation-related challenges in Orleans, learn their perceptions of OCT, and gain member input on how we can do better.

Finally, members of the full board sat down in coffee shops and offices with Orleans town officials, business leaders, and leaders of other local organizations with whom we partner to glean their perspectives on conservation challenges and how we might strengthen our collaboration.

The reward of all this in-



Fueled by coffee, lunch, and the energetic guidance of facilitator Hal Minis, OCT trustees generated a wall full of ideas for our strategic plan. Next step: setting realistic goals and implementation plans.

formation gathering is a wealth of new perspectives and ideas for trustees to consider as they proceed with strategic planning. We heard, for example, that other trusts have started to allocate more resources to land management as their acreage under trust grows—as OCT is doing. Also like OCT, other trusts continue working to conserve more land, either through land donations, conservation restrictions, or purchases made possible by contributions to the trusts.

Our member survey and local interviews confirmed our belief that OCT and its work are viewed favorably by the community. A tremendous bonus was the many suggestions and ideas we received about how we could be even more effective in our work.

“As you’d expect, everyone said that buying and saving land should be the number-one priority of OCT,” notes board president Bob Prescott. “But another strong takeaway was how highly

our members and other Orleans residents value our educational outreach.”

All the fruit of our environmental scan feeds into the current phase of the process. As of this publication, the trustees have completed the first of two workshops facilitated by Hal Minis this spring. At these sessions we’ll review the background data; discuss OCT’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; and begin to formulate short and long-term goals. Armed with a good understanding of our environment and the resources

available, we’ll go on to develop a plan that reflects OCT’s priorities going forward.

“It’s very exciting to work with a group that’s developing a clear and positive vision for its future,” says Hal Minis. He feels that the extensive preparation and the planning workshops will enable the Trust to create a plan that’s both aspirational and realistic. “A good strategic plan opens many doors,” he notes.

We’re excited, too. We look forward to presenting a completed strategic plan that provides a roadmap for OCT’s future at our annual meeting.



# Autumn 2016 Speakers

Join us at the Orleans Yacht Club for the latest in our series of **entertaining and informative** talks by **local and regional experts**. Time, **6:30 – 7:30 pm**. Admission is **free** (donations welcome, cash bar). Doors open 30 minutes before the start of each lecture.



PHOTO KEVIN MCCARTHY

## Bird Migration Mysteries

**Tuesday, September 13**

### Philip Kyle

*Past president of Cape Cod Bird Club, head naturalist at Barnstable Harbor Ecotours*



Philip Kyle

Learn about the migration patterns of shorebirds and land birds around the Cape, including how and why they migrate. Philip's presentation includes spectacular photography. (See the story by Philip on page 11.)



## The Lowdown on Terrapins

**Tuesday, October 11**

### Bob Prescott and Barbara Brennessel

*Mass Audubon Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary*

The diamondback terrapin, a state-listed threatened species, is the only salt-marsh turtle in the U.S., living at its northern limit in Wellfleet. You'll learn about the natural history of terrapins, research efforts in Wellfleet, and the restoration work OCT has completed at White's Lane. Rescheduled from a cancelled presentation in April.



## Farm/Land

**Tuesday, November 1**

### Lucas Dinwiddie

*Proprietor of Halcyon Farm, Brewster*

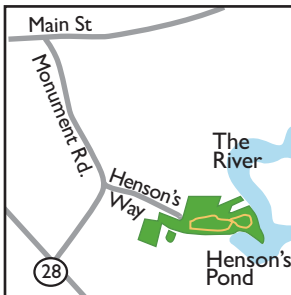
"We strive to be good stewards of the land by maintaining and enhancing soil, water, and air quality through sustainable farming practices." That's how Lucas Dinwiddie, who owns a small organic vegetable farm, describes his work, and why we asked him to talk about Cape Cod's local food movement. Come and learn more!

To help support the Trust's educational programs, please make a donation at our website, [www.orleansconservationtrust.org](http://www.orleansconservationtrust.org)



# Summer/Fall 2016 Walks

Get to know the **open spaces** of Orleans on our **popular educational walks**. They're **free, fun**, and appropriate for **all ages**.

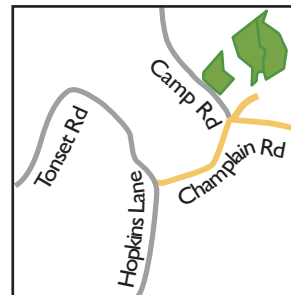


## White's Lane Conservation Area

Short walk through open meadows along The River and enjoy an up-close look at turtle gardens. Led by outgoing OCT president Bob Prescott.

Meet at 33 White's Lane, Orleans

**Saturday, June 11**  
3:00–4:00 pm

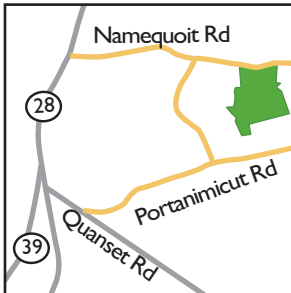


## Grassy Knoll Conservation Area

1.5 mile walk through an early succession habitat, then along the shores of Nauset Harbor.

Meet at 60 Champlain Road, Orleans.

**Sunday, September 11**  
1:00–2:30 pm

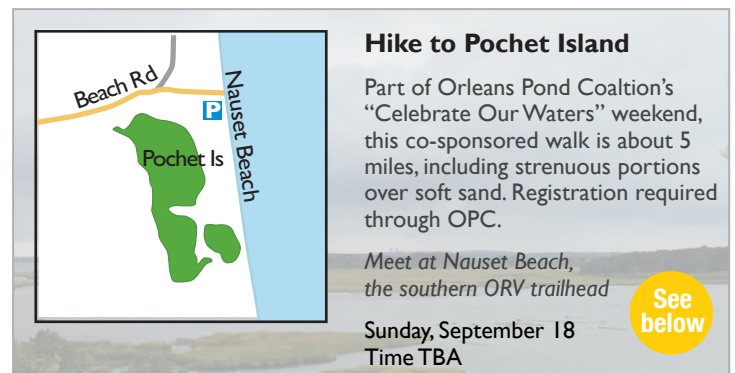


## Christian Property Conservation Area

1-mile walk through open meadows, wooded forests, and along the edge of a cedar swamp.

Meet at 80 Portanimitic Road, South Orleans

**Thursday, July 21**  
9:00–10:00 am



## Hike to Pochet Island

Part of Orleans Pond Coalition's "Celebrate Our Waters" weekend, this co-sponsored walk is about 5 miles, including strenuous portions over soft sand. Registration required through OPC.

Meet at Nauset Beach, the southern ORV trailhead

**Sunday, September 18**  
Time TBA

See below



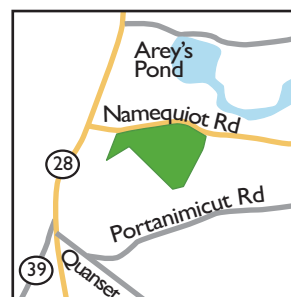
## Kayak to Little Sipson's Island

Paddle a total of 2 miles to and from Little Sipson's Island Conservation Area—one of our most popular outings, led by Bob Prescott. Pack snacks or a small lunch, and water. Advance registration required.

Meet at Town Landing, end of Quanset Road, South Orleans

**Monday, August 1**  
10:00 am–12:30 pm

Participants must bring their own watercraft.



## Kenrick Woods Conservation Area

Walk about 1 mile through large stands of white pine, and see specimens of the very rare American chestnut.

Meet at 35 Namequoit Road, Orleans

**Tuesday, October 18**  
9:00–10:30 am

## Help Celebrate Our Waters on Pochet Island

See above

Locals know to say "PO-chee" in naming this wild and beautiful island at the north end of Pleasant Bay. The Monomoyick name means a "cleaving" or turning—marking where their territory ended and the Nauset tribe's began. Today the National Park Service holds a conservation easement on land privately owned by the Payson family, who welcome respectful hikers and usually give our group a guided tour. This long walk is worth every step, especially for the fabulous bay views from the island's high point.

Get a preview of each walk on our website, <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/walks/>  
And find trail maps here, <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/trail-maps/>

# Eyes on the Land

## Land Stewards Wanted for OCT

Charlie Thompson heads down the broad trail that partly encircles Twinings Pond, just a stroll from his home on Boulder Lane in South Orleans. Charlie and his wife, Susan, walk this trail all the time—they are outdoorspeople who love nothing better than to head off in their trailer to some faraway national park, and serious birders as well. But OCT’s Twinings Pond Conservation Area is their wild “back yard,” so it’s special to them.

That’s why they have served for the last five years as “land stewards” for OCT. Being a steward isn’t an onerous job: Charlie and Susan are officially responsible for visiting the property at least once a year and viewing its boundaries. Walking around the perimeter of a Trust property, a land steward can observe what’s happening around these property lines, which aren’t always crystal clear to abutters. Stewards basically keep an eye on things: has someone been dumping leaves or trimming back plants growing on OCT land? They’re not expected to interact with neighbors; they just report potential issues to Director Liz Migliore.

Usually any impacts are minor. A few years back, though, Charlie recalls, “I found a shed someone had built on Trust property in another part of town.” Following a polite inquiry from then-OCT director Kris Ramsay, the neighbor removed the trespassing structure.

Such annual tours of a property are the minimum required, “though we encourage stewards to monitor about once a month if they can,” says Migliore. Partly thanks to their proximity, the Thompsons regularly go above and beyond. Charlie just pitches in when he sees something that needs attention. Twice a year he mows the edges of the trails—no big deal when you live close enough to ride over on your tractor. And already this year he has cleared several trees that came down across trails.

On this early spring day, he’s keeping an eye out for re-emerging poison ivy, “to make sure it doesn’t get too rambunctious.” A typical task for land stewards is to observe and report any obvious proliferation of this unwelcome native, or of invasives growing in a conservation area. They quickly learn the



A goldfinch perches above Twinings Pond.  
Below: Jack Shine on patrol at Ice House Pond.

places where this tends to be problematic, and call the Trust office to address it.

As Charlie says, “Some stewards like me do a little work,” though land stewards aren’t responsible for actual maintenance. The important thing is having enough stewards, and therefore enough eyes, on all our properties. This enables OCT staff to deal with problems while they are easily managed.

At the opposite end of town, Jack Shine is a volunteer land steward for the Ice House/Reuben’s Pond Conservation Area, near his home in East Orleans. For the past seven years, Jack has enjoyed taking a day each month to walk the trails: clearing fallen branches, snipping back invasives, and checking the trail conditions. “My favorite place on the trail is a stone bench where I sit and look out on Ice House Pond,” he says. He’s grateful to the Hopkins, Moore, and Wilber families, who donated this land.

Jack is an avid naturalist with a passion for the birds and other animals he encounters. He also often meets hikers on



# Migration Magic

by Philip Kyle

Everyone's aware that fall brings cooler temperatures and beautiful foliage to the Cape. But we may not be aware of another traditional event that's gone on for millions of years. The fall bird migration remains among the most amazing and thought-provoking of all natural phenomena. Birds don't have the same sense of urgency in autumn as they do in spring, but the fall migration is no less magical. Changes in day length activate different hormones in the birds, and new behaviors result—most notably, they depart!

WHEN do they leave? Post-breeding migration starts in mid-July with southbound shorebirds. The mass movement southward may take several weeks or up to three months, peaking in late September or early October. Its onset is triggered by some combination of genetics, weather, food, and social factors; which takes precedence depends on the species.

Fat contains more than twice the energy of sugars or starches and is stored right beneath the skin. So robins, cedar waxwings, bluebirds, and thrushes are attracted to the berries of American holly, flowering dogwood, spicebush, sassafras and magnolias, which are high in lipid (fat) content. Plant some in your yard to help migrating birds.

WHY do they migrate? Harsh weather conditions and reduced amounts of suitable food up north are the main reasons. So considering the mild winter we've just had on the Cape, why don't birds just hang around all winter, avoiding the perils of migrating hundreds or thousands of miles? For most species, leaving this region in fall is simply part of their genetic make-up.

When migrants do decide to leave, they need a favorable wind. A tailwind reduces the time needed to fly from point A to point B and the energy



required. Many migrants travel primarily during the day; others drift southwards at night.

HOW they find their way is even more interesting. The birds' most basic skill is to recognize landmarks like mountain ranges or river systems from past migrations—sometimes even from genetic memory! Some migrants can detect the earth's magnetic pull with special organs in their ears—like having a built-in compass. They also use visual aids such as polarized light or reflected sunlight off stars, and they are aware of the constellations. Some may even detect

Top: Barn swallow.  
Above: Piping plover with eggs.  
Photos by Kevin McCarthy.

familiar smells as they near their destination.

WHO migrates in the fall? More than 200 species in the Northeast including almost all warblers and shorebirds, wading birds, most hawks and sparrows, and many others. But between the arriving winter migrant ducks and the year-rounders, plus a few that may winter over by accident, the Cape still has 140-plus species to keep hardcore bird brains happily birding all winter!

Continued from page 10

the trail, “and we chat about what creatures and plants we've seen.” Each month after his stewardship tour, Jack e-mails the OCT office with a summary of the trail conditions, any issues found (for example, downed trees after a storm), and species observed. When Liz Migliore first arrived at OCT, it was Jack who introduced her to the area.

Land stewards become deeply engaged with a special piece of land and the benefits to OCT are obvious. Managing conservation land in an era of ever-spreading development, aggressive and stubborn invasive species, and the community's hunger for walkable trails is a big challenge, and OCT staff and interns just can't cover all the ground.

The rewards that stewards derive from their work are mainly personal: “We get out in nature, we keep track of changes in the seasons and the plant and animal life around us; we learn about taking care of the land, and we get some exercise,” says Charlie Thompson. But it's also satisfying to know that they're doing something on a regular basis to benefit the whole community.

managing our lands

# Then and Now in Namequoit Bog

## How the Heyelmans Saved a Cedar Swamp for Conservation

by Diana Landau

*Orleans Conservation Trust has lots of reasons to be grateful to the Heyelman family of South Orleans. Over the decades, OCT acquired several important properties in this part of town courtesy of Rachia Heyelman and her brother, Charles Abbott Heyelman. They include Hosea's Swamp, off Quanset Road, and a parcel in what became the Meadow Bog Pond Conservation Area that gives access to the whole Meadow Bog Pond trail system. Rachia also donated, in 1993, a small dry bog on Pochet Road in East Orleans.*

*But the crown jewel of lands that came to OCT via the Heyelmans is Namequoit Bog, 22.5 acres of wetlands and uplands purchased in 1998 from Charles Heyelman. Of this total, 17.5 acres is wetland that was farmed for cranberries from the 1800s to the 1950s. After farming ended, invasives took over, but for the past decade OCT has been proactively restoring this landscape for the benefit of native species and the health of Pleasant Bay. One bright morning early in April, Rachia Heyelman gave Director Liz Migliore and this trustee a tour of the bog and its history with her family.*

"My father wanted to get into the cranberry business on the side. That's how it started." As we bump slowly down unpaved Thelma's Way toward Namequoit Road, Rachia Heyelman relates some of her family's history in South Orleans. (The lane is named for her mother, Thelma, born a Nickerson.) "In the early days, people did a little of everything. Fishing and shellfishing. Keeping a woodlot for firewood. And sometimes farming cranberries."

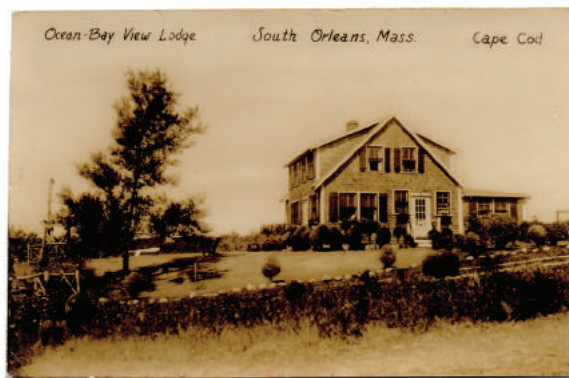
On her mother's side, that history goes back to 1658, when Joseph Rogers bought a piece of salt marsh on Little Pleasant Bay from a Monomoyick native, and some upland behind it in 1672. Part of that land has been in Rachia's family ever since, she believes. Joseph and his father, Thomas Rogers, both arrived on the *Mayflower*, and Thelma Nickerson was their descendant through seven generations. Her family owned land

on pastoral Portanimituc Road, and when Thelma operated a summer inn on the property in the 1940s, the view down to the bay was among its chief attractions.

Frank Heyelman, Rachia and Charles's father, was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1885. Trained as an engineer, he worked for a Scottish company in Cuba, where the adventurous Thelma was working as a teacher. After they married, the couple moved back to her homeland, where Charles was born in 1925 and Rachia in 1935. When Frank conceived the desire to grow cranberries, the big nearby cranberry bog just north of Namequoit Road was the obvious place. Originally a white cedar swamp, Namequoit Bog had been cultivated since the 1880s, under piecemeal ownership. During the 1930s, Frank acquired parcels from various owners, including some Rogers and Nickerson relatives of his wife, and from Miss Kingsbury, who owned much of Namequoit Point.

Crossing Namequoit Road, we drive a short way down Viking Road along the western edge of the OCT property, parking at a pullout about 50 yards along. As we continue down the unpaved part of the road, with the bog downslope on our right, Rachia points out big swales in the slope here and there: the remains of "borrow pits," where cranberry farmers "borrowed" sand to spread on their cultivated land and keep down other vegetation. Elsewhere in the bog you can still see the drainage ditches and sluiceway used in cultivation.

When the Heyelmans stopped farming the land in 1960, trees such as cedars, tupelos, and red maples grew up in the unmaintained wetland. But much of it was gradually taken over by dense thickets of briars and other invasive plants. Over time they choked out native species such as Atlantic white cedar, shrubs such as water willow, cattail and other rushes, sedges and grasses. And the old sluiceway that connected the wetland to Pahwah Pond, used to periodically flood the bog between growing seasons, didn't work properly,



Note: OCT regularly offers guided walks of Namequoit Bog. It's not on the calendar for this year, but stay tuned. Meanwhile, please visit our website for accounts of past walks and management work.

contributing to the land's transition from a wetland forest to a drier "wet-meadow" community.

Since the 1970s, conservationists had placed a high priority on preserving the bog. Its fate was closely linked with protecting groundwater flowing into Pleasant Bay (through the historic ditches and sluiceway) and promoting native plant communities. It was also a key link in a wildlife corridor through this part of South Orleans, not to mention its potential for recreation and education. Orleans Conservation Trust began efforts to conserve the land nearly a decade before concluding the bargain-sale agreement with Charles Heyelman. Since the 1998 acquisition, OCT has worked hard—with recent help from state restoration ecologists—to restore the bog as a healthy freshwater wetland that supports native species, and we've regularly chronicled those efforts (see "An Evolving Wetland" in our Spring/Summer 2015 issue, found on our website).

Our walking route takes us through a gate installed by a neighbor and on past a heavily overgrown part of the bog, with downed limbs everywhere at the end of winter. Pointing to a stand of dead cedars, Rachia says, "Fifty years ago, the edge of the bog was there," with the bordering land kept dry for ease of access. Another hundred yards on, the land rises slightly, marking the boundary between Namequoit Bog and the former Camp Viking. We detour into the woods to explore the remains of an asphalt tennis court, white pines

sprouting where the net once hung. Rachia also gestures in the other direction: "That's where the archery range was."

Soon we head back down Viking and over to the parallel Duck Marsh Road for a look at the more open part of the bog at its southern end, where most of OCT's management work has taken place. Rachia spots a recently cleared patch of land, noting, "That may have been still in cranberries when I was young." We also see evidence of our latest workday with AmeriCorps volunteers, who regularly assist with managing the bog: brushpiles awaiting the next burn day. On this rare early spring morning, sun pours down, red-winged blackbirds call, woodpeckers and flickers drum on dead cedar snags, and red maples are sprouting fat buds.

"I supported my brother's decision to sell the bog to the Trust," says Rachia, "and I'm very happy to see it protected and cared for. I think my parents would be, too." OCT depends greatly on supporters like the Heyelman family in fulfilling our mission to set aside land for conservation, thus helping to preserve the historic and natural character of Orleans. A landscape like Namequoit Bog, which so plainly tells the tale of how land use in our town has evolved, is a keystone of that mission.

*Diana Landau is a freelance writer and editor, and an OCT trustee.*



*Opposite: Vintage postcard advertising the inn run by Thelma Heyelman. Far left, top: Old drainage ditch in part of the cleared bog; bottom: Map of Namequoit Bog Conservation Area. Left: Rachia Heyelman shows Liz Migliore the lay of the land.*

# Three Pearls in a Necklace

## Walking the Three Ponds Conservation Area

by Mon Cochran

It was a raw morning on February 20 when 21 hardy souls gathered at the Twinings Pond trailhead to hike around the Three Ponds. Sarah's, Twinings, and Meadow Bog Ponds are three of the five pearls in the "necklace"—a string of kettle ponds stretching east to west across South Orleans from Little Pleasant Bay almost to Route 28. Orleans Conservation Trust and the town own 125 acres of upland bordering these ponds, thanks to gifts of land (or conservation restrictions) by the Flecks, the Brooks, the Heylman, the Berdiks, the Cochran, and hundreds of private donors.

The longest regular walk in the OCT repertoire, the route is a figure eight with a nice mix of level walking and vigorous up-and-down. From Quanset Road it loops partway around Twinings, then climbs above Meadow Bog and Sarah's Ponds, ending with a hike along Davis Road and through an upland portion of the Cochran gift (see map on the OCT website). Director Liz Migliore and I led the group this day.

The trail through Twinings Woods is gentle and wide, with expansive views of the pond—especially in February. Liz pointed out erosion on the path leading from the main trail to the water's edge, noting that a project to divert runoff away from the path would be done in March by a team of AmeriCorps volunteers. Maintaining the 600-plus acres OCT controls is becoming an ever more important part of our work.

The Twinings Pond trails emerge onto Lake Drive and Twinings Lane in the private Quanset Harbor Club. OCT trustee Patty Platten, who joined our walk, is president of the residents' association; she noted that its



The view out to Pleasant Bay from above Meadow Bog Pond.

members are willing to allow trail walkers to use these roads as long as they park on Quanset Road and keep dogs on leashes.

Back on Quanset Road, we trekked south to the neck that divides the fresh water of Meadow Bog Pond from salty Little Quanset Pond. At one time, I mentioned, a plan imagined reintroducing a herring run from Little Quanset through Meadow Bog and over the ridge to Sarah's Pond, which would have required installing a larger culvert under the road.

Climbing uphill along the southern edge of Meadow Bog Pond takes you through the only stand of locust trees in that part of South Orleans. To your right, a large old cedar swamp interlaced with mosquito-control channels drains into a former cranberry bog, now reverted to salt marsh. Along the trail are several memorial bench-

es, each with a lovely pond view. The most spectacular viewpoint is high on the hill above the east end of the pond. We paused there to admire how Meadow Bog, Little Quanset, and Quanset Ponds form a chain that leads the eye out to the sparkling waters of Pleasant Bay.

A steady climb through oaks and pines brought us suddenly to a stunning view of Sarah's Pond. At that point the trail is fifty steep feet above the water's surface, on which black ducks paddled and mute swans sailed. The Pleasant Bay Narrows Trust recently installed a bench, situated perfectly to frame the view, recognizing Helen Cochran Dicke for her efforts in the late 1990s to protect Sarah's Pond. Descending to Davis Road, we climbed into and out of a ravine dug in the late 19th

century to carry fresh water from Sarah's to the cranberry bog southward. After one of the big storms last winter, I watched a river otter slide down the ravine—no surprise, given previous otter sightings in the pond.

Emerging onto Davis Road, we hiked north to a trail through the woods marked informally by pink ties, paralleling the remains of a 19th-century cart track that I believe once linked Davis Road with the present Route 28. Soon we were back at the Twinings trailhead. The only thing missing at the end of this winter walk was a steaming cup of hot chocolate!

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*Mon Cochran is a retired professor of early childhood development, an author of books on climate science for young readers, and an OCT trustee.*

# More Gifts and Donations

## Membership Year 2014–2015

Because of an untimely glitch in our new database, the following names did not appear on the roster of donors published in our fall issue. We apologize for the error, and we greatly appreciate the generosity of these and all our donors.

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### Become a Land Steward!

OCT is actively recruiting land stewards to monitor our properties. Stewards choose a property from those available and monitor it regularly—at least once a year, preferably once a month. Director Liz Migliore meets with new recruits to provide trail maps and make sure they understand how to complete the monitoring form. Reporting your findings is simple: the form is on our website and can be filled out electronically. And Liz is always on hand to answer questions. Whether or not you can commit to being a steward, we always need volunteers to take part in occasional trail workdays as well. If you're interested in volunteer work, and to learn what parcels are available for stewarding, please contact Liz Migliore, [emigliore@orleansconservationtrust.org](mailto:emigliore@orleansconservationtrust.org), or 508-255-0183. You can also fill out and submit a volunteer interest form on our website; go to <http://orleansconservationtrust.org/volunteer-interest-survey/>

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We're a membership organization, and we need the talents, experience, and energy of our members to carry out our mission of saving and caring for local lands. Do you have a background in development or marketing, or enjoy getting out in the field? Right now we have openings for members on our Fundraising, Communications, and Land Management committees. And we're always looking for new Land Stewards (see page 10) and workday volunteers.

Call us at (508) 255-0183, or complete the volunteer interest form on our website, [orleansconservationtrust.org](http://orleansconservationtrust.org)