

Wareham Land Trust



NEWS

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TAX INCENTIVES FOR CONSERVATION

It is easy to get discouraged about political gridlock these days, but land trust supporters have reason to celebrate the most consequential conservation legislation in decades. In December President Obama signed a law to make permanent an enhanced tax incentive to promote donation of land for conservation purposes.

Included as part of the Omnibus Bill, there was strong bilateral support as the House voted 318-109 and the Senate voted 65-33 to pass the bills that included the tax incentive. This benefits the environment and the public by encouraging private landowners to permanently protect their important natural, scenic and historic lands using conservation easements.

Conservation easements are voluntary agreements that landowners make with local land trusts to permanently limit the future development and uses of the land. Landowners continue to retain ownership of the land, which can be sold or transferred subject to the terms of the easement.

Massachusetts provides additional incentives to landowners by providing a Commonwealth Conservation Tax Credit. Lands that qualify include drinking water supplies, wildlife habitats,

agricultural and forestry production and other values.

The conservation incentive was first enacted as a temporary provision ten years ago, and is directly responsible for conserving more than 2 million acres nationally. But the uncertainty of its availability each year made it hard for land owners and land trusts to plan ahead.

The Land Trust Alliance, a DC-based organization with over 1,000 member land trusts, mobilized hundreds of land trust leaders across the US to serve as "Advocacy Ambassadors" to advocate for the passage of this bill and other legislation and policies that support land conservation.

Congressman Bill Keating (D-MA) was a co-sponsor of the Conservation Easement Incentive Act and supported two of the charity bills in spite of earlier opposition from Democratic leadership.

For more information about protecting your land using the conservation tax incentive, contact the Wareham Land Trust.



Mary McFadden founded the Wareham Land Trust in 2001. She is on the boards of WLT and the Land Trust Alliance and is an "Advocacy Ambassador" for the Alliance. Photographic proof of that advocacy shown here in DC with Rep. Bill Keating and Sen. Elizabeth Warren.



Inside This Issue:

See the winning entries in our 2015 photography contest. Special thanks to WLT's John Wiliszowski and Kevin Bartsch for the organizational efforts including planning, publicizing, and printing the winning photos for displays. And a very special thank you to our guest judge, Richard Van Inwegen. Richard is an award-winning photographer and principal photographer for the New Bedford Symphony. He has been involved with local, national, and international photography competitions and we thank him for the time and effort he dedicated to our inaugural event.

Wareham Land Trust

Itty-Bitty Bay Explorers

This spring marked the beginning of another exciting series of Itty Bitty Bay Explorer programs hosted by your friendly MassLIFT AmeriCorps members! For four mornings in April, we introduced participants to local conservation lands with fun activities that would help them observe the new life that spring has to offer.

Our first program was held at the WLT office to tell them about the places we'd visit and the tools they would use to explore. We read a short story, then looked at some nature items that we could expect to find at the habitats we'd be visiting. All the children were very excited about the seashells, bird feathers, and pine cones that they saw and couldn't wait to put the nets and bucket to use.

The first outdoor exploration took place at The Trustees' Lyman Reserve property. Our group was fully prepared with nets, buckets, waders and a seine net. Everyone spread



across the beach finding plenty of shells, seaweed and even some crabs hiding beneath rocks. Kari and I used the net to capture tiny clear grass

shrimp. Every child had sand in their hair and wet toes by the end of this exploration, but they all left with smiles on their faces and pockets full of newly collected treasures.

Next, we visited an old cranberry bog at Westgate Conservation Area. This program was held in the middle of April vacation week, so our toddler participants brought their older siblings. We had a very excited group of twenty-three participants. They dipped their nets into flooded bog cells fishing for insects, plants and anything else they could find. We offered a scavenger hunt with a map of the paths and some clues to help them find items that were hidden around the bogs. Many found salamander eggs, fish and different types of insects. A group of three sisters even found a baby turtle swimming in the water. Many remarked that they had not known this conservation property was here, and we encouraged them to visit Westgate again.

This series has been wildly successful. We've had such a great group of young enthusiastic explorers who I know will always love to tell the stories about the seashell they found, or the fish they saw during these programs.

—Tanya Creamer

Tanya Creamer and Kari Amick are our 2015-2016 AmeriCorps/MassLIFT Community Engagement and Learning Coordinators and we thank them for all of their dedicated time and effort.

Local History and Conservation

When you visit Wareham's conservation areas, it's hard not to stumble into the town's history. Sometimes that's literal: near the entrance to the Buzzards Bay Coalition's Horseshoe Mill visitors can find slag, which is a byproduct of iron manufacturing. At the Douglas S. Westgate Conservation Area cranberry bogs provide a centerpiece for wide walking trails, and although the cranberries that were once cultivated there can still be found, they're interspersed with a mixture of wild plants. Things like cranberry bogs and iron slag are easy to see, but the history that they represent can be a bit more complicated.

I stopped in with Mack and Cathy Phinney, WLT board members and lifelong Wareham residents, to get an overview of town history and how it relates to conservation. The Phinney family has been in Wareham since 1770, when a mariner arrived from England and settled here. Mack says some of the paths here can be traced to the native Wampanoag.

"Wareham became worth something because of all the rivers," Mack said. "They could dam the rivers and build mills. And they did it all over the place." Today's Papermill Road earned its name because they made the papers that wrapped spermaceti candles there. But iron manufacturing was where the real money was. "I've heard it referenced that every farmer had a furnace in his backyard to make iron," Mack told me.

Wareham was perfect for iron manufacturing: rivers for power, iron ore to be smelted, and shells which could be used for the flux in the furnace. Shells were easy to find, because there were plenty of middens—piles of shells left by the Wampanoag, who threw them there after eating shellfish.

The iron furnaces grew from the small, farmer-owned types to larger

operations. Some of these were used during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812—Federal Furnace made the ammunition for Old Ironsides. Around this time, the Tremont Nail Company emerged.

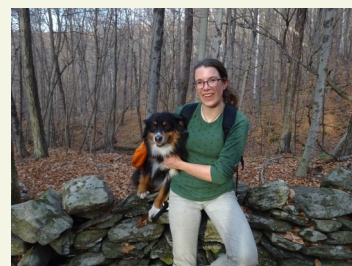
"The other thing that happened with the dams was the fishing industry," Mack said. "Practically as important as the iron industry was the herring." At one point, they dug a trench from Red Brook in Wareham to White Island in Plymouth. The herring were so thick that people said you could walk across their backs.

As for cranberries: each town was assigned a cranberry yard, a place where cranberries grew naturally. After the Revolutionary War, veteran Henry Hall settled on the Cape and became a farmer—and is credited with the origin of cultivated cranberries.

All of these industries both helped Wareham grow and left their mark. Mack reminded me that this human history is directly linked to the history of our environment. "Its impact upon the environment was tremendous," Mack said. "They denuded the place. They dammed all the rivers."

What does all this mean? "We're trying now to undo all the damage we did in the past," Mack said. "Hopefully that's going to be part of the history of Wareham."

—Kari Amick (ed's note: this is an edited version of Kari's original article found on the blog portion of our website. warehamlandtrust.org)



2015 Photography Contest

See an entire album of all photos, including Honorable Mention winners, at facebook.com/warehamlandtrust.



First Prize: Jessica Lagneau

Category: People Enjoying the Land



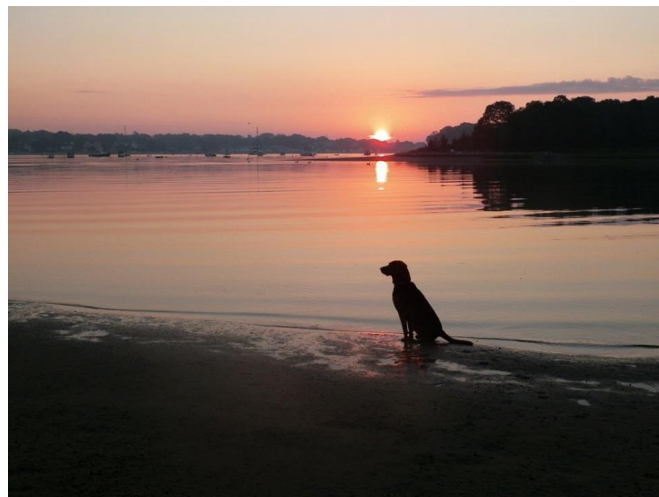
First Prize: Dean Martin

Category: Solitude and Serenity of Nature



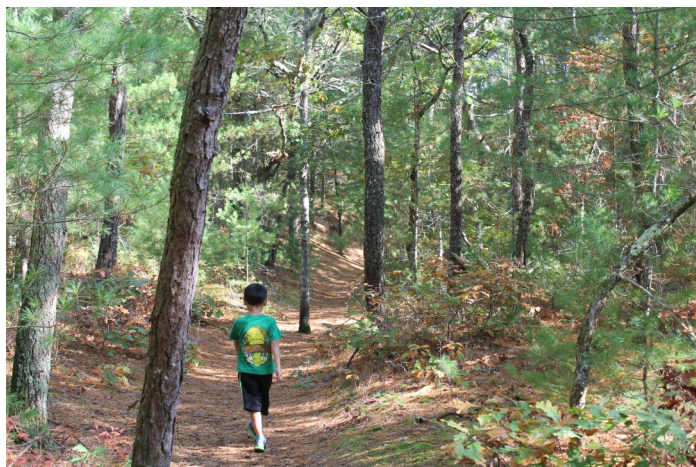
Second Prize: Robert Price

Category: People Enjoying the Land



Second Prize: Robin Allen

Category: Solitude and Serenity of Nature



Third Prize: Lee Sayers

Category: People Enjoying the Land



Third Prize: Deborah Pacini

Category: Solitude and Serenity of Nature

Shifting Sands, Shifting Ideals



A couple of tiny moments recently brought me immediately to my second home on Mark's Cove even though I was in Boston. First there was a meeting with a coworker whose office boasts a wonderful little desktop gizmo, which when tilted upside down and back, resembles waves and sand flowing back and forth. It mesmerized us both. "Can you see the dynamics of wave motion creating shifting sands?" the science geek in me asked our software geek. She didn't, but that's OK. The second moment came as I practiced playing a popular Irish pub tune with my high D whistle called "Out on the Ocean." To play it correctly, the timing of the notes should feel like you are riding the waves out to sea then following them back to shore. I found the best way to practice was by visualizing the gentle waves at Mark's Cove.

Desktop gizmos and whistle playing may mimic the process of wave and sand, but don't truly equal the magic we witness along our coastline. We can do whatever we want with décor or musical notes, but changes caused by the strength of storms are subject to Mother Nature's whims. We can only play a part in that action. We cannot control the tides. We cannot control the direction or speed of wind, the strength of ocean currents, or the affect these have on shallow East Coast bedrock. Storms are often lamented because we see erosion and changes to the shoreline as something bad and in need of "repair." But what many don't see is that some alterations are beneficial. They create new opportunities for estuaries which provide a mix of fresh and salt water to nurture young marine organisms. This in turn promotes the growth of fish that move further up the food chain.

An abundance of beach grass growing throughout the year intrudes on what was a local beach. We think we can reclaim the beach by pulling them up. But beach grass absorbs tremendous amounts of energy from big storms (i.e. hurricanes). This in turn protects homes from damage that would occur should storm energy remain unchecked. While we can't control Mother Nature, we can care for our coastline communities. We can educate ourselves about the potentially negative effects that man-made alterations have and we can educate ourselves about the value of preservation. The Wareham Land Trust is committed to this through the purchase or stewardship of land offered by those who appreciate that value. We thank our members for that faith, and welcome new members to join us all in this effort.

—Karen McHugh

Books for Nature Lovers

I don't know which came first, my love for books or my love for nature; but I work in a library and volunteer with the WLT so I thought it was time to join the two and share some favorite nature-inspired titles with our members. There's something here for everyone. A classic for the purist, a literary memoir, one for the art lovers, and gorgeously illustrated children's titles.

One title that hit lots of "Best" lists in 2015 as well as winning multiple awards is ***H is for Hawk*** by Helen MacDonald. An experienced falconer, MacDonald took on the raising and training of a goshawk as a means of coping with grief over the loss of her father. In addition to her writing, MacDonald has worked in raptor research and conservation projects across the globe. Another memoir currently out is ***Girl in the Woods*** by Aspen Matis—a story of survival and triumph as a young woman hikes from Mexico to Canada.

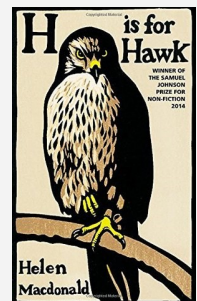
For the "Classic" category I'm choosing Wendell Berry's ***Clearing***. "I went by paths that bespoke intelligence and memory I did not know. Noonday held sounds of moving water, moving air, enormous stillness of trees. Though I was weary, song was near me then, wordless and gay as a deer lightly stepping." Originally published in 1977, Berry's *Clearing* is a sequence of poems that all deal with land stewardship—particularly his own

farmland. The title poem's theme is one of healing and the collection all relates to the notion of a love of work (for the land). The poetry is accessible and Berry is revered by environmentalists.

Andrew Goldsworthy is a British photographer, sculptor, and environmentalist who brings those passions together in amazing art installations. One lovely way to spend a bit of time with his work is to peruse his 1990 ***A Collaboration with Nature***. Some friends received the book as a Christmas gift and I borrowed it for one very peaceful and content hour on a snowy day. Goldsworthy's gift is transforming natural materials into ephemeral works of art (most of his works leave no trace beyond the existence of the photographs that capture them).

Finally and most importantly...Children's books: please help inspire young people to appreciate the environment. Share these stories with them. ***Small Wonders: Jean-Henri Fabre and His World of Insects*** by Matthew Clark Smith; ***The Wonder Garden*** by Kristjana S. Williams; ***Backyard Witch: Sadie's Story*** by Christine Heppermann; ***My Autumn Book*** by Wong Herbert Yee.

—Carleen M. Loper



Year-in-Review

It's always good to look back and revisit our events and programs of the past year. They're a reminder of all the hours of commitment by a dedicated group of volunteers and a celebration of friendship and collaboration with our community and other hard-working non-profit groups.

This year we were approached by Nora Bicki to help participate in the local "Don't Trash Wareham" initiative. Volunteers joined that group on separate dates picking up trash at our own properties and other popular public areas around town.

In the fall, we invited Board members from the area's first native-owned conservation group: the Native Land Conservancy to share their history and cultural philosophy related to the land. It was fascinating and we hope to have future events together.

In November, we hosted a very popular program led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's Natural Resource specialist John Pribilla on Invasive Species.

As always, Board members attended the national Land Trust Alliance Rally, the Mass Land Conservation Conference, and the Southeastern Mass Land Trust Convocation. The annual membership canal cruise on the Viking sailed as scheduled in August despite stormy weather!

A highlight of any year is the opening of new conservation land. That took place in December when our photo contest winners were celebrated at the expansion of the Tweedy and Barnes property.

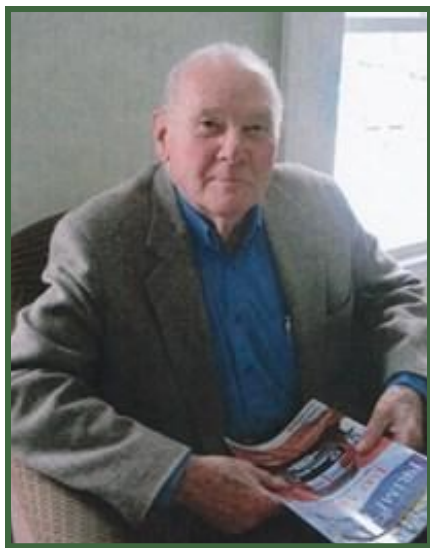


Another reason to celebrate in 2015: our "matching donation" campaign. Thanks to the generous support from the Stifler Family Foundation and new and increased membership donations, we raised **\$10,450** between May and November.

Want to get involved with our programs and events? We welcome volunteers. Contact us!



In last year's newsletter, we included a sampling of nature poetry. One of our long-time members, Vernon Ingraham, loved seeing that addition and was inspired to send us one of his own poems for a future edition. We were very sorry to hear that only a few weeks after doing so, Dr. Ingraham passed away. We are proud to share his poem with everyone. Our sympathies to his loved ones.



Vernon Ingraham

Mallards at Mirror Cove

Another year has passed
And once again they come—
The long-awaited gift
From out of the sky.
The males in iridescent green
and royal blue—
Their mates demurely decked
in shades of brown.
They break the mirrored surface
with a splash
And circling, feed upon nurture
to be found.
Hallowed in Nature's
kind communion.

Some rise and beat their wings
in exultation.
A fitting form of praise
for providential care.
One day, as suddenly as
when they first appeared,
They take their leave.
Let no dismay upon their
swift departure
cloud my joy.
But rather thanks
that once again
these welcome guests came here
to rest at Mirror Cove.

The Wareham Land Trust is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization dedicated to protecting and conserving Wareham's open space and natural resources. All gifts and bequests to the WLT are tax-deductible within IRS guidelines. With 54 miles of shoreline, Wareham claims some of the most breathtaking landscapes in the Commonwealth. From bogs to barrier beaches, forests to farmlands, we are surrounded by a diversity of lands and natural resources.

Membership

Join our efforts to preserve Wareham's open space and natural resources today!

Membership Categories

Individual:	\$15	\$ _____
Family:	\$25	\$ _____
Friend:	\$50	\$ _____
Sustaining:	\$100	\$ _____
Sponsor:	\$250	\$ _____
Benefactor:	\$500	\$ _____
Lifetime:	\$1,000	\$ _____

(or land donation):

Other Contribution: \$ _____

Note: Donations may be made online at our website via PayPal.

Corporate Membership Opportunities: Please contact us for more information.

Name _____

Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please send contributions to: The Wareham Land Trust Inc. P O Box 718 Wareham MA 02571-0718

508.295.0211 Warehamlandtrust.org email: info@warehamlandtrust.org



First Prize: Ethan Hamel (age 7)

2015 Photography Contest (12 & Under)

Category: The Solitude and Serenity of Nature

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