



NEWS

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EXPLORING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Wareham is a unique place, partly due to its wide variety of natural communities and the diverse array of species that call them home. From upland white pine forests, cranberry bogs, riverside wetlands, salt marshes and sandy beaches, our town has it all. Just out our back doors, in fact.

The Wareham Land Trust, along with other conservation entities, provides access to uniquely beautiful locations. The WLT safeguards over 675 acres of conservation land and allows public access on the vast majority of these properties. Caring for this land is a magnanimous task that requires the support of dedicated volunteers who monitor the parcels, clear debris from trails and support the land trust's mission of uniting citizens in conservation. Passionate and tireless conservationists, these volunteers aggregate in small groups to maintain trail systems throughout the area. It is this dedication to preserving our wild, scenic places that allows us all to enjoy such beautiful and picturesque sanctuaries.

Launch a canoe along the Agawam River, take a hike along the historic and striking Tweedy and Barnes Trail, or patiently relish the wildlife along the shores of Mark's Cove. The Wareham Land Trust offers myriad outdoor exploration opportunities.

More information about each specific Wareham Land Trust property, along with a map of where to find them, can be found at warehamlandtrust.org/properties.

Are you interested in helping us maintain WLT trails? Join the Wareham Trail Crew by emailing us at: info@warehamlandtrust.org and keep an eye out for our monthly trail-clearing days!

—Mead Binhammer
Land Stewardship Coordinator
TerraCorps-AmeriCorps



A Thank You to Our Members:

The WLT was formed in 2000 by individuals who realized our local natural landscape was vanishing. Their vision of “uniting to preserve our diverse lands and natural resources” soon led to more individuals joining the effort, and the 2001 501(c)(3) incorporation of the WLT. Our membership continues to grow as more people become aware of the importance and benefits of open space: clean water and air, habitat and species protection, climate resilience and more.

I want to *thank* each and every one of our members for your financial support, for your votes at town meeting and at the ballot box, for your stewardship monitoring and trail clearing of properties, for making refreshments at our community events and annual meeting, for volunteering to join one of our committees and/or Boards, for helping staff our table at town events. YOU make all the difference in the success of the WLT. Together, we *are* making a difference. Thank you!

Kathy Pappalardo
Membership Chair

A VISIT WITH DICK WHEELER

While sitting in his home overlooking Onset Bay, I would feel especially privileged to be sharing these moments with Dick. A gentleman who was soft-spoken, who chose his words carefully, expressing great knowledge and insight from years of study, observation, and doing. He would invite me into his living room to discuss ecosystems and environmental issues. We talked of birds. (Did you know Fish Crows can perch on utility wires, whereas American Crows cannot?) Of turtles. (Dick had a very large tortoise that roamed his house.) Of fishes. (He pointed out that, historically, we have almost depleted the oceans of certain fish.) Of trees, grasses and seaweed (all of which are necessary to solving the climate crises.) Of beaches. (Dick would walk along Onset Beach every morning, pick up trash and wonder – why?) We talked of oceans, marshes, forests and such.

Dick loved to read and teach. He loved books and would encourage me to read as much as possible. He would lend me books and often give me books from his own extensive library.

Dick passed away January 31, 2019. I miss him.

I now visit him through the memories of our visits, our conversations and the knowledge we shared. I believe he would want me to pass on this message to all. Respect the Earth. “Think Globally. Act Locally.” Support your schools (Wareham Public Schools), your library (Wareham Free Library), your land trust (Wareham Land Trust) and other similar organizations (Buzzards Bay Coalition.) As he did, from picking up trash on Onset Beach, to kayaking 1,500 miles along the northeast coast, to bringing attention to extinction and the human impact on our planet.

Dick Wheeler. Time Magazine’s “Heroes of the Planet.” Wareham’s home-town hero. My hero.

–Malcolm Phinney



AN ENDANGERED BIRD’S SUCCESS STORY



Photo captured by Helen Lozoraitis at Parkwood Beach in Wareham this Spring.

In the 1950s and 60s, the osprey population was dropping at an alarming rate. Thankfully, a few environmental scientists were paying attention. They determined that the use of the pesticide DDT was slowly poisoning the bird and causing their eggshells to thin. The osprey’s tragic story turned around in 1972, after the United States government banned the use of DDT.

Power lines are a safe, convenient place for the osprey couple to build their summer home and start a family. The male gathers sticks, vines, sod and other debris to make the nest, while the female rearranges the building materials.

The female lays between 1–4 eggs that incubate for approximately six weeks. After the babies hatch, both

parents care for their young for another seven weeks. By then, autumn is approaching and it’s time to leave for their winter spot in Central or South America.

Although the family splits up (the juveniles are the last to head south) the same couple meets at their nest the following spring, often increasing its size each year. Some nests have grown up to ten feet wide!

Ospreys are the only hawk on the continent that consumes a diet almost exclusively of fish. As you’re walking along one of our river-view trails, you’ll likely see an osprey diving three feet into the water and coming up with the family dinner.

–Ann Bryant

SAVING SEA TURTLES

Sea turtles are not just residents of warmer tropical waters. Like some of our human neighbors, sea turtles travel north from Florida and the Gulf of Mexico to enjoy our Cape Cod waters during the summer months. These turtles are mostly juveniles who travel North to feed on a buffet of crabs, shellfish and jellyfish with a side of eelgrass and algae in our coastal waters and bays.

Species of sea turtles that make the journey north include Loggerheads, Green and Kemp's ridley turtles, all of which are threatened or endangered, with the smaller Kemp's ridley being federally listed as critically endangered. Adult Green and Loggerheads can reach 400 pounds in size, while Kemp's ridleys typically grow to around 100 pounds. Most of these turtles summering in New England are juveniles or sub-adults and often less than 10% of adult size, with some only being a few pounds. Leatherback turtles, the largest species (Adults can be up to 8 feet and 1500 pounds!) and unlike the smaller species can generate higher body temperatures, are also seen in our local waters during the summer.

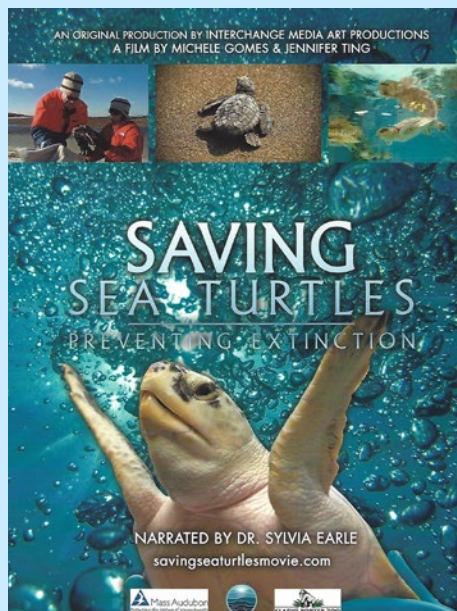
The unique geography of Cape Cod poses a hazard to the visiting young turtles when winter approaches and the waters begin to cool. The turtles, sensing the change in season, begin to migrate back south, retreating from the cooling waters. Encountering the hook of the Cape, many of these turtles become trapped in Cape Cod Bay. All of the species, with the exception of the Leatherback, are ectothermic and cannot regulate their internal body temperature. As the surrounding waters cool below 50° F, they become lethargic and cold-stunned, washing up along the beaches of the Cape, unable to move and exposed to the elements. Stranding events typically begin in November and extend into the new year. While the bulk of the cold-stunned turtles are found along the beaches of Cape Cod Bay, some have been found on Wareham beaches as they travel into Buzzards Bay.

For over 40 years, Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary has led a group of dedicated volunteers who regularly patrol the beaches looking for cold-stunned turtles in need of rescue. The turtles are taken back to the Sanctuary for triage and then transported to facilities such as the New England Aquarium and Buzzard Bay's National Marine Life Center for rehabilitation. A large number of these turtles are saved and released in the Spring (often airlifted South for release.) Researchers also learn valuable information about the ecology and physiology of these endangered turtles by studying the individuals that do not survive.

If you would like to learn more about these sea turtles, MA Audubon's Sea Turtle Stranding Rescue program and how you could become involved, visit their website at www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/wellfleet-bay/about/our-conservation-work/sea-turtles. For information about the documentary *Saving Sea Turtles*, which follows a sea turtle stranding season here at the Cape, visit www.savingseaturtlesmovie.com. If you see sea turtles during the summer while boating, you can be a citizen scientist by reporting them at www.seaturtlesightings.org. Sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act, making it

illegal to harass or transport them without a permit. If you encounter a beached or cold-stunned sea turtle in the late fall or winter, move the turtle above the high tide line (never holding it by the head or flippers), cover with some dry seaweed or wrack, mark the spot and call the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary hotline at 508-349-2615 x6104 or the Wareham Department of Natural Resources at 508-291-3100 x3180.

—JC Weber



Karen Dourdeville, a sea turtle research associate at Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary, answers questions following the screening of the documentary, an event co-sponsored in April by the WLT and the Wareham Boys & Girls Club.

HOUSE OF (WINTER) BLUES

That lovely flash of blue in the bushes around your yard? That could be a male Eastern Bluebird, foraging for food or seeking to attract a mate. If you are so lucky as to have some of these birds nearby, then you are in for a treat: courtship rituals, feeding behaviors, and, come mid-summer, the fledging of their brood. Quite a sight!

How can you help to make this happen? Well, making a bluebird nesting box is one way to start. First, you need to have the right habitat: open land with a scattering of trees and low or sparse vegetation.

Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters, which means that they can't create their own nesting cavities but must rely on what is available in their area. With people moving away from wooden fence posts and toward metal posts and wire, with the cutting of old, dead trees, and with the decline of orchards and

backyard fruit trees, the number of natural bluebird nesting cavities has also declined.

All is not lost, though. Homeowners and bird lovers have stepped up to provide these blue beauties with man-made houses suited to their needs. There are many designs easily available on the Internet to anyone interested. Recently, the WLT held a bluebird house building event



at the Wareham Free Library. It was well-attended, with almost thirty houses made that afternoon.

So look around your yard and see if you too have the right habitat for these native songbirds. And if you do, why not take on a fun afternoon project, and make them a house?

—Tom Kinsky



WLT Advisory Board member Tom Kinsky leads a Bluebird Birdhouse Workshop at the Wareham Library in February.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF LOCAL CONSERVATION

The defining feature in Wareham's rural character is its open space, yet 14% of its protected open space is less than all but one of the seven surrounding towns. Coastal communities tend to have the highest percentage of protected open space, and Wareham's is less than half of other coastal towns in the area. Preserving more open space in Wareham both protects its local character and improves its economic outlook.

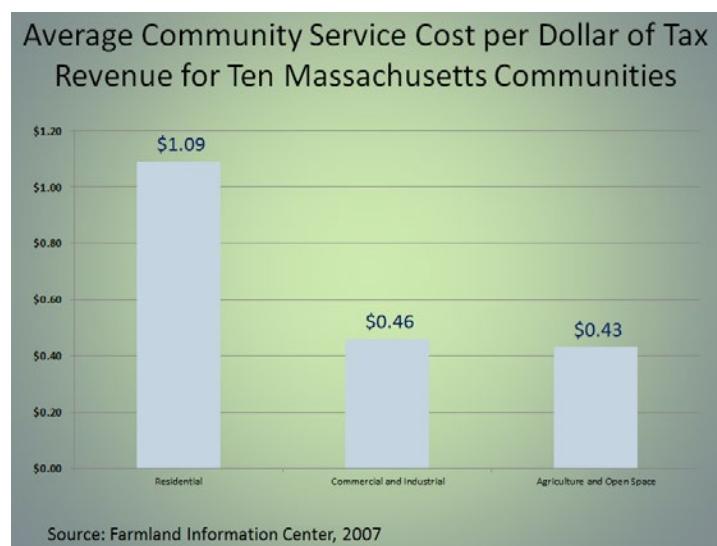
Whenever we talk about open space, the issue of lost tax revenue tends to come up. However, the reality is that the cost of providing services to residential or commercial property is more expensive than the amount of tax revenue generated. (See chart on right.)

Open space increases the value of adjacent properties, reduces noise, absorbs greenhouse gases, provides flood control, recharges groundwater,

removes pollution, and provides wildlife habitat. The value placed on property in real estate terms is based on an appraisal of the development potential of the land. However, if you consider the value of clean air, the value placed on the

earth's natural beauty, the value of habitat for plants and animals, the value of flood control, and the value of clean water, you should quickly realize that not having these things is more costly. The result is a better quality of life for all of us.

—Kevin Bartsch



WINGS & THINGS

Mid Spring. Just after lunch. I'm out walking around Wareham with a friend of mine. The sky looks about ready to open up and rain down something fierce. Despite the warning signs, we continue to prod along the edge of a clearing. As we round the corner, we catch a sight I will not soon forget — a twenty foot stretch of busy *Colletes inaequalis* bees, or *unequal cellophane* bees. The term "swarm" might not be appropriate for these animals. Perhaps "village" suits them better. This species does not nest in large social hives like our friends the honey bees. Instead, they often nest alone, but distribute in communal clusters, each nest akin to a house in a village.

At this time, I'm reminded that over 80% of our native bees nest underground. Feverishly, the unequal cellophane bees dip into and out of their holes. Being all single moms, they work alone to build and provision their nests. Unlike honey bees, unequal cellophane bees have a short active adult season. After May, time's up! From that point on, the adults will die off and leave their

eggs to develop underground into next year's generation. Underground, the eggs are provided with all the food they will need as larvae. They are also protected by a waterproof, cellophane-like lining that mom has created by mixing her saliva with a secretion from her Dufour's gland.

While not endangered or rare, the unequal cellophane bee is still a fantastic sight. In addition to a short "above ground" season, they can often be localized. Like many of our native bees, they have short flight ranges. Even if a location possesses the right floral resources, they simply



may not have the means to access that location. But, as ground-nesting bees, the availability of the habitable soil may be an additional limitation. We know that ground nesting bees, in general, prefer sunny, sandy, and well-drained soil. Until we know more, there appears to be a certain je ne sais quoi to some soils. For now, there may be no substitute for preserving land.

—Blake Dinius



Plymouth County entomologist Blake Dinius leads the Fall WLT Butterfly & Insect Walk at the Douglas S. Westgate Conservation Area in September.



Plymouth County entomologist Blake Dinius leads the Spring WLT Butterfly & Insect Walk at the Douglas S. Westgate Conservation Area in May.

In Memoriam: Mary Crowley & George Decas



We are sad that Wareham Land Trust lost two founding board members, both in February of this year. Mary and George were elected to WLT's inaugural Board of Directors in December 2000, one month before WLT's incorporation. As a new organization, WLT was fortunate to have the talents of such experienced and widely-respected civic leaders.

A realtor with a reputation for integrity and honesty, Mary's experience with real estate transactions was an invaluable resource for the new land trust. She was keenly aware that protecting Wareham's natural resources and open space will enhance our quality of life and make Wareham a desirable place to call home. In addition to her land trust service, Mary was President of the 15,000-member Massachusetts Association of Realtors. Her lovely demeanor and gracious personality won many friends for the WLT.

A lifelong Wareham resident and attorney with expertise in municipal law, George served as Middleboro Town Counsel for over 30 years. In addition to his work with the WLT, he served on many Town boards and organizations, chairing the Planning Board and the Wareham Historical Society. George was an early supporter of the Community Preservation Act, which was adopted with 75% of Wareham voters.

WLT is grateful for their many years of service and dedication to our community.

—Mary McFadden

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.

Would you like to become a member?

Join our efforts to preserve Wareham's open space!

Individual:	\$15.
Family:	\$25.
Friend:	\$50.
Sustaining:	\$100.
Sponsor:	\$250.
Benefactor:	\$500.
Lifetime:	\$1000.
Other Contribution:	\$_____

Name _____

Street Address _____

Town/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

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

Contributions may also be made online via our website.

For land donations or corporate membership opportunities, please contact us for information!

warehamlandtrust.org • 508.295.0211 • info@warehamlandtrust.org

We'd like to acknowledge and send a heartfelt thank you to the following local organizations for their support and generous donations:

Buzzards Bay Coalition

Mass Audubon

Mass Cultural Council

Town of Wareham

Wareham Boys & Girls Club

Wareham Community Events Committee

Wareham Garden Club

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