



The Heron

Spring 2007

The Newsletter of the Mattapoisett Land Trust, Inc. • www.mattlandtrust.org • E-mail: info@mattlandtrust.org

A Loaded Gun: Nitrification in Buzzards Bay

By Tom Richardson

I first started fishing and boating on Buzzards Bay in the early 1980s, during visits to my best friend's summer home in Wareham. His dad kept a 17-foot Aquasport moored in a cove near the mouth of the Wareham River, and every day we'd row out to that boat in the family's dinghy, laden with tackle and bristling with rods and excitement. As we slid through the shallows I would always peer over the gunwale to see what creatures might be swimming and creeping among the thick bed of eelgrass that covered the bottom of the cove. Often I would see big blueclaw crabs, which were so numerous that my friend's father could catch a dozen for dinner by simply scooping them up with a long-handled net. There were always grass shrimp and minnows darting about, and once I even spied the snout of a large eel poking out from amid the tangle of olive grass.

Twenty years later the eelgrass in that cove is gone. The mud-and-grass bottom that once provided a home for scallops, crabs and shrimp is now mostly hard-packed sand and gravel. It is flat, featureless and largely devoid of bottom vegetation, save for sea lettuce and blobs of algae.

What happened? The cove was another victim of "nitrogen loading" or "nitrification," one of the most insidious threats facing the coastal environment. Nitrification is the introduction of excess nitrogen in the watershed, mostly through treated wastewater, septic systems, stormwater, fertilizer used on farms, golf courses and lawns, and all types of agriculture, according to Korrin Petersen, staff attorney and advocacy director for The Coalition for Buzzards Bay (CBB). In the case of animal by-products and chemical fertilizers, nitrogen that isn't absorbed by plants and trees seeps into the groundwater and makes its way to the ocean through rivers and streams, growing ever more concentrated along the way. Once it enters the shallow coastal waters, nitrogen fuels the growth of algae, which in turn prevent sunlight from reaching bottom vegetation, such as eelgrass.

Eelgrass plays a critical role in the life cycles of numerous animals. It provides an important nursery for many kinds of marine creatures, from minnows and crabs to seahorses and shellfish. It also traps sediment, eventually forming a soft mud bottom that is rich in food. However, when large amounts of algae in the water prevent sunlight from reaching the grass, it dies or recedes.

But algae is a two-fold threat. When it dies and settles to the bottom, the decomposition process eats up oxygen in the lower portion of the water column. If enough algae are present, large "dead zones" of anoxic water can cause massive die-offs of shellfish and other sedentary bottom creatures. Finfish are forced to move away from the oxygen-depleted zones and into the upper levels of the water column, where temperatures are higher. Here they suffer greater stress from the warm water, making them more vulnerable to disease and predation. Sometimes the fish become trapped, eventually using up the remaining oxygen and dying in large numbers. Such fish kills happen every year along the East Coast, usually during the summer when algae growth is highest and oxygen levels are lowest.

Buzzards Bay is more fortunate than many coastal bays in that it receives thorough flushing and mixing of its waters thanks to its relatively broad mouth, strong winds and the powerful currents of the Cape Cod Canal. Also, its watershed is relatively small – 432 square miles, or about twice the size of the bay itself – compared to some other major waterways along the coast. Consider the plight of Chesapeake Bay, whose watershed (64,000 square miles) is more than 10 times larger than the bay and encompasses 6 states. Chesapeake environmentalists have struggled for many years with nitrogen loading and attendant dead zones, yet progress has been made. In many regards, the nitrogen problem in Buzzards Bay should be easier to solve, given its smaller watershed, but there are no simple solutions when the sources of nitrogen are so varied and widespread.

Many parts of the bay continue to suffer from nutrient overload, especially during the warm months. As a rule, these spots are located in shallow areas near the mouths of creeks, streams and rivers, where nitrogen levels are highest. In Mattapoisett, inner Aucoot Cove suffers from a lack of eelgrass and low

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Nitrification – continued

suspended oxygen each summer caused by algae growth fueled by high levels of nitrogen, much of it emanating from the Marion wastewater treatment plant several miles upstream on Aucoot Creek. Mattapoisett Harbor, especially the area just outside the Mattapoisett River, is another nitrogen “hot spot.”

Many more problem areas exist within Buzzards Bay, including New Bedford Harbor, the Weweantic River, the Wareham River, the Slocums River and the Westport River, but the good news is that groups like the Coalition for Buzzards Bay, the Trustees of Reservations, the Nature Conservancy, the MLT and other local land trusts are working together to help mitigate the problem.

How can we limit the amount of excess nitrogen that enters the watershed? There are many ways, according to naturalist and writer John Page Williams of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), an organization that monitors and works to improve the health of the nation’s largest estuary. One is to encourage the use of eco-friendly farming techniques and land use, such as getting farmers to plant cover crops that “soak up” excess nitrogen in the soil during fall and winter. Getting landowners to create buffer zones of trees and brush along deforested stream and river banks is another way to remove nitrogen, as is getting farmers to reforest marginal cropland, particularly former wetlands, which serve as great natural filters. Since livestock manure is a major source of nitrogen in some areas, encouraging eco-friendly manure-management techniques, such as containment and composting, can go a long way toward reducing nitrogen pollution and even increase a farmer’s profits.

Of course, protecting forested land within the watershed, or reforesting cleared land, is an even better solution. When forest is paved over, or roofed over, or lawned over, it loses its ability to absorb nutrients and serve as a natural filter. That’s why groups like the MLT, the Trustees of Reservations and the CBB are working hard to buy up as much critical watershed land as they can. Last year’s acquisition of the Rounseville Property in Rochester is a good example of a watershed-protection purchase.

The need to conserve forested land in the watershed is critical. In a 1990 report, the CBB points out that only 53 percent of the area in the watershed suitable for building has been developed, which leaves the potential for doubling the amount of nutrients and pollutants entering Buzzards Bay. Scary as that may sound, there is also tremendous opportunity for educating landowners on what they can do to minimize nitrogen run-off, and work with interested individuals and organizations to protect key watershed lands. As you are probably already aware, these are primary aims of the MLT.

What about the issue of nitrogen loading from wastewater treatment plants and septic systems? “If you have a cesspool or an old septic system, get rid of it, and get a denitrifying septic system,” advises John Torgan, a Baykeeper with the Narragansett Bay environmental group Save the Bay. “If you can connect to a sewer, do that. Also, if your community’s wastewater treatment facility does not remove nitrogen or phosphorus, advocate for an upgrade to advanced wastewater treatment.” According to Korrin Petersen of the CBB, only three out of six of the area wastewater treatment facilities have nitrogen removal: Wareham,

West Falmouth, and Marion (although Marion’s nitrogen limit is much less stringent than the other two towns – 7-10 ml/L versus 3 mg/L, respectively). Hopefully Mattapoisett and other towns that border Buzzards Bay will follow suit, but nutrient-removal systems are expensive. Yet if the call for change is strong enough – which requires educating the public on the threat of nutrient overloading – change will happen.

The *really* good news is that algae growth can be limited, allowing eelgrass to return to places where it once flourished and maintaining healthy levels of suspended oxygen. It won’t happen overnight, of course, but good things are worth waiting and working for, even if it means that our great grandchildren will be the ones to reap the benefits of a healthy Buzzards Bay. And perhaps some day that cove in Wareham, which I still visit from time to time, will again be carpeted with eelgrass.

Tom Richardson is Editor of Offshore Magazine, a northeast boating publication based out of Quincy, MA. He lives in Mattapoisett with his wife and two children.

How You Can Get Involved...

Let Town Hall know your concerns: Mattapoisett – via the Fairhaven Wastewater Treatment Plant – does NOT currently remove nitrogen or phosphorous from treated waters. To advocate for an upgrade in our town, address your concerns to the Water Department at 33 Church Street, Mattapoisett.

Think GREEN when it comes to your yard: Check out www.buzzardsbay.org/lawncare.htm for helpful tips to ensure a beautiful yard, while also minimizing the impact of fertilizer and pesticide use on the watershed and environment.

Become a Bay Watcher: Every year, the CBB looks for volunteers to help monitor water quality around the bay. Bay Watchers help to provide critical information used to compile a Bay Health Index, a yearly measure of Bay Health, which allows for the development of restoration programs in Buzzards Bay. For more information, contact Tony Williams, Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator at CBB (508-999-6363 ext. 203 or e-mail Williams@savebuzzardsbay.org). Training sessions begin mid-May at locations all around the Bay.

Join the MLT: We can’t think of a better way to get involved than to join us in raising a voice on this issue!

Who We Are: Gary Johnson

This season's Member Spotlight column features Gary Johnson, President of the MLT:

MLT: Where did you grow up?

GJ: I was born and raised in Jamestown, NY, a small city southwest of Buffalo. It happens to be the birthplace of Roger Tory Peterson, the ornithologist, of whom we were justly proud (I even met him when I was about 10 years old.)

MLT: What is your educational background?

GJ: I earned a BA from Colgate University in 1971 in American Studies, an MBA from the University of Rochester in 1982 with a concentration in Finance and Applied Economics, and an MS in Applied Mathematics from Brown University in 2001.

MLT: How did you come to live in Mattapoisett?

GJ: My wife, Luana, and I were living in Wellesley, MA, but I had a 15' catboat that I was keeping in Padanaram Harbor, we started looking around on the south coast for a place that we might put down roots. We particularly liked the feel of Mattapoisett as a typical New England village. Cannon Street seemed like the ideal spot for us.

MLT: How long have you lived in Mattapoisett?

GJ: We bought the house in 1993, but we didn't move to town permanently until 1999 – before that time I was working in downtown Boston and I refused to make that commute on a daily basis.

– Photo by Gary Johnson



Gary Johnson, President of the MLT

three months during the summer in Norway where I do a lot of fishing and boating and take a lot of pictures. When we return to Mattapoisett I try to continue the photography but also do more woodworking. A 200-year-old house also requires considerable attention. I enjoy bicycling both here and in Norway. Finally, I've just gotten an autoharp and I'm trying to learn to play more than just simple chords.

MLT: Are you retired?

GJ: I guess so. After working in the investment management business for 16 years, I left the business in 1999. I now manage my own investments and work on land trust issues. I also serve on the Board of the Coalition for Buzzards Bay. That's plenty to keep me busy.

MLT: What are your hobbies or pastimes?

GJ: Our year is split into two parts: we spend

MLT: Tell us a little about your family.

GJ: My wife, Luana Josvold, was featured in a previous edition of The Heron, so you know about her. We have a daughter, Berit Ann working in theater in Brooklyn. The rest of the family is spread around the country: New York, Wisconsin, Virginia, Colorado... I still have distant relatives in Sweden that we have visited during the summer.

MLT: Why have you chosen to get involved with the MLT, and to be a board member?

GJ: Luana and I were asked by our neighbor, Bob Atkinson, to join the Board in 2000. We had contributed to fund-raising efforts in the past but didn't know that much about the organization. I don't believe that government has enough resources to provide for the open space that would benefit the community. Therefore, it's up to private groups of concerned individuals to fill that need. The MLT tries to do its part in Mattapoisett.

MLT: What are your current responsibilities on the board?

GJ: I've been the president of the board since 2002 and have been involved in acquisitions, fund raising, and organization. Since I have neither a regular job nor children at home, I've had the opportunity to devote more time to the MLT. While I wish to continue to contribute as a director to the MLT, I believe that after five years, it's time to begin the search for a new MLT president and for me to step aside from the president's job so that the organization can have an infusion of new leadership.

MLT: How do you see MLT contributing to Mattapoisett's future?

GJ: My hope would be that in a hundred years, residents and visitors to Mattapoisett would still be able to visit our properties and experience the wildness and beauty of nature – that we will have places for people to escape the virtual digital reality to see the wonders of the physical reality. That we will still have places where kids can get their feet wet while trying to catch a salamander. We can't assume that private landowners or the Town will provide those opportunities to all.

MLT: Are there any other issues you would like to highlight, or thoughts you'd like to share?

GJ: I would like to encourage people to get involved. First, tell your friends and neighbors about the work of the Land Trust and encourage them to join. Secondly, volunteer to help out. Not all of our jobs are clearing trails or building walls. We can also use help with mailings or maintaining the website. Or maybe you could serve on a committee to offer advice. Finally, give us feedback. Let us know when we are doing something well and also when you think we are doing something wrong. We exist to serve the needs of the community – we want to hear from more of that community. Lastly, I want to thank all the members and directors for all the support they have given me in the last five years. They deserve your thanks for doing all the work that has gotten us to where we are today. I know we have much more work to do, but this has been a wonderfully dedicated group with which to work. As we say in Norway, "Takk for nå" (*Thanks for now.*)

Kids Corner

In our *Who We Are* column, Gary Johnson mentions a famous ornithologist, Roger Tory Peterson, from the town he grew up in, Jamestown, NY. How many of you know what an ornithologist does? What sorts of creatures might an ornithologist be looking for? Ornithologists study the behavior, ecology, classification, physiology and conservation of birds. Ornithologists can be involved in fieldwork and research, in conservation and habitat management, and in education efforts.

Roger Tory Peterson was a leading ornithologist of his time, known for his best-selling pocket-sized *Field Guide to the Birds* (1934). Peterson is also known for increasing the awareness of “birding” and other environmental issues. And as an interesting aside... most of you are familiar with the name James Bond, right? But did you know that, in reality, he was a leading American ornithologist, specializing in the study of Caribbean birds? The writer Ian Fleming was familiar with Bond’s definitive book *Birds of the West Indies* and chose his name for the fictional spy James Bond because it was short, ‘as ordinary as possible’, and very masculine.



Yellow Spotted Salamander

(Used by permission of Leo Kenney, www.vernalpool.org)

Featured Creature

Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*). The Spotted Salamander can reach lengths of 6 to 8 inches, and is very distinctive with a dark body and yellow or orange spots. Spotted salamanders breed in early spring in vernal pools. And did you know that evidence of Spotted Salamander breeding activity is enough to allow for a vernal pool to be certified?

Adults migrate to their breeding pools during nighttime rainstorms to engage in courtship activities, known as “congressing”. Some towns, like Amherst, Massachusetts, have required that salamander tunnels be installed under streets that have been constructed in known salamander migration routes to cut down on roadway mortality during this nighttime event. Spotted salamanders exhibit high fidelity to their breeding pools, and it is suspected that adults return to their natal pools to breed, bypassing other more convenient pools encountered along the way.

After depositing their eggs, usually attached to twigs, grasses or other supports within the pool, they then return to the upland forest where they spend most of their lives. After about six to eight weeks, larvae will hatch. They have external gills that are feathery and located behind the head and feed on insect larvae, including mosquitoes. Spotted salamander larvae are vulnerable to predation from immature dragonflies, damselflies, backswimmers, caddisfly larvae, wood frog tadpoles and other salamander larvae, and generally opt to remain near the bottom of their pool until they reach the juvenile stage, when they will leave the pool during a rainfall to enter the upland forests.

Spotted salamanders can live up to 18 years and overwinter in leaf litter, under logs or in small mammal burrows. In Massachusetts, they prefer shrew burrows. Adults feed on earthworms, snails, slugs, spiders, crickets, millipedes, beetles, ants, other adult insects and insect larvae. Spotted salamanders, and the vernal pools they rely on, play an important role in the biodiversity of the forest ecosystem.

Do you have suggestions for activities we could offer area kids?

We’d love to hear your ideas on fun, educational outings or events that get kids involved with the land trust and appreciating the outdoors! Call Diane Perry (508.758.9063) if you’d like to suggest an activity that could be sponsored by the MLT, or would like to get involved in the MLT Educational Committee.

Through a gift of the late Edith Shoolman, the Education Committee aims to provide seed money for funding environmental educational initiatives in the wise use of resources (both locally and globally). With periodic planning meetings, the committee offers educational programming for area children.

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’ email addresses. You can provide us your email address by simply heading to our website (www.mattlandtrust.org), clicking “Contact Us”, and entering your email address. We really appreciate it!

(And we promise to maintain the privacy of your information, emailing you only with MLT updates!)

Property Updates

HILLER COVE PROJECT ADVANCES

By Paul Ozenkowski and Gary Johnson

Several years ago, with the leadership of the late Dana Coggins, the Mattapoisett Land Trust began the Hiller Cove Project – an effort to preserve more land in the eastern part of town between Route 6 and Buzzards Bay. Our idea was to acquire parcels that would link existing holdings and provide both more protection for the Bay and a natural wild space for passive recreation. We are pleased to announce that we took another step toward that goal in December by acquiring from Abel and Libania Grace nearly ten acres of undeveloped upland with a pond at the southern end of Bowman Road. We now hold an unbroken chain of properties consisting of 182 acres that extends from the Martocci Preserve on Route 6 across Bowman Road and through the Coyne Preserve to Aucoot Road.

Abel and Libania agreed with the Land Trust on a bargain sale price for the property because of their love of the land and their hope that it could be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. Abel obtained the farm from his father, Manuel “Lelocca” Grace, who had a garbage collection service in town years ago. The family used the property as a subsistence farm where they raised crops as well as pigs, acquiring the pond in the 1940’s to use as a “watering hole” for the swine. Often there would be flocks of migrating ducks who stopped at the pond before resuming flight; it was a sight Abel remembers fondly. When Abel and Libania began thinking about what would become of the old family farm in the future, they contacted long-time friend, and MLT Director, Blanche Perry. With Blanche’s help and stewardship, the MLT was able to acquire the property and, thereby, assure the Graces that the old farm could be protected from development in perpetuity.

With the addition of the Grace Farm, we are looking again at the idea of having a trail that will connect the Martocci Preserve with Aucoot Road. We would especially like the trail to visit the pond which we hope to have certified as a vernal pool and which we plan to name the Lelocca Grace Pond, in honor of Abel’s father. Planning, constructing, and maintaining the trail will not be easy, however, given the creek that must be crossed, and the large amount of wetlands present. The MLT has contacted

– Photo by Gary Johnson



In early March, the pond on Grace Farm is still frozen

Mattapoisett’s Boy Scout Troop 53 with the suggestion that the troop help us with the planning and construction of the trail – we believe that the project will offer a wonderful educational experience as well as provide an asset to the Town that will be used and appreciated for years to come. We would welcome the help of other groups or individuals who would like to be involved in this project.

The Grace Farm could have been sold to a developer for significantly more than the MLT was able to pay – we are sincerely grateful that Abel and Libania have chosen to preserve this land for the benefit of the entire community. The MLT will never be able to out-bid developers for land in Mattapoisett, but with the cooperation of conscientious landowners like the Graces we still have a hope of protecting more of the Town so that future generations will have an opportunity to experience some “wild” places in the neighborhood. We hope you’ll take the time to visit the Hiller Cove properties, especially the Grace Pond, as the weather warms.

MARTOCCI PRESERVE DEDICATION

By Brad Hathaway

A few years ago when I wrote to Ruth Hiller Martocci to thank her for her generous gift of land to the Mattapoisett Land Trust, I did so by quoting a part of Kahlil Gibran’s “The Prophet”, taken from the chapter “On Giving”:

At last fall’s dedication of the Martocci Preserve, I repeated those quotes that I have come to believe are filled with wisdom unparalleled, as is so much of Gibran’s work. Here is what was said:

“Then said a rich man, Speak to us of Giving.

“And he answered:

“You give but little when you give of your possessions.

“It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

“For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow?

“And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the overprudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?

“And what is fear of need but need itself?

“Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, the thirst that is unquenchable?

“There are those who give little of the much which they have – and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gift unwholesome.

“And there are those who have little and give it all.

“These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

“There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward.

“And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism.

“And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue;

“They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space.

“Through the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.”

And that is how I think of Ruth Hiller Martocci and her gift to the generations of Mattapoisett residents who will follow.

Nasketucket Bird Club Updates

SPRING MIGRATION AND "PANNING FOR GOLD"

By Mike LaBossiere

Spring is, or should I say was, the traditional time of year when the weather got warm prior to summer and the transition was very obvious even to the least observant. After birding for over 40 years I have seen "few" classic spring migrations. It seems that our New England weather has beaten down the Atlantic Flyway and forced the migration in at least our geographic location further to our West. For several years now the Berkshires and the Connecticut valley have had great migration results! All the other signs of spring are still present, such as peppers, pussy willows, crocus, and many others.

The real first waves of birds have been steadily making their way North for several weeks now. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, as of this writing, are as far as Connecticut. Blackbirds are back, Osprey are on their towers and Phoebe are calling.

The "Gold" that I refer to in the title of this article are the Spring Warblers, little colorful birds that adorn the tops of trees and force us to strain our necks to get a glimpse of their flashy nuptial or breeding colors! My personal favorites are Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided and Nashville. We here in southern New England are often treated to a good number of Warblers on their way North to New Hampshire and often further. However a good number of them do stay and breed in our area. Some examples are: Blue-winged, Black-and-white, Canada, American Redstart, and the list goes on. There are some twenty plus species of Warbler and they are joined by the likes of Scarlet Tanager, Northern Oriole (now called Baltimore again!) and a host of Vireos and many others, not to mention the Shorebirds that have already started to arrive!

The job of "Panning for Gold" becomes more difficult when the weather does what it seems to have been doing now for TOO many years. It has been rainy, cold, with unfavorable winds that make the "coastal" migration for us more of a challenge. One becomes a meteorologist, checking wind directions, cold fronts, full moons, clear nights and many other factors that affect migration. Ideally the advance of a cold front from the South or West and clear nights moonlit or not and favorable winds from the Southwest in our area are best, though all these factors can be defied by a determined group of migrants and then it becomes a game of being in the right place at the right time. A place like Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston is usually a good spot as it is slightly inland and an oasis of vegetation and a good resting and/or landing area for a good number of migrants. The Beech Forest in Provincetown is also a great spot. The Riverside Cemetery in Fairhaven has yielded many great migrations in the past. However, almost anywhere can end up being a great spot IF conditions are right. Once I was treated to a "fall out." A fall out is when species drops out of the sky during their trip because of weather conditions. Birds were migrating along the coast and a dense fog rolled in and I just happened to be in the right spot at the right time. I had almost three hundred Warblers

in a two-acre woodlot! I did not know where to look first! They were everywhere and at every vantage point high in trees and on the ground! I did not live at the time of the Gold Rush but I would liken the quest for the little "nuggets of gold" to the job of finding the "Jewels of the Air". Take your binoculars and give it a try. You might get lucky!

— Photo by Mike LaBossiere



Blue Winged Warbler photographed in Fairhaven at the Little Bay Conservation area

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.

To become a member of the MLT, renew your membership, learn more about upcoming events, and find out about volunteer opportunities, **check out our new website: mattlandtrust.org**, or email us at info@mattlandtrust.org. We would like to hear from you and welcome any suggestions or comments!

Education Committee Updates

UPCOMING ANNUAL 4TH GRADE TRIP TO NASKETUCKET BAY STATE RESERVATION

By Diane Perry

The MLT Education Committee is working with the grade 4 teachers from Old Hammondtown School to plan the fourth annual spring field trip to Nasketucket Bay State Reservation (NBSR). With the NBSR entrance located on Brandt Island Road, the property itself covers almost 210 acres. Many well-marked trails crisscross the property, which includes a forest, a meadow, vernal pools, and almost a mile of shoreline.

Students learn about the "web of life" as part of the fourth grade curriculum. They are also taught basic journaling techniques as part of the art curriculum. Each of the three classes will be visiting a separate area of NBSR. Once there, a volunteer guest leader will teach them, up close and personal, about the ecosystem that is specific to that area's flora and fauna. Students will be making sketches and notes in their journals, which will be used for follow-up activities in the classroom and art room. Several volunteer parent chaperones also participate in this event.

Why does the MLT continue to assist with this field trip? Here are a few comments overheard in prior years:

From a teacher: "This has been the most valuable field trip, ever!"

From a parent: "I had no idea we had such a terrific place in town!"

From a student: "I'm coming back to see all the other parts!"

A bequest from Edith Shoolman provides the funding for both the buses and the supplies used in the field trip. The Education Committee is eager to find other ways to support children's environmental education with the funds left to us by this long-term supporter. Please contact us with ideas!

Elizabeth Leidhold leads a group of 4th graders in discussion of a vernal pool at NBSR

— Photo by Diane Perry



The Heron is published bi-annually by the Mattapoisett 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 Mattapoisett, 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: Robert Atkinson, Michele Bernier, Martin Hudis, Luana Josvold, Elizabeth Leidhold, Jenny Mello, Paul Milde, Paul Osenkowski, Blanche Perry, Diane H. Perry, Elizabeth E. Richardson, Eleanor Smith and Gary P. Johnson, President

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

Mattapoisett Land Trust, Inc.

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Including your email address will help us to provide you with timely information on upcoming MLT events!

Join the Mattapoisett Land Trust!

Mail in your support!

Membership Renewal

We only exist with your help!

Membership Categories:

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$ 250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$ 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | \$ 75 | <input type="checkbox"/> Founder | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends of Salty | \$ 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | _____ |
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Calendar – Spring/Summer Activities

• SATURDAY, APRIL 21:

All MLT Events are FREE and Open to the Public!

9:00 AM – Dunseith Gardens Spring Clean-Up: Join our local Boy Scout troop #53 in cleaning up the park around Salty the Seahorse and sprucing it up for Spring! We'll start at 9:00 am, but feel free to join us at any time. Leaf rakes, leaf blowers and plastic trash barrels are especially useful in moving leaves and branches to the composting piles at the rear of the property. – **Rain or Shine.**

12:00 PM – Oldfield Farm Clean-Up: Come join the Rochester Land Trust as we help to clean up this beautiful property. Directions to Oldfield Farm: Proceed out North Street to its end; turn left on New Bedford Road; the Farm lies on the left about a mile from North Street. – **Rain or Shine.**

• SATURDAY, MAY 5 – A Spring Day with the MLT:

10:00 AM – Oldfield Farm Walk: Come join the MLT and the Rochester Land Trust at Oldfield Farm (see directions above) for a hike through these 80 acres of fields and forest abutting the Mattapoissett River. We encourage you to bring binoculars to help identify birds that may be present during the spring migration. Please dress appropriately for wooded wetlands.

11:30 AM – At the Friends Meeting House on Route 6, Mattapoissett: ORR Water Monitoring Project: Lynn Connor and students in the Environmental Studies Program at ORR will display and briefly discuss the findings of their water quality sampling project, a project partially funded by the MLT through the Edith Shoolman Fund. We are especially interested in the project because it included water from the Tub Mill Creek, an MLT property on Route 6.

12:00 PM – Lunch and MLT Annual Meeting: Following our hike and student presentation, we'll enjoy a potluck lunch, with drinks and desserts provided by the MLT. After lunch, we'll hold a brief annual meeting, reviewing the events of the past year and electing our new board of directors.

1:15 PM – Guest Speaker: We are delighted to welcome our guest speaker, Korrin Petersen, Esq., Advocacy Director for The Coalition for Buzzards Bay, who will speak on "The Massachusetts Estuaries Project: What is it, and how is it relevant to Mattapoissett?" – **Rain or Shine.**

• JULY 20-22 – Harbor Days Celebration: Come check us out at the Annual Harbor Days Celebration! As always, we'll be located at our Shipyard Park booth, with a focus this year on educating folks on recent land acquisition activities. As always, we could use your help! Those interested in volunteering a couple of hours at the MLT booth on either Saturday or Sunday, please contact Martin Hudis at <http://mattlandtrust.org> (click on "contact us"). Please indicate the times you are available. The booth will be staffed from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday and 10:00 am to 4:00 pm on Sunday.

• WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8 – 2:00 PM – Haskell Swamp Nature and History Walk: As part of the Mattapoissett 150th celebration, Ruth Bates will again lead us on an educational walk of the Haskell Swamp Preserve. Contrary to its name, the swamp has many wide, clear paths; but some wet areas, too. Wear insect spray, long pants and long socks to cover pant legs (as precaution against deer ticks), and hiking shoes. Directions: Follow North Street north from the intersection of Rt. 6 about 3 miles. Take left onto Abby Lane. Park at 6 Abby Lane, Mattapoissett.