



32nd Year NEWSLETTER

June 2014

Truro Conservation Trust, P.O. Box 327, North Truro, MA 02652-0327

www.TruroConservationTrust.org

SAVE THE DATE:

SATURDAY MORNING

JULY 26, 2014, at 10:00 am

The Anne H. Brock Community Room

Truro Public Library

Truro Conservation Trust Annual Meeting

Coffee, tea, pastries & fruit

OSPREY UPDATE

You may recall our reporting in June of 2011, about an osprey nesting pole being erected in the Tom's Hill area of the Pamet River marsh, on land owned by the Truro Conservation Trust.

About 1970, ospreys disappeared from Cape Cod, largely because DDT had depleted their ability to lay strongly shelled eggs. Ospreys have been making a comeback since DDT was outlawed in the early seventies.

The erection of this pole took several years, and was the result of a major effort involving your Trust, the Wellfleet Bay Audubon, local neighbors, and the Truro Department of Public Works, which supplied the pole itself. Twenty-two people showed up in April of

2011, to help put the pole in place out in the middle of the marsh in hopes that an osprey nest might be established.

Strangely enough, human structures like telephone poles or our pole can help ospreys replenish their numbers. They need a large platform away from trees and high above the ground near bodies of water rich in fish. Fish account for about 99 percent of their diet.

Ospreys are found all over the world. Cape Cod ospreys are large, fish eating raptors (also known as sea hawks or fish eagles) that over-winter in South America, and return to North America in the spring to



Adding final decorative touches

Continued on next page

OSPREY UPDATE

Continued from previous page

breed. Slowly, but surely these birds have been returning to nesting on the Cape through the not insignificant effort of Cape Coders erecting poles for them to build nests. Ospreys mate for life, which averages seven to 10 years, although some are known to have lived for more than 20 years. They lay two to four eggs requiring a five-week incubation period. Their vision allows them to spot prey underneath the water from as far as 130 feet above the surface. They are the only fish eating raptor that dives into the water to seek its prey.

There was no nesting activity at our pole in 2011, but in 2012 a young pair of ospreys investigated the pole before heading south. Last year, there was much excitement when a nest was built by a pair of ospreys, but no eggs were laid as far as we know. The accompanying photo, taken last year, is of the nest itself, and of one of the builders, standing guard.

Now, this year they are back at the nest they built last year. There is much hope that this might be the year for a successful breeding and fledging. Reportedly, the female has been seen sitting on the nest while her mate stands guard.

Please, please do not come close to the pole in any way. There were reports last year that kayakers at high tide approached the pole, and that photographers on the shore tried to make the birds fly off their nest to capture a good photo. This may be why the pair did not have a successful family last year. These birds are easily spooked.

You should not trespass on the surrounding private property to get closer to the pole. With the aid of binoculars or a telephoto lens you can get a good look at the birds if they

are on their nest by driving down Castle Road from the direction of Corn Hill until you pass Gospel Path on your left. Look out toward the Pamet and you will see the pole in the middle of the marsh. Also, walking out along the edge of the marsh is not a good idea because you may be too close and spook the birds. **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE!**

These are the first ospreys to make Truro home in some time. Let's hope they and their offspring will return again and again.

TOWN TO HELP TRUST ACQUIRE 3.77 ACRES

As a Trust member you may be scratching your head over Article 18 that was approved at the Truro Annual Town Meeting held April 29, 2014. Article 18 was unanimously approved by the voters, and involves an expected conservation land purchase by the town and the Truro Conservation Trust.

If the transaction is completed, there will be no net cost to the town. Town Meeting voted to appropriate \$500,000 to purchase a perpetual conservation restriction on two parcels of land that are part of what is known as Edgewood Farm, on the condition that funds will temporarily be loaned to the town of Truro. Your Trust will provide this loan and be partially reimbursed once the town applies for and receives a grant from the State's Land Grant program. Only the Town through its Conservation Commission may apply for this State grant. Your Trust will own and manage the land, and the Town would administer the conservation restriction.

Your trustees are excited about this potential acquisition for many reasons, which is why

Continued on page 4



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Trustees

Fred Gaechter
Chairman
Phil Smith
Treasurer
Robert Bednarek
Secretary

Brian Boyle
Carol Green
Tony Hodgkin
Larry Lown
John Pendleton
Amanda Reed
Meg Royka
Irma Ruckstuhl
Susan Travers
Bill Worthington

Dear Members, Friends and Neighbors,

For those of you who were not in Truro this past winter, you probably have heard that it was a snowy, cold and long one, but we were spared any major storms.

It was an eventful winter for the Trust in that our mission to acquire and/or protect open space in Truro had some promising developments. We are pursuing one particularly interesting acquisition that is discussed in the accompanying article, "Town to Help Trust Acquire 3.77 Acres." This acquisition will require several more steps before it is finalized in 2015. One of those steps will allow the Trust with the Town to apply for a grant to help defray part of the cost, thereby saving the Trust funds to pursue other open space opportunities.

Your continued support is what makes our various efforts possible. Beyond the purchase price of land, there are the legal expenses that also occur even when land is given to the Trust. Ongoing expenses include auditor's fees, mailing costs, property upkeep needs, and membership in the Compact of Cape Cod Land Trusts.

Without your ongoing support we simply could not continue the Trust's work. You have your Trustees' deepest thanks and that of other Truro residents who frequently voice their gratitude for the Trust's work.

Best Regards,
Your Trustees

TOWN TO HELP TRUST ACQUIRE 3.77 ACRES

Continued from page 2

several trustees have already expended much time and effort to make this happen.

Adjacent to the 3.77 acres that the Trust wants to acquire, there are another 6.8 acres of Edgewood Farm, including the old farmhouse. The Castle Hill Center for the Arts hopes to purchase this acreage and use the buildings on these two other parcels to expand its art classes and operations.

The Trust's parcels would be immediately adjacent to another 11.4 acres that were bought by the Town through its Land Bank in 2002. All these properties are located south of South Pamet Road between Rte. 6 and Collins Road. An existing path to a ridge on Great Hill with views of Ballston Beach and the upper Pamet valley is located on the parcel that would come to the Trust. We foresee the possible creation of other trails to make this area available to the public from Route 6.

If all the various, required steps necessary for this purchase take place, we look forward to a mutually satisfying and working relationship with Castle Hill.

Edgewood Farm has been in the Meldahl family for two generations (50 years). Prior to that, the land was farmed by Manuel F. Corey.

Winter's Damage

This fox frequently visits this very popular bench located on Trust land at the so-called Oriental Carpet at the corner of Old County Road and Ryder Beach Road. It's also a popular hangout for photographers, bicyclers, hikers and young canoodlers, particularly when the fall colors are ablaze.



Another TCT bench user

The bench was partially destroyed after one of our frequent snowstorms this past winter from the pressure of too much snow. Luckily, the very handy Joe Francis lives across the road and helped the Trust rebuild the bench and move it farther from the road's edge where future snowstorms won't be a problem. We thank him for his help.

John Pendleton

Your Board of Trustees has learned with deep regret that fellow trustee John Pendleton will be leaving Truro to live closer to family in Maine. He has been a trustee for almost four years. His background in real estate law has been of incalculable value to the Trust, along with his dedicated leadership of the nomination committee through which our Board of Trustees has expanded with the addition of several new, dedicated Trustees. Another big job mostly done by John was helping the Trust amend its bylaws. The Trust will miss him, as will the town to which he has given much, including service on the Planning Board. We wish him well.