

SUMMER 1986

Trailside Museum

In the past few months the eighteenth century barn, here at the Sanctuary headquarters, has undergone some physical changes in preparation for the long awaited Trailside Museum that will soon be under construction.

The second story, or mezzanine has been expanded to wrap around the entire barn, to allow a circular flow of visitors through the exhibit area. New lighting designed to highlight the exhibits, and a fire escape have been added as well. The foyer downstairs has a more open atmosphere, now that the stairs have been relocated to the back, and the adjoining wall removed. The designers at Wade Associates, who are helping us with this project have been careful not to compromise the "old barn" atmosphere of the building.

These renovations along with a drafting of a final exhibit plan, complete the first phase of the museum project. All of this was made possible through a \$15,000. matching grant from the Rhode Island Foundation, contributions from our membership, and revenues from the "Harvest Fair" and "Birds and Breakfast".

The idea that the barn should be used as a nature museum has long roots. In 1964, Robert Woodruff, then Sanctuary Director, began constructing exhibits of mounted birds. It was felt from the start, that museum displays as well as interpretive signs along the trails should serve to inform and educate Sanctuary visitors.

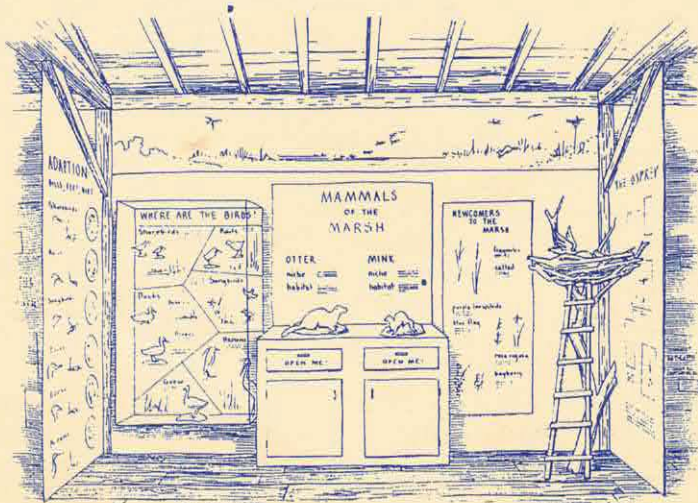
Over the years the barn acquired a collection of mounted specimens and artifacts which were put on display. Because there had been no overall plan for the

museum, the exhibits lacked thematic unity.

In 1980, Sanctuary Co-directors Tim Traver, Delia Clarke, and the Advisory Board Committee decided to work on a master plan to guide the future development of the barn. This resulted in the renovation of the building to house a heated office, kitchenette, bathrooms, and store, as well as a plan for an exhibit area on the second floor. It was at this step that most of the displays were dismantled.

It was decided then, that the museum in the barn should have an overall theme and that it should serve only as an introduction to the living museum out on the refuge. The theme is the Sanctuary itself, and all of the habitats within it, the forest, fields, pond, ridges, marsh and shore. It should help to translate what is seen along the trails and help to enrich the visitors experience here.

In addition to traditional displays of specimens, artifacts, and illustrations, several exhibits will incorporate "hands-on" components, inviting the viewer to interact with the exhibit by stooping down, looking inside, lifting a flap, using an identification key, or by turning a crank. A mural will run along the walls directly above each exhibit area to depict the habitats being interpreted. (continued)

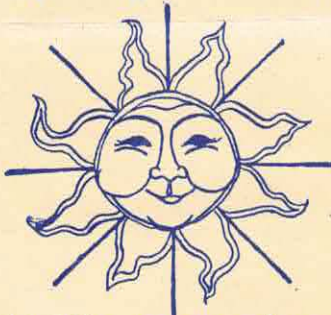


Summer News

The summer season is in full swing here at the Sanctuary. Summer Camp, which is fully enrolled, is being directed by our Education Coordinator, Lisa Pritchard. She is also teaching the Parents with Pre-schoolers program on Tuesday and Thursday mornings throughout the summer.

Our summer camp staff is made up of five talented and energetic Teacher/Naturalists who have much to share with Nature Day Camp and Summer Challenge participants. We welcome back Rebecca Brady, who has been a Teacher/Naturalist for the Sanctuary beginning in 1982. She has just completed her Masters in Elementary Education at Antioch, New England. Claudia Almeida brings years of experience working with children and adults who are hearing impaired. She might teach us a few signs this summer. Catherine Curtis, a student at Brown University, is experienced with children's theater. She also sings and plays the guitar wonderfully. Rosemarie Souza, a student at Salve Regina College has experience in organic gardening and animal care. Hap Morgan, a familiar face from years of volunteering and teaching at the Sanctuary will share some of his extensive knowledge of local edible and useful plants.

Meg Benzinger is supervising the Youth Conservation Project this summer. She is a student at the University of Rhode Island and has headed the Youth Volunteer Program here at the refuge. The youths she will be working with will be cleaning trails, controlling erosion and replacing a few of the older boardwalks.



We would like to extend a special thanks to those who contributed to the Norman Bird Sanctuary Summer Camp Sponsor Fund. Because of their generosity, 16 children from low-income families in Newport County, are participating in our Nature Day Camp and Summer Challenge Programs, where they are learning about the natural world, and challenging themselves in an active and productive experience outdoors.

Around the Refuge

I looked forward to my first Spring at the Sanctuary with nervous anticipation. Spring is usually the most exciting season for birding, and it seemed that after familiarizing myself with the Fall and Winter birds that are here, Spring would bring the ultimate challenge.

For me, Spring arrived on March 23, in the form of a pair of Eastern Bluebirds that were spotted down in the community gardens. They stayed here three days before moving on. Maybe another year a pair will spend the summer here.

Since that time I have kept a check list of the different species of birds that I have seen on the refuge. Maple Swamp Pond has had quite a number of visitors this Spring which includes: Green Herons, Little Blue Herons, Black-Crowned Night Herons, American Bitterns, Great Egret, Wood Ducks, Black Ducks and Mallards.

A pair of Barn Owls have returned to the old water tower, and are raising five young. The young Great Horned Owl that we released last October has made frequent appearances lately, and seems intent on spending the summer nearby. A trio of Turkey Vultures circled overhead one day in April, and appearances have also been put in by Kestrels, Sharp Shinned and Red-Tailed Hawks, and a Northern Harrier.

Until now, I regarded Warblers as birds that were too small, too fast, and too numerous to try to identify, but lately, with a little effort (and a little help) I've identified, Yellow, Yellow Rumped, Yellow Throat, Parula, Pine, Black and White, and Blackburnian Warblers along our trails.

A pair of Barn Swallows are raising chicks in the rafters of our barn, and I suppose a few pairs of the numerous Tree Swallows are doing likewise in the trees.

Ring-Necked Pheasant, Great-Crested Fly-Catcher, Brown Thrasher, Caroline and House Wrens, Bobolink, Hummingbird, Chimney Swift, White-eyed Vireo, Rufus-Sided Towhee, Meadowlark, Northern Oriole, Goldfinch, Flicker, Mockingbirds, Catbird, Redwinged Blackbirds, Tree, Field and Song Sparrows, Cardinals, Chickadee, Robin, Crow, Grackle, and Oh yes, Starling complete my Spring birding checklist at the Norman Bird Sanctuary.

Larry

Public Programs

WILD EDIBLES

Thursday, July 24th.

7:00 p.m.

Discover and taste some delicious recipes from Nature's cupboard. Hap Morgan, Herbalist and NDC Teacher/Naturalist will be your guide, as you search the fields and forest in quest of Nature's wild edibles and useful plants.

STAR WALKS

Thursday, August 5th

9:00 p.m.

Enjoy the summer night air as you explore the stars and their legends with Bill O'Connell as your guide. Bring a blanket and binoculars if you have them. Call to confirm, if cloudy.

BEACH COMBERS WALK

Wednesday, August 13th.

7:00 p.m.

Learn the names and fascinating life stories of all those creatures you see on the beaches. Leader, Larry Taft, will point out shells, crabs, seaweeds, shore birds and other shore and sea life.

BIRD WALKS

Sunday mornings

8:00 a.m.

Please join us every Sunday morning at 8 a.m. for a guided bird walk. These hour long walks meander through various parts of the Sanctuary and are designed for all levels of "eggs" pertise. Free and open to the public.



NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

Saturday, August 23rd.

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Sanctuary will be the setting for a full day workshop designed to sharpen your senses and skills in photographing the beauty of the natural world.

Arthur Swoger, a nationally recognised photographer and naturalist, will be conducting the program. His photographs have been featured in National Geographic, Natural History, The Audubon Field Guide to North American Wildflowers, and in motion pictures and television.

Expert and beginner photographers alike will benefit as Mr Swoger shares tips and techniques acquired over many years as a professional Nature photographer. The workshop will include a one hour slide presentation, a one hour critique session (so bring along up to four of your best slides or prints) and a three hour field session out on the trails of the Sanctuary.

Bring your camers, plenty of film. sample photos, walking shoes, and a bag lunch

Limit 12 participants.

Fees \$25.00 (\$20.00 NBS members).

Pre-Registration is required.

The completion of the Trailside Museum is now just around the corner. We are about to launch the final phase: the construction of the physical elements. We hope to have this completed within the coming year. The groundwork has been set: the architects, cabinet makers, artists, and naturalists are ready to go to work. Our progress now hinges on funding. We are seeking additional grants and contributions, and will hold our annual fund-raisers. If you are able to contribute toward the completion of the museum your generosity will be greatly appreciated, not only by us, but by our visitors who might see the Sanctuary in a different light, after having started here at this doorstep.



BENEFIT CONCERT FOR SAVE THE BAY

The Channing Music Series will present a joint concert this summer by the Paul Winter Consort and Alex di Grassi: to benefit the important work of Save the Bay. Save the Bay has been recognised nationally as an outstanding environmental organization striving to protect and preserve the water quality of Narragansett Bay.

Paul Winter and his music have long been recognised for their dedicated and moving appeals to our appreciation for our natural resources. Paul has developed a unique musical style in which he calls to and responds the calls of nature. His music incorporates elements of jazz, folk and classical music as well as the recorded callings of wildlife including the Whale, the Wolf and the Loon

Alex di Grassi is an acoustic guitarist who combines the influences jazz, classical and various types of folk music in a unique style that has made him one of the leading figures in the new school of American acoustic guitar.

The concert will take place on July 12th, 3:00 pm. until 7:00 pm., at the Eisenhower House, at Fort Adams State Park. Tickets are available through Save the Bay, the Music Box on Thames Street and at Ticketron outlets.

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