

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, 2014

Building on Strong Foundations

2014 has been a busy and eventful year for Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay with new land acquisitions, new conservation easements, and several fruitful collaborations as we work diligently to meet and surpass Land Trust Alliance standards and practices. One of our exciting new directions is the establishment of an annual newsletter, mailed late in the year. Publishing one newsletter, instead of our usual two, will conserve

both human and material resources and encourage us to further develop and promote our website. We invite members to stay current with OCT's activities by visiting **oceansideconservationtrust.org**, and to reflect on OCT's progress and achievements in our annual newsletter.

Reflecting on 2014's Priorities

Organizing for additional land acquisitions and easements

- ✓ Gardiner Parcel on Cliff Island conservation easement complete
- ✓ new transaction begun with Land Associates of Cliff Island [LACI]
- ✓ new transaction begun with Peaks Island Land Preserve

Stewarding our properties

- ✓ all properties monitored in May
- ✓ Long Island invasive plant work at Wreck Cove
- ✓ removal of fallen trees from abutter's property on Little Diamond
- ✓ Island survey work to reset boundary markers on Cliff and Peaks

Documenting compliance with policies and practices

- ✓ completion of review of all Oceanside policies
- ✓ Wreck Cove Management Plan approved
- ✓ Daveis Sanctuary, Skillings Woods, & Echo Pond Management Plan approved
- ✓ monitoring reports on all properties reviewed, discussed, and unanimously approved

Building additional outreach and educational efforts

- ✓ annual meeting presentation by MCHT and tour of CICC property
- ✓ participation in Casco Bay Invasive Species Network [CBISN]
- ✓ annual newsletter
- ✓ annual winter birding expedition
- ✓ year 2 of Peaks Island School project

Working toward Land Trust Alliance Accreditation

- ✓ application completed and submitted

Continuing the development and efficacy of Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative

- ✓ workshop on bird habitats
- ✓ workshop with Peter Forbes

Three Days in May

Day 1 Peaks Island



Daveis Sanctuary



Skillings Woods to Echo Pond



Battery Steele

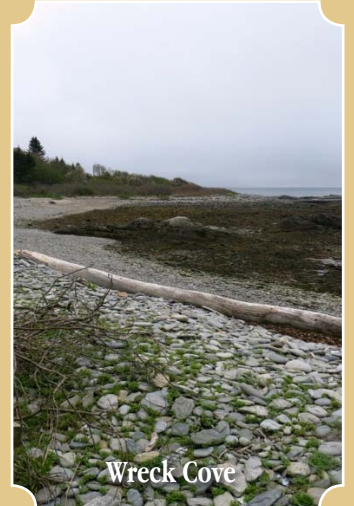
Day 2 Little Diamond & Long Island



Hagge Woods



Fowler's Beach



Wreck Cove



Memorial Woods

Monitoring all 14 of OCT's property responsibilities

Day 3 College Island & Cliff Island



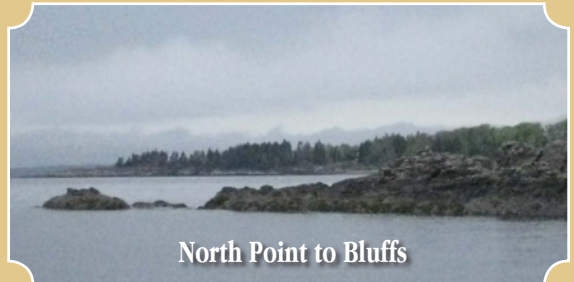
College Island



ACE Ballfield



Griffin's Cove



North Point to Bluffs

The Gardiner Parcel

Located along the southeasterly shore of Cliff Island, the Gardiner parcel offers a beautiful view of the channel between Cliff and Jewell islands. Some years ago the land was donated by David Gardiner to Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics, Conservation and Education (ACE). Oceanside now holds a conservation easement on it. This easement is a step toward more conserved land in the interior of Cliff Island.

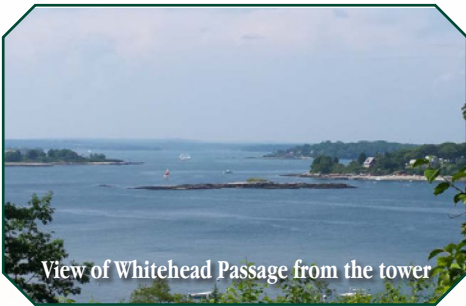


Abutting a shingle beach, this small parcel is covered with ferns and a modest scattering of red spruce. These hardy trees have so far survived the massive blow downs that have significantly changed the surrounding landscape.

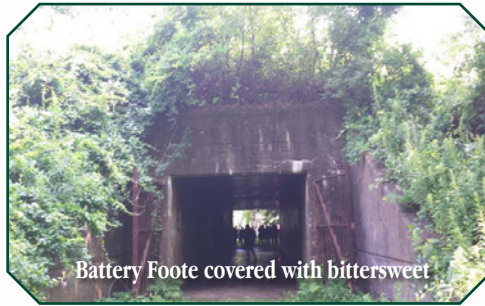
Oceanside Conservations Trust's conservation easement allows low-impact recreation such as hiking, birding, and enjoying the beautiful views.

Annual Meeting on Cushings Island

Oceanside Conservation Trust of Casco Bay's thirty-second Annual Meeting was on Cushings Island on August 4, hosted by Cushings Islander and OCT Board member John Spencer. The theme of the meeting was stewardship, a core capability and strategic priority of OCT.



View of Whitehead Passage from the tower



Battery Foote covered with bittersweet



Along the trail

The meeting combined a tour of conserved land on Cushings led by John Spencer, who is also the current President of Cushings Island Conservation Corporation (CICC), with a keynote address by Jane Arbuckle, Director of Stewardship with the Maine Coast Heritage Trust (MCHT).

John's tour showed how CICC is managing about 142 acres that include wetlands, woodlots, open fields and overgrown pasture. Cushings Island has a significant amount of invasive plants, and the tour highlighted how CICC is managing areas recently cleared of honeysuckle and bittersweet. The tour also stopped at the evergreen woodlot damaged by a severe winter storm in February 2010 with a discussion on how CICC is monitoring the reforestation process. John emphasized the importance of having even a simple land management plan, and how lucky Cushings is to have a group of active islanders who volunteer to help maintain restored areas. (For more on stewardship on Cushings, read John's article *Monarch Butterflies in Migration* in the newsletter archive located at oceansideconservationtrust.org)

Jane Arbuckle's address summarized the much larger-scale efforts of MCHT to steward more than 150 conservation easements and more than 50 preserves along the Maine coast. She reviewed the many factors that go into MCHT's stewardship program. She noted that much of that effort depends upon effective outreach to communities, dealing not only with how best to manage the land but also how to maintain relationships with the people who use or are neighbors of protected areas.

Sunny weather and a chance for OCT members to revisit Cushings resulted in a strong turnout – close to 100, with representation from all the neighboring islands in Casco Bay where OCT has properties. OCT president Roger Berle led the business meeting where he reinforced John's and Jane's stewardship messages. Work similar to that on Cushings and on MCHT properties is being done successfully on other islands as well.



Battery Foote makes a perfect amphitheater



At the end of a long walk, the Spencer cottage



"Battery Bittersweet"



Our host and leader, John Spencer



Relaxing in the shade of a chestnut tree



Board members speak with Matt Altieri from CBISN

Thanks to Roger's leadership, OCT resources are being leveraged and expanded through the Southern Maine Conservation Collaborative. While OCT is a leader in local conservation efforts, Roger reminded everyone about the importance of the generous support OCT has had from those who want to see conserved lands cared for appropriately.

Seeing the work done on Cushings, listening to Jane Arbuckle, great weather, and talking to so many from our island communities made for a successful meeting. As four boat trips took all back home, OCT hoped the message on conservation will spread and take even deeper root as we collectively deal with the future of our unique part of the world.



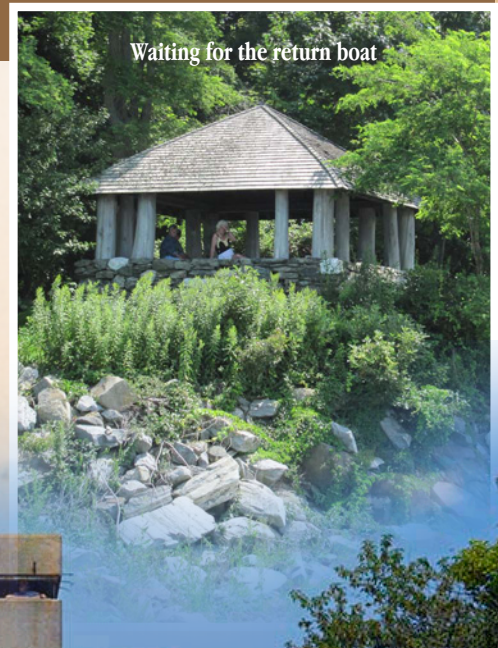
Observation Tower



The business meeting



The guest speaker, Jane Arbuckle



Waiting for the return boat



The view from the trail to the boat

Approaching the tower at Whitehead

Oceanside's Financial Collaboration

Through the generosity of Oceanside's membership and healthy returns over the past several years on its investments, Oceanside is able to help other organizations preserve land in Casco Bay, and to maintain sufficient funds to serve as good stewards for its land interests (both in fee and in easement), as well as to protect and defend these assets from any future legal challenges. From time to time, Oceanside utilizes these reserves to provide financial support to other organizations' conservation efforts. By collaborating with other organizations on efforts that are consistent with Oceanside's organizational mission, Oceanside can help achieve goals that would be unreachable by any local land trust acting alone.



Clapboard Island

of wooded, shorefront land and lovely trails newly preserved in perpetuity by Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Our modest donation may have been a drop in the bucket of a \$1,600,000 campaign, but we feel good about kicking in on a neighboring effort.

In April we made a contribution to the Francis Small Heritage Trust to help finance its legal fees in challenging a ruling by the Town of Limington that the tiny, all-volunteer land trust was not entitled to a property tax exemption as a "benevolent and charitable institution." Over the years, the FSHT has saved from development fourteen hundred acres amid the Sawyer Mountain Range, and Limington believed it should be permitted to tax FSHT on its holdings. The FSHT appealed the town's decision all the way up to Maine's highest court. We are happy to report that in August Maine's Supreme Court issued a landmark decision in the case, ruling that land conservation is indeed a charitable purpose and that typical land trusts in Maine are eligible for property tax exemptions on their holdings. The ruling is a significant victory for land trusts and land conservation efforts all over the state.

Thank you for your continued support of Oceanside.

Chris Stevenson, OCT Treasurer



Ice Pond

Three exciting examples of such collaborative work have already occurred this year.

Earlier this year, we supported the Peaks Island Land Preserve's purchase of the island's ice pond, which also serves as a fire pond for the northeast portion of the island. The parcel has now been purchased and PILP awaits an engineering study to determine the need to rebuild the dam creating the pond. The Portland Land Bank has also pitched in with significant support.

We made a contribution to the Maine Coast Heritage Trust Clapboard Island preservation campaign. Clapboard Island, just off the Falmouth shore, now has fifteen acres

GREAT NEWS for all Maine Land Trusts

Maine Coast Heritage Trust reported in August on the following Maine Supreme Court decision:

"It is time to directly declare that a legitimate land trust, such as this one (The Francis Small Heritage Trust), which meets the statutory and case law requirements, is a benevolent and charitable institution exempt from local property taxes. **The direct and indirect value of open space preservation particularly when, in appropriate cases, it is coupled with access for a wide variety of recreational activity is within any modern definition of a charitable institution.** In addition to the ecological and environmental benefit of land preservation there are numerous physical, psychological and, for some, even spiritual benefits to having access to undeveloped land."

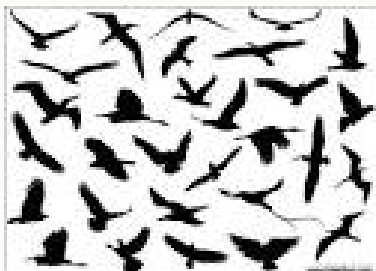


HONORING the MEMORY of AJ ALVES

Following the death of AJ Alves, Peaks Island member of the Oceanside board, OCT wished to recognize his wonderful friendship, personality, and longtime support of land conservation efforts on the islands and for the work of OCT in particular. The board unanimously authorized the purchase of a granite bench to be placed at Daveis Cove. AJ took informal care of the cove for years before it was acquired by OCT, and his love for that special place will now be memorialized.



SAVE the DATE



OCT's 8th Annual Winter Birding Trip

Saturday March 14, 2015 (no rain/snow date)

Check our website as the date approaches!
oceansideconservationtrust.org

OCEANSIDE CONSERVATION TRUST OF CASCO BAY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-2014

Roger Berle, President.....	781-5331 766-2827 <i>Cliff Island</i>
Christine McDuffie, Vice President..	829-3231 766-5277 <i>Long Island</i>
Jane Laughlin, Secretary.....	799-9285 766-2570 <i>Great Diamond Island</i>
Christopher Stevenson, Treasurer.....	772-1941 <i>Cape Elizabeth</i>
Mike Beaudoin.....	774-0522 766-3028 <i>Cliff Island</i>
Bob Bittenbender.....	892-3818 <i>Windham</i>
Erno Bonebakker.....	871-0048 615-6664 <i>Chebeague Island</i>
Priscilla Doucette.....	772-5705 <i>Little Diamond Island</i>
Jeanne Gulnick.....	766-2601 <i>Peaks Island</i>
Eric Handley	899-0027 <i>Portland</i>
Michael Johnson.....	232-5778 <i>Long Island</i>
Harry R. Pringle.....	774-0437 766-3326 <i>Little Diamond Island</i>
John Spencer.....	617-680-0012 766-2680 <i>Cushing Island</i>

ADVISORY BOARD:

Tom Bergh.....	766-2419 <i>Peaks Island</i>
Brenda Buchanan.....	854-5824 <i>Westbrook</i>
Mark Greene.....	766-4440 <i>Long Island</i>
Eliza Cope Nolan.....	772-5024 <i>Cushing Island</i>
John Whitman.....	766-2211 <i>Peaks Island</i>

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
Memorial Woods	Little Diamond Island	Little Diamond Island Association	09/2006	.5 acres
Hagge Woods	Little Diamond Island	OCT	2012	2.5 acres
Gardiner Parcel	Cliff Island	Cliff Island Corporation for Athletics & Conservation Education	2014	.3 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

217 COMMERCIAL STREET, SUITE 302 | PORTLAND, ME 04101

OceansideConservationTrust@gmail.com | Tel. 207-699-2989

www.oceansideconservationtrust.org

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

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.*

217 COMMERCIAL STREET, SUITE 302
Portland, ME 04101

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OF CASCO BAY

