

## LONG ISLAND TREASURE

*by Christine McDuffie*

Who would have thought an out-of-state developer would permanently protect a beautiful double-horseshoe beach on Long Island? Fowler's Beach has been used by Long Islanders for generations, but in 1986 it was owned by Phoenix Resources. Northland Investment Corporation of Newton, Massachusetts, purchased the beach and a 55 acre parcel on the southwest end of Long Island. They subdivided the property for residential development and offered the beach and its backlands to the Long Island Civic Association. The gift came with the provision that a conservation easement would protect the beach forever.

In the year of the purchase, Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay was a new land trust, and conservation easements were just gaining acceptance. Protecting Fowler's Beach was new ground for both organizations. Before accepting ownership of the beach, the Long Island Civic Association had to become a tax exempt corporation. Diane Nolan, then President of Oceanside, sought guidance from Maine Coast Heritage Trust in drafting the conservation easement, the first such document for Oceanside. The Civic Association raised funds and established an endowment to cover the ownership and maintenance expenses of the beach. They then worked to persuade the City of Portland that a conservation easement is permanent protection and extinguishes development



*Fowler's Beach*

potential. Therefore, taxes should be abated. Oceanside had to convince the City that access to Fowler's beach was of significant public benefit and that OCT was a viable organization capable of maintaining that easement. The Portland assessor finally fully abated the property taxes. After becoming independent from Portland, the Town of Long Island has honored that abatement decision. Rules for Fowler's Beach were established by the

*continued on page 3*

## STEWARDSHIP: PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES

*On April 12, 2008, twenty-five land stewards from Portland North Land Trust Collaborative (Cumberland-Chebeague Land Trust, Falmouth Land Trust and Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay,) Peaks Island Land Preserve and*

*Great Diamond Island Land Preserve met at Audubon's Gilsland Farm to discuss stewardship of the protected properties of these trusts.*

*The workshop agenda included a panel presentation and discussion from three experts in different aspects of stewardship. Brenda Buchanan, a board member of OCT and an attorney with extensive experience in the legal issues of land conservation, spoke about the legal context of land conservation and stewardship. Bob Bittenbender, also a board member of OCT and the assistant Property Manager for Maine Audubon, discussed his experience dealing with specific management issues such as invasive plants, overuse and misuse of property, and storm damage. Jaime Parker, the Trails Director for Portland Trails, described the stewardship program of Portland Trails, focusing on their collaborations with other groups, neighborhoods and volunteers.*



*Bob Bittenbender leads participants on a tour of Gilsland Farm.*

*After the panel discussion, the workshop participants broke into small*

# How You Can Support the Work of OCT by Brenda Buchanan, Esq.



*Hazel Johnson & her father check Echo Pond for salamander eggs.*



*Collecting litter at Battery Steele*



*Wild ramps in Memorial Woods at Little Diamond*



*Bluffs on Cliff Island*

*People interested in land conservation might consider the following ways to support the work of OCT:*

1. *Outright gifts of land*
2. *Grants of conservation easements*
3. *Volunteering to steward protected land*
4. *Financial gifts – either lifetime or through an estate plan – to help pay the many costs associated with responsible land preservation*

## **Gifts of Land and Grants of Conservation Easements**

*Sometimes people want to be sure a particular parcel of their land is never developed. Perhaps the treasured spot is a woodland where ladyslippers bloom in the spring, or maybe the land is an undeveloped waterfront lot that has provided access to the shore for many generations. OCT is happy to accept either outright gifts or conservation easements on such cherished parcels. OCT will work with the donors to define the terms of the land's future use.*

*An outright gift of land is just that – by deed you transfer title of the land to OCT, often with detailed restrictions recited in the deed to ensure your intentions are understood and will be followed. With an outright gift of land, you no longer have any responsibility for the land, yet you are assured it will be managed and maintained in accordance with your wishes.*

*A conservation easement is a legal agreement by which the landowner retains ownership of the land but agrees to permanently release the right to develop that land in order to protect its conservation values. Conservation easements keep property in private hands, while still meeting important natural resource goals.*

*Conservation values that may be protected by giving land or granting conservation easements to OCT include wildlife, plant and fish habitats, forest and farmland, open space and scenic areas, public outdoor recreation and educational areas, coastal access areas, streams and wetlands, and historically important land areas.*

*Property owners who embrace these land conservation tools are usually motivated by a love of their land and the guarantee that their land will remain protected forever. In addition, a variety of tax benefits may be available to donors who give land or grant conservation easements to OCT. Please contact any board member if you would like to hear more about gifts of land or conservation easements.*

## **Gifts of Time and Energy**

*OCT needs the help of volunteers to regularly monitor its protected properties and participate in periodic hands-on projects to make sure the properties are managed responsibly. Volunteer stewards and project volunteers enable OCT to carry out its mission. If you have interest in stewarding an OCT-protected parcel or participating in periodic land conservation projects, please let us know. We'll match you up with an opportunity that will allow you to use your skills for a good cause.*

## **Gifts of Money**

*OCT is deeply grateful for the financial support it receives from its members and supporters. Monetary gifts of any size always are welcome. Gifts may be made in your own name or anonymously, or in memory of an individual you wish to honor. OCT also accepts bequests, and will be happy to discuss with you the planned giving opportunities you might consider when preparing your estate plan.*



# MEET ERNO BONEBAKKER

A few years after moving to Portland from the smog and freeways of Southern California, Erno Bonebaker joined the board of Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay. The many channels and islands of Casco Bay satisfied his lifelong fascination with the edge of the sea. The rich history, relatively unspoiled islands, and endlessly fascinating coves and channels have entranced him ever since.



Erno became active with the Maine Island Trail Association and Friends of Casco Bay. He purchased his first boat in 1992 and began vacationing on Chebeague Island in 1994. He became increasingly involved in conservation of Casco Bay. OCT with its focus on islands was a natural fit.

Erno's background in geology, oceanography, mapping and law has helped him contribute to OCT's activities. Recently he began working with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a new tool to collect, display, and analyze data about the Bay and the islands. He volunteers on the Chebeague Island Comprehensive Planning Committee. Erno focuses on water quality and historical topics as well as uses his knowledge of the natural resources and the conservation community in Maine to support efforts such as aerial photography surveys and vernal pool evaluations.

One of his most satisfying projects for OCT was developing a partnership between the Maine Island Trails Association and OCT. College Island, owned by OCT, became a part of the Maine Island Trails, and OCT welcomed MITA's assistance in monitoring the condition of the island. The island is an attractive stop for MITA members traveling in Casco Bay. MITA members are committed to low impact use of the island and to reporting any conditions of concern.

Currently Erno is working on developing GIS capacity for OCT and Portland North Land Trust Collaborative to be used both for tracking the status of properties in OCT's care and for strategic conservation planning.

Erno's interest in history, ecology, and sense of place draws him to Little Chebeague and Jewell Islands. On both islands the traces of WWII activities remain, even as bittersweet and other plants overgrow the trails, gun emplacements, and bunkers. For Erno, the challenges of preservation, conservation, stewardship, global warming, and climate change are exciting.

## LONG ISLAND TREASURE *Continued*

Civic Association. Commercial use, camping, and vehicles are not allowed. Fires require specific permission in addition to a fire permit. A trespass cut was addressed, and reparations were negotiated. When erosion became a problem, a permit was granted by the DEP to allow installation of snow fencing to rebuild and protect the dunes. Island school children, including OCT's present board member Mike Johnson, planted beach grass behind the fencing, and adult volunteers planted beach roses along the roadside. Plank walkways were installed to concentrate foot traffic along two paths and prevent erosion. Each summer volunteers work to maintain the snow fence, walkways, and the beach. Oceanside monitors Fowler's Beach at least once a year. Board members walk the boundaries and take photographs to document the condition of the property in relation to the easement restrictions, and prepare an annual report. These monitoring records are archived for future reference. Knowing that Oceanside pays careful attention to its monitoring responsibilities helps the Civic Association honor its commitment of being a good steward for the property. Thanks to both organizations, Fowler's Beach will continue to be a community treasure and recreational asset for future generations.

## STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOP *Continued*

*groups and assessed the stewardship needs of their protected properties and their organizations. Each trust came away from the meeting with an articulated plan for action and follow-up. The workshop ended with a walk around Gilsland Farm, as Bob discussed decisions about management issues and identified noteworthy flora and fauna.*

*The workshop is an important example of the benefits achieved through collaboration. In addition to the information presented, the participants connected with stewards from other trusts and shared challenges, approaches, and experiences.*

*The Collaborative thanks Coffee By Design, Standard Baking Company, North Star Café, Maine Audubon, and PILP's Steve Shuit for their contributions.*

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# CLIFF ISLAND STORM CLEAN-UP

*Editors' Note: Damage from the Patriot's Day Storm of 2007 was not limited to conservation land on the Casco Bay islands. In this article, Cliff Islander Roger Berle assesses the clean-up operation on conservation lands stewarded by Oceanside, Land Associates of Cliff Island, and on private property.*

Under the direction of forester Rene Noel, an impressive force of loggers and equipment worked from early November to mid-April clearing more than one hundred acres of damaged, downed, and vulnerable trees from Cliff Island.



*Cliff Island*

The crew worked first on the southern part of the island, mostly on interior land belonging to Land Associates of Cliff Island, a land conserving organization. They cut new road access through this property in order to hook cables up and drag the timber to the log landing site on the South Road. During the early part of the winter, the frozen ground made the work easier and caused less wear-and-tear on the land. The results are impressive: the crew completely cleared areas leaving relatively few jagged stumps and random trees; they left integral stands of trees which looked healthy enough to withstand future storms; and they cleared many hundreds of trees dead or damaged from earlier storms. This left things quite neat and clean. Now wonderful trails the width of a skidder exist in places where most Cliff Islanders have never set foot!

Later in the winter the loggers moved north to address an even larger tangle on more difficult terrain, including much of the Vortisch property. The weather gods were less considerate during the second half of the project, and mud became the loggers' primary foe. Several times the loggers gave up and headed up-country to other sites where the ground was more likely to be frozen - returning to Cliff when they thought it would make sense. They made a valiant effort to avoid damaging the "Fire Road" which loops around the northerly and easterly part of the island; however, they were constantly thwarted by

warm weather and precipitation. Upon leaving they hired an on-island contractor to re-grade and minimize the remaining mess. The northern section of worked land appears far less "finished" than the southern site, but the original mission of removing a serious fire hazard was accomplished.

Over three thousand cords (128 cubic feet each) of wood left Cliff Island on large trailers. Folks on Long Island quickly lost count of the log convoys heading to the mainland from Cliff. Friends in Portland who saw the loaded trailers sitting at Portland's East End Beach parking lot frequently commented on the prodigious amount of softwood pulp which had made its way ashore. The loggers cut and stacked a great deal of hardwood, which they left for islanders to burn for fuel. On several work days this spring, wood was distributed among all islanders who had indicated an interest in having a share.



*Mike Beaudoin assesses the clean-up on Cliff Island.*

The 2007 completion of the new barge landing on the South Road made this project possible, and contributes to the sustainability of our community.

Storekeeper Mark Millington kept far more store hours than he would have without the loggers. In March a pot-luck appreciation supper was held for the loggers by Cliff's sparse year-round population.

Now, we wait for time and nature to soften the ragged and ruptured remainders. But a larger question remains: How will we prevent a repetition of this single-species grow-up-and-blow-down cycle in seventy years?



# LONG ISLAND & PEAKS ISLAND FOLLOW-UP



*Tom Bergh & Chris McDuffie make notes for the monitoring report.*



*Daveis Woods on Peaks Island*



*Additional blow-down damage on Long Island*



## SAVE THE DATE



**July 24<sup>th</sup>**

**1:00 - 4:30**

## A Visit to LITTLE CHEBEAGUE ISLAND

Transportation via landing barge

Speaker, Pat McGowen

Details will follow by mail.

## OCT PUBLISHES NEW BROCHURE

*Some members of OCT have recently received the new Oceanside Conservation Trust brochure in the mail. This brochure is an update of our previous material. It is intended to inform readers about the work of OCT. It includes the mission and vision of Oceanside, a map of Casco Bay, and photographs which show the beauty of land we protect.*

*This brochure was developed to answer questions about the work of OCT and to explain how to participate. It will be sent with membership solicitations and invitations to the annual meetings. Jess Burton, administrative assistant to Portland North Land Trust Collaborative, created the brochure. If any members of OCT would like extra copies or have suggestions for improvements or additions, please contact Ms. Burton at [portlandnorth@gmail.com](mailto:portlandnorth@gmail.com).*



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# MAINE LAND TRUST CONFERENCE 2008

*"We are desperate for thinkers, not consumers.*

*We are desperate for people of courage.*

*We need people who will take responsibility for their own actions.*

*We need people willing to live in service to something bigger than their own desires."*

*"Today is a day for all of us to consider the rest of our lives, the rest of life. You are the ones paying attention. You are the ones who, through good thinking, can invent a different America, a different Maine."*

So said writer, naturalist and activist Janisse Ray as she began her keynote address on Saturday, May 3, as over 400 participants from more than 100 organizations gathered at Brunswick HS for Maine Land Trust Conference 2008. Janisse Ray is a poet and the author of three books of literary nonfiction including ***Ecology of a Cracker Childhood***, a memoir about growing up on a junkyard in the ruined longleaf pine ecosystem of the Southeast. She lectures widely on nature, community, organic agriculture, native plants, sustainability and the politics of wholeness. As an organizer and activist, she works to create sustainable communities, local food systems, a stable global climate, intact ecosystems, clean rivers, life-enhancing economies, and participatory democracy. Sprinkled with her poetry, the address was an uplifting beginning for the annual land trust conference.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust, annually presents the Maine Land Conservation Conference in support of its Maine Land Trust Network program and Maine's land conservation community. The conference provides training on best practices in land trust management, land transactions, and stewardship. It is a forum for learning about the most pressing issues facing land conservation today.

This year's theme was Connecting Conservation and Communities: "Success in land conservation is often judged in terms of acres, but many in the field have realized that just protecting parcels of land from development isn't enough. The accomplishments must mean something to the people in the communities that surround the land. How does it improve the quality of their lives? What activity, product or opportunity will become available to them? In what other ways does conservation land contribute to the community? To answer these questions, people who work and volunteer for conservation organizations need to find ways to come together with the public and community leaders to talk about the many ways that land conservation benefits

everyone, from grade school kids and their teachers to local business people and senior citizens."

More than thirty workshops were offered on such varied topics as carbon markets, climate change, stewardship planning, farmland protection, tick management, mapping with Google Earth, Photography Gone Wild, and No Child Left Inside.

*"From 'Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation' I learned about vernal pool ecology, the criteria used to identify a significant vernal pool, and how land trusts can be involved in Maine's new Natural Resources Protection Act The presenter, Aram J.K. Calhoun of UMO, had attached tiny radio transmitters to wood frogs (which are about the size of a bean) and salamanders in order to follow them through their life cycle. She discovered that many vernal pool inhabitants migrate from one vernal pool to another, returning to the same pool where they were born to lay their eggs and traveling to the same pool to hibernate where their 'parents' hibernated. She was so enthusiastic about salamanders that I couldn't help but be excited too!" ~ Jane*

*"Speakers from Acadia National Park, Ferry Beach Ecology School and Auburn Parks & Recreation reviewed recent trends in the use of conservation lands and discussed interesting ways to encourage exploration, free play, enjoyment and appreciation of the outdoors with children. Since today's kids are tomorrow's conservationists, making conservation lands attractive to kids and encouraging parents to promote outdoor activities should be a priority for OCT." ~ Erno*

As interesting as all the workshops were, keynote speaker Janisse Ray's concluding words stay with us, calling to mind the reason why Oceanside is committed to conservation:

*"It seems fitting that creatures of privilege, gifted beings, able to use language, to pass messages across geographies and generations, should speak and act on behalf of those who cannot. Although the tasks before us seem monumental, ...we must find hope in a vision and hang on to it relentlessly.*

*Because life is unendingly fascinating.*

*Unbearably beautiful.*

*Utterly fragile."*

## Kingfisher

The sidewalk was crowded  
the evening the kingfisher  
fell.

People stopped, staring  
at the ground, then up,  
bewildered.

It just dropped  
from the sky,  
a woman said.

Above,  
Chittenden Bank rose  
shining  
four stories high:  
Windows are sky  
and dusky sky: the river  
meters away.

Kingfisher: I know  
their chants by heart.  
I've watched hundreds  
dive, rise,  
fly off.

But once I would hold  
a kingfisher  
in my hands.

I would touch that blue power.  
It might be the only time  
ever I would.

What I held was more precious  
than handfuls of money.

If I could

have thrown it  
to the wind

I would have.

What to do  
with such wild pain?  
was the question,  
and the answer:

Carry it  
across Elliot Street  
to the bushes by the church  
to the flowers

and set it down.

Slip it inside an envelope  
of green.

Give it back.

Give it back,

all of it,

and go home.

Janisse Ray



Belted Kingfisher  
John J. Gurney, 1997

## Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

### Board of Directors 2007-2008

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

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of OCT 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, OCT 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
Daveis 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. Kenefick	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
LDI Property	Little Diamond Island	Little Diamond Island Association	09/2006	.5 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!*

*Printed on recycled paper*



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Oceanside Conservation Trust of

permanently protected.

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on Casco Bay Islands have been

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