



# The Norman Bird Flyer

Volume 16, No. 3

Fall 1995

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## The History of Paradise

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This photo, believed to be Dr. Cerio, shows a row of chicken coops which lined the lawn of the farmhouse.

Since the publication of the article "Paradise Lost", in our Spring newsletter which addressed the uncertain future of the Paradise Farm complex, the Newport Collaborative has been hard at work uncovering a wealth of historic information documenting the rich history of the Paradise Farmhouse and surrounding buildings. With the help of the Newport Historical Society and subconsultant Lucinda Brockway from Kennebunk, Maine, they have been able to formulate a picture of the architectural, agricultural and natural history of Paradise Farm and its evolution into the place we know today.

The earliest records of Paradise Farm indicate the house may have been built by Thomas Weaver about 1750. It is in the Will of the subsequent owner, Williams Stoddard that the first image of the farm complex as an agricultural unit appears--great room and chamber above, keeping room, bedroom, garret (attic), hen house, cheese room, wash room, kitchen, kitchen chamber, cellar, well of water, privy, crib (corn), horses' stable, garden and orchard. In 1782, the farm was sold to Benjamin Gardiner. The deed refers to



Farmhands, loading corn into the original barn, what was later turned into Mable Norman Cerio's painting studio.



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two hundred and ten acres with a "mansion" house and other buildings.

This colonial period was a prosperous one for Paradise Farm and its owners. Benjamin Gardiner's household in 1782 consisted of 10 members, four of which were black, (it is unknown if they were in bondage or free) presumably farm workers. In his Will of 1819, Gardiner provides an inventory of his estate including the farm, which by colonial standards was a sizable one.

After Benjamin Gardiner's death in 1819, the farm saw two more owners before George H. Norman took over ownership in the late 19th century. The first was Samuel Allen who lived on the property until 1869 when George Gordon King, a well-known Newporter, lawyer and US Congressman purchased the farm. During that period, the property grew to 260 acres and its use changed from that of commercial farm to more of a country estate and was, at times, leased to summer visitors. A record by Maud Howe Elliott (*This Was My Newport*) indicates that her mother, Julia Ward Howe and uncle Ward McAlister, may have summered at the farm as children in the 1830s.

Aptly named, Paradise Valley became a focus of well-known 19th-century painters of nature, including the luminists John F. Kensett, James A. Suydam, Thomas Worthington Whittredge, and others. John La Farge rented a house in the valley west of the farm and painted from Hanging Rock. As these painters portrayed, the landscape at that time was much more open than we know it today. Sheep grazed over the upland areas which could not be plowed. The importance of this appreciation is the recognition of nature expressed in the art work-an appreciation shared by subsequent owners of the farm and NBS members.

Construction of the ponds was the driving force behind George Norman's purchase of the property. He was realizing the completion of a proposal he had made to the City of

Newport in 1876 for a system of water works. The works consisted of Easton's North Pond, some low embankments at Easton's South Pond, and the beginnings of St. Mary's Reservoir. In 1882 Easton's North Pond dam was added to and Nelson's Reservoir was built together with works for diverting Paradise Brook into it. In 1898, with the purchase of Paradise Farm by Norman, Gardiner's pond was dammed and the small pond and adjoining marsh flooded to become Gardiner's Reservoir. The property was then deeded to the Water Works for \$1.00 in the early 1900s.

The Norman family expanded the farm's use as a country estate and transformed the property to its current configuration. The farmhouse was enlarged and embellished and re-oriented to face a U-shaped drive and a formal walled garden. Additional outbuildings were also added. The original barn was converted to the structure we know today as Mable Norman Cerio's artist studio.

Throughout the time the Normans owned Paradise Farm, interest in gardening, the landscape, painting, ornithology, and farming prevailed the use and appreciation of the property. As early as 1916, Miss Mable Norman corresponded with leading authorities on birding and landscape planting to attract birds. Since 1950, with the establishment of the Norman Bird Sanctuary by Mable Norman Cerio, the management of the Bird Sanctuary has maintained some of the agricultural feel and open space of the farm and, also the diversity of other ecological habitats.

Article written by the Newport Collaborative and Susan VanDerhoof. Thank you to the Newport Historical Society for the use of photos from the Mable Norman Cerio collection.



## After School Hikes

Day: Thursdays

Dates: October 12th & 19th  
November 2nd & 16th  
December 6th

Time: 3:00 - 4:30

Fee: \$6.00 Non-member \$4.00 Member/Hike  
\$24.00 Non-member\* \$16.00 Member\*

\*Package price for all 5 hikes

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Autumn is such a great time at the Bird Sanctuary. The geese are migrating, the leaves are turning colors and the mosquitoes are gone! Come join the Sanctuary's Education Specialists for a hike up to Hanging Rock, or the Grey Craig Trail and learn about the wonders of nature. Open to children in Grades K-4. Please dress for the weather.



## Family Nature Walks

Day: Saturdays

Dates: October 14th - December 2nd

Time: 2:00 pm

Fee: \$4.00 non-member adult FREE Members  
\$1.00 non-member child

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

### FAMILY PROGRAM

Autumn is the time of change when the birds migrate south for the winter and flowers send out their seeds and the forest becomes a brilliant blaze of colors before the leaves fall. Families and friends are welcome to join the Sanctuary's staff for a gentle and enjoyable hike through the refuge as Autumn begins slumbering toward Winter. Please dress for the weather. Hikes are weather dependent. Please call in advance. Pre-registration is not required.

## Wild Flower Walk

Date: Sunday, October 1st

Time: 1:00 pm

Fee: \$4.00 Members & Non-members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

### ADULT PROGRAM

Wild flowers abound here at the Sanctuary and Fall is a time for rich and varying displays of color, smells and textures. Join Lisa Gould, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Natural History Survey, as she searches high and low for some of the wild and beautiful plants of our area. Identification and natural history of these plants will be covered. Please dress for the weather and wear comfortable hiking shoes.

## Natural Holiday Crafts

Date: Saturday, December 9th\*

Time: 1:00-3:00 pm

Fee: \$10.00 Non-member \$8.00 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Natural holiday crafts can be a wonderful way to show friends and family your commitment to the environment. Recycling nature's own gifts can be fun and creative. Each child will make three different ornaments or other type of gift to bring home. Make your holiday the natural way this year! The class is open for children in grades K-4. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required.

\*If December 9th class fills, a second class will be scheduled for December 16th. Please inquire.





(Programs Continued)

## Nature Club

Day: Saturdays

Dates: See Listing Below

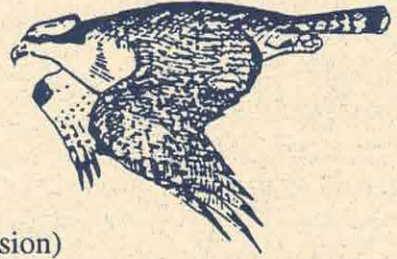
Time: 9:30-12:30

Fee: Session #1: \$48.00 Non-member \$40.00 Member (Per Session)

Session #2: \$36.00 Non-member \$30.00 Member (Per Session)

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

### CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



Saturday morning Nature Club is starting once again this Fall so, if you like the great outdoors, then this is the club for you! Learn something new about nature each week as you explore everything from bats to weather. Join us for hikes along our ridges and maybe even a day at the seashore. Crafts and songs will add to the fun and learning. Open to children in Grades K-4. Please be sure to dress for the weather.

#### Session #1

**October 14th**

Where do the Birds Go?

**October 21st**

The Color of Leaves

**October 28th**

Night Creatures

**November 4th**

Nuts About Squirrels

#### Session #2

**November 11th**

How Seeds Travel

**November 18th**

Autumn Weather

**December 2nd**

Rabbits

## Autumn Night Hike with the Newport Childrens Theatre

October 26th, 27th\* and 28th

7:00 pm

\$8.00 Non-member \$6.00 Members

What are all the animals doing at night? Did you ever wonder where birds sleep? Do all owls hoot? Watch out for skunks! Why aren't there any more frogs this time of year? Come join the wonderfully creative and entertaining actors of the Newport Children's Theatre for a night of mystery, excitement and laughs as we explore the nocturnal side of the Norman Bird Sanctuary. This night is guaranteed to be the most fun you've had in a long time!

\* After the Night Hike on October 27th join the  
Astronomical Society for a free evening of Stargazing



Norman Bird Sanctuary's  
21st Annual



**an Old-Fashioned Country Fair**

**OCTOBER 7 & 8**  
**10 am to 5 pm Rain or Shine**  
**\$4/Adult, \$1/Child**

**Come Celebrate Fall**

...at our annual Harvest Fair. Brave the mud pit and test your stamina on the greased pole. The event features hay and pony rides, face painting and old-fashioned games for kids. Live entertainment, beauty contests (for vegetables and flowers); home cooking; artisans and crafters gathered under the big top.

**It wouldn't be October without it!**

**NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY**  
**Third Beach Road, Middletown, Rhode Island**

**For Information Call**  
**846-2577**





## A VISITOR FROM ASIA

Making the national news, was the arrival of a Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*) to the shores of Second and Third Beaches. This was perhaps the sighting of the century for many birders. Congratulations to Sanctuary member and volunteer, Patty O'Neill who first sighted and identified the bird. Numerous people from as far away as Vermont, New York, New Jersey and even Ohio travelled here in search of this "life bird". The gull which calls the shores of China, Korea, Japan and Taiwan its home, probably got lost and tired somewhere out in the Pacific and found a freighter to rest upon, only to later find itself on the shores of the wrong ocean.

## UNIQUE SUMMER SIGHTINGS

Some other animals have made *out of the ordinary* visits to Aquidneck Island this Summer. The most notable of these was a Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*). This yellow and blue-gray bird, a denizen of southern swamps, usually a rare vagrant in these parts, made an appearance right here in the woods of the Sanctuary. It has been gradually extending its range northward. In 1992, a pair was discovered nesting in the Great Swamp management area in South Kingstown. That was only the second time it had been discovered nesting in Southern New England!

Other summer sightings here at the Sanctuary include a White-tailed doe and fawn (*Odocoileus virginianus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*) and a lone osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) who spent most of the summer roosting near the Maple Swamp Pond. This is the second year the Osprey have been seen. Perhaps next year will yield a nesting pair?

The ocean offered a rare chance for scientific study when a Right Whale (*Balaena glacialis*) carcass washed up onto Second Beach in July. With only a few hundred individuals of this species left in existence makes the Right Whale one of the rarest animals on earth.

Other arrivals to our shores included a Minke Whale and a leather-back turtle. Unfortunately, both were dead.

## ONE LUCKY BIRD

This Great Horned Owl certainly picked the right house to land at when he sustained some nerve damage in his wings last winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Frank found the owl sitting on their deck, and realizing it was injured, bravely captured the owl and brought it to us.

After a few months of recovery with rehabilitator Joe Zybrowski, the owl was ready to return home. Mr. and Mrs. Frank, were on hand to snap this photo of Joe just before he released the bird into the woods of the Sanctuary. A great success story!







Stop in and welcome our new staff. From Left to right, Sharon Schultz, Dana Chrostowski, Nikki Hinds & Dede Forker

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## NEW FACES and FOND FAREWELLS

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This Fall we bid a fond farewell to two staff members and welcome four new people to our ever-growing staff.

Forster Peabody, our part-time Maintenance Assistant for the past two years, has begun classes at the Mass. Maritime Academy in preparation for a career with the Merchant Marines. Forster, who just turned 18 this August, has been a part of our team since he was 14, first working on the Summer Trail Crew for 3 years, then working year-round keeping our buildings and grounds in top shape.

Karin Lucci, our Education Specialist for the past 18 months, has received another offer she can't refuse (or would be crazy to refuse). This Fall she will be traveling to different parts of the globe with her husband Tony, a chef, as he refines his skills in international cuisine. Karin's special interests in marine ecology and astronomy have contributed greatly to our programs for schools and the public.

We welcome Veronica "Nikki" Hinds, as our new part-time Refuge Caretaker. Nikki began working here this past June in a summer position as Supervisor of the Youth Conservation Program a.k.a. Trail Crew. Nikki is

currently pursuing her masters in ornithology at URI where she also received her bachelors degree in Science. Among her accomplishments, Nikki has hiked the entire Appalachian trail from Georgia to Maine, a solo trek that took her 6 months to complete. She has also worked on a volunteer trail crew with the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Two new Education specialists joined our staff this Fall too. Dana Chrostowski and Dorothy "Dede" Forker, both of whom began with summer positions as our camp's Teacher/Naturalists. Dana is a recent

graduate of the URI Marine Affairs program; Dede has her master's degree in Education and has worked as a 3rd grade teacher at Rocky Hill School in East Greenwich.

Last, but not least, we welcome our new Receptionist, Sharon Schultz. Sharon has been an office volunteer here at N.B.S. for the past two years. In addition to being a great asset to office organization, Sharon has a bachelors in biology and has done extensive studies on salt marsh and shore plants in Maine. Her experience has also taken her to the Florida Keys, where she worked with a group concerned with preserving coral reefs.

Give to the  
NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY  
through

### Payroll Deduction

Your may donate through the **UNITED WAY** by writing the Norman Bird Sanctuary in or through the **COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN**.

Please call the NBS office for more information



# Environmental Programs

## **Preschoolers with Parents**

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Fee: \$25 Non-Members \$20 Members  
(Price is per Session)

Pre-registration and pre-payment required  
**CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

## **Fledglings (without Parent)**

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 9:30-11:30

Fee: \$25 Non-members \$20 Members  
(Price is per session)

Pre-registration and pre-payment required  
**CHILDREN'S PROGRAM**

### **PLEASE SEE DATES & THEMES LISTED BELOW**

Exploring nature's Fall themes with short walks, simple crafts, stories, and lots of silliness serve as a wonderful introduction to the Sanctuary. Teacher, Marilyn Lyell, guides your child through their first discovery of nature. Adults are expected to join in the fun! Please dress for the weather. For children ages 3 & 4 who are not yet in Kindergarten.

Hikes, crafts, stories and games are all a part of this 1 1/2 hour class designed to continue your child's introduction to nature and the Sanctuary. Each week offers a new theme (listed below) waiting to be explored. For children ages 4 & 5 who have previously participated in our Preschoolers with Parents program.

### **Session #1**

**October 11**

Indians Were Here

**October 18th**

The Colors of Fall

**October 25th**

Honking Geese

**November 1st**

Where'd the Frogs Go?

### **Session #2**

**November 8th**

Trails of the Sanctuary

**November 15th**

Just a Day at the Beach

**November 22nd**

What's a Chickadee?

**November 29th**

Burr...It's Getting Cold!

## **REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Unless stated otherwise, pre-registration is required for programs. Fees for programs requiring registration must be paid in advance by cash, check or Mastercard/Visa. Registration can be made by mail or by phone (with credit card payments). **Fees will be refunded in full up to five days before the program. With less than five days notice, fees will be refunded only if you can be replaced with a person from the waiting list.** Please use the registration form on page 11 if registering by mail.



## **RABIES ON THE LOOSE**

We are in the midst of a massive attack of a raccoon strain of the rabies virus. Our local Animal Control Officers (ACO) each receive about 10 calls a day, with most producing rabid animals.

Rabies is an infectious disease of the central nervous system that is caused by a virus concentrated in the saliva (spit) of infected animals. Rabies is spread when an animal bites or scratches another animal. It also can be passed through the saliva of an infected animal into a wound or into the eyes or mouth of a person handling a rabid animal without an actual bite occurring.

Since raccoons live in close proximity to humans, both in cities and more rural areas, this strain of rabies poses a greater risk to cats, dogs and humans than strains carried by other animals. There are steps, however that you can take to protect yourself and your pets:

- **VACCINATE!** Vaccinating your pets is the first line of defense in the fight against rabies.
- **DO NOT TRAP ANIMALS.** It is illegal to trap wild animals. The best way to clear your property of unwanted animals is to remove the incentive for them to be there; food, water or shelter.
- If you see a sick animal, call your local police and ask for animal control or on Navy property call NETC Pest Control at 841-4487.  
**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE THE ANIMAL YOURSELF!**
- **DO NOT LEAVE PETS OUTDOORS ALONE!**

**Rabies Clinic**

Bring Your Cats & Dogs  
to  
**SACHUEST POINT  
WILDLIFE REFUGE**  
on  
**Saturday, October 21st**  
**12:30 - 2:30 pm**  
**\$8.00 per shot**



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## THE BARN OWL SHOP

**We have the perfect gift for all the nature lovers on your list!**

- BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES
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- BOOKS, TAPES & CDs
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- NATURE ACTIVITIES

There are items just right to fit into a stocking too. Try our **Pine Scented Soap, Earth Marbles, Finger Puppets, Bug Boxes, Gems & Minerals, Magnets** too! Members receive a 10% discount. Come in and browse!

**Remember your purchases help support  
The Norman Bird Sanctuary!**

**Don't Forget to Buy Your NBS Christmas Cards Too!**

**25% Off**

- Feeder Accessories (with the purchase of a feeder)
- Fanny Pack Kits
- Selected Books (when you attend one of our programs)



# REGISTRATION/MEMBERSHIP FORM

PLEASE JOIN US!  
NBS Membership Form

- ☐ Student (\$10)
- ☐ Individual (\$20)
- ☐ Family (\$30)
- ☐ Sustaining (\$50)

- ☐ Patron (\$100)
- ☐ Business/Institution (\$100)
- ☐ Supporting (\$250)
- ☐ Benefactor (\$500)

## ADDRESS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Mastercard VISA

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Make Checks Payable To: Norman Bird Sanctuary

## Please Register the Following:

Name	Age & Grade	Program	Fee
Name	Age & Grade	Program	Fee
Name	Age & Grade	Program	Fee
Name	Age & Grade	Program	Fee

Please list any medical conditions/problems we should be aware of including allergies & medications:

**Waiver:** In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I hereby give my permission to the Norman Bird Sanctuary staff or medical personnel to take emergency measures as necessary.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## OUR MISSION

To preserve the 450 acre Norman Bird Sanctuary for the protection of animals and birds and for the enjoyment of the public; to assist the Trustee in the overall management and development of the Sanctuary; to conduct programs for children and adults in environmental education and natural sciences; to work with individuals and groups in the region in the preservation of natural habitats and open space.

**For Information Call  
846-2577**

## FALL HOURS

**TUESDAY-SUNDAY**  
9 am to 5 pm

Closed  
Thanksgiving Day

Norman Bird Sanctuary  
583 Third Beach Road  
Middletown, RI 02842



## HELP WANTED! for the HARVEST FAIR

- Face Painters
- Midway Games
- Monkey Bridge
- Baked Goods
- & Much More

## ATTENTION CRAFTERS

We still have a few openings in our crafts tent for homemade goods. Please contact the NBS office for details at 846-2577.

OR TO CURRENT RESIDENT

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