

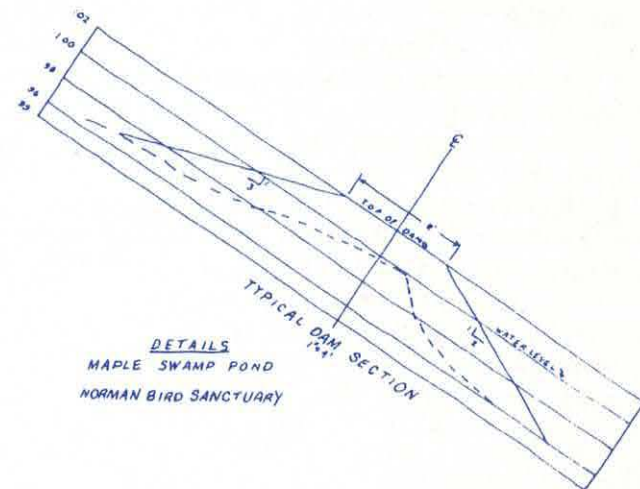


The Norman Bird Flyer

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 4 NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY, THIRD BEACH ROAD, MIDDLETOWN, RHODE ISLAND 02840 PHONE 401-846-2577 *

POND REPAIR

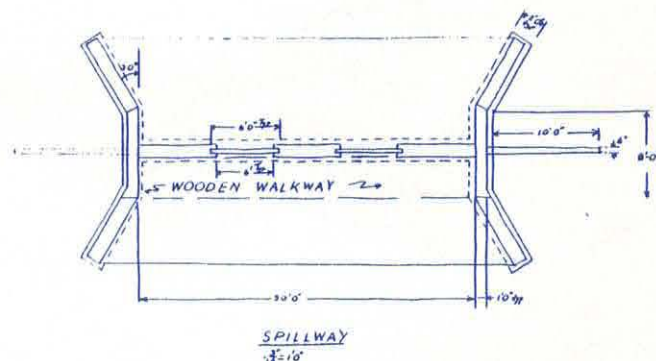
Fall 1983



Pond Repairs in the Offing

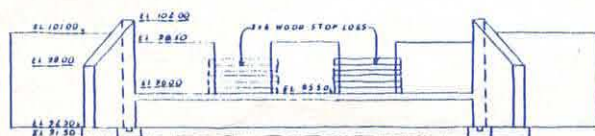
At the turn of the century, when the Norman Bird Sanctuary was still a farm, the farmers made a pond down in the swamp. They had cows to water. The swamp muds were piled up to form a crude dam. Spring floods spilled over the earthen structure every year, but enough water stayed in the pond to water the stock. Over the years, muskrats, tree roots, and human traffic wore the dam down. The pond, in a natural process of aging, slowly filled in with washed-down sediments and the muck of decomposing vegetation. Now in the late summer, the brook bed cuts through it, but it's hardly a pond. Yellow aster, touch-me-not, burreeds, bulrush, and smartweeds grew tall out of the rich bottom sediments.

In the early sixties, the pond--now called Maple Swamp Pond--was dredged out, and a new stone dam was built to contain the spring floods. Now, twenty years later, the same factors have worked to fill in the pond again. Much of the old dam has



eroded away, and water has found a path around the stone. In this latest chapter in Maple Swamp Pond History, the planners decided to start from scratch. Much of the old dike will be removed. A new spillway will be constructed of concrete with white cedar stop-logs employed to control water levels. A plank bridge will span the spillway. The new dam will be two feet higher than the present structure, will flood over two acres of wet woodlands, and will create nearly four times the wetland area now flooded.

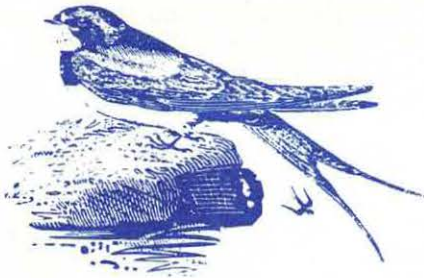
But besides increasing the diversity and quality of wildlife found in the refuge, the pond will serve an important function as a natural interpretive area. Nearly every hiker at the refuge passes the pond on his way out through the woodlands to the ridges. Few will fail to appreciate the rich life and beauty of the pond.



NEW SPILLWAY - MAPLE SWAMP POND

FALL MIGRATION SKETCHES

Bird Migration has long been a subject of fascination and mystery for scientists and amateur bird-watchers all over. Migration is far from fully understood. Scientists do know that the urge to migrate is, in part, brought on by changes in day length and hormonal balances. Weather conditions are widely recognized as playing an important role in the more specific timing of migration. Birds set out with stores enough of fat, possibly a genetically coded directional map, an ability to orient to the sun and stars, and perhaps even the ability to follow the alignment of the Earth's magnetic fields. Their direction in autumn is south, far enough south to find a food supply which can sustain them, and sometimes further. Incredible and old hat at the same time, migration is looked forward to with the zeal of children to Christmas.



Tree Swallows, Iridoprocne bicolor

Each August/September, huge flocks of these black-shouldered, white-bellied birds congregate over the marshes and ponds of Third Beach Road prior to moving south to wintering grounds along coastal sections south of Long Island to Central America. These flocks stretch for miles sometimes and can resemble horizontal tornadoes. The tornado undulates and shifts as the flocks move over the land on their way south. Some observers have estimated flock size in the millions of birds.

The Norman Bird Flyer is published by the Norman Bird Sanctuary, a non-profit nature preserve established under the will of Mabel Norman Cerio.
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Co-Directors: Deborah Clark, Timothy Traver



Sanderling, Calidris alba

Although some of these chunky, gray-white sandpipers can be seen chasing waves on Newport beaches through the winter; many others of these long distance migrants work their way south to the farthest reaches of Argentina.

Some of these remain on Arctic breeding grounds only long enough to see their eggs hatch before beginning an 8,000 mile journey south. The young, like other shore birds, are precocial--self sufficient almost immediately after emerging from the eggs. In most species, however, at least one parent remains in the area to guard hatchlings from predators.



Merlin, Falcon columbarius

October is the big month for these jay-sized falcons. On a clear day at Hanging Rock, one of these swift flyers may surprise you. These falcons stick to the coast during migration where food in the form of migrating shore and song birds, is plentiful. Kestrels and Sharp-shinned Hawks will be by far the most abundant hawk migrating in October, but Merlins are not a rare sighting.

CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Saturday Afternoon Adventures

SATURDAY AFTERNOON ADVENTURES.

These three-hour adventures are among the favorites of summer campers. Programs limited to ten participants. For children grades 5-8. Registration required.

Time: 1:00 pm-4:00 pm

Fee: \$5.00 member; \$7.00 non-member

STOCKING THE SALT WATER AQUARIUM.

Many animals, including mummichogs, fiddler crabs, mussel, and snails, live in the salt tank at the Sanctuary. Fish seining and crab collecting down on the shore provide the framework for discovering the nature of our tidal zones.

Date: 8 October

ROCK CLIMBING.

Rock climbing with the right equipment, under the supervision of trained climbers is as safe as it is exciting. This program will teach children the basic knots needed by the climber, the communication system used between climber and belayer, and, of course, all will have a chance to scale a ledge in the refuge.

Date: 22 October

PIONEER TOY-MAKING

Pioneers' toys, using materials from nature's cupboards, were cleverly designed and simply rendered. Their do-it-yourself appeal and ability to provide hours of entertainment, both in the making and in the using, endures even today. This workshop will provide materials and instruction in making several toys and games.

Date: 19 November



Halloween Party

Haunted house, costume parade and competition, fortune telling by the great wanda, apple bobbing, pin the tail on the pumpkin, and much more. A party for children and adult kindred spirits.

Date: Sunday 30 October

Time: 2:30- 5:00pm

Fee: member .75, non-member 1.25

Nature Club

A Saturday morning alternative for your child, the Norman Bird Sanctuary's Nature Club is a place where children can safely do things that have always excited their curiosity, under the guidance of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic adult staff. Seven to ten children per instructor. For children in grades K-4. Registration required.

Dates: October 8-29; November 5-26

Time: 9:00-12:00 noon

Fee: \$20.00 members; \$25 non-members



"LIFE BIRD?"

RENEWAL TIME

We will soon be sending out membership renewal forms. Thanks to you, we will send nearly 1,000 of them!!!

Family and Individual memberships provided over one-quarter of the Sanctuary's operating budget last year. Each and every \$15.00 membership makes an important difference. Continued educational programming and upkeep of the trails, orchards, and fields depends on your help.

Are your friends members? Please pass the word!

9th ANNUAL AQUIDNECK ISLAND HARVEST FAIR

OCTOBER 1 & 2

Lamb Roast

The Lamb Roast and contradance is again planned for Saturday night. Tickets are \$10.00 for dinner and dance and \$3.00 for just the dance. Tickets go on sale Monday, September 19. Reservations will be held for three days only, so be sure to come down and pick up your tickets right away.

Kiddie Games

There will be more for the wee ones at this year's Fair. Kiddie games, face painting, pumpkin painting, a hay pile, shell games, balloons, and booth games, and more, including the Great Shonting magic show.

Fair Parking and Unfair Parking

Parking for the Harvest Fair is free and plentiful. This year, a south and north lot will be available, so there will be no one-way traffic. No parking is allowable on Third Beach Road or Howland Avenue.

AQUIDNECK ISLAND HARVEST FAIR

FUN? YOU BET!!

OCTOBER 1 & 2
10:00AM - 5:00PM

SATURDAY

Spider Bridge Blue Grass Band
Home and Garden Contest Judging
Jody and Donna Gibson - Folk Artists
The Bagpiper
Lamb Roast Dinner and Contradance

SUNDAY

Paul Geremia - Folk/Blues Artist
Newport Concert Band
ALB - Rock music
Log Sawing Contest

BOTH DAYS

Cider Pressing, New Games, Shonting the Magnificent Magic shows, Puppets, Crafts and More Crafts, Flea Market, Food and Drink, Famous Mud Pit, Pony Rides, Giant Bell Ringer, Coconut Throw, Monkey Bridge, Exhibits, Hay Rides, Animal Kingdom, Clowns, More!

ADMISSION: Adults \$1.50
Children 50¢

COUNT ME IN !

I'll help the Sanctuary with the Harvest Fair!

Bake Sale

I'll bring:

<input type="checkbox"/> Cake	<input type="checkbox"/> Breads
<input type="checkbox"/> Pie	<input type="checkbox"/> Rolls
<input type="checkbox"/> Cookies	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Fudge	
<input type="checkbox"/> Brownies	
<input type="checkbox"/> Muffins	

Country Store

I'll bring some home-made:

<input type="checkbox"/> Jam	<input type="checkbox"/> Canned Tomatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> Jellies	<input type="checkbox"/> Canned Vegetables
<input type="checkbox"/> Pickles	<input type="checkbox"/> Garden Produce

Volunteer Worker

I'll volunteer to help

<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday with:
<input type="checkbox"/> Gates	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking
<input type="checkbox"/> Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Country Store
<input type="checkbox"/> Games	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean-Up
<input type="checkbox"/> Set-Up	

Name _____ Phone # _____

Flea Market

I'll bring:

<input type="checkbox"/> Children's clothes
<input type="checkbox"/> Children's books
<input type="checkbox"/> Toys
<input type="checkbox"/> Household items

If you can help with any of the above, please send this form to the Sanctuary, or call us at 848-2577 for more information.

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY EVENTS

Sunday Morning Birding

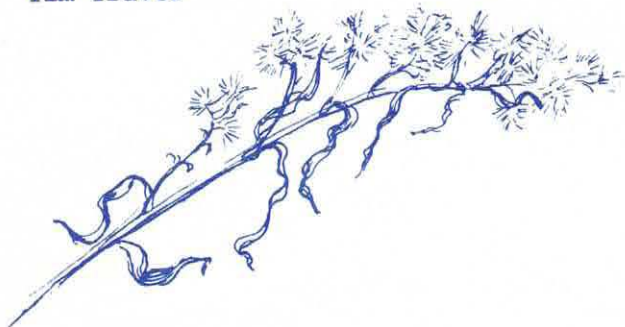
These weekly forays feature the trails of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, the beaches and rocky shorelines of Sachuest Point, and later in the Fall some of the Island's fresh ponds. Walks last from 1 to 2 hours and are free and open to the public. Bring binoculars and field guides.

Dates: Every Sunday
Time: 8:00am
Guide: Sanctuary staff

Sunday Afternoon Tours

Autumn is the most popular walking time here at the refuge. Guided tours for the whole family with a special focus will be offered on several Sunday afternoons this year. Members are invited free of charge. Non-members are asked a \$2.00 trail fee.
Time: 2:00 PM; Place: Meet by the front entrance sign.

Fall Bird Migration, 25SEP, Barry Murphy
Fall Bird Migration, 16OCT, Gillian Hall
Fall Foliage, 23OCT, Delia Clark
Sanctuary Shrubs in Fruit, 20 NOV,
Tim Traver



Falconry: Lecture

The Newport Garden Club presents Mr. Dick Lucius, master falconer for over 30 years, and an experienced lecturer. Mr. Lucius will speak on the history of falconry and his experiences as a hawk trainer. Live hawks, including a Golden Eagle, will be shown.

Date: 21 September
Time: 1:00pm
Admission: Free

Star Gazing

What did the ancients see when they looked past an Autumn moon toward the web of bright pinpricks we now know as distant suns? The Fall star walk will focus on constellations and star legends from around the world. In the event of clouds, call the Sanctuary for a rescheduled date. Dress warmly!

Date: 2 December
Time: 7:30 pm
Fee: \$1.00 members, \$2.00 non-members
Star Guide: Delia Clark



Wreath Making

Holiday greens can look fresh throughout the season with a special design which makes use of water retention capabilities of sphagnum moss. We'll provide materials. Registration is required.

Date: 4 December
Fee: \$7.00 members, \$9.00 non-members
Instructor: Chris Callahan

PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

Name _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____

Sanctuary Member _____ Non-Member _____ Please Send Membership Information _____

		#Attending	Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Club Session #1	October 8-29	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Club Session #2	Nov 5-26	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stocking the Salt Water Aquarium	October 8	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing	October 22	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pioneer Toy Making	November 19	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wreath Making	December 4	_____	_____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

A WILD IDEA

What do the chickadees, cardinals, gold finches, nuthatches, white-throated sparrows, and other birds so familiar around home feeders eat in the winter when left to their own devices in the wild? Well, one good way to find out is to take a walk through the abandoned field behind your house, the fallow field or pasture down at the corner, or the empty house lot where "weeds" grow, and observe these birds eating. Another way is to go out collecting wild bird seed.

Some of our least wanted weeds are favorites among birds. The lamb's quarters you pulled out of your garden, hopefully before it went to seed, the curled dock, and ragweed growing by the side of the garage, or the bamboo-like knotweed which flowers in the early fall, all provide food for the birds.

Try stripping seed from a few of these untouchables and offering it with the standard feeder fare. Or hang a passel of weed from a tree branch by the kitchen window just to see what happens. You might try keeping a log of which wild foods the birds most prefer. This is a favorite project for children, too, and a nice way to include them in the feeder operation.

For more information on weeds and what birds like to eat, the following reading is recommended:

Weeds, Martin, Golden Press.

American Wildlife and Plants, A Guide To Wildlife Habits, Martin, Zim, Nelson, Dover Press.

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY
Third Beach Road
Middletown, Rhode Island



Barn Owls Fledged from Watertower

The metal water tower next to the Sanctuary barn holds no water now, but it's far from empty. A family of barn owls has lived there off and on now for nearly 20 years. This is especially good because conversion of farms and farmland in R.I. has caused barn owl populations to decline.

James Baird, first director of the refuge, suggested cutting a hole in the old tank in hopes of attracting an owl family. Owls took to his idea nearly right away, but nesting over the years has always been spotty. Successful nesting this year is in part attributable to a platform erected inside the tower by Chris Raithel of the R.I. Department of Environmental Management and Sanctuary staff. Two young owls fledged, taking their first tentative flight out over the apple orchard sometime in August.



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