

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

Volume 9 Edition 2, November 2013

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

with Peter Forbes By Roger Berle

On the first weekend of November, Peter Forbes, the well-known author, photographer and conservationist, came to Portland from his farm in Vermont



for two Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative events. On Friday evening, Peter delivered a mesmerizing slide show and a narrative designed to raise awareness about

the measureable benefits land conservation can provide to communities around the world. Oceanside Conservation Trust Board members joined a robust crowd of seventy-five folks at Camp Ketcha in Scarborough. The Scarborough Land Trust hosted the gathering which included a trail walk on the Libby Farm, on which SLT holds a conservation easement. Peter's images, both visual and verbal, remain poignant even at this writing.

Then, on a gorgeous, unseasonably warm Saturday, Peter continued his visit with a seven-hour workshop at Laudholm Farm in Wells. Twenty-five land trust staff and directors, including three from Oceanside, heard his message loud and clear: conservationists must break away from their choir chambers and energetically engage a far wider audience than is currently the case. Sitting in a circle of chairs outside, we twenty-five discussed ways and means to broaden the beneficial effects of the good works we set out to do. **Only 1.2 per cent of Americans belong to conservation organizations.** We all need to work together to engage more people from the remaining 98.8 per cent and welcome them to the congregation of the conservation-minded.



To accomplish this, we need to listen, to hear their thoughts about their communities, and understand who they are and what their needs are. **We can then work to connect the people to the land – through food, through clean water, through beauty.** When their land is tended to, the people will correspondingly prosper.

It was a most valuable and inspiring day.

*"The outcomes of
'community conservation'
are more resilient, healthier
communities more closely
connected to the land, and
a conservation movement
that transcends its privileged
roots to be in service to more
Americans." - Peter Forbes*

GREEN CRABS & other MARINE INVASIVES

What's all the hoopla over European green crabs? European green crabs are a non-native species that arrived in the Cape Cod region in the 1800s and spread northward to Casco Bay by 1900. Rising water temperatures and less robust winters have contributed to a recent surge in the populations. Green crabs prey on young shellfish such as softshell clams, mussels, and oysters. The crabs can have a devastating effect on these populations. Green crab burrows may also have an impact on eel grass and salt marsh grasses. Besides the potential economic toll from the crabs' destruction of shellfish populations, consider also that native shellfish beds and marsh grasses can help lessen the effects of large storms by reducing erosion related to wave action and storm surges. What can we do? Despite their small size, green crabs are edible and perhaps we can eat our way out of this current threat to the Bay. (text from *Friends of Casco Bay*)



Oceanside is concerned with the new threat of marine invasive species. Again we need to work together to educate islanders and find successful methods to overcome these new challenges to our fragile environment.

Other organizations concerned with the invasion of green crabs include the following:

- *Casco Bay Estuary Partnership*
- *The US Geological Survey*
- *Harbormasters/ Shellfish Wardens: Chebeague Island, Freeport, Brunswick*
- *Maine Coast Heritage Trust*
- *UM Machias*
- *Friends of Casco Bay*

CHEBEAGUE ISLAND STUDENTS *Learn about Marine Invasives*

OCTOBER 4, 2013

At the Stone Pier on Chebeague Island, Jeremy Miller of the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (WNERR) and Curtis Bohlen of the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership (CBEP) demonstrated marine invasive species monitoring to students of the Chebeague Island School. The students learned about the importance of marine invasive monitoring. They discussed the possibility of Chebeague joining the New England monitoring network and establishing a regular monitoring on Chebeague Island. The group looked closely at the floats at the Stone Pier and saw many,



many different species of invasive and non-invasive marine animals. The students and adults were very enthusiastic. This program complements Chebeague Island School's WeatherBlur project to investigate lobster trap bycatch.

Events on the floats at Chebeague Island and Peaks Island were intended to introduce MIMIC (Marine Invasive Monitoring Network) to these communities through the vehicle of the island

kids. The event on Peaks was an informal open invitation to the community, extended through the CBISN (Casco Bay Invasive Species Network) created this summer with funding from CBEP

THE VANISHING MONARCH BUTTERFLY

In last fall's newsletter, OCT Director John Spencer described the profusion of monarch butterflies on Cushing Island's preserved land. Unfortunately, this fall has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of these beautiful visitors. Derrick Jackson of the *Boston Globe* is one of many authors of recent articles that offer explanations for this very disturbing phenomenon. He writes:

But today, an assault awaits the butterfly at almost every stop. Its only food, milkweed, has disappeared as Midwestern grasslands become food and biofuel farmland, and agricultural fields are essentially sterilized for corn and soybean crops that are genetically modified to resist pesticides. Suburban development and the increasingly extreme weather accompanying climate change, particularly heat and drought, are taking a further toll. From Mattapan to Minnesota and up through Maine and Canada, scientists and volunteers are recording record low numbers of the butterfly. In Mexico, the government has taken major steps to curb large-scale logging of monarch habitat in pine and fir forests west of Mexico City. But a study released last month by monarch researchers and the World Wildlife Fund found that small-scale logging is still continuing at alarming rates.

"Climate change, pesticides, and habitat fragmentation and loss are a pretty devastating combo," said Massachusetts Audubon President Henry Tepper.



(from *Boston Globe*)

"The question is what is the exact combination?"

The combo adds up to a wintering monarch population that has crashed from an average of 350 million to 60 million. They congregate in one forest in Mexico. Their colonies once occupied up to 52 acres but are now down to 2.94 acres, according to the Mexican government and a consortium of environmental groups, including the WWF. Monarch researchers fear that if the acreage falls below 2.5, it may be difficult for the butterfly to recover to previous populations. As longtime monarch researcher Lincoln Brower of Sweet Briar College in Virginia told National Public Radio, "at some point the straw is going to break the camel's back."



of lobster trap bycatch linked to other Maine island schools and Sitka, Alaska, through the Island Institute (Weatherblur website). The event was organized by Erno Bonebakker, a Chebeague Island resident and Oceanside Conservation Trust director.



through the Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative. The Chebeague event was organized with the students in grades 3-5 at the island school and fit into their current curriculum work which involves studies

LOOKING FOR A good book FOR THE Holidays?

Our Board Members Recommend...



Jess Burton

Owl Moon by Jane Yolen

A girl and her father go owling on a moonlit winter night near the farm where they live. They trudge through snow "whiter than the milk in a cereal bowl;" here and there, hidden in ink-blue shadows, a fox, raccoon, field mouse, and deer watch them pass. An air of expectancy builds as Pa

imitates the Great Horned Owl's call once without answer, then again. From out of the darkness "an echo came threading its way through the trees." Ages 2-6.

Chris McDuffie

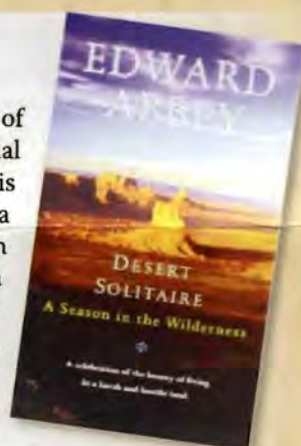
One Morning in Maine and **Time of Wonder** by Robert McCloskey

I use any excuse to re-read these classics. They are love poems about summers in Maine for children of any age. The spell of rain, gulls, a foggy morning, the excitement of sailing, the quiet of the night, the sudden terror of a hurricane, and the peace of a Maine island are shown in poetic language and vibrant, evocative pictures in **Time of Wonder**. A Caldecott Honor Book, **One Morning in Maine** tells the story of a very special day in Sal's life.



Mike Beaudoin

I recommend Edward Abbey, one of the most prominent and influential nature writers of our time. Two of his classics are **Desert Solitaire** (1968), a narrative of his adventures in the Utah desert, and **The Monkey Wrench Gang** (1975), a novel. He is regarded as somewhat of a nature anarchist, railing against anti-conservation trends in America and poetically inspiring readers to have a greater appreciation for nature.

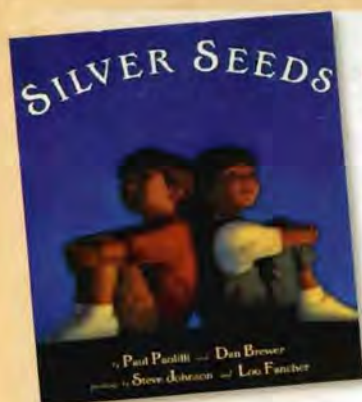


Bob Bittenbender

Winter World by Bernd Heinrich

My favorite book is Bernd Heinrich's **Winter World**. From flying squirrels to grizzly bears, and from torpid turtles to insects with antifreeze, the animal kingdom relies on some staggering evolutionary innovations to survive winter.

Unlike their human counterparts, who must alter the environment to accommodate physical limitations, animals are adaptable to an amazing range of conditions. The thread of the book follows the Golden-crowned Kinglet along with many other creatures through the harsh Maine winter.



John Spencer

Silver Seeds by Paul Paolilli

Silver Seeds is a poetry collection for children by Paul Paolilli and Dan Brewer containing acrostic poems with lovely illustrations. Because of the brevity of the poems, their success lies in the metaphor, and the authors come up with

some perfect matches: Stars are "Silver seeds/ Tossed in the air/ And planted in the sky,/ Reaching out of the darkness/ Sprouting wonder." The moon a "Marvelous melon, whole/ Or sliced,/ Offering sweet flavor to the/ Night." I recommend it because it has a nice combination of imagination, nature, and education. The wonder that the natural world holds for children is brought to glowing life in this picture book. Good for ages 5-9.

Chris Stevenson

Closer to the Ground by Dylan Tomine

This is an interesting nonfiction book chronicling the experiences of a young family living in the Pacific Northwest during the four seasons as they attempt to live primarily off the natural resources around them. It is well-written and a great reminder of all there is to utilize for day-to-day living in the natural world just outside our door.





Eric Handley

Bringing Nature Home
by Douglas Tallamy

I liked the clear explanations of the necessity of having native plants in our landscape and the interaction of birds and insects with native plants. Tallamy writes about the unbreakable link between native plant species and native wildlife — native insects

cannot, or will not, eat alien plants. When native plants disappear, the insects disappear, impoverishing the food source for birds and other animals. In many parts of the world, habitat destruction has been so extensive that local wildlife is in crisis and may be headed toward extinction. **Bringing Nature Home** has sparked a national conversation about the link between healthy local ecosystems and human well-being. By acting on Douglas Tallamy's practical recommendations, everyone can make a difference.

Harry Pringle

Four Wings and a Prayer: Caught in the Mystery of the Monarch Butterfly by Sue Halpern

This book is probably best for young adults and older readers. It's a wonderful description of the monarch migration to Mexico, told by a journalist through her experiences in the United States and Mexico working with experts to follow and document the migration. Substitute an island in Casco Bay for her home in New York and it becomes both personal and an easy, enjoyable read. It is poignant as well, given the discussion of the environmental threats the migration faces and the fact that this summer monarchs have been extremely scarce in Maine and elsewhere.

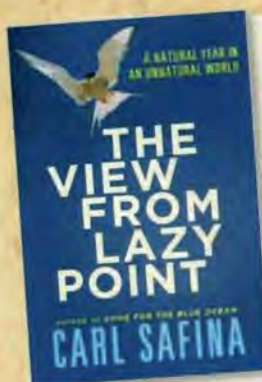


Mike Johnson

Sedges of Maine: A Field Guide to Cyperaceae by Matt Arsenault, Glen Mittlehauser, Don Cameron, Alison Dribble, Arthur Haines, Sally Rooney and Jill Weber

This recent comprehensive guide to Maine's sedges, coauthored by one of my colleagues at Stantec, is

a must have for amateur and professional botanists alike. It is filled with wonderful photos of each species along with key identifying features, and notes on distribution and habitat.



Jeanne Culnick

The View From Lazy Point by Carl Safina

Safina brilliantly chronicles the natural world of his northeastern seaside home over the course of a year and intersperses stories from far flung areas of the globe. His beautiful writing and detailed observations show the interconnectedness between the local and the global. One of my favorite reads!

Roger Berle

Sea Room: An Island Life in the Hebrides by Adam Nicolson

My recommendation is this historical perspective of life on the Shiant Islands in the Outer Hebrides over many centuries; it is erudite, exhaustive, in-depth, and personal. In **Sea Room**, Nicolson describes and relives his love affair with the three tiny islands and their strange and colorful history in passionate, keenly precise prose—sharing with us the greatest gift an island bestows on its inhabitants: a deep engagement with the natural world.



Priscilla Doucette

Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver

Kingsolver's novel is a suspenseful narrative that traces the unforeseen impact of global concerns on the ordinary citizens of a rural community. With the miraculous appearance of a colony of migrating monarch butterflies on a mountain in Tennessee, nothing is on firm ground.

Jane Laughlin

Fireflies by Megan E. Bryant & Carol Schwartz

Full of scientific facts, colorful art work, and tips on how to make our yard firefly-friendly, **Fireflies** delighted my grandson Orion last summer. This book is part of the Penguin Young Readers series which includes titles such as **Butterflies**, **Honeybees**, **Bats**, and **Bug Out!** Just right for ages 5-8.



ANNUAL MEETING 2013

Carolyn Walker, Cliff Island resident and professional horticulturalist, gave the keynote address at Oceanside Conservation Trust's Annual Meeting, held on Thursday, July 25, at the Cliff Island Association Hall. She described the largely successful and on-going efforts to eradicate invasive species on Cliff Island.

According to the National Invasive Species Council, an invasive plant is "an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm." Carolyn Walker's working definition of an invasive plant is "a non-native plant that spreads on Cliff Island in a way that causes environmental harm."

On Cliff Island, residents are not trying to remove all non-native plants; they are focusing on organic removal of nine plants which originated in Asia and Europe and which have become invasive in the past twenty-five years:

- jimsonweed/datura
- purple loosestrife
- multiflora rose
- Japanese barberry [deer ticks are 67% higher in barberry infested areas]
- Japanese knotweed
- shrub honeysuckle [out of control on Cliff Island; berries are not good for birds – pure sugar, no lipids or fats]
- Norway maple
- phragmites/common reed
- bittersweet [greatest single threat to Cliff Island]



Carolyn Walker and volunteers are gathering community support through working with the school, hosting volunteer days, offering free gardening advice and discounted plants, organizing fun events, planting gardens, and providing literature, lectures, and displays designed to educate the islanders about the environmental harms caused by invasive species.

Walker emphasizes that the native ecosystem is beautiful and essential. "Biodiversity is our life support system; without it we can't survive." Cliff Islanders realize they probably can't save the world, but maybe they can rescue their own island.

Following Walker's talk, Bob Bittenbender, Oceanside director and invasives species expert, gave a description of bay-wide efforts to contain and control invasive species. Bittenbender presented an Invasive Species Eradication Award to the people of Cliff Island.

Matt Fischel, 2013 Invasive Species Coordinator for Cliff Island ACE, presented samples of Cliff Island invasive species and led a tour of specific areas of invasive plant eradication efforts, including a Japanese knotweed project, a phragmites project, three nearby native species demonstration gardens and a viewing of the Turnaround Project.



BEAVER DAM

Island children watch as outwash flows from a removed beaver dam on the western end of Fowler's Beach on Long Island. OCT regularly monitors this area and the dam removal to prevent flooding of adjacent properties.





More than twenty-five members of the newly formed Casco Bay Invasive Species Network [CBISN] met on August 12 at the Casco Bay Lines conference room to discuss the management of invasive plant species. The workshop included a field trip to the Fort Allen Trail to examine terrestrial invasive plants and discuss control methods. The workshop was organized by Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative.

OCEANSIDE CONSERVATION TRUST OF CASCO BAY

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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. 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
Memorial Woods	Little Diamond Island	Little Diamond Island Association	09/2006	.5 acres
Hagge Woods	Little Diamond Island	OCT	2012	2.5 acres

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

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

Membership Dues: \$20.00

Additional Gift: _____

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Membership is renewable at any time before the OCT annual meeting. Please check the four-digit number directly following your name on the address label; the number indicates the year your most recent membership dues were received if applicable. Your contributions are tax deductible.

Thank You!

www.oceansideconservationtrust.org

Check out our new website!

Printed on recycled paper

*Since 1982, approximately 88 acres
on Casco Bay Islands have been
permanently protected.
Oceanside Conservation Trust
of Casco Bay welcomes
your support.*

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