

"Leaflets Three, Let It Be"

Summer 1989

I've been "itching" to write about this nemesis of the forest and fields for quite some time now. Poison ivy, or more affectionately called "P.I." is a plant to be taken seriously if you plan on any outdoor nature activities.

If you've ever had poison ivy you know from personal experience just how irritating and dangerous the plant can be. If you've never had it please do not think you are immune to its toxic effects. Some of us are more sensitive than others to the effects of poison ivy, but we are all capable of contracting this most noxious of summertime skin ailments.

Poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) enjoys a variety of habitats. The sandy shore of your favorite beach, shaded forests, exposed roadsides and even the haven of your own backyard are likely places for poison ivy to grow.

Learning to identify "P.I." is the first step to prevention. The old saying, "Leaflets three, let it be", is a good rule to follow. But it may take an even more trained eye to recognize the many disguises this plant has.

The leaf of "P.I." is compound, with three leaflets, and these may be red, yellow, green, orange, brown, or even purple. The leaflets may be smooth-edged or they may be coarse-toothed. The clusters of greenish yellow to white flowers have five petals and bloom from May through July. In August through November the pea-sized white fruits appear. Poison ivy will grow as a low ground cover, in shrub-like solitary clumps and even as a creeping vine. I once saw a forty foot high maple that had been completely covered by the vine to the point of strangulation. Believe me, the sight of a poison ivy tree was impressive. The vine supports itself with clinging hair-like aerial roots.

All parts of the plant are toxic to the touch and a shiny oleoresin will cause dermatitis within forty eight hours of contact. Starting as red marks on the skin, the area of contact soon becomes itchy and swollen with raised bumps. Blistering may occur and a secondary infection could arise if proper treatment is not taken. Many first aid remedies are available to relieve the itch, with cortisone cremes often being preferred. If you are overly sensitive to "P.I.", contact your physician for special care. A trailside remedy here at the NBS is rubbing on the juice of an annual plant called Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*). This works best if you can apply it within ten minutes or so of contact. Otherwise, wash with a strong detergent. If a rash develops, cool soaks are best to relieve irritation. I often apply a cool, moist, clay pack to the area.

Continued on next page



Personally, I have tremendous respect for poison ivy. It is the first plant I will focus on when I go out for a hike. I tend to think of "P.I." as "Nature's gatekeeper"-- a protector of her precious environment. Knowledge and respect for this plant can aid in the prevention of poison ivy dermatitis.

Poison ivy berries are eaten as a good winter food source by as many as sixty species of birds. This is probably the reason "P.I." is so widely distributed. The birds, after eating the berry, deposit the single seed wherever they may fly.

Poison ivy is a dangerous plant not to be taken lightly. But it's also a beautiful, fascinating, and interesting plant to observe. There is more to know about this much maligned three-leaflet plant and I know I've barely "scratched" the surface.

Hap Morgan



Volunteers and Donations

This Spring was the season of great generosity for the Sanctuary. The staff would like to thank everyone who was able to donate their time and/or items needed.

-For animal care, we thank Charles Donald, Monique Roeder, Jen DeSimone, Jen Reed, Eric Johnson of Coggeshall Farm, and Dick Rounds.

-For items donated to benefit the animals, we thank Marilyn and Andrew Lyell, Tim Brown, Elizabeth Thurston, and Don and Kathy Larson. (Also, thanks to those of you who donated towels but were too quick to skip out!)

-For grounds, garden maintenance, and garden items donated, we thank St Georges students: Jack Mascharka, Steve Boyd, Rod Woodstock, and those who helped clean the trails and rebuild walls on "Ecology Day", June Warren, The Potting Shed, and Jean Gorham of Green Schemes.

-For library donations, thanks to Dick Rounds, Fran Holmes, Mrs. Thomas, Jen Reed, and Cally Gottlieb.

-For public program assistance, our thanks to Ray Rogers, Linda Evans, and Mike Lapisky.

-Special thanks to Gil and Josephine Fernandez, Jordan Kerber, Claudia Binns, and Bill Thomas.

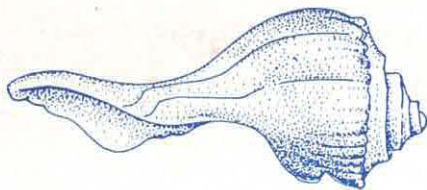
-We would also like to thank those Advisory Committee Members who are no longer able to serve on the committee. They are Patti Corgan, Gini Laughlin, Gary MacDonald, and Mark Vissman. They have helped tremendously for many years and we're sorry to see them go. New members include Betsy deLeiris, Marabeth Farrell, Albert Marcantonio, and Candace Powell. We welcome their new energy and support.

Birds and Breakfast 1989 was the most successful it has ever been thanks to all of you who contributed in more ways than one. **Thanks to:**

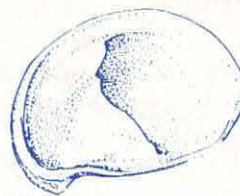
-all the wonderful members who baked delicious goods to donate.

-the local businesses who supported our efforts through donated advertisements and quality goods: Au Natural, Cappuccinos, Coffee Corner, Crystal Springs, Designs Unlimited, Harvest Natural Foods, Newport Art Association, Katrinas Bakery, La Patisserie, Rooney, Plotkin and Willey, Sheffield and Harvey, St. Georges School, The Bank of Newport, The Marriott, The New School, The Sheraton Islander, and The Viking Hotel.

- the committed volunteers who led bird walks, baked, cooked and/or served the day of the event: Larry Allen, Charlie Avenengo, Joyce Botelho, Hellie Casagrande, Chris Callahan, Laura Coggeshall, Patti Corgan, Anne Damon, Betsy deLeiris, Lucis deLeiris, Andrew and Lauren Doolittle, Mickey Elliott, Marabeth Farrell, Ken Gates, Jan Goodland, Callie Gottlieb, Gillian Hall, Morris Hirsch, Pat Kalble, Fran Holmes, Irene Mack, Jeff Metz, Tim Moore, Barry and Bev Murphy, Fran Roeder, Ray and Lois Rogers, Gay Sheffield, Liz Snyder, Jay Sullivan, David and Jane Steele, The New School's First Graders, Dottie and Mark Vissman, Marjorie Ward, Jen Warren, and Sher Williams.



Summer Programs



Every Sunday morning 8 am
Guided Birdwalks Take an hour's walk through the Sanctuary's trails and down to the shore identifying summer broods of fledglings and seasonal migrant species soon to leave the area for their southerly Fall migration. We'll also begin to search the skies for hawks as they move through this area during their fall migration. **No Fee.**

Thursday evenings
July 27, August 31, Sept. 28 9 pm
Stargazing Astronomer Bill O'Connell offers his expertise on the heavenly bodies and summer constellations during these free one hour programs. In July, the meteor showers from the Delta Aquids will be the most visible and a sure bet to be wished upon! Cloud dates for these Thursday programs will take place on the following Friday at the same time. Call to confirm if unsure. **No Fee.**



Thursday evening
August 10 7 pm
Wild Edible Walk From chickweed salad to seaweed pudding, wild edibles are delicious and can be found almost anywhere in nature! Hap Morgan will guide participants through the Sanctuary's fields and forest searching for some of these gastronomic delights. Samples will be made for tasting. Recipes will be provided. **Fee:\$7 (\$5 NBS Members).** **Pre-registration is required. Limit:15.**

Saturday afternoon
August 12 2-4 pm
Orienteering with Map and Compass Jan Binger has been the National Orienteering Champion and has taught this course at Hurricane Island for Outward Bound. Join her as she teaches participants how to use a map and compass. You'll be able to test out your newly learned skill on a simple course at the Sanctuary. **Adults and children over 12 only. Fee: \$10 (\$8 NBS Members).** **Pre-registration is required. Limit 10.**

Wednesday evening
August 23 7 pm.
Life Between the Tides Take an informal walk at the sandy and rocky shores with Sanctuary Director, Larry Taft. He'll point out the fascinating creatures and plantlife that live in these two habitats. Families are welcome. **Fee:\$4 adults \$2 children under 12 (\$2 NBS adult members \$1 child member).** **Pre-registration is required.**

Saturday morning
August 26 7 am
Shorebird Migration at Trustum Pond The Spring field trip over to this wildlife refuge in South Kingstown was so enjoyable that Patti O'Neil, NBS member and avid birdwatcher couldn't wait to go again. During this time, beginner and expert birders can enjoy seeing the waves of shore and wader birds gleaning between tides as they begin their migration south. Perhaps a Piping Plover, R.I.'s most endangered bird will be seen! Participants will meet in the Sanctuary parking lot to carpool over. **Fee: \$7 (\$5 NBS Members).** **Pre-registration is required.**

Sunday afternoon
September 10 2 pm
Field Wildflower Walk The Sanctuary's fields are full of bloom and seed this time of year, as the Summer begins to fade and Autumn approaches. Field Naturalist and Roger Williams College Instructor Millie House is an expert on these wonderful late blooming wildflowers. She'll help identify these treasured native plants during a short hike on the trails. **Fee:\$4 (\$3 NBS members).** **Pre-registration is required. Limit:15.**



Visitors- 7675 - (up 14% from last year)

The monthly breakdown is below:

April	607	October	705
May	771	November	744
June	884	December	580
July	658	January	286
August	641	February	747
September	635	March	367

Buildings and Grounds:

Improvements to the buildings and grounds included putting a new roof on the barn, extending hot and cold running water to the animal care facility, painting the director's residence and the barn trim and putting new gravel on the parking lot.

Museum Project

Substantial progress was made on three exhibit areas: the Marsh, Ridge and Changing Land. Wall and table display fixtures were purchased for the museum. Expenses for the museum project were paid through last year's grant from the Garden Clubs of America and previous NBS fundraising.

Land Management

A 22 page forest and wildlife management plan was completed by the director this year. The plan includes an inventory of the major plant communities and wildlife species on the refuge, and gives recommendations for the management of the refuge over the next 5 years. As part of this plan, a prescribed burn was planned for this winter. A consultant was hired, permits were obtained, and firebreaks were created. The burn was not carried out due to inclement weather on each of the burn days. The burn will be rescheduled for next winter. Also as part of the plan, the understory of the cedar grove was cleared with the volunteer help of 4 Boy Scout troops. This will postpone natural succession from destroying this grove.

Personnel

June Doolittle was hired as the Sanctuary's new receptionist in October, replacing Jean Ballentine, who left after working here for 4 years.

Annual Report

April 1988-March 1989



Grants:

The Sanctuary received a \$27,000 grant from the Prince Charitable Trust to hire legal and technical assistance in its effort to preserve the open space of the Gray Graig Estate.

We also received a \$15,000 grant from the Champlin Foundation for the purchase of a new tractor for land management.

Volunteers

The Sanctuary benefitted greatly from the help of over 300 volunteers at the "Harvest Fair" and 60 for "Birds and Breakfast". Through the year, more than 120 volunteers helped us with mailings, newsletter and brochure layout, trail maintenance, stone wall repairing, litter patrol, graphics and animal care. Community organizations that provided volunteers included St. George's School, South Eastern Massachusetts University, Volunteers in Action and the New England Wildlife Clinic.

Education Program

School Tours: Approximately 1550 students from Aquidneck Island schools as well as Jamestown, North Kingstown, South Kingstown, Cranston, Coventry, Little Compton, Bristol, Barrington and Providence came to the Sanctaury for tours. Themes for the walks included "Exploring Habitats", "Birds of NBS" and "Seashore and Saltmarsh".

In-School Programs: Lisa and Hap presented 28 in-school and pre-trip lessons at schools, reaching more than 1400 students in grades K through 8. Gaudet Middle School and The New School took advantage of a new program: "Winter Adaptations". Gaudet 8th graders began a new geology program.

Teacher Workshops: D.E.M. offered its "RI ... Naturally" workshop on birdlife at NBS for 40 teachers. The Sanctuary has 3 curriculum boxes available for loan to teachers.



Public Programs: NBS continued to offer its more popular seasonal public programs. These included a bird identification class, Sunday morning bird walks, whale watch, medicinal herb class, wildflower walk, mushroom walk, pot pourri making, basket making, woodcock walk, and an owl prowl. In addition, special programs were offered as well, including: "Endangered Species of Newport County", environmental education singer "Billy B", "New England Birds of Prey" and storyteller, Michael Caduto.

Guided Tours and Lectures: Over 110 adults from various community groups participated in guided tours through the Sanctuary, and more than 150 participated in our various lectures. Groups included URI Seagrant, AARP, Channing Memorial Church, Quincy Historical Society, the Carriage House, Royal Crest Estates, and local garden clubs.

Community Groups: Over 150 girls and boys from Brownies, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts participated in guided walks led by the Sanctuary staff. Project Headstart was given 3 in-school presentations gratis from scholarship funds.

NBS Children's Programs: The Sanctuary offered its popular Saturday morning "Nature Club" and its Wednesday afternoon "Preschooler with Parents Nature Hour" for five sessions. Also, spring and winter vacation weeks for public schools were filled with 20 children each week. Summer Nature Day Camps, for children Pre-7th grade continued to be successful with 480 spaces being filled by enthusiastic campers. Other programs included after school nature walks, an Easter egg hunt, and a natural Easter egg dyeing workshop. The Sanctuary "swapped" a Bird in-school presentation for a "Pioneer Day" presented at the Sanctuary by W. Alton Jones Environmental Education Center staff in February.

Conferences: Rhode Island was the host of this year's New England Environmental Education Alliance conference. The Sanctuary staff helped plan, organize the weekend event, and teach over 200 participants who attended.

Publicity: The local papers and radio stations are always, and continue to be important for publicizing the Sanctuary's events through free press releases. The Norman Bird Flyer, sent quarterly to members continues to provide natural history articles, public and children's program information, community and special events. In addition, the Sanctuary's "Henny Penny" joined forces with the Robert Potter League's "Moose" this winter and spring, appearing in the Newport Daily News as a column to provide the public with advice on wildlife issues.

Operating Budget

REVENUES

Contributions	2,476
Membership	22,104
Sanctuary Store	7,506
Norman Trust	24,954
Entrance Fees	6,435
Program Revenues	33,982
Special Events	16,456
Reserve Fund *	<u>12,244</u>
	126,157

EXPENSES

Salaries/Benefits	71,849
Accounting/Auditing	3,970
Trustees Fees	6,695
Office Supplies	3,608
Printing	2,501
Postage	1,576
Telephone	1,310
Insurance	6,017
Travel	301
Store Expense	6,005
Publicity	414
Books/Subscriptions	339
Utilities	2,889
Maintenance	5,166
Capital Improvements	1,500
Program Materials	2,820
Wildlife Mgt.	1,693
Animal Care	1,104
Contingency	<u>6,400</u>
	126,157

EXCESS/DEFICIT

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* This past year we drew upon our reserve fund to put a new roof on the barn, extend hot and cold running water to the animal care facility and purchase a small computer. This year we hope to begin building back this fund.

Tree Swallow Conservation Project

For the second year, the Sanctuary, with the volunteer help of Ray Rogers, set up nesting boxes that were donated by members to help conserve the local Tree Swallow population. Throughout the nesting season, Ray monitored the activity around the 46 boxes. Heavy competition between Tree Swallows and House Sparrows was continuous for these sites. This year there was an increase in the number of successful nests for both species (meaning there were either eggs or young observed).

If you would like to build a nesting box to donate to the Tree Swallow Conservation Project, kits are available at the NBS office for \$7.50.

A special thank you is due to Virginia Treherne Thomas for securing a grant of \$1,000 through the Julia Bird Charitable Trust for this project. The grant money makes the nesting boxes and poles available to participants at less than 1/2 the cost of the materials.

Below is a listing of the activity observed in each box, and a list of who donated the boxes.

key

BEHAVIOR KEY

BN - Building Nest
PN - Partial Nest
CN - Complete Nest
EO - Eggs Observed
YO - Young Observed
YF - Young Feeding
FL - Fledglings

SPECIES KEY

TS - Tree Swallow
CH - Chickadee
BB - Bluebird
HW - House Wren
HS - House Sparrow



NAME:	BOX #
Barbie Sturtevant	1 - 40
Byron Blandino	41
The Blanchettes	42
Cecily Thomas	43
Erica Sable	44
David Martellino	45
Valerie Druken	46

The Norman Bird Flyer is published quarterly by the Norman Bird Sanctuary, a non-profit 450 acre nature preserve established under the will of Mabel Norman Cerio.

Trustee: Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank

Advisory Committee: Barry Murphy - Chair., Lawrence Allen, Joyce Botelho, Ann Damon, Betsy deLeiris, Thomas Gunzelman, Frances Holmes, Marabeth Farrell, Albert Marcantonio, Charles K. Moore, Julie Morris, Candace Powell, Horatio Rogers, Gay Sheffield, Barbara Sturtevant.

Director: Lawrence Taft

Education Coordinator: Lisa Pritchard

Naturalist/Caretaker: Hap Morgan

Receptionist: June Doolittle

Address: 583 Third Beach Rd. Middletown, R.I. 02840

Telephone: (401) 846-2577

Graphics by: Lucia deLeiris, Erika King, Julia Turk, Amy Wright, and SMU Illustration students.



<u>BOX #</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>BEHAVIOR</u>	<u>BOX #</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>BEHAVIOR</u>
1	HS	CN	24	TS	FL
2	HS	PN	25	TS	FL
3	HS	CN	26	HS	CN
4	?	CN	27	HS	CN
5	HS	EO	28	HS	CN
6	HS	YO-2	29	HS	CN
7	HS	YO-4	30	HS	CN
8	TS	CN	31	HS	CN
9	TS	CN	32	HS	CN
10	TS	CN	33	TS	CN
11	HS	EO-1	34	(no activity)	
12	HS	YO-4	35	HS	YO-1
13	HS	CN	36	TS	YO-2
14	HS	EO-4	37	HS	PN
15	TS	PN	38	TS	CN
16	HS	EO-5	39	HS	EO-3
17	TS	EO-5	40	HS	CN
18	?	PN	41	TS	YO-3
19	HS	EO-5	42	TS	CN
20	HS	CN	43	HS	CN
21	CH	CN	44	HS	PN
22	TS	FL	45	HS	PN
23	TS	FL	46	TS	YO-4



Director's Notes

Gray Craig Update

First, I would like to thank our members and friends who signed petitions or wrote letters of support to local officials and the local newspapers voicing concern about the potential development of the Gray Craig Estate. Also, a special thank you to those St. George's School students who drafted a petition and canvassed the neighborhood. Your involvement has shown the community that Gray Craig is an important issue.

The Coastal Resources Management Council was persuaded to cancel its full council hearing in Providence, on Gray Craig. Instead, they have scheduled a subcommittee hearing, to allow local residents to voice their concerns. The hearing is scheduled to be held at the **Middletown High School Auditorium on Wednesday, July 26, at 3:30 pm.** This will be a very important meeting, please plan to attend. Please check the "Legal Notices" section of the Daily News or call us to make sure the meeting hasn't been rescheduled.

In regard to possible acquisition of the property, it has been a long process of proposals and counter proposals, but the Sanctuary and the owners of the Gray Craig Estate are close to reaching an agreement. We have been working on a plan that would limit development, preserve most of the open space of the estate, and minimize the ecological and scenic impacts that a full-scale development would otherwise have on the Sanctuary, Nelson Pond and the surrounding natural areas.

Once a final plan is agreed upon, the Sanctuary will attempt to purchase the forested, northern section of the estate, adding 15.6 acres to the Sanctuary, and conservation easements on the two ridges, protecting another 16.8 acres from development. The Newport Water Department has also expressed interest in purchasing conservation easements on an additional 8.6 acres providing a permanent buffer zone around Nelson Pond. Together, this would permanently protect 41 acres.

To raise funds, we are looking to both public and private sources. We have submitted an application to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management for an Open Space grant and have approached the Middletown Open Space Committee as well. Due to stiff competition for limited public funds, we will rely heavily on private foundations and individual contributions. With the help of the Prince Foundation, we recently hired a fund-raising consultant to help us begin organizing a capital campaign.

In the coming months, we will be asking you, the members and friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary to help us in this campaign by writing letters of support and sharing your resources. When that time comes, we hope that you will give to the best of your ability to help preserve and protect the largest and most valuable natural area on Aquidneck Island.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Taft

Ask Henny Penny

Dear Henny Penny,

Do we have hummingbirds in R.I.?

Dear Kind Person,

Being in a northern climate with a short growing season, Rhode Islanders are blessed with only one species of these magnificent birds- the Ruby Throated hummingbird. These tiny 3" to 3.75" hummers dart about quickly, able to beat their wings up to 200 beats per second (that's fast!), and feed on nectar with a straw-like bill. The male Ruby Throated lives up to its name having a beautiful red patch under his bill and a green iridescent back. The female lacks the ruby patch and much of the iridescence. Since they are only up in the northeast such a short time (May-Sept.), sometimes people never get the chance to see them. If you're interested in attracting these delightful visitors, consider planting a garden full of red and purple flowers. Nicotiana, larkspur, columbine, bee balm, salvia, and cardinal flowers are good choices. Vines such as the trumpet vine and honeysuckle will also attract them. A red-colored feeder with 1 part sugar to 4 parts water, cleaned regularly will help supplement the nectar from the flowers.

An enjoyable summer to you! **Henny Penny**



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OR TO CURRENT RESIDENT

**Norman Bird Sanctuary
Aquidneck Island Harvest Fair
September 30 and October 1, 1989 10 am-5 pm**

an old fashioned country fair

Crafts, Games, "Monkey Bridge", Ethnic Food, Animals, "The Mud Pit", Home and Garden Contests, Country Store, Greased Pole, Pony Rides, Face Painting, South End Jazz Band, The Puppet Workshop, Bill Thomas, Showcase Orchestra, Talent Show, and more, more, more!

Volunteers Needed!

The Aquidneck Island Harvest Fair Committee is looking for volunteers who will be available to work before or during the Fair. Particularly, volunteers are needed to help pick up trash and empty cans during the Fair on Saturday and Sunday (Sept. 30 and Oct. 1). If you can work for 1-2 hour shifts as a clean up person, please call the Sanctuary, or Morris Hirsch (849-3466). If you would like to help us in another way, please let us know!

ARE YOU DUE TO RENEW?

Your NBS membership renewal date is printed on the mailing label below your address. If you're due to renew now (or before the next newsletter), please use the form below and send it along with your renewal check. By using this form and sending your renewal ahead, you can save the Sanctuary the cost of sending out reminders. This will help us put your membership dollars to better use.

**If you are not a member,
please use this form to
become one!**



MEMBERSHIP

☐ New Member

☐ Renewal

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

- | | | | |
|---|---------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$ 50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$ 100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional/Business | \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life | \$1,000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to my yearly membership, I would like to contribute \$ _____ | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be called for volunteer work. Phone _____ | | | |

All contributions are tax-deductible when made out to:

Norman Bird Sanctuary
Third Beach Road
Middletown, Rhode Island 02840