

THE FLYER

the norman bird sanctuary newsletter

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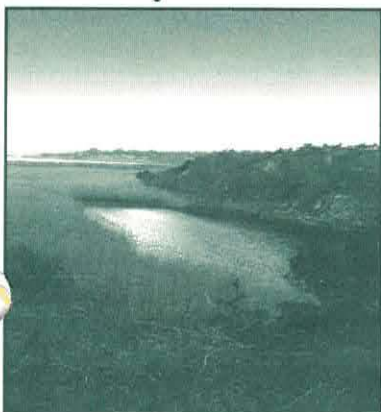
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Sanctuary Photo



Melissa Ellis photo

One Million Dollar Grant to Acquire Third Beach



by Betsy deLeiris

I imagine you've heard the news by now. Jay Manning, President of the Friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, has signed a purchase and sale agreement to buy 23 acres of Sakonnet River frontage and beach for \$3,687,500. You probably have three questions for me:

Why buy this?

Why do it now?

Why pay so much?

I think a little descriptive history is in order first.

When Mabel Norman Cerio died in 1949 and created the Norman Bird Sanctuary, she left these 23 acres in a separate trust: for the benefit of her daughter for life, then, for 21 years, for the benefit of her grandchildren, and, finally, to go to her grandchildren free of

trust. The property was known for many years as the Third Beach Club, and, in keeping with Mabel Norman Cerio's express wish, was used by many families to enjoy the delights of this beautiful spot fronting on the Sakonnet River. The clubhouse was last open in 1993, although some of its members continued to enjoy the "cabanas", the

small cottages on the beach side, each summer. Few of those who enjoyed the pleasures of the beach or waded in the Maidford River realized that this idyllic spot was private property. Even fewer knew that the road past Peabody's Beach and on to the Navy Beach was a private road.

In 1997, the same court decision that gave the Norman Bird Sanctuary ownership of the Paradise Farm buildings gave ownership of the

beach property to the five grandchildren of Mabel Norman Cerio. Importantly, the Sanctuary acquired a right of first refusal, should the family decide to sell. Over the next few years, we had many conversations with the owners about the Sanctuary's desire to purchase and protect this important piece, but were

unable to reach agreement about the value.

In September, lawyers for the family notified us that they had received an offer to purchase the property. Jay Manning, Veronica Hinds and I had already met with the prospective purchaser, a real estate developer from Massachusetts. He told

Protection of this parcel ensures public access on the road, and protects the beautiful stretch of beach for the public's enjoyment.

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Each staff member has an identifying icon. Please follow the guide to identify articles in the newsletter.



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EDUCATION



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OFFICE MANAGER



Melissa Martin Ellis
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

One Million Dollar Grant to

Continued from Page 1

us that he planned to put a horse farm on the property, building a stable, carriage house and possibly other structures. He also planned a 10,000 square foot addition to the small Cape Cod cottage on the property. We understood that he would be closing the private road.

We had thirty days to match this offer. The Board carefully discussed the Sanctuary's options. We did not lightly undertake the task of raising nearly \$4 million. Our organization is a

small one. Our members and friends are loyal, but this was a task of a magnitude far greater than any we'd undertaken. We had been talking for two years with a number of prospective partners about trying to purchase this

property; now, we sat down with them to see if it was realistic for us to tackle such a daunting task.

Our partners agreed with us unanimously. The preservation of this piece was absolutely critical! This land links the Norman Bird Sanctuary and the Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge, each a stunning wildlife refuge in its own right. It not only serves as a connector on the Sakonnet Greenway, but also serves as a significant wildlife corridor. It includes fragile marshland and upland. It provides an opportunity for us to continue to expand and improve our grasslands, while adding a jewel of a new ecosystem to the Sanctuary's holdings.

Protection of this parcel ensures public access on the road, and protects the beautiful stretch of beach for the public's enjoyment. Ownership ensures that we can continue to build upon our relationship with United States Fish and Wildlife, developing cohesive land management strategies to benefit wildlife on contiguous parcels. And none of us could be sure that the fairly extensive development proposed by the would-be purchaser would be all that would happen there.

*This land links the
Norman Bird Sanctuary
and the Sachuest Point
National Wildlife Refuge,
each a stunning wildlife
refuge in its own right.*

And so the Board, on October 20, voted to move forward to try to acquire this land. We had the right to match the offer on the table. While this seems an enormous sum, our survey of real estate sales in the area,

and our conversations with real estate brokers in the area, convinced us that the threat was a real one, that the value was not grossly inflated. If we failed to move within thirty days, our rights would be extinguished, and the sale would move forward. Given the inflation in the costs of coastal real estate in the last year, we would be unlikely to be able to compete for this property at a future date.

Our spirits were buoyed by an outpouring of support from the community. The Aquidneck Island Land Trust committed 10% of the purchase price and offered us technical support as well. Other donors have been coming forward with

Acquire Third Beach



The Maidford River and Third Beach Marsh.

Linda Ujifusa photo

generous support. But, time is of the essence, and we must raise these funds by April 1, 2003.

I am thrilled, therefore, to let you know that we have been awarded a \$1 million challenge grant, to support our efforts to raise the necessary funds. For every dollar in new funds pledged or received after November 6, 2002, we will receive \$1 from the donor of this grant. They have asked that we keep their identity anonymous. They are as committed as we are to the preservation of this priceless piece of our natural heritage, and I am confident that, with their help and yours, we will succeed!

We will still be moving forward with our everyday important work of protecting our lands, educating your children and ours, and sharing this precious place with our community. But today, with some urgency, we ask for your help to make our dream of protecting Third Beach a reality. We have established a designated fund to hold contributions for this project. We ask you to give as generously as you can to this important project. Together, we will meet the challenge.

I wanted to share with you some of the ways our members and friends have already contributed to this initiative. Children at Saint Michael's School held a dress-down day and raised more than \$200. Chaves Gardens on November 23, and Island Books on November 29, 30 and December 1, are contributing a portion of their sales. And friends have been sending or pledging donations ranging from \$10 to \$100,000. We've done a lot, have a long way to go, and will arrive in time! Please call us with your ideas. We will go with you to your favorite business or philanthropist, come to talk to your neighbors, whatever will help meet the goal. But we need you!

Some of our high school volunteers from Middletown High School had a great caption for this initiative "Home Sand Security"! I know that we can secure this priceless heritage for tomorrow's children to enjoy. Thanks for all of your help and faith in the Norman Bird Sanctuary.

Please find our inserted flyer within this newsletter and mail your contribution to the Third Beach initiative today!

Natural New England

We wish you a merry...

Natural New England is a new magazine focused on and celebrating science and outdoor exploration in the Northeast. Published quarterly, the magazine features diverse articles ranging from how lightning works to the science of making maple syrup, and including birding highlights, conservation news, museum activities and more. The magazine describes its mission as engaging the reader in the stuff of our extended backyards, either actively or from the armchair. We find it lively and educational, and hope you will too.

You will receive a single gift issue of *Natural New England* in January, as a gift from the Norman Bird Sanctuary. If you like what you see, fill out and return the coupon on the cover for a free one-year subscription, or e-mail nne@maine.rr.com and request your free subscription as a Norman Bird Sanctuary member. (By the way, this won't open you up to a lot of junk mail. The magazine is not authorized to use or sell our mailing list!)

Happy reading!

Give the Gift of Preservation

Stumped on what to give for the holidays? How about a piece of Third Beach?

Come in to pick up (or have us send) a notecard, with the Third Beach Marsh (see photo above) and an inscription to your friends and family, letting them know that you love them enough to give them a gift of preservation of a priceless piece of our natural heritage?

Betsy Edeker



Guest Article

Homes in the Snow

By Lauren Parmelee

Winter is approaching. Daylight is fading early, gray clouds hang low, cold seeps through cracks in the floor, and the smell of snow hovers in the air. Where will you go when it snows? Will you haul in a stack of wood and stoke a roaring fire? Will you pull sweaters out of the cedar chest and bundle your family up inside warm wool? Will you chop vegetables and herbs for a hearty stew? Or will you pack up the car and head south to warmer climes?

Where do wild animals go when it snows?

In a nearby swamp or a pond, you may find a family of beavers in a cozy two-room lodge. Beavers use several strategies to survive the winter snows -- they create a winter shelter, store food, and congregate together to stay warm. There may be six or more of these large flat-tailed rodents living together over the cold season...a mated pair, two or more yearlings, and the kits that were born in the spring. Their lodge is a large pile of sticks and mud with two underwater entrances that lead to a feeding area and a large well-ventilated room that they have gnawed out in the middle. Before the water freezes, they pack fresh mud on the lodge that hardens like cement and keeps out any predators who may prowl across the ice. Beavers love to eat bark, so in preparation for winter they store saplings under the water near the lodge. Studies have shown that these winter homes are quite warm compared to the outside temperatures,

probably due to the structure's insulation and the numerous warm bodies inside.

Hibernating deep in the mud at the bottom of these same wetlands are reptiles, such as Snapping Turtles and Painted Turtles, as well as amphibians like Bullfrogs and Green Frogs. While many animals sleep a lot during the winter, those who are true hibernators



Lori Cochrane photo

Lauren Parmelee, the Sanctuary's new Assistant Education Director.

are in a state of long-term torpor during which their metabolism decreases, their heart and respiratory systems slow down, and their body temperatures drop. Some hibernating animals will eat a great deal of food and gain a lot of weight before settling down for the winter. Eastern Chipmunks and Woodchucks are two species of land mammals that are true hibernators. They both stuff themselves full of food and then find or create cozy dens in which to spend the winter.

In overgrown fields, you may spot a thick-furred Cottontail Rabbit using its large back feet to move quickly through the snow. Rabbits are active all winter, but they change their diet from green plants to buds and twigs that they nip off neatly with their sharp front teeth. They often feed at night, and rest during the day in "forms". Forms are hollowed out spaces among the dry

grasses and leaves found under shrubs. They are places where the snow is shallow, the sun is warm and there is protection from the wind. The brown and white coloration of Cottontail Rabbits and their ability to remain motionless helps them blend into the surrounding habitat and hide from predators. Deer are another example of an herbivore that changes its diet from green plants to buds, bark and twigs to make it through the winter.

Birds often change their diets from season to season, and they all have layers of fluffy downy feathers that trap air and help keep them warm. The Ruffed Grouse, a medium-sized ground feeding bird, grows combs on the sides of its feet to help it walk on the snow. At night, this same Grouse dives into deep powdery snow to keep warm while it is sleeping.

In the forests, meadows, and suburbs, Red Fox are actively stalking their prey all year long. These common, but secretive predators spend their nights, and sometimes their winter days, hunting squirrels, rabbits, mice, and birds. They will also eat corn, berries, apples, and grasses. Fox cache or store their food for later meals. Similar to their rabbit prey, these handsome canines nap in sunny spots in the forest, where they are sheltered from the wind. In winter, they seek out old woodchuck holes or other dens where they will have their litter of pups in late February or early March.

So next time large white flakes begin to fall quietly outside your window and you are bundled up under eiderdown quilts, think of all the wild creatures coping with winter in their own ways, in their own shelters, with their own families, or alone. Keep in mind that we are all connected in the snow.



Norman's Activity Page

Wow! The weather has really gotten cold since I last saw all of you. Has anyone seen any animals around? I went out hiking on the trails at the Sanctuary last week and all I found were signs of animals, but I can't quite figure out what animals they are signs of. I was wondering if all of you could help me out?



I found the following animal tracks on the ground. Can you match the following animal tracks with the correct animal?

1) Deer

4) Fox



2) Crow

5) Raccoon

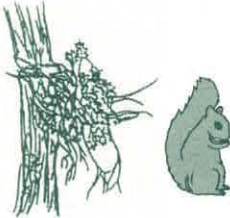
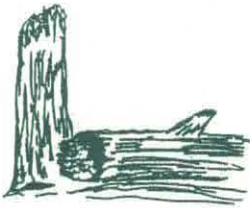

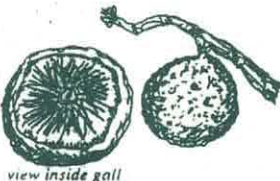




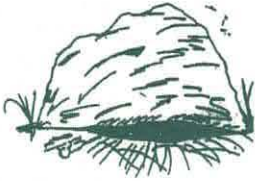


3) Rabbit

6) Squirrel

The cold winter weather brings with it very harsh weather conditions that wild animals need to find shelter from. Search your backyard for the following animal homes. How many animal neighbors do you have?

Animal Home Hunt

 <p>Squirrel Nest mostly leaves</p>	 <p>Fallen Log</p>	 <p>Birds Nest mostly twigs</p>
 <p>Oak Gall</p>	 <p>Insect Nests</p>	 <p>Tree Cavity</p>
 <p>Small Hole In Ground</p>	 <p>Brush Pile</p>	 <p>Rock Den</p>

Sometimes as gross as it may seem, we find a sign that an animal has gone to the bathroom. Scientists call this scat. Can you guess what animals the following scats belong to?

Write in the letter beside the number.

A. Fox B. Deer C. Rabbit



1) _____



2) _____



3) _____



ANSWERS:

Tracks

1) E

4) A

2) F

5) C

3) D

6) B

Scat

1) A

3) B

2) C

3) B



Educational Programs

What's Up Down There?

Thursday, December 5, 7:30 PM
Members Free \$2 Non-members
Family program

Steve Parente, fisherman and raconteur, will take you on a whirlwind tour of what's happening in the waters of the Sakonnet River and Rhode Island Sound as we get closer to winter. Gather by the fire in the Studio to hear about the secrets of the sea. **Maximum 35.**

Holly Days

Saturday, December 7, 12:00 to 7:00 PM

\$5 Adults \$3 Children

Celebrate the holiday season with a day of natural fun at the Sanctuary. Crafts for young and old, a hunt for the enchanted tree, storytelling by a cozy fire, and a festive tree-lighting. As evening falls, a night hike, perhaps a glimpse of an owl, the roasting of marshmallows, and a blazing bonfire.

An Evening With Red Tail

Thursday, December 12, 6:30 PM
Members Free \$2 Non-members.
Family Event

In the second of our winter family series, join us in the classroom for a visit with our red-tailed hawk. Learn about what makes raptors so fascinating. Bring your bag supper, and join us after the program for cider, hot chocolate and cookies. **Maximum 40.**

Winter Star Gazing

Friday, December 13 and other Fridays to be announced
6:00 PM - 8:30PM
Free to the public

Join Kenneth Conca and the Gaudet Astronomy Club as they peer through telescopes at the moon and stars and planets. Learn more about constellations and the night sky in an informal setting. These Friday night star sessions will take place several times over the course of the winter, weather

permitting. Dress for the cold and wear sturdy shoes!

Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 14

Members Free \$2 Non-members

Throughout the northern hemisphere, birders are out this week counting species. This is a valuable tool to monitor what's happening with bird populations, and a good indicator for trends in populations. Be a part of the excitement. We'll start in the pre-dawn hours seeking the elusive owls, and continue on the Sanctuary, at Gardiner's Pond, on Third Beach, and up Indian Avenue. Call the Sanctuary for rendezvous times. Not sure of your birding skills? Come to a **Beginner's Bird Count at 9:30.** We'll do a short program on bird identification, and head out on the Sanctuary's trails.

Owl Prowls

Adults Only Programs:

Thursday, January 16, 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Thursday, January 30, 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Thursday, February 6, 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Family Programs that include hands-on activities for children:

Friday, January 17, 6:00 - 7:30

Friday, January 31, 6:00 - 7:30

Friday, February 7, 6:00 - 7:30

\$6 Members \$8 Non-Member

Owls begin nesting earlier in the season than any other bird. They court their mates, occupy nests, and lay eggs during the shortest and coldest days of the year. Join us as we walk the sanctuary trails on winter nights to listen for the hoots, screeches, and whistles of local species. We will use our eyes and our ears to seek out Great Horned and Eastern Screech Owls and perhaps a surprise or two! Hot chocolate and cider will be served when we follow-up the walk with a talk and activities focusing on the habits and habitats of these incredible creatures.

Winter Rarities Road Trip

Saturday, January 25, 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

\$25 Members, \$30 Non-members

Adult Program

Rare birds anyone? Winter is the

best time for northern vagrants, such as Snowy Owls, Gyrfalcons Bohemian Waxwings and Crossbills. The plan is to keep an ear open for rumors of rarities that can be found within a few hours of our island, pile into the Bird Van, and seek them out as a team. This experimental adventure will be a hoot or a squawk or a whistle!! Bring binoculars, mittens, a bag lunch, and we will provide snacks and drinks. **Maximum 12.**

Preschoolers with Parents

Wednesdays 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Session A February 5, 12, 19, 26

Session B March 5, 12, 19, 26

Session C April 2, 9, 16, 23

Ages 3 - 5 years

\$30 Members \$35 Non-members

This series of four one-hour programs is an engaging and hands-on way to introduce your pre-school age child to the wonders of nature. We'll explore the outdoors using our five senses, songs, crafts, and explorations of the plants and animals of the Sanctuary. Parents will have fun too! Marilyn has been teaching this program for several years and has quite a following, so register early.

Connecticut River Raptors

Sunday, February 9, 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

\$25 Members \$30 Non-members

Adult Program

Road Trip! Winter is an excellent season for eagles, hawks, owls, and water birds. Join us in the Bird Van as we explore the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound near Essex, CT, home of the Eagle Festival. We will seek out bald eagles, harriers, rough-legged hawks, and wintering ducks, such as goldeneye, scaup, and long-tailed. Grab your binoculars, mittens, a bag lunch, and let's go! We will provide snacks and drinks. **Maximum 12.**

Great Backyard Bird Count

Friday - Monday, February 14 - 17, 9:00 - 11:00 AM each day

Members Free Non-members \$5 per day

Become involved in a valuable citizen science project and have fun doing it! Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology

Please Note: Preregistration is required for programs.



Educational Programs

and the National Audubon Society have developed the Great Backyard Bird Count to collect data on the numbers and distribution of birds in North America during the heart of the winter. Anyone can participate by counting the birds in their own neighborhood and entering the data on the Web <http://www.birdsource.org/>. You are also invited to join Education Director, Lauren Parmelee, one or more mornings over the weekend, to count the birds here at the Sanctuary. This is a great opportunity to learn to identify the birds under and around your feeders this winter, and contribute to an important research project.

Winter Vacation Camp

Theme: Nature in Winter
Tuesday - Friday, February 18 - 21
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM each day
\$115 Members, \$125 Non-Members
Children's Program for grades K-4

Learn to track a rabbit and follow a deer trail. Seek out shelters and dens around the sanctuary. Investigate how local plants and animals survive the snow and the cold. All of our camps include science explorations, stories, games and a field trip or two. What a perfect way to spend a winter's day! Dress for the weather and bring your lunch, snack and a water bottle too. **Maximum 20.** (FYI: *Spring Vacation Camp will be held Tuesday - Friday, April 15 - 18. Look for a description in the next newsletter.*)

Ancient Indian Peoples of New England - An Archaeological Perspective



Tuesday, February 25, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
Adult & Family Program
Free to the public

Archaeologists have found evidence of Indian peoples spanning eleven thousand years occupying what we now call New England. What do human remains and artifacts tell us about these early residents of North America? What is their relation to

present-day Native American tribal groups? What evidence has been found here at the Sanctuary? Alan Leveillee is the Director of Educational Programs at the Public Archaeology Lab and is dedicated to sharing archaeological research with public audiences. Join us in the studio for this fireside slideshow and talk.

Private School Camp

Theme: Nature in Winter
Tuesday - Friday, March 18 - 21
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM each day
\$115 Members, \$125 Non-Members
Children's Program for grades K-4

What a perfect way to spend a winter's day! (See Winter Vacation Camp for more details) Dress for the weather and bring your lunch, snack and a water bottle every day. **Maximum 10.**

Woodcock Walk

Friday, March 21, 5:30 - 7:00 PM
\$6 Members, \$8 Non-members
One parent free in each family
Family Program

During early spring, the male American Woodcock, a rotund short-legged bird, performs an unusual courtship display. Often referred to as a "sky dance", the Woodcock's flight is a joy to witness. Join an NBS naturalist on an evening nature walk to seek out this interesting bird and to look for other signs of spring. **Maximum 20.**

The Amazing World of Amphibians

Thursday, March 27, 7:00 - 8:00 PM
Members free, \$2 Non-members
Family Program

In preparation for warm rainy April nights, Mary Jane Bressette, an award-winning amphibian researcher will share her knowledge of the denizens of vernal pools-frogs, toads, and salamanders. As part of our fireside lecture series, she will be presenting a slide show and talk focusing on the obligate species - those amphibians that rely on these sea-

sonal wetlands for survival. As an educator, Ms. Bressette works with students of all ages and is currently facilitating a long-term student research project on the Sanctuary property. If you or your children are intrigued by these amazing and sensitive creatures, please join us in the Studio for this evening program.

Beginning Birding Workshop

Saturday, March 29, 8:00 - 11:00 AM
\$10 Members \$15 Non-members
Adult Program

Birds are a wonderful way to get hooked on nature! They are colorful, noisy, and active all year round. If you are interested in learning more about our local feathered creatures and their habits, please register for this three-hour class. Director of Education, Lauren Parmelee will use slides, field guides, and outdoor investigations to engage your interest in these fascinating songsters. **Maximum 12.**

Spring Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 5, 1:00 - 2:00 PM
\$8 Members Only
Children's Program for ages 3 to 10 years

Welcome the spring season by participating in the Sanctuary's traditional Spring Egg Hunt! A short presentation by a NBS educator will be followed by an enthusiastic search for plastic eggs filled with sweets. Children will seek their treats around the barn, orchard, and upper trails of the Sanctuary. Dress for the weather and bring your own collection basket! Register early. **Maximum 35.**

Sunday Morning Birdwalks

Every Sunday - 8:00 AM until December 15, Every other Sunday at 8:00 AM January 5 - March 30. Free to the public.

Winter may be upon us, but birds are out and about all over the Island. Put on your warmest clothes, grab your binoculars and join us in the Sanctuary parking lot at 8:00 AM for a couple of hours of birding around the local area.

Please Note: Preregistration is required for programs.

SAVE OUR SHORELINE

THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY HAS UNTIL APRIL TO RAISE THE FUNDS TO PURCHASE 23 ACRES OF SAKONNET RIVER FRONTAGE AND BEACH.

THIS PROPERTY WAS SLATED TO BE SOLD TO A MASSACHUSETTS DEVELOPER. THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY EXERCISED ITS OPTION TO MATCH HIS OFFER, AND MUST RAISE \$3,687,500 BY APRIL 14.

THE SANCTUARY NEEDS THE HELP AND SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THIS CRITICAL LAND FOR THE BENEFIT OF WILDLIFE AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THE PUBLIC.



PLEASE HELP THE NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY WITH YOUR DONATION TO MEET A \$1 MILLION CHALLENGE. YOUR DOLLARS WILL BE MATCHED BY THIS CHALLENGE GRANT.

YES, I AM A STEWARD OF THE EARTH!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

☐ ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO:
NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY THIRD BEACH ACCOUNT

☐ PLEASE CHARGE MY VISA/MASTERCARD (CIRCLE ONE)
ACCOUNT# : _____ EXPIRATION DATE: _____

IN THE AMOUNT OF: \$ _____

SIGNATURE: _____

PLEASE MAIL TO:

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY, 583 THIRD BEACH ROAD, MIDDLETOWN, RI 02842

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (401) 846-2577



Holiday Gift Giving from the Barn Owl Shop

by Suzanne Goulart



The Green Man by Carruth Studios

Hard to believe, but the holiday season is upon us again! Here at the Sanctuary's Barn Owl Shop, we have some great new items. Let us help you in your search for the perfect gift. Besides our regular collection of Nature reference books which include Sibley, Peterson, and the Audubon Society, we have some new and very interesting choices.

Take a look at *"Four Wings and a Prayer: Caught in the Mystery of the Monarch Butterfly"* by Sue Halpern. This book recently earned a favorable review from the New York Times. A couple more suggestions: *"Reading the Forested Landscape - A Natural History of New England"* by Tom Wessels and *"Smithsonian Guide to Seaside Plants of the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts"*. Our children's book section is extensive, with the likes of *"Miss Rumphius"* by Barbara Cooney, *"Beaks!"* by Sneed B. Colard III, and *"Hello Ocean"* by Munoz Ryan gracing our shelves.

Moving on to other areas, our new handcrafted brass Indoor/Outdoor Nature thermometers, orna-

ments, and slate coasters from Ancient Graffiti are unique and beautiful, as are our fine collection of Carruth Studio ceramics.

Don't forget to check out our new t-shirts, stationary, New England Seasonal Cookbooks, Folkmanis puppets, Burt's Bees all natural cosmetics, Snap watches, nature videos, birdfeeders, and our great collection of children's toys (which include Club Earth products).

Hope to see you soon!

Welcome home Stephanie Bongiovanni!

When Stephanie left her position as Education Specialist at the Sanctuary, we missed her greatly and were pleased to have her back occasionally to help with a program. Now Stephanie will be working out of the Sanctuary for the next four months on a special project.

The Norman Bird Sanctuary and Save The Bay were jointly awarded a planning grant to evaluate the feasibility of a consortium of environmental education organizations undertaking an AmeriCorps project. Stephanie is collecting the data for us on underserved and unserved schools, where few environmental education programs exist. She will be evaluating models of governance for a cooperative initiative among organizations, and will be making recommendations on the design of a proposal for a national competitive round of grants for AmeriCorps projects in the early winter. We are thrilled to have Stephanie's superb analytical skills, and think the potential for a statewide cooperative outreach for environmental education is incredibly exciting.

Middletown High School Schedules Walk-A-Thon

The students of Middletown High School are showing their support for the Third Beach Road initiative by holding a Walk-a-thon on Sunday, December 8th. Registration is at noon, the walk will be from 12:30 to 3:00 PM.

The walk begins at the Sanctuary and will continue on to Hanging Rock Road, then around to Third Beach Road and finally, back to the Sanctuary.

The entry fee is \$20 per family, \$15 per individual and \$10 per student. The entry fee will directly benefit the Third Beach Road fund.

Get some fresh air and exercise helping a very worthy cause.

You're Never Too Young to Care - Thanks, Kyle!

Thanks to our youngest friend of Third Beach, Kyle Burns, son of Lorrie and Tim Burns of Portsmouth. Kyle has spent most of his life hiking the trails of the Sanctuary with his mom and dad, older brother Reid, and little sister, Lyla.

On November 13, Kyle showed his appreciation for the times he's enjoyed here by giving his birthday money, \$51, to the Norman Bird Sanctuary, for the Third Beach Fund. Thanks, Kyle, for showing us how important the Sanctuary is to you. Thanks, Lorrie and Tim, for raising a wonderful, thoughtful little boy!



Kyle Burns

Lori Cochrane photo



The Art of Animal Tracking

by Veronica Hinds

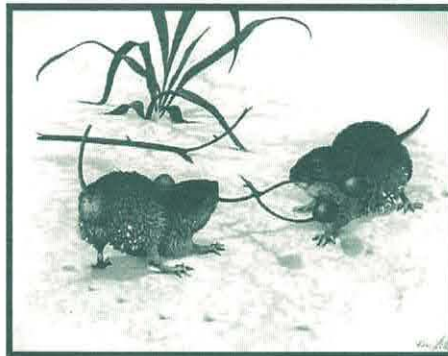
Last week I followed deer through the fields at the Bird Sanctuary. This week I followed mice through a house in a Denver suburb. As I write this, I'm staying with friends in their new home in a new development, with their new baby. Of course, most things in Colorado are new. The closest piece of open space is about 25 miles away in Boulder.

As I sat on a beautiful, soft, luxurious leather couch, in front of an awesome flat screen TV., watching a DVD movie with surround sound, a tiny mouse scurried across the beautifully manicured, pristine white carpet. Later that night, I heard the unmistakable pitter-patter of tiny little feet running between the walls of my bedroom. It seems I had left one wildlife issue (our mink/chicken problem) only to be confronted with another (a human/mouse problem). Where had the mice come from, why were they here, and how do we get rid of them? It was time to do some tracking to help answer these questions.

We started our detective work by going to the scene of the crime, where the mouse was first seen. Between the couch and the wall we found a trail of scat. Scat, which is dung, feces, or droppings, is a very important tool in the art of animal tracking. It can tell you what kind of animal left it, what that animal was eating, how long it was there and what other animals are in the area. These droppings were the size of a grain of rice and smaller, usually had

a rough, wrinkled look and were irregular in shape. It was definitely mouse scat. I looked further under the couch and in the corner was a pile of various birdseed shells. Knowing that mice tend to create middens, we surmised that the mice were eating birdseed.

The neighbors are avid bird watchers and feeders, so it was easy to figure out where the mice were getting their nourishment, but how were they getting into the house? Fortunately for us, it had snowed the previous night, so we were able to find tiny little footprints and tracks in the snow. We followed the tracks from the neighbor's bird feeding area to a small crack in the



foundation of my friend's home.

The next task was to remove this nuisance animal from the house. So we sent in the great white hunter. He patched the hole in the foundation and set some traps in areas where we had seen evidence of the mice. The pitter-patter was eventually silenced, the scat was vacuumed up and mice were not seen again.

Our ancestors imposed their European view of nature on North America. The trees in the forests were turned into lumber; the cleared land was property; the creatures of the forest were considered either prey or nuisance animals. People shot the animals, poisoned them, trapped them, burned their habitats, dug their young out of their bur-

rows, and felt proud of themselves for doing so. This attitude seems prevalent even today. Some people still look at a tree and see only so many board feet. Hunters complain about the coyote, whose role has gone from trickster to scapegoat. If the rabbit or deer hunting isn't what it used to be, it's because the coyotes must be killing them off. Other people believe that if someone's dog or cat is missing, a coyote must have got it. They don't consider that *Canis latrans* was here long before *Homo sapiens*; that the rabbit, deer, and coyote have coexisted since the Pleistocene without any of them becoming extinct; or that in the five hundred years since Europeans arrived on the scene, numerous native North American species of animals have become extinct or nearly so.

As of November 6th 2002, a list of endangered and threatened species in the United States included 517 animals and 743 plants. These plants and animals have been pushed to the edge of extinction by human activity, either because we hunted them for pest control, fur, trophies, or because we have appropriated their natural habitats.

Living harmoniously with nature can be quite a challenge. I encourage you to make your house a home, while respecting the homes of thousands of animals here on Aquidneck Island.

You can help the Norman Bird Sanctuary do just that, as we strive to protect and preserve Third Beach!

To find out more about the Sanctuary's campaign to save this unique environment, see the article on the front page of this newsletter.

Call 846-2577 to further explore ways to help us with the preservation of this priceless piece of our natural heritage.



Volunteers & Events

Harvest Fair 2002

by Lori Cochran

The 28th Annual Norman Bird Sanctuary Harvest Fair was definitely the biggest and best fair to date! Crafters, educational exhibitors, midway games, the mud-pit and other fair favorites were this year joined by talented children's entertainers, animals, spectacular produce from local Farmer's Market growers, new children's games, and even Miss Rhode Island. Blessed with the best weekend weather in October, the fair was a huge success, once again the result of months of planning by the Harvest Fair Committee and the help of hundreds more community volunteers.

Our sincere thanks to the 2002 Harvest Fair Committee, our corporate and educational sponsors, numerous contributors, and everyone who helped out during the fair. It is extremely rewarding for the Sanctuary to provide a community event that people not only love to attend, but want to be part of.

Our Sincere Thanks to All Who Helped Make the 28th Annual Harvest Fair a Great Success!

Corporate Sponsors:

- Bank of Newport
- B.R. Arnold Construction Co.
- J.G. Edwards Construction Co.
- Rooney, Plotkin & Willey



Educational Sponsors:

- The Pennfield School
- St. Michael's Country Day School

Harvest Fair 2002 Committee:

Co-chairs: Robert Barlow & Anne Howell

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • Kevin & Stephanie Bongiovanni | • John & Denise Crimmins | • Heather Lynch |
| • Lori Call | • David & Kelly Croston | • Dave Rodericks |
| • Hellie Casagrande | • Mason Hawes | • Kathy Shorey |
| • Mike Condry | • Bob Helmbrecht | • Marilyn Stookey |
| | • Ginny Hinds | • Kevin Zahm |

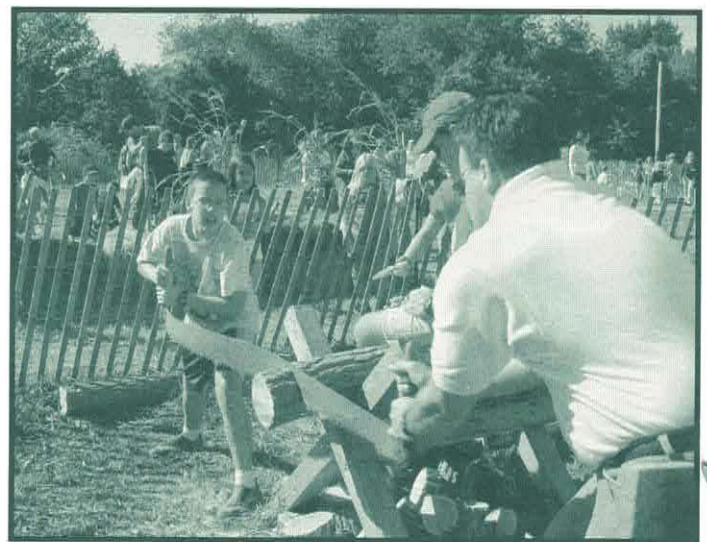
Volunteer Groups & Supporters:

- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--|
| • AMA Graphics | • LeCorda Farms | • Portsmouth High School - |
| • Clement's Market | • Louis Escobar | • Community Service Class |
| • Coca Cola | • Middletown High School | • RI Resource Recovery Corporation |
| • DeCastro Farm | • Newport Daily News | • RI Storytellers in Concert |
| • Jaime DeFreitas | • Newport National Golf Club | • Theresa Santos |
| • Francis Nunes | • Newport Tent Company | • Shaw's Supermarket |
| • Frank Kostka | • NBS Members & Friends | • St. George's School |
| • Graybar | • Portsmouth Abbey students | • Toner Electric |
| • Jessie Almeida | | • Town of Middletown - Dept. of Public Works |
| • Johnson & Wales | | |

~ and all who volunteered ~



An appreciative crowd gathers at the mudpit.



Veronica Hinds photos

A father and son team at the log saw competition.



Volunteers & Events

Norman Bird Sanctuary's Harvest Fair Home & Garden Contest Winners 2002

Thank you to everyone who submitted entrees for the Home & Garden Tent at this year's Harvest Fair. We are pleased to announce the winners in each category:

AMATEUR PRODUCE:

SINGLE FRUIT

- 1st Prize - Sanne Hodges
- 2nd Prize - Jeffrey Hodges
- 3rd Prize - Lisa Hodges

SINGLE VEGETABLE

- 1st Prize - Cathy VanHof
- 2nd Prize - James Kyle

COLLECTION

- 1st Prize - Emlen & Liz Drayton
- 2nd Prize - Kosinski Family
- 3rd Prize - Jeffrey Hodges

BIGGEST PUMPKIN

- 1st Prize - Kyle McDevitt
- 2nd Prize - Richard Wimpress

MOST UNUSUAL

VEGETABLE/EDIBLE PLANT

- 1st Prize - Sanne Hodges
- 2nd Prize - Hillary VanHof
- 3rd Prize - Lisa Hodges & Ellie VanHof

YOUNG GROWER - BEST PRODUCE

- 1st Prize - Joey Steadman

AMATEUR FLOWERS:

SINGLE ROSE

- 1st Prize - Anne Becker

SINGLE DAHLIA

- 1st Prize - Emily Gedney
- 2nd Prize - Pat Frizzell
- 3rd Prize - Debbie Gedney

FRESH ARRANGEMENT

- 1st Prize - Lee Bagwill
- 2nd Prize - Sanne Hodges
- 3rd Prize - Chris Gedney

SUNFLOWER

- 1st Prize - Nina, Jamie & Jackie Tollefson

BIGGEST SUNFLOWER FACE

- 1st Prize - Christina Kosinski
- 2nd Prize - Nina, Jamie & Jackie Tollefson

YOUNG GROWER - BEST ARRANGEMENT

- 1st Prize - Christina Kosinski
- 2nd Prize - Chase & Jackson Baker

FOOD-AMATEUR:

APPLE PIE

- 1st Prize - Sandy Derecktor
- 2nd Prize - Christine Ayars
- 3rd Prize - Katy Cashman

PESTO

- 1st Prize - Debbie Gedney
- 2nd Prize - Kai Matthews
- 3rd Prize - Colleen Aull

SALSA

- 1st Prize - Teena Hiebner
- 2nd Prize - Samantha Beam

SAVORY RELISH / PRESERVES

- 1st Prize - Pat Chase

JAM/JELLY

- 1st Prize - Melissa Pellar

QUICKBREAD/MUFFINS

- 1st Prize - Teena Hiebner
- 2nd Prize - Suzette Benett and Gay Cardoza

- 3rd Prize - Melissa Pellar

YOUNG BAKER-BAKED GOODS

- 1st Prize - Nina Tollefson and Colleen Geasey
- 2nd Prize - Garrett Cashman

SCARECROWS

- 1st Prize - Lauren Call and Ali Borges
- 2nd Prize - Abby Preston
- 3rd Prize - Joshua & Robert Laurie
- Hon. Mention - Casey Koffyer



Other Honorable Mentions:

(The Pennfield School Kindergarten "Best Use of a Gourd")

Matthew Rease
Ida Puerini/Brittany Croston
Ciara Cunningham
Zack & Alec Scott
Marcinidks'
Helen N.
Maure Bucktz & Ava Peznola
Appel & Tuck
Tori Offenberg
Haley Call & Kelley Craft
Sarah Hirsch & Amanda Preston
Joey Buckley & Michael Peznola
Gorski
Kara & Don Lessels
Addison Sullivan



"Most Glamorous"
"Best Use of Suspenders"
"Best Friend of Mickey"
"Best Use of Hunchback"
"Best Use of Accessories"
"Best Use of Big Belly"
"Best Scarecrow in Small Scale"
"Best Use of a Top 40 Song"
"Best Use of Team Spirit"
"Best Pose"
"Most Scary Scarecrow"
"Most Coordinated Outfit"
"Best Use of a Nose"
"Best Outfit"
"Best Effort on the Head"

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Members enjoy free access to the trails, 10% discount in our store, a subscription to our newsletter and discounts on our programs.

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