



# The Heron

SPRING-SUMMER 2010

*The Newsletter of the Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc. • [www.mattlandtrust.org](http://www.mattlandtrust.org) • E-mail: [info@mattlandtrust.org](mailto:info@mattlandtrust.org)*

## *The MLT's Early Years*

The Mattapoissett Land Trust has come a long way from its modest beginnings in 1974 and in this edition of the newsletter we take a look at its origins with the help of its first president George Mock and Brad Hathaway, who co-founded the MLT along with Dave Hewitt and his wife Norma.

By DON CUDDY

In the 1970's George Mock was known as a birdwatcher. "That's what attracted Dave Hewitt's attention," he said. "Dave, and his wife Norma, were the moving force in getting this thing started." He was referring to the Mattapoissett Land Trust which was founded in 1974 by a small group of people concerned about the pace of development in town and its impact upon the land.

After George was recruited by the Hewitts he subsequently became the MLT's first president.

"I'd never heard of land trusts before this and when we went around town to see what support we might get, other people were equally uninformed," he said.

But there was sufficient response to create an organization and incorporate although its arrival was not greeted with universal acclaim. "The assessors were against it," he said. "They didn't want any land taken off the tax rolls and they made us file for abatements every year for about ten years." The taxmen need not have worried however.

"There was no rush of acreage to us," George recalls. "The Munro property was one of the first but otherwise

it was so slow that one got a bit discouraged. That's why today I am really amazed to see the acquisitions that Gary Johnson has brought about. And the donations he has been able to solicit and receive."

Brad Hathaway, Bim Randolph and Margareta Pothier were some of the original board members, George said, along with Dave Hewitt.

"Dave came to me and asked if it was time to start a land trust in Mattapoissett," said Brad Hathaway. "I think we could both see into the future and we realized what could happen if large blocks of land weren't preserved."



*The Munro property on Mattapoissett Harbor*

Ruth Munro who lived on Water St. and owned the parcel on the harbor opposite her house contacted Dave Hewitt around this time because the town was seeking to buy her land for use as additional wharf parking. Fortunately for us all, Ruth wanted to see the land preserved in its natural state. "That was another reason why we formed the Land Trust so we could hold that land and keep it forever," Brad said.

Getting things started proved difficult however, he said. "We had no money. Attracting members was not easy and we got no support from the town".

Like George, Brad has no fond memories of his dealings with the assessors. "We had to file for abatements every year even though we told them the land was protected forever. I felt it was like a punishment."

The first piece of land given to the MLT, off Long Plain Rd., was donated by Dr. Woodcock and this was followed soon after by the Munro parcel.

"Once we incorporated we had to have a board of directors," said Brad. "It was difficult to get any of the old timers from town to serve. There was Dave and his wife,

Priscilla and I and Vi Jones from Ned's Point Rd. who was the treasurer for many years. Isabella Watts was there too. But it was difficult to unite the town behind the idea."

However the Hewitts were not discouraged and went into the schools every year to carry the message about the importance of land preservation. In addition they were responsible for having the Audubon Society come to Mattapoissett schools to present programs.

"I hope some day the Land Trust will establish something to honor him, and his wife, for their foresight," Brad said. "Nowadays we have to buy properties but in the beginning the land we had was given to us, which was really nice."

The membership might have been less than fifty people in the early years but the people who were involved were totally committed.

"George Mock and his son, George III were stalwarts," Brad said. "Don Marvin was not on the Land Trust but he worked so hard to have the Conservation Commission accepted. Can you imagine having to go to Town Meeting year after year to have the ConCom set up under state law?"

While the MLT board can be proud of its history, as in any other endeavor, there have been some disagreements along the way. Particularly difficult was the controversy surrounding the decision to sell the waterfront home of Edith Shoolman which she bequeathed to the MLT. The decision was approved on a 7-5 vote with Brad adamantly opposed. However, he has now come to view it in a different light. "I think Gary's vision was tremendous," he said, noting that the proceeds from the sale of the house were instrumental in the acquisition of the Walega-Livingstone preserve on Brandt Island Cove.

Brad still walks the woodlands and trails almost



*The Munro property in winter*

every day and maintains a running total of the miles. he has covered (19,000) since he began keeping track twenty years ago.

"Just yesterday I came to a beautiful spot behind the high school with an open area, a stream and a little waterfall. I closed my eyes and I heard nothing but the stream. It was beautiful. I hope that this place can become part of the trail when we gain access to the Tinkham Forest on the old Indian Trail."

Looking ahead, he believes that the struggle to protect open space must continue but is optimistic. "I think more and more people are getting involved now that they can see more clearly the need to protect what we have," he said.

## *Salty Gets Festive*

You may have noticed that Salty the Seahorse who lives on the Mattapoissett Land Trust's Dunseith Gardens property embraced the holiday spirit this year with a new Santa hat.

He looked great and delighted young and old Mattapoissett residents alike.

We hope that his 'Happy Holidays from the Mattapoissett Land Trust' message also reminded people about the Land Trust's role in the community and encour-



aged them to enjoy this exceptional parcel of land.

A very special team of people pulled together to make this fun holiday spectacle possible. Ron and Silvia White at Eastern Sails and Canvas donated their time to make the hat. Kenny and Todd Pacheco at Village Signs measured Salty's head and helped design the hat and the team at Brownell System's donated their time and the use of the crane to secure the hat in place.

Thanks to everyone for adding a little extra holiday cheer!



## Scholarship by the Salty Sea

by Ellen P. Flynn, MLT

### Chairman of Education Committee

"All of us have in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean, and therefore, we have salt in our blood, in our sweat, in our tears. We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea—whether it is to sail or to watch it—we are going back from whence we came".

John F. Kennedy

The Mattapoisett Land Trust is honored to announce the Blanche B. Perry Scholarship of \$1000.00 this year. Blanche B. Perry was a motivating force in establishing the criteria and helping to identify the purpose and requirements to become a candidate for the scholarship. While volunteering her time with the education committee; it was through her expertise, wisdom and knowledge that the committee was able to create forms for the document of the new scholarship. After her death, in October 2009, the board voted to name the scholarship in her honor. As President of the Land Trust, Gary Johnson said, "She will never be forgotten by those who had the good fortune to work with her in pursuit of a mission that she valued. Mattapoisett, and the world, were better and richer because of her 80 years"

Aside from her work with Land Trust, Blanche volunteered and dedicated her time for over 30 years to education, working in school systems and serving on the Old Colony Regional Vocational School Committee, the Old Rochester Regional School Committee, and the Scholarship Education Fund of the Mattapoisett Woman's Club.

The scholarship is made available through the Edith Glick Shoolman fund, a bequest left to The Mattapoisett Land Trust to provide support for children in the community. The Award is offered to a resident senior graduating by June 2010, from secondary school pursuing an education in environmental studies or a related field. Covering a wide perspective in the area of environmental studies, and without specializing, a high school student will be able to meet the scholarship requirements, even if his or her interests, include math, technology, engineering, and the

sciences, yet not limited to those specific fields of pursuit. The scholarship is consistent with the Mattapoisett Land Trust mission of preserving land in order to enrich the quality of life for present and future generations of Mattapoisett residents and visitors and of furthering environmental education in the community. Along with the application a personal statement about career goals as they relate to the mission of the MLT, is required. An authorized community service form documenting a minimum of twenty hours of community services needs to be completed and letters of recommendation along

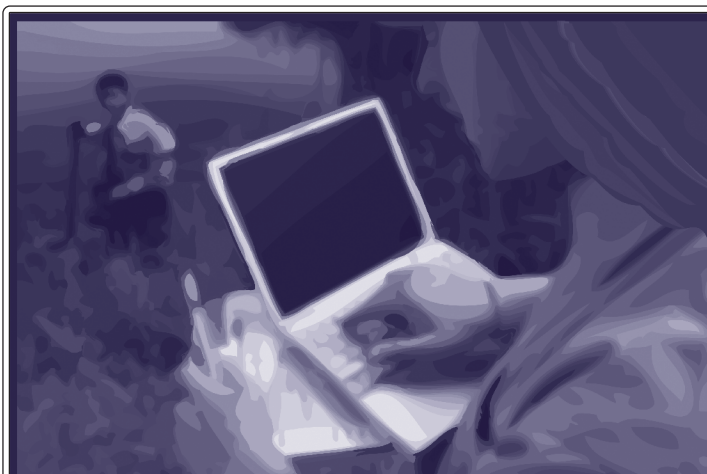
with an official transcript including credits and class rank must be submitted.

Applicants will be assessed according to academic achievement, pursuit of education in the environmental studies or a related field, personal statement, professional and personal references, community service, and financial need. Preference will be given to individuals who are members of the MLT or whose parents or grandparents are members of the MLT. The recipient will be selected by May 10th and will be notified by mail. The recipient will be recognized at his or her school's awards ceremony. The award of \$1,000.00 will be disbursed after the student submits a college

transcript documenting successful completion of his or her first semester in college to the President of the MLT.

Since the average student debt loan is typically \$20,000.00, the Mattapoisett Land Trust is very pleased to offer a young person some financial assistance with his or her college expenses, through this newly formed Blanche B. Perry Scholarship. As Kennedy's quote talks of blood, sweat, and tears, we all know those exact terms are inclusive during and continued on through one's college career. So as many of Mattapoisett's young people know the Land Trust is located just at the edge of the "Salty" sea, and maintains its support of educational endeavors. The Scholarship is available to qualified Mattapoisett residents, and the Land Trust looks forward to honoring the recipient.

Peace,  
Ellen P. Flynn  
Mattapoisett, MA 02739  
508-758-1312  
elflynn@vassar.edu



The Mattapoisett Land Trust

**Blanche B. Perry Scholarship**  
for a resident graduating from secondary school  
pursuing an education in environmental studies  
or a related field.

## The Dexter Mill at Tub Mill Brook

by Paul Osenkowski

The mill race and waterfall that is seen on the north side of Route 6 as you leave the center of Mattapoisett showcases a part of the history of Mattapoisett's ship building era. The beautiful field and running brook are actually the remnants of the old barrel stave mill that supplied parts for tubs and barrels that were used on some of the many ships and boats that were built here in Mat-



tapoisett since the late 1700s to the mid 1800's.

Industries like ship building would naturally stimulate the need for related

industries and the barrels were something that would be needed to carry the provisions for the sailors who did the whaling out of New Bedford. The property was purchased in 1999 by the Land Trust for \$50,000 by means of a fund raiser.

The old wooden structure that was the mill stood astride the brook. The stone foundation of the building is what can be seen by passers-by.



On the north side of the earthen dam a pond was created which supplied power to the turbine. The water ran directly through the building in a sluiceway and turned the blades of the turbine. The original turbine was sal-

vaged from the bottom of the waterfall in 2007 when the Land Trust, with the help of Wes Bowman, reconstructed the dam for the second time in three years as a result of flash flooding. It sits on the east side of the brook and can be examined by all that are interested.

I'm told that during the winter many children in the area skated on the pond and delighted in bonfires all around it. In some of the old photographs, children can be seen fishing from the edge of the dam in the warmer weather.

The stump of the "Old Dexter Elm Tree" is still present and can be seen from the sidewalk as you pass the park and look down into the brook. The elm tree that is standing just to the west of the old stump is most likely an "offspring" of the original tree.

The Tub Mill Brook flows under Route 6 and then into Eel Pond. Years ago it was an area of great eel hunting and even the Native Americans used to fish it for eels. The Land Trust hopes to do more restoration on the north side of the dam in the future to improve the water quality and further strengthen the dam itself.

The Tub Mill Park is only one of the parks and preserves that we maintain for the enjoyment of the residents of Mattapoisett and their guests. Access to the park can be gained by way of Mendell Road just to the west of the park. Parking is located across from the Town Garage on Mendell Road. Come and visit it and try to envision the structure that stood there for so many years and was a part of the heyday of ship building in Mattapoisett.

## Community Garden Project

### Local resident to dedicate land for public use

Two individuals have taken the lead on developing a Community Garden at Florence Martocci's property. There will likely be 20 plots available. For more information contact:

Jim Stowe 508 758-4892,  
jimstowe@jstowe.com

## A Special Request...

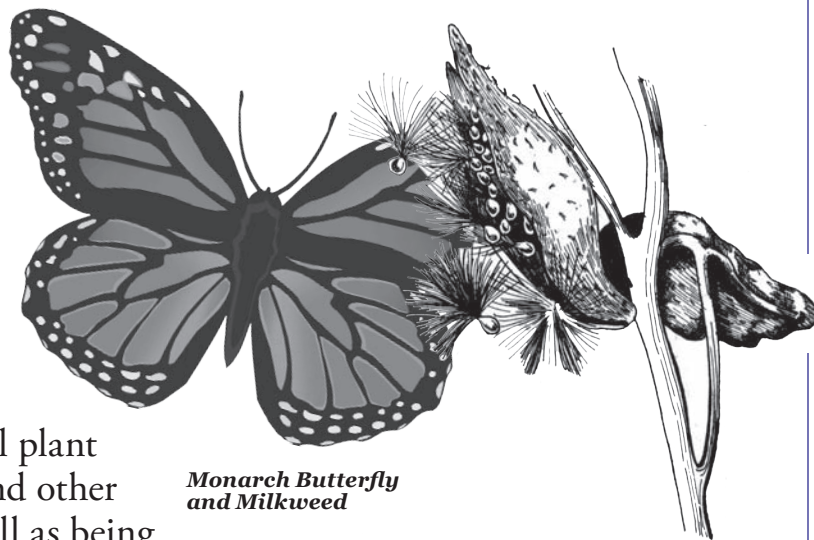
In order to provide you with timely information on upcoming MLT events, the MLT is trying to assemble a database of members' e-mail addresses. You can provide us your e-mail address by simply heading to our website ([www.mattlandtrust.org](http://www.mattlandtrust.org)), clicking "Contact Us", and entering your e-mail address. We really appreciate it! (And we promise to maintain the privacy of your information, e-mailing you only with MLT updates!)

# Kids' Corner

## Monarchs, Milkweed, and Black Swallowwort

The second grade students at Center School have a science project consisting of raising monarch caterpillars to be released in the fall as butterflies. Because milkweed has become much less common in recent years, they have asked the MLT to provide some land for growing milkweed.

Milkweed (*Asclepias*), of the dogbane family *Apocynaceae*, is a perennial plant that provides a nectar source for bees and other



*Monarch Butterfly  
and Milkweed*



*Black Swallow Wort*

insects as well as being the only food source for the monarchs. The plant contains a milky fluid and the seed pods contain seed in overlapping rows each with its own silk filament, called pappus, that allow the seed to be blown by the wind.

Unfortunately, in Mattapoisett we have another member of the dogbane family, black swallowwort (*Cynanchum louiseae*), which has similar seed pods but is poisonous to monarchs. You will find black swallowwort as a vine in fields or along fences both in the village and in other parts of town. It can get up to 10 feet long and has clusters of small dark-purple flowers along the stem before the pods are formed.

Please help us try to rid Mattapoisett of the black swallowwort... the monarchs will thank you.

### New Website Needs Your Pics

We are the first to admit that the website we created in 2003 has become a little stale. We have established a new committee to create a new one and in our first meeting we decided that we would like to see more pictures and less text. To this end we would like to ask our members and friends to send us digital photos for use in the new website. The photos can be of people or places, landscapes or close-ups, in winter, spring, summer, or fall. We ask only that they be taken on, or from, one of our properties or Nasketucket Bay State Reservation (which we helped the state acquire). You can submit them by email (if under 2 meg) to [info@mattlandtrust.org](mailto:info@mattlandtrust.org) or send us a CD or DVD. If one, or more, of your photos are used, we will give you credit on the new website and you'll have your choice of an MLT cap or T-shirt.

We know there a lot of secret artists out there. So start rummaging through those .jpeg files to find some "special" photos of Mattapoisett that you'd like to show to the world.



## Who's Watching You?

### Owls of the World

Everyone loves owls! Yet, how many of us have ever seen a live owl up close?

Perhaps you've glimpsed the shadowy form of a Great Horned Owl in the headlights as you've traveled a back road at night. Ever scanned a frozen saltmarsh or farmer's meadow in winter, hoping to find that Arctic hunter, the Snowy Owl? How about a mob of noisy crows circling a white pine tree. Have they found an owl?

Following our Annual Meeting on June 5 we invite you to join naturalist Marcia Wilson and photographer Mark Wilson at 1:00 in sharing their passion for owls!

Who's Watching You? Owls of the World will introduce you to the owls of New England and beyond. Mark and Marcia will share the field marks, signs and naturalist's skills that you can use to find wild owls without disturbing them, while introducing you to six live owls up close. Everyone is treated to a hooting lesson, as well as tips on how to attract and protect owls near you.

Explore the world of owls with two talented naturalists and six lively owls, whose pursuits both near and far make this interactive program fun and educational!

## Vote for Land and Water Protection

Four years ago we successfully campaigned for the adoption of the Community Preservation Act in town. The Act provides state funds for communities that agree to a property tax surcharge to be used for land protection, historical preservation, affordable housing and recreation. Our argument at the time was that the Town's Master Plan had identified protecting the drinking water in the Mattapoisett River valley as one of the most important requirements for the long-term prosperity of the Town. We believed it was best to start setting aside funds for the land acquisitions that seemed inevitable and appropriate in the future.

This year the Community Preservation Committee will bring to Town Meeting (May 10-12) an article to contribute \$325,000 toward the acquisition of 41 acres along Acushnet Road. The acquisition is only part of a much larger project funded through local, state, federal and private sources and coordinated by the Coalition for Buzzards Bay to protect 355 acres in the valley- a significant step toward protecting the drinking water of Mattapoisett as well as of Fairhaven and Marion.

Please raise your hand for land and water protection at Town Meeting this May. Future generations will thank you.

## We would like to hear from you!

Whether your contributions come in the form of tax-deductible financial gifts or through volunteer services, your support matters! Your annual membership contributions support the operating expenses of the MLT. Mowing, inspections, forestry services, trash pick-up, legal and accounting advice are all part of what keeps the organization vital and growing. In addition, whether you are concerned about preserving the scenic beauty of Mattapoisett, maintaining its biodiversity, or fear the degradation of Buzzards Bay waters from septic systems and chemical run-off, there are many ways you can volunteer your time and services, allowing for the enjoyment and education of future generations. You can check out some of these opportunities on our website, [mattlandtrust.org](http://mattlandtrust.org), or contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Jenny Mello at 774-377-3305.

To become a member of the MLT, renew your membership, or learn more about upcoming events, check out our website: [mattlandtrust.org](http://mattlandtrust.org), or e-mail us at [info@mattlandtrust.org](mailto:info@mattlandtrust.org). We would like to hear from you and welcome any suggestions or comments!

## Discovering Vernal Pools

MLT presents a talk and field trip to Grace Pond



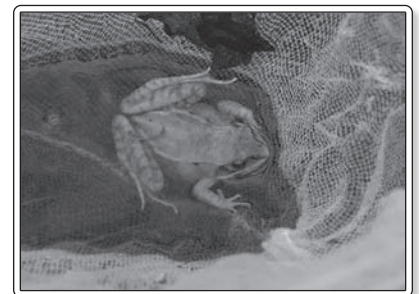
*Wood Frog egg masses*

On March 24, at the Mattapoisett Free Library, Elizabeth Leidhold gave a presentation on what makes a vernal pool. She introduced us to the species living or breeding in the pool and described what their presence means toward official certification as a vernal pool by the state.

The following Saturday, March 27, Liz lead a field trip to MLT's Grace Pond. We were shown how to collect information on the pond, crea-

tures living in it, and on the results of breeding activity. The information was entered on forms required to request certification of Grace Pond as a vernal pool.

Among our discoveries were a Wood Frog, masses of Wood Frog eggs, and Caddis Fly larvae in their peculiar tubular cases made from bits of debris.



*Red Wood Frog*

## Honor Your Loved Ones

*The following individuals or groups have chosen in the last six months to honor their loved ones through donations to the Mattapoissett Land Trust.*

### In memorial:

#### Thomas A. Damery

Gerald & Cynthia Johnson  
Mattapoissett, MA

#### Jane Towers Gowing

Mr. & Mrs. Sanford Earle  
Venice, FL  
Mrs. Henry A. Gowing  
Loudon, NH  
Joyce S. Marshall  
Stratham, NH  
Lynn Meier  
Fredericksburg, VA

#### Jane & Homer Gowing

Thomas P. Jackivicz, III &  
Pamela D. Pierce  
Mattapoissett, MA  
Mrs. Henry A. Gowing  
Loudon, NH

#### Frances Pernas

Ruth & Dick Cederberg  
Mattapoissett, MA  
Robert M Coquillette  
Lexington, MA  
Brad & Priscilla Hathaway  
Mattapoissett, MA

#### Homer L. Gowing

Bob & Jeanne Bigelow  
Rutland, VT  
Julie & Mark Bodenstab  
West Chester, PA  
Anne Coggins  
Mattapoissett, MA  
Cynthia & Lawrence Glynn  
Topsfield, MA  
Stephen T. Gowing  
Canton, MA  
Carol A. Houghton  
Assonet, MA  
Thelma V. Karr  
Lansdale, PA  
Bob & Sue Nydick  
Ambler, PA  
Judith Pasquill  
Fairhaven, MA  
Victor M. & Rosamond J. Pierce  
Felton, DE  
Elyse & Marc Russman  
Canton, MA  
Michele Stern  
Lansdale, PA

#### Blanche Perry

Brad & Priscilla Hathaway  
Mattapoissett, MA  
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Hudis  
Mattapoissett, MA

#### Duane Ragsdale

Cynthia & Lawrence Glynn  
Topsfield, MA  
Hilda Horne  
Boxborough, MA  
Victor M & Rosamond J. Pierce  
Felton, DE

#### William Sparks III

Margaret M. Murray  
Wrentham, MA

#### Ellie & Potter Trainer

Jennifer & Joe Thompson  
Williamstown, MA

#### Helen Cobey Flynn & Joseph Chester Flynn

Ellen P. Flynn  
Mattapoissett, MA

**Join the Mattapoissett Land Trust! Cut along the dotted line and mail in your support!**

### Membership Application/ Renewal...We only exist with your help!

Name(s)

Mailing Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

E-mail

Seasonal Address (if applicable)

City/State/Zip

#### Membership Categories

☐ Individual \$30

☐ Family \$50

☐ Supporting \$75

☐ Sustaining \$100

☐ Friends of Salty \$5  
(children under 12 years)

☐ Benefactor \$250

☐ Patron \$500

☐ Founder \$1000

☐ Corporate \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to:

**Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc.**

P.O. Box 31

**Mattapoissett, MA 02739**



**Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc.**  
Post Office Box 31 ~ Mattapoissett, MA 02739

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Fairhaven, MA  
Permit No. 39

## *Calendar — Spring and Summer Activities*

### ***Friends of Nasketucket Bay clean-up***

*Apr. 24*

*9:00 a.m.*

*Nasketucket State Reservation, Brandt Island Road*

### ***Earth Day***

*April 22nd*

### ***Mattapoissett Town Meeting***

*May 10 - 12*

*7:00 p.m.*

*Vote on Community Preservation Act article (see page 6)*

### ***Mattapoissett Land Trust Annual Meeting***

*June 5*

*12:00- 1:00 p.m. Pot-luck lunch and annual meeting*

*1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. "Eyes on Owls " (see page 6)*

### ***Harbor Days***

*July 17th and 18th*

THE HERON is published bi-annually by the Mattapoissett Land Trust.

The MLT, formed in 1974, is a non-profit, tax- exempt charitable organization incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its purpose is to preserve open space for the enjoyment of current and future residents of Mattapoissett, as well as to educate the public about the sound use of natural resources, and to work with other organizations having the same goals.

Our membership consists of annual contributors — our primary source of revenue — and a volunteer Board of Directors: Kathy Bohan, Linda Clifford, Don Cuddy, Ellen Flynn, Sandra Hering, Martin Hudis, Luana Josvold, Elizabeth Liedhold, Jenny Mello, Paul Milde, Paul Osenkowski, Charles Radville, Elizabeth Richardson, Johnna Tierney, and Gary P. Johnson, President.

The MLT is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. All contributions are fully tax deductible.

**Mattapoissett Land Trust, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 31**

**Mattapoissett, MA 02739**

**E-mail: [Info@MATTLANDTRUST.ORG](mailto:Info@MATTLANDTRUST.ORG)**