

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Volume 3 Edition 1, June 2006

OCT PURCHASES ECHO POND ON PEAKS ISLAND

Oceanside Conservation Trust is pleased to announce the acquisition of Echo Pond on Peaks Island. Previous owners Jack and Candace Healy worked with Oceanside to ensure that this wooded .4 acre property with vernal wetland features will be preserved. This land significantly enhances OCT's abutting properties of Skillings Woods and the Daveis Sanctuary. During this year's monitoring, OCT directors marked the boundaries; biologist Mike Johnson examined the area and found wood frog egg cases. OCT will continue to study the pond to document vernal pool activity. OCT plans to place a bronze plaque identifying property and thanking the Healeys for sharing our conservation values.



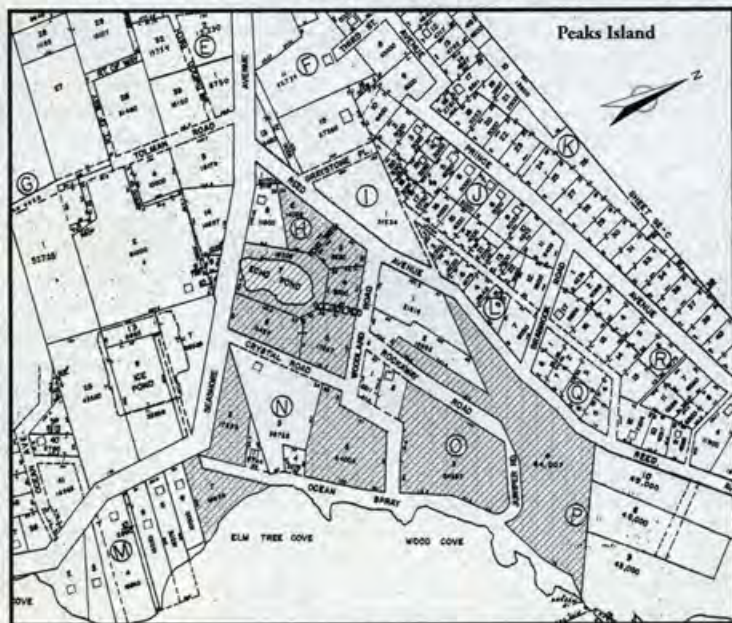
Biologist Mike Johnson and his daughter look for signs of vernal pool activity.



Jack and Candace Healy



Vernal pool vegetation



Shaded area of map shows Echo Pond, Skillings Woods, and Daveis Sanctuary

VERNAL POOLS



Wood frog, *Rana sylvatica*

Across America and here in Maine, small wetlands are routinely lost to development and logging. Recently a number of local newspaper and magazine articles have been written describing the value of these areas. Scientists who study vernal pools have come to appreciate them as major forces in the forest ecosystem. Research by the University of Maine and the Maine Audubon Society has raised our understanding of the importance of vernal pools to our woodland landscape. Found throughout the United States even in non-forested areas, vernal or spring pools are isolated, not connected to streams, and in most years dry out by late summer. Because they are ephemeral, they do not support fish populations. In Maine, wood frogs, spotted and blue salamanders, and fairy shrimp must have access to vernal pools to breed and survive. Wetland plants, threatened species such as the spotted turtle and Blanding's turtle, moose, mink, raccoon, herons, and numerous other species also need these areas.

A bill to protect significant vernal pools became law in Maine this spring. "This is the most significant wildlife area protection rule in a decade," said David Littell, Commissioner of Maine's Department of Environmental Protection. A pool's significance is determined by the number and type of pool-breeding amphibian egg masses that are present or by its use by threatened species. Development within 325 feet



Spotted salamander, *Ambystoma maculatum*

of a significant pool would require a state permit. In some cases as much as five acres of habitat zone could be subject to state protection around each pool.

Some Casco Bay islands lack populations of wood frogs, spotted salamanders, and fairy shrimp that are considered "obligate species" for the identification of a significant vernal pool. However, if a pool functions as a home and breeding area for other wetland life, it can still be considered a functioning pool.

Echo Pond on Peaks Island, recently acquired by OCT, may be an example of a vernal pool.

OCT board members will be evaluating Echo Pond this year to determine if it meets state guidelines. OCT will protect this area as a part of the forested landscape of the surrounding Skillings Woods.

During a springtime walk, whether on Peaks Island or elsewhere, the sound of frogs or the discovery of an isolated pool reminds hikers of the magical combination of weather, topography, and biological adaptation which come together to form a vernal pool and support its unique inhabitants.

MEET OCEANSIDE'S NEW PRESIDENT

A serendipitous confluence of tradition, deep family roots in Casco Bay, and a school project, first brought Stephanie Weaver to Oceanside Conservation Trust membership in the 1980s. In the past six years, she has served OCT as a director, treasurer, vice-president, and now president. How she got there is an interesting story.

Stephanie has summered on Cushing Island since 1963, but her roots in Casco Bay go back four generations. Every year Stephanie's great-grandmother moved thirteen children, the donkey, the piano, and all the other necessary baggage for an island summer via barge from Portland to Peaks Island. As a young wife and mother, Stephanie's grandmother wanted a similar island experience for her own two children, and she found it on Little Diamond Island. A generation later, after returning from a career overseas, Stephanie's mother visited Cushing Island, and fell in love with the house the Weavers have now owned for two generations.

~ continued on page 3 ~

After her parents passed away, Stephanie continued their tradition of donating to Oceanside. As a member of OCT, she participated in an annual monitoring expedition in order to fulfill one of the requirements for a Muskie class. This graduate school project, an organizational review of Oceanside, began Stephanie's involvement in land conservation in Casco Bay.



Stephanie's education, professional experience, and civic involvement bring many talents to OCT.

A 2005 graduate of the USM Muskie School of Public Service, she holds an MA in Public Policy and Public Service, with a dual major in Fiscal Management and Organizational Management. She is eminently qualified to guide an organization through a period of change and the accompanying growing pains. Stephanie created a national award-winning class project for the City of Saco which resulted in her current employment in the financial department of that city. On Cushing Island, she serves on the boards of directors of Cushing Island Conservation Corporation and Cushing Associates, Inc., the homeowners' association. Stephanie notes with some pleasure that she was the youngest and the first woman president of Cushing Associates, Inc. During her two years tenure as president, that organization dealt with several growth issues.

Her experience lends valuable insight to Oceanside in a time of organizational growth and change. Stephanie has a proven record of being an able administrator who can understand issues, multi-task projects, and manage a myriad of details. Stephanie describes herself as a "safe transitional person" to facilitate directing the energies of all board members toward growth.

Stephanie lives in Portland with her husband Paul Lusty and their son Hayden Sayre Weaver, a fifth-generation islander.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OF THANKS

Along with Oceanside Board of Directors, I thank our members and supporters for their contributions over the last year. We understand an endless stream of requests come your way every year.

We are so glad that when we asked, you were willing to share our goals and dreams of protecting land in the greater Casco Bay community.

It seems appropriate to look back at what we accomplished together. This past year, Oceanside acquired Echo Pond, a small but important piece of protected Peaks Island wilderness, the beloved Daveis Sanctuary-Skilling Woods. We strive to improve our management of these important parcels and are very proud to have expanded our collaborations with the Peaks Island Land Preservation (PILP), whose volunteers have become our eyes and ears at Daveis-Skillings.

Also on Peaks, Oceanside provided a challenge grant to PILP for its effort to secure the local ballfield property for future generations to enjoy. Thanks to all who responded to our article in the last newsletter with a contribution directly to PILP. They met their goal and we can all share in their success.

Your dollars also went to work on an interesting collaboration with the Portland Trails group, which this year acquired the Brickyard Point property near the Main Audubon Gislard Farm in Falmouth. Additionally, we have been working to support new conservation efforts on Little and Great Diamond Islands. Look for more information in OCT's fall newsletter.

While it would be easy to linger on these success stories, more work needs to be done.

I again want to say thanks, and I hope with all my heart that we can continue to count on you.

Please renew your membership, join us at the annual meeting on Cliff Island, and contribute generously. Together we can make a difference.

Best,

Stephanie Weaver

Spring Property



On April 18, Mike Beaudoin, Mike Johnson, and Roger Berle secure the *Christian Alf* in a strong wind at Long Island.



Chris McDuffie updates the monitoring notebook for Griffin C. For each of OCT's easements, the Board maintains a notebook which includes maps, photos, a detailed property description, a copy of specific easement, and yearly observations.



OCT maintains several commemorative markers. This stone on Peaks Island is in memory of OCT member Harold E. Hackett. Bayberry, beach plum, and volunteers help keep the bittersweet in check.



OCT's monitoring of College Island in the background of this picture often takes place with the use of binoculars from Fowler Beach. Jo Belknap, Jane Laughlin, Sue Ingalls, and Mike Beaudoin find the sunny day perfect for taking photos for the records.



Roger Berle and Hazel Johnson, our littlest monitor, inspect the view and collect trash from the top of Battery Steele on Peaks Island. Members noted the area was almost litter-free.



On April 25, board members enjoy the sunny day on College Island while searching for boundary markers – sometimes a hazardous job!

Monitoring 2006



On May 10, neither rain nor fog deters this group of faithful monitors: Chris McDuffie, Hazel Johnson, Roger Berle, Susan Ingalls, and Mike Johnson, Stephanie Weaver, and photographer Priscilla Doucette. They took the 7:45 a.m. ferry to check OCT's easement property for encroachment, cutting, litter, and changes in vegetation.



Posted OCT signs help visitors identify the Daveis Sanctuary on Peaks Island. Yearly monitoring helps keep these signs visible.



Where in the world except Cliff Island would the local ballfield include two spectacular beaches? OCT holds a conservation easement on this beautiful land owned by Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics and Conservation Education. In the background is the Bluffs which are protected by an OCT easement.



This view from the Cliff Island Ballfield beach includes the cottage where the *Whales of August* was filmed. Enjoying the scenery is a part of every monitoring excursion.



OCT board member Mark Green from Long Island doesn't spill a drop of coffee while measuring boundaries on Fowler's Beach.



In the woods behind Wreck Cove, board members check the map before setting out to walk the 11.3 acre property owned by the Town of Long Island. Hazel wisely catches a nap.

BRICKYARD

Oceanside Conservation Trust recently donated \$5,000 to Portland Trails to help purchase a prominent parcel of waterfront land at the entrance to the lower Presumpscott River. In addition to being a trails organization, Portland Trails also is a land trust.



Driving north on Route 295.

Portland Trails members had noticed a "for sale" sign on land just by the bridge where the river flows into the estuary. A PT board member contacted the realtor and soon began negotiations. PT contacted Maine Island Trail Association leadership and together members boated out to walk the property, called Brickyard Point, and to visualize what it could mean to each group. Overgrown now, and in private ownership, this point of land had a long history as a brick factory. Currently accessible only by water, it has become a popular spot for duck hunters. PT and MITA quickly determined that the four acre parcel had significant potential as an addition to a string of newly acquired properties with public access easements between the estuary of the Presumpscott and the Exit 9 spur of Maine Turnpike. Collaborators in these acquisitions include the Town of Falmouth, the City of Portland, Falmouth Conservation Trust, and Portland Trails. Oceanside's Board decided to encourage this project by presenting a \$5,000 challenge grant to PT. This money was soon matched by PT and the property was secured in January. Because of Brickyard Point's unique location, not just islanders, boaters, or hunters, but also thousands of drivers each day can view this conserved land as they travel from Portland toward Freeport. Brickyard Point will look much the same forever, thanks to the dedication of PT, OCT, and the donators to land preservation.

SAVE THE DATE

JULY
12TH

Annual Meeting of Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Wednesday, July 12, 2006
Cliff Island
ACE Ballfield

An Old-Fashioned Cookout



CONSERVATION EFFORTS BEGIN ON LITTLE DIAMOND AND GREAT DIAMOND ISLAND

With donations from Little Diamond families and a \$5,000 contribution from OCT, this past year Oceanside Conservation Trust purchased a wooded parcel of land in the interior of Little Diamond Island. The process of deeding the land to Little Diamond Island Association is underway. OCT will hold the conservation easement on this old growth forest.

On Great Diamond Island, a generous family donated two lots for conservation and initiated the creation of a new land trust to own the property. Great Diamond Island Land Preserve will manage the property which has traditionally been used for recreation.

These efforts represent the first properties to be placed under conservation easement on both Little and Great Diamond Islands. Oceanside says, "Congratulations!"

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Board of Directors

2005-2006

Stephanie Weaver, President.....	761-4212 <i>Cushing Island</i>
Brenda Buchanan, Vice-President.....	766-4403 <i>Peaks Island</i>
Jane Laughlin, Secretary.....	799-9285
	766-2570 <i>Great Diamond Island</i>
Roger Berle, Treasurer.....	781-5331 <i>Cliff Island</i>
	766-2827
Mike Beaudoin.....	774-0522
	766-3028 <i>Cliff Island</i>
Jo Belknap.....	721-8505 <i>Cliff Island</i>
Tom Bergh.....	766-2419 <i>Peaks Island</i>
Bob Bittenbender.....	892-3818
Erno Bonebakker.....	874-6664 <i>Chebeague Island</i>
	846-5203
Priscilla Doucette.....	772-5705 <i>Little Diamond Island</i>
Mark Greene.....	766-4440 <i>Long Island</i>
Susan Ingalls.....	774-1092 <i>Little Diamond Island</i>
Michael Johnson.....	232-5778 <i>Long Island</i>
Christine McDuffie.....	829-3231 <i>Long Island</i>
	766-5277
Eliza Cope Nolan.....	772-5024 <i>Cushing Island</i>
John Whitman.....	766-2211 <i>Peaks Island</i>

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay is to facilitate the conservation of wild or undeveloped open space, scenic areas, and historic landmarks in the Casco Bay region and to foster low-impact and respectful access to these resources, as well as to enhance the cultural, economic, and civic well-being of residents and visitors. The Trust may acquire, hold, and transfer interests in land, including easements, in order to accomplish this mission and to assure that a diversity of ecosystems will be available to future generations. In addition, the Trust may hold charitable, cultural, and educational activities for the benefit of residents and visitors. (Adopted 10/24/96)

VISION STATEMENT

While maintaining the highest standards of stewardship and land management, Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay will become a leader in coordinating and facilitating land conservation efforts among individuals, island organizations, and land trusts in Casco Bay.



Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay



Property	Location	Owner	Date Acquired	Approximate Size
Fowler's Beach	Town of Long Island	Long Island Civic Association	5/25/1987	6.38 acres
The Bluffs	Cliff Island, Portland	Robert & Josephine Belknap, Tenants in Common	12/26/1989	18 acres
Dave's Sanctuary	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	5/14/1994	6.8 acres
College Island	Town of Long Island	OCT	9/7/1994	1 acre
Battery Steele	Peaks Island, Portland	Peaks Island Land Preserve	7/28/1995	14.3 acres
North Point	Cliff Island, Portland	Helen W. Kenefiek	12/1997	9 acres
ACE Ballfield	Cliff Island, Portland	Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics & Conservation Education	1/31/2000	15.4 acres
Griffin's Cove	Cliff Island, Portland	Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics & Conservation Education	12/22/2000	.75 acres
Everett & Mildred D. Skillings Woods	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	2001	2 acres
Wreck Cove	Town of Long Island	Town of Long Island	7/29/2004	11.3 acres
Echo Pond	Peaks Island, Portland	OCT	04/2005	.4 acres

In addition, OCT has a cooperative role in the protection of Cow Island, Stockman's Island, and Rose's Point, Chebeague Island.



Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

P.O. Box 10404
Portland, Maine 04104

In order to support the work of Oceanside Conservation Trust, I/we are sending this contribution.

Membership Dues \$ 20.00
Additional Gift _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Seasonal Address: _____

Membership is renewable at any time before the OCT annual meeting. Please check the two-digit number directly following your name on the address label; the number indicates the year your most recent membership dues were received if applicable. Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law; dues are not.

Thank You!



**Oceanside Conservation Trust
of Casco Bay**
P.O. Box 10404
Portland, Maine 04104

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*Since 1982, approximately 85
acres on Casco Bay Islands have
been permanently protected.*

*Oceanside Conservation Trust
of Casco Bay
welcomes your support.*