

The Norman Bird Flyer

VOLUME NO. 5 ISSUE 4

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG

Sachuest Point, the Sakonnet River and Aquidneck Island all bear names that remind us that Roger Williams was not the first settler of Rhode Island. The English colonists found a land settled by an ancient people - a tribe of native Americans called the Wamponoags with a cultural heritage stretching back thousands of years into the past.

This Summer, scientists from the Public Archaeology Laboratory Inc. of Providence, a private research foundation, conducted a survey for sites left by the ancestors of the Wamponoags. The work was funded by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission as part of a larger study all along both sides of the Sakonnet River. Working closely with the Sanctuary staff, the archaeologists were able to discover some new sites and to uncover detailed information on previously known locations of prehistoric campsites. Their most important findings concerned a deposit of shells (shell midden) that can be seen along the Hanging Rock trail.

This site (which has been named the Gardiner Pond Shell Midden) came into being about 1900 years ago, about the time that the Roman Emperor Claudius was reconquering the "savage" tribes of Britain. This summer's studies have revealed it as one of the largest, deepest and densest prehistoric shell middens left in the Narragansett basin.

The midden was formed by repeated visits by Native American groups over many hundreds of years - possibly right up to the arrival of the first white settlers in the seventeenth century. The midden contains many things besides shells. Bone fragments of deer and an unknown kind of bird have been identified. There are probably the remains of other mammals, fish and reptiles among the shell, which is mainly from quohogs. Closer examination of the midden surely will reveal seeds and other parts of edible or useful wild plants. In short, the midden is really an ancient garbage dump, but it holds evidence which can be used to reconstruct the environment in and around the Sanctuary as it was some 20 centuries ago.

Fall, 1984

There are also discarded stone tools, like arrowheads and scrapers, as well as the broken pieces of pottery used by the prehistoric visitors. Flakes of stone, the by-products of tool manufacturing, and fire-cracked rocks from ancient hearths are also scattered throughout the shell deposits.

Most of the stone came from nearby sources, like the quartz veins in Indian Rock. But some of the rocks came from outcrops in Attleboro, Massachusetts or even as far away as the Hudson River Valley.

Archaeologists are just beginning to understand something about the behavior of the people who left behind sites like the Gardiner Pond site. First of all, they did not belong to primitive bands that wandered.

CONT



Inky Cap - Coprinus
after LOC Krieger

Dig, cont.

haphazardly around southern New England. Although these people had a very simple technology, their patterns of land use were quite complicated and involved careful scheduling of movements to obtain key resources scattered over many hundreds of square miles. Most of the resources were available only during a single time of the year at a specific location. Being at the wrong place at the wrong time or at the right place and time with the wrong tools or wrong number of people could have meant that the survival of the whole group would have been jeopardized.

Sites like the Gardiner Pond Shell Midden are important because they might help us to understand some of the basic principles of how humans relate to natural resources through planning and social organization. However, prehistoric sites are being destroyed at a rapid rate all over New England. The Sanctuary can be a haven for these fragile, non-renewable cultural resources.

There are plans for nominating the Gardiner Pond Shell Midden to the National Register of Historic Places, as well as conducting more detailed studies.

Perhaps future work there can involve interested community members. Sanctuary members interested in learning more about the shell midden and the work of the Public Archeological Lab should contact the Sanctuary staff.

By Peter Thorbahn
Dir. Public Archaeology Lab



POND REPAIR



Maple Swamp Pond is close to holding water again thanks to the recently completed earthen dike and concrete spillway spanning its south end. It really has been a production at the Sanctuary this summer. Ten-wheeled dump trucks, bulldozers, backhoes, and cement trucks made frequent trips down the main trail, stopping at the flattened Pond area.

In spite of all the noise and disturbance, grass is already taking hold on the new dike and the area is quiet once again. Migrating warblers, in fact, are as busy as ever before in the tupelo trees (already turning red) on the west side of the Pond.

Two steps remain: Building a bridge over the stream and reflooding the pond. The bridge will go in any time now. The reflooding will not take place until the grass covering is well established on the dike.

Something for everyone to watch over the next few years is how the habitat will change. New water levels will bring in a succession of plant community changes. These will bring in a growing diversity of wild animals, from salamanders to woodpeckers, nesting ducks, mink and muskrat. The Sanctuary plans to set up a simple system of monitoring to document these changes.

The Norman Bird Sanctuary
583 Third Beach Road
Middletown, RI 02840

Annual Membership

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Individual...\$15 | Business...\$50 |
| Family.....\$20 | Patron....\$100 |
| Sustaining...\$50 | Life....\$1,000 |

Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contributions and membership dues are deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes.

The Norman Bird Flyer is published by the Norman Bird Sanctuary, a non-profit nature preserve established under the will of Mabel Norman Cerio.
Trustees: Louis Lorillard, RI Hospital Trust National Bank
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Co-Directors: Deborah Clark, Timothy Traver



The Norman Bird Sanctuary

583 Third Beach Road • Middletown, Rhode Island 02840 • Telephone (401) 846-2577

FALL PROGRAMS

OCTOBER - DECEMBER, 1984

GUIDED NATURE WALKS

BIRD WALKS

The Sanctuary offers a free guided bird walk every Sunday at 8:00am. Please join us! Autumn walks 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 water ponds. Walks last from 1-2 hours and are open to all levels. Bring binoculars if possible.

Every Sunday, 8:00am
No charge

STAR WALKS

The night sky in Autumn! The Great Bear dips low to the Earth, looking for a place to hibernate, while Andromeda, our distant sister galaxy rises high into the sky. Delia Clark will explore the legends of these and other stars as the crisp night air moves in. Bring a blanket to sit on and binoculars if you have them. In case of cloudy weather, call 846-2577.

Oct. 18, Nov. 15, and Dec 13, 7:30 pm
M/\$1, NM/\$3

MUSHROOM FORAY

Spend the afternoon with URI mycologist Dr. Goos searching the meadows and woodland paths for mushrooms. Feel free to bring mystery samples and questions to the workshop/walk. Bring notepad and pencil for there are sure to be recipe suggestions!

Oct. 20 1:00pm-3:00pm
M/\$1, NM/\$3

FALL FOLIAGE WALK

Autumn is the most popular walking time here at the refuge. But when the red maples turn color, it becomes even more glorious. Delia Clark will guide this walk through the most colorful parts of the refuge, explaining a few of the whys and wherefores along the way.

Oct. 21, 1:00pm
M/\$1, NM/\$3



CHILDREN'S EVENTS

NATURE CLUB

Based on our Summer Nature Day Camp program, the Norman Bird Sanctuary's Nature Club offers a school-year Saturday morning alternative for your child. Nature Club is a place where children can safely explore the natural world under the guidance of a knowledgeable and enthusiastic instructor. Children follow their curiosity, learn by doing, and have fun at the same time. For children in grades K- 4. * Registration is required: Saturday mornings, 9:30- 12:30.

Session #1 October 13- November 10
Session #2 November 17 - December 15
M/\$25, NM/\$30

* We will offer a Nature Club for pre-school children this fall if there is sufficient interest. Please contact the Sanctuary at 846-2577 for more information.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

Stop by the Sanctuary Halloween night for traditional Halloween games, hot cider and other treats. And if you are brave enough come along on a guided tour of the Sanctuary woods at night. All children and kindred adult spirits are welcome.

October 31, 6:00pm-8:00pm
M/\$1 NM/\$2

CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR THE BIRDS

A very special party for children in grades K-4 who want to help the birds celebrate Christmas. We'll learn to make a variety of bird treats and decorations for the bird's outdoor Christmas trees and we'll even learn to make a special gift for a bird loving friend or relative. Join us! Registration required.

December 22, 1:00-3:00
M/\$3. NM/\$4

more! →



NATURAL CRAFTS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Here is a series of Autumn and Winter holiday crafts to lend a warm sparkle to your home, outside and in!

GRAPE VINE WREATH MAKING

Weaving grape vines produces a naturally attractive Autumn harvest wreath to display either inside or as a greeting to guests on an outside door. Elaine Silva-Mangiante will teach the technique of making a wreath decorated with dried wildflowers, herbs, and other natural materials. All materials will be provided. Bring clippers and scissors. Registration required.

Nov. 17, 1:00 pm- 3:00pm

M/\$6, NM/\$8

HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING

Holiday wreaths can look fresh and green throughout the season with a special design which makes use of the water retention capabilities of sphagnum moss. Chris Callahan will teach this technique which includes the use of a wide variety of green. Materials and decorations will be provided, but if you have access to an interesting green shrub, bring some along! Also bring clippers, and gloves if desired.

Dec. 2, 1:00pm

M/\$10 NM / \$12

DECORATING WITH GREENS

The Winter holiday season is the time to lavish your home with bright natural decorations of all kinds. In this workshop, Chris Callahan will demonstrate how to make kissing balls, roping and centerpieces as well as teaching participants to make a decorative Boxwood Christmas tree. Materials will be provided. Bring clippers. Registration required.

Dec. 16, 1:00pm

M/\$7, NM/\$9



REGISTRATION

All program fees are indicated in the program descriptions. "M" refers to Sanctuary members and "NM" to non-members. If a program requires pre-registration, that will be noted in the program description. You can register by calling the Sanctuary at 846-2577.

SPECIAL EVENTS

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What kind of feeder should you be using to attract the greatest diversity of birds to your backyard? Arthur Brown from Droll Yankee, Inc. will be at the refuge to present to you detailed and enlightening information on Winter bird feeding. Included will be displays and information on do-it yourself feeders, what birds eat in the wild, and bird feeding projects for children. All of the major types of bird feeders and seed will be available for purchase at very reasonable prices on this day and throughout the winter. By Buying your seed and feeders through the Sanctuary you support the programs and projects of the refuge. November 11, 2:00pm- 4:00pm
No Charge. Seed pick-up and feeder pick-up will go all day.

ANNUAL AQUIDNECK ISLAND HARVEST FAIR

See Harvest Fair display page for a description of the 10th annual Harvest Fair. Fun? You bet!
Oct. 6 and 7 10:00am- 5:00pm

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You never know what birds or weather to expect on the CBC. Rain, snow, sleet, or shine we will census refuge birds in the morning then break for a lunch of hot chili at noon. The CBC in RI is sponsored by the Rhode Island Ornithology Club. There is a \$2 optional fee to have your name listed with other participants names in National Audubon's American Birds. Registration required.
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AQUIDNECK ISLAND



OCT 6 & 7

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY
THIRD BEACH ROAD  MIDDLETOWN

COUNT ME IN !

Volunteer positions are now available in every facet of Harvest Fair operation: Cooking, serving, gates, set-up and clean-up, game hosting, raffle ticket vending, country store clerking, balloon selling, and beer pouring. Apply with the Sanctuary staff at 846-2577 today.
WE NEED YOU!

CONTRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY STORE!

The Harvest Fair will again feature a Country Store stocked with homemade goods from our members' country kitchens. Without your help our shelves and cupboards will be mighty bare! Please help by contributing homemade cookies, cakes, pies, fudge, brownies, muffins, breads, or homemade jams, jellies, pickles, canned tomatoes, canned vegetables or garden produce. For information, call the Sanctuary anytime at 846-2577. **THANKS!!**



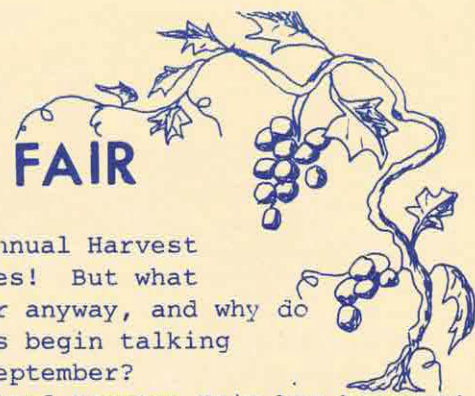
HARVEST FAIR

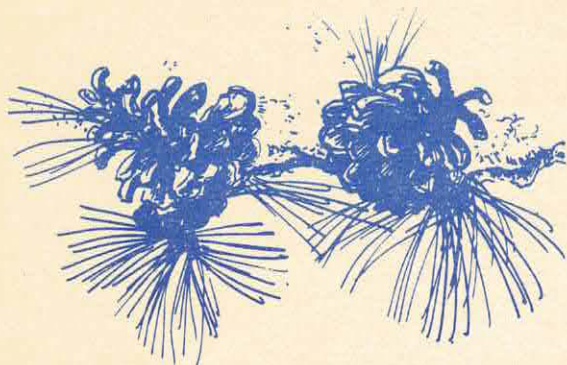
It's nearing the time for the 10th annual Harvest Fair. How time flies! But what is this Harvest Fair anyway, and why do both kids and adults begin talking about it in early September?

The Aquidneck Island Harvest Fair has happened every October here at the refuge for the past 10 years (except in 1980). In body it is a country celebration in the tradition of real country celebrations: Home and Garden competitions, crafts hand-rendered by local craftspeople, lots of good food and drink, cider pressed for drinking before your very eyes, merrymaking, dancing, fiddle music, puppetry by locals, log sawing contests, greased pole climbing and many other ridiculous feats of strength, tests of skill, assaults on character (the mud pit). There is more to the body of it too: Old fashioned engines belch and cough smoke and noise, children tumble about in a haypile, tugs of war and many other children's games, balloons, farm animals, and much more. As first fair chair person, Pat Hegnauer, put it, "We are trying to demonstrate yankee inventiveness, ingenuity and talent." This year's fair chair person, Chris Callahan has been working hard along with 10 activity chairpeople to assure that there will be plenty of inventiveness, talent, and, fun at this year's fair.

In spirit, the Fair is a community coming together to celebrate itself. The celebration is open to all Aquidneck Island. People from every town come to the fair to enjoy the sights and activities. Friends who don't see much of each other all year will see each other at the fair. Wrapped up in this spirit is the Norman Bird Sanctuary. One of a number of hubs of community activity, the Sanctuary is a place set aside for all islanders to enjoy 450 acres of secluded woodlands and ponds. The Sanctuary is a place to come to to reaffirm ones essential links with nature. The fair connects people with each other in the same way.

Finally, the Harvest Fair for the past 3 years has in an important way, helped the Sanctuary balance its budget. The funds raised by the Harvest Fair have enabled the Sanctuary committee to make much needed improvements to buildings and grounds. This year, like others, important educational projects and capital improvements will rest on the success of the fair. So, come, rain or shine, bring your friends, bring your folks, your kids, your good spirits, and sense of fun, and don't tread too near the mud pit.





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COMMUNITY CALENDER

The following is a listing of local events of interest to nature enthusiasts and conservation-minded individuals. With the exception of the toxic waste pick-up day, these programs are co-sponsored by Save the Bay, the Norman Bird Sanctuary, and many other conservation organizations.

Barrier Beaches: Learn the economic and ecological importance of barrier beaches on this walk with Joanne Kalin and Iris Zwillman of the Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge. 13 October 1:00 pm parking lot Sachuest Pt.

Rocky Shore Tour: How do marine plants and animals survive the hardships of life on the rocky shore? Marine biologists Chris Powell, and Jerry Prezioso will conduct this tour at Brenton State Park. 21 Oct. 10:00 - Noon.

Watershed Bus Tour: Learn the ins and outs of a local watershed. How does run-off effect water quality, wildlife habitat, and top soil depth? Steve Davis, and Kristine Stewart of the USDA and Tim Traver of Norman Bird Sanctuary will be your guides. 27 October 10:00am-1:00pm, \$2.00/person. Bring a bag lunch. Coffee and cider will be served after the tour.

TOXIC WASTE CLEAN-UP DAY

Bring your household toxic substances to toxic waste pick up sites. For Aquidneck Island the pick-up is on Oct 20 at the Anthony Road Department of Transportation Garage off Rt. 138 (see enclosed sheet for details).

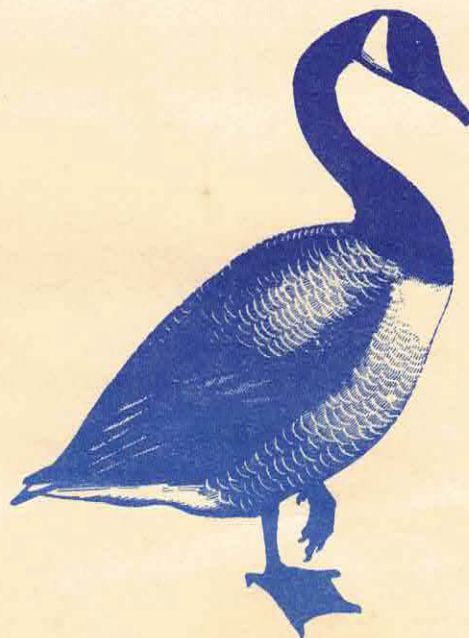
Brown Bag Lunch Series (Save the Bay)

Meet at noon in the Save the Bay office at 126 West Main Road for a series of informal discussions on citizens participation skills. Bring bag lunch, questions, and concerns. Together we will try to generate strategies and solutions.

Researching an Issue, Building a Convincing Argument : 26 September : Noon.

Taking Arguments to the CRMC: 10 October , Noon.

Telling Your Story Through the Media: 17 October, Noon.



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IN SEARCH OF THE SAFE MUSHROOM

My first mushroom, found along the roadside, was a prize puffball, cracked on the outside and cream-colored clear through. Sliced, breaded and fried, it took on the taste of added herbs. The texture was of tofu.

From first bite I was hooked. Yet loving life as I do, and forewarned with the wise words of an anonymous poet, "There are old mushroom eaters/ And bold mushroom eaters/But there are no old, bold mushroom eaters," I proceeded with caution.

I developed a surefire method of identifying tasty but innocuous specimens. I tagged along with a self-proclaimed mycologist on his daily jaunts into a Providence cemetery. After collecting a basketful, we divided our treasure; mine matching his, shape for shape, color for color, spore print for spore print. I then returned home, cooked up my cache, waited two days, then rang up my friend and asked, meaningfully, "How ARE you?" This always worked.

Since then, I've moved to Newport and, while continuing in search of the safe mushroom, I'm now on my own. With bike, basket, 4 to 5 books to guide (uncomfortably they disagree), I've found wild mushrooms growing in profusion, confidently cooking some, eyeing others in confusion. Red-velvet boleti with mustard yellow underbellies taste of pepper and offer the perfect compliment to pasta and wine. Masses of ringless honey fungi that thicken soups, sauces and stews can be collected at the base of a withered oak along Ocean Drive (I won't tell you which oak). And Russulas, wearing bright green, red, purple, or navy hats, guard the gates of a well-known mansion. They add zest and crackle to salads, I'm told, but so far I haven't dared. One, known as the fly-agaric, is as gorgeously evil to spy upon as it would be deadly to eat. I shudder deliciously when I sight its bright yellow crown and think of its power.

Soon I shall be abetted in my singular pastime. A foray for mushrooms is planned at the Norman Bird Sanctuary. And the guide? Not me you'll be glad to hear. 'A true expert I'm told. Will YOU dare?

Excerpted from an article by Carol Scott

CAMP DISCOVERIES

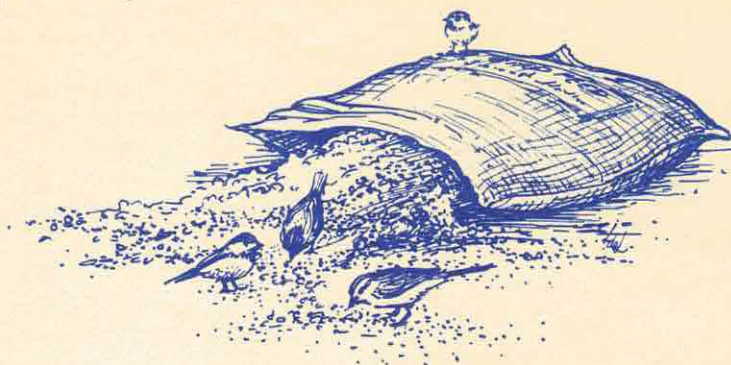
The big question this summer was: Would The Plan work? Would it work to include pre-school age children in Nature Day Camp? Would they be old enough to benefit from our strict focus on learning about nature and the environment? Would they be able to hold their own with all the older children running intently to and fro?

As Sanctuary staff, parents, and even campers look back on the summer, the answer seems to be a resounding "Yes!" The 3 and 4 year olds as a whole seemed very enthusiastic about their outdoor studies, learning to use all their senses in exploring the fields, forests and shore. On Festivities Friday, one young group did such a good job of impersonating Jewelweed seed pods popping open that the older children were able to guess it immediately without prompting! Another group studied animal tracking, laying out a long roll of paper to see how far a rabbit can travel in one hop, and then printed paw prints, including their own, on custom T-shirts.

The pre-schoolers seemed to lend yet more proof to the Sanctuary's theory that when you provide children with the opportunity and structure to explore freely in the outdoors, learning (and fun!) are just about inevitable.



Two Nature Day Campers learn to use a trail map



NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY

* BIRD SEED SALE *

Stock up now for the long winter ahead. Feed the birds and help support programs at your Sanctuary at the same time. Get high quality wild bird food at competitive prices. To order:

- (1) Fill out coupon below and mail it with payment to the Norman Bird Sanctuary, 583 Third Beach Road, Middletown, R.I. 02840. Orders must be received by October 18. Make checks payable to Norman Bird Sanctuary.
- (2) Pick up your seed November 10th or 11th from 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. in the Sanctuary Barn.

Don't miss the free program by Arthur Brown of Droll Yankee on bird feeding techniques and equipment. You can join in the program on November 11 at 2:00 P.M., and pick up your seed at the same time!

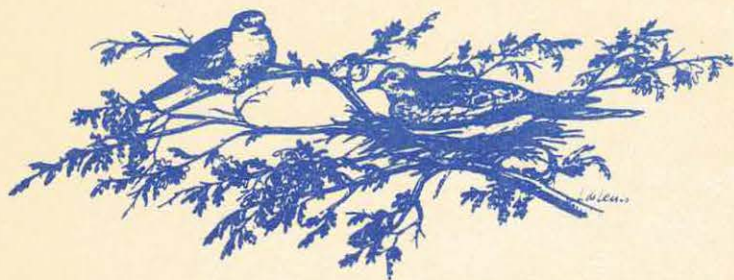
Bird seed in small and large quantities as well as bird feeders, guide books, and selected other items are now available in the Sanctuary Store. Come for a visit!

BIRD SEED ORDER FORM

Name _____ Telephone Number _____
Address _____
Sanctuary Member ☐ Non-Member ☐ Please send membership information! ☐

| QUANTITY | TYPE OF SEED | PRICE PER BAG (TAX INCLUDED) | AMOUNT |
|----------|---|---------------------------------|----------|
| _____ | Black Oil Sunflower Seeds - 20 # bag | \$ 9.48 | \$ _____ |
| _____ | Black Oil Sunflower Seeds - 50 # bag | 18.51 | _____ |
| _____ | Black Oil/Striped Sunflower Mix - 20 # bag | 9.48 | _____ |
| _____ | Black Oil/Striped Sunflower Mix - 50 # bag | 18.51 | _____ |
| _____ | Hulled Sunflower Seeds ("Sunflower Chips") - 20 # bag | 11.85 | _____ |
| _____ | Hulled Sunflower Seeds - 40 # bag | 21.59 | _____ |
| _____ | "Bird Snack" high quality mixed seed - 20 # bag | 7.08 | _____ |
| _____ | "Bird Snack" high quality mixed seed - 50 # bag | 15.75 | _____ |
| _____ | Thistle - 5 # bag | 5.82 | _____ |
| _____ | Thistle - 10 # bag | 11.65 | _____ |
| _____ | White Millet - 50 # bag | 13.75 | _____ |
| _____ | Cracked Corn - 25 # bag | 5.50 | _____ |
| _____ | Suet/Seed Cakes - 11 oz. square | 1.49 | _____ |

Total \$ _____



AQUIDNECK ISLAND BREEDING BIRDS

In 1982 the Rhode Island Breeding Bird Atlas was initiated as a 5-year project to map the distributions of all of the state's nesting species. The results of this project will provide an accurated data base on the status and range of all breeding birds which will aid in selecting unique natural areas for preservation, guiding development within and around natural habitats, and providing a reference point upon which future changes can be measured.

Using a grid based on the USGS topographic map series the state has been divided into 165 blocks, each containing approximately 10 square miles. Individual blocks are chosen by volunteers who conduct field work during the breeding season, recording species and searching out evidence of nesting. Although appearing to be a large area for one person to cover, once a species is recoreded in a particular block, no other information is needed

for the duration of the atlas project. Practically, this means that conspicuous or numerous birds in each block can be readily confirmed as breeding, and remaining seasons can be used to search out elusive and rare nesters.

What has been learned about Aquidneck Island over the first 3 seasons? The area has been broken into 12 blocks, some well-covered and others with little or no data. As in many island situations the species not found are as interesting as those which are. For example, the Tufted Titmouse, commonly observed on the mainland, is a rare commodity in the Newport area presumably due to its dislike for crossing open water. Also, many of the common forest species, including Scarlet Tanager, Ovenbird, Veery, etc., are rare or lacking on the island as wooded areas are not extensive. However, the reverse is also true with some rarer mainland species being well-represented in several island blocks. Included are Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Willow Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, and White-eyed Vireo.

With two years remaining on the atlas project more work still remains. Atlasing is fun and open to all, (some people atlas from their living rooms). For more information contact Rick Enser, RI Natural Heritage Program, 277-2776.

Writer, atlaser Rick Enser writes he will be monitoring hawk migration from Brenton Point starting the 22nd of September. Anyone is welcomed to join in. Call Sanctuary for info.



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