



The Norman Bird Flyer

Volume 16, No. 4

Winter 1995

Establishing a Vision

Starting this month, the Norman Bird Sanctuary will begin the process of strategic planning. We have formed a committee, composed of board, staff, key constituents and other community leaders to organize this effort.

Thanks to a grant from the Prince Charitable Trusts, we are also able to hire an outside consultant, Simone Joyaux, to facilitate.

The whole process should take about 9 months. The end product will be a strategic planning document. The written plan should clarify where our organization is going over the next 5-10 years and how it will get there. The plan will describe a vision for the future, as well as the present, and a blueprint for action.

"An organization which thinks strategically...will be better positioned for the challenges ahead."

What is Strategic Planning?

In a book she is writing on the subject, Ms Joyaux states: "strategic planning is more than a written document or a directional road map. It is a process as well as a product. It helps inform the organization, builds investment and mobilizes its participants. It results in learning. It is a way of thinking and acting. An organization which thinks strategically and acts accordingly will be better [positioned for the challenges ahead.]"

Good strategic planning always involves those who will be affected by the plan, whether they are clients, staff, volunteers, donors or community leaders. Decision making relies upon hard and soft data produced by market research, insights provided from experience, and critical self-assessment. Planning demands honest dialogue and difficult decision making. The process of

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planning tests the relevance of the mission.

Strategic planning takes the long view. Our organization will likely make decisions whose effect will not be felt for five or even ten years. The plan's time frame is generally 3-5 years, no longer because we live in such a swiftly changing world. The resulting written plan presents a set of strategies and action steps which outline how the group will proceed toward its future over a period of time. This road map balances detail with big-picture thinking.

Despite the obvious benefits of strategic planning, the process is often avoided with such excuses as:

- There isn't enough time
- We are so busy that we must focus on the here and now
- We know who we are and our mission is clear
- We are a strong organization. Nothing is wrong.
- Not much has changed. We're headed in the right direction

Then there is the quick and dirty attitude, which acknowledges some need for a plan but denies the value of the planning process. This usually entails:

- Conducting a one-day retreat with the board to bang out a plan.
- Forming a group of key leaders to recommend direction & action to the board.
- The staff does it and the board approves it.

Finally, there is the version of strategic planning that endorses a planning process but focuses on programs only. It addresses mission but ignores the infrastructure, the supporting systems necessary to carry out the mission.

A strategic plan must include our organization's vision and goals related to program and service delivery. Equally important are the

vision and goals related to infrastructure or supporting systems which includes such areas as management and governance, fund development, marketing and communications, physical plant and information systems.

Why us? Why now?

The last time the Sanctuary did any form of long range planning was in 1991, so we are due for another round. Last time, the process addressed programs and involved only board, staff and standing committees.

This time, we thought it would be wise to conduct the full scale strategic planning as described above. Given, not only the realities of a tightening economy and the increasing competition among non-profits for charitable gifts, but also in light of the imminent possibility of acquiring, or losing the use of Paradise Farm (as described in our Spring '95 newsletter).

Reference: S. P. Joyaux "Raise more money for your philanthropic cause through strategic planning" (unpublished draft)

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Sometime before next September we will be asking you for your input through a survey that will come to you through the mail or perhaps by telephone. When asked, please take the time to respond. Your participation and feedback will be critical. You can help the Norman Bird Sanctuary establish a vision for the next 10 years.



Feather Your Nest

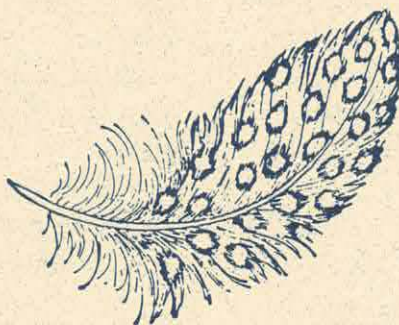
at the

1st Annual NBS Auction

with Auctioneer

Charlie Hall of the Ocean State Follies

Friday, March 29, 1996



*Cook at some of the wonderful items that
have been donated so far:*

Bareboat Charter on 36' sailboat
A garden makeover/design (including tilling & plants)
1 week of PC overnight hockey camp
Original works of art by local artists
Day of Beauty at Judy's Hair Co.
Gift Certificates to many area restaurants
Golf at Newport Country Club & RI Country Club
1 week of PC Basketball Camp
and much more...

*We are still in need of services or items in excellent condition such as
antiques, vintage linens, silver, baskets...If you or your business would
like to donate an item, please call the NBS office at 846-2577.*

Environmental Programs

Gone Birding

Date: Sunday, January 21, 1996

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Fee: FREE to Members and Non-Members

Pre-registration required

ADULT PROGRAM

Match your birding skills against those of the Sanctuary staff, as you take a video birding trip around the country in the game of "Gone Birding". What a way to beat the winter blues - sitting by a warm fire, sipping hot chocolate and testing your bird ID skills against the NBS staff. "Gone Birding" consists of ten video trips to "hot spots" around the country to see birds, using scorecards. Expert birders can be handicapped to play against beginners, to help even the odds. This is a great way to sharpen your identification skills. Limit 6 players.

Woodcock Walk

Date: Thursday, March 21

Raindate Friday, March 22

Time: 5:30 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-Members \$4 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

ADULT PROGRAM

Let's welcome the arrival of Spring together by searching for a bizarre creature, the woodcock! Spring offers the best opportunity to see this bird close up as the male performs his amazing courtship flight in hopes of attracting a mate. Spring wouldn't be the same without them!

Full Moon Owl Prowl

Date: Sunday, February 4

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-Members \$4 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

ADULT PROGRAM

Date: Tuesday, February 6

Time: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Fee: \$12 Non-Member Family

\$10 Member Family

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

FAMILY PROGRAM

Things that go bump in the night never sounded so good! Join us on a journey into the night to witness some of Aquidneck Island's greatest creatures, the owls! Together we will search for the Great Horned and Screech owls which hunt and call to their mates at night. So dress warmly and don't be late, they're waiting!

Winter Woodland Walk

Date: Saturday, January 27

Time: 2:00 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-Member adult, \$2 child

\$4 Member adult, \$1 child

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

FAMILY PROGRAM

Free for Winter Festival Button Wearers! Come explore the Sanctuary in the Winter. Look for and learn about animal and plant life in this season of rest. We will begin by taking an invigorating 45 minute walk and end with a hot drink and informal chat around the woodstove.



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 9 if registering by mail.

(Programs Continued)

Winter Nature Club

Dates: Saturdays, January 20 & 27

Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Fee: \$20 Non-Members. \$16 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Tracking animal signs is great fun, but you have to be a good detective. You have to know where to look, and what to look for. Come and find out what our animal friends are doing during the winter season. Open to children in grades K-2. Be sure to dress for the weather!



January 20th

Who's Who?

January 27th

Tracks and Traces

Native American Nature Club

Dates: Saturdays, March 2, 9 & 16

Time: 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Fee: \$36 Non-Members \$30 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

What could be more fun than to travel back in time? Come join us for a look at the New England Indian way of life. Each session we will listen to a legend, take an exploratory hike and complete a craft. Open to grades 2-5. Dress for the weather!

March 2nd

Circle of Life - Native American Daily Life

March 9th

Mother Earth - Food and Natural Containers

March 16th

Summer Structures - Wigwams and Migration

Sweetheart Piñatas

Date: Saturdays, February 3 & 10

Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Fee: \$20 Non-Members \$16 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

This Yule-tide Mexican tradition is too much fun to do just once a year! Surprise someone you love with a Piñata Valentine stuffed full of chocolate kisses, sweet thoughts and special treats. Please note that this class will take two Saturdays to complete because of drying time. Some piñata fillers will be provided. You are welcome to bring additional stuffers the second Saturday. Open to grades 1-6.



Winter Vacation Week

Date: February 20-23

March 12-15

Time: 9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Fee: \$50 Non-members \$40 Members

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Winter is a great time at the Norman Bird Sanctuary! Animals leave tracks in the snow, nests are easy to find in the trees, and birds are keeping busy foraging for food. Join Education Specialist, Dana Chrostowski, for a week full of hiking, crafts and fun! We will spend time outdoors, so dress warmly! These classes fill up fast, so remember pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Open to grades K-4.

**Spring Vacation Programs
will be offered**

April 15-19

Mark it on your calendar!

Winter Stargazing

Dates: Fridays, January 26th
February 23rd
March 29th

Time: 5:30 pm

Fee: FREE

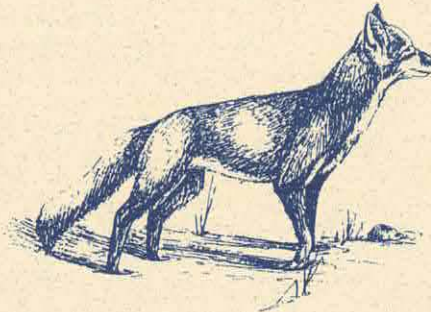
Pre-registration not required

Please join the Astronomical Society of Southern New England (ASSNE) for an exciting evening of stargazing.

Once each month, ASSNE meets in the NBS field to set up a variety of telescopes trained on a host of celestial bodies. ASSNE members are more than willing to share their knowledge. The evenings are free for NBS members and are a great opportunity to get started in astronomy or expand your knowledge.

ANIMAL PAUSE

BY
DEDE FORKER



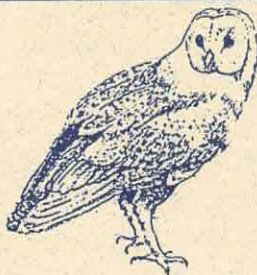
Last week, I returned home from celebrating the holidays with my family. I was overjoyed to see that most of Aquidneck Island was covered in a thick blanket of snow. As I walked around to my backyard I came to a sudden standstill. My eyes were transfixed by the flurry of activity that had occurred right outside my house. I went about trying to identify every animal that had visited my yard in the past week.

I could clearly see that a rabbit had been near the stone wall and a deer had been browsing on the low brush. Not far from the rabbit tracks were the tracks of a coyote! Under the bird feeder I found squirrel and pigeon following the tracks, along with the remains of some seed shells.

In order to read tracks you need to know how an animal's feet are shaped. Do they have hooves or paws? Do their claws touch the ground when they walk or are they retractable? Look at the animal's stride. Is it walking in a straight line, running or hopping? Other clues may include an animal's scat (droppings), fur, feathers or remains of a quickly devoured meal. Good detectives will always put themselves in the place of what they are tracking. Ask yourself why that animal was there. What was it looking for and where was it going.

When I first started to think about what made those tracks in the snow a whole new world of mystery opened up to me. As we become better nature detectives we will learn more about our animals friends and, in turn, more about ourselves.

Early morning is a great time to come tracking at the Sanctuary. You may want to stop in our store and take a look at our tracking book collection for children and adults as well as the great animal tracks poster we have too!



The Barn Owl Shop

Environmentally Friendly & Educational Gifts

*All sales benefit the Norman Bird Sanctuary
Members receive a 10% Discount*

Located in the
Norman Bird Sanctuary Barn
583 Third Beach Road
Middletown, RI

Open Tuesday thru Sunday
9 am to 5 pm

Stewardship & Management

by Nikki Hinds

This past summer the Youth Conservation Program trail crew was very active. In addition to maintaining 8 miles of trails, the crew constructed log steps on a steep section of the Red Fox Trail and rock steps on another steep incline on the Gray Craig Trail. These steps help lessen the direct impact on the trail and make the trail more accessible to a greater number of hikers. If you have not yet walked up or down these steps, we encourage you to do so in the near future.

We have also had a very productive fall season. We had a number of St. Georges students who volunteered for about 8 weeks. They were a big help in preparing for the Harvest Fair. They also completed a huge undertaking in painting the barn and adjacent buildings. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with these projects.

This winter, we will be implementing a program of land stewardship which will utilize volunteer work groups. The continuing stewardship and management of the Sanctuary for wildlife is one of the NBS's top priorities. With the help of volunteers we can maintain the trail system for public use and manage the land for a diversity of wildlife habitat.

The projects planned for our first two work groups include blazing a new connector trail between Nelson Pond Trail and Red Fox Trail, removing invasive species of plants that are out-competing our native plants, and working with established open areas to help preserve wildlife habitats.



Trail crew leader, Nikki Hinds, works with Eric Crosby on the Red Fox Trail

Attend the RI Flower Show Free!

This year the Norman Bird Sanctuary will be having a booth at the Rhode Island Flower Show. Since the show spans four days, we are looking to our volunteers to help with coverage of the booth.

If you would like to attend the flower show for free and help the Bird Sanctuary by volunteering 3 to 4 hours of your time, please call the Sanctuary office at 846-2577 for available times and information.

Land Stewardship Work Days

Saturdays
February 10th and 24th
9:00 am to 1:00 pm
(with hot chocolate & goodies by the fire afterward)

Please call the NBS office at 846-2577 to sign up for one or both of the work days.



Nature Guide 1996 Training Seminar Coming Soon!

What Is A Nature Guide?

A Nature Guide is a trained volunteer environmental education teacher. They share their knowledge of the Sanctuary and the natural world by conducting tours with school groups, children and adult visitors.

What Is the Time Commitment?

Although there are a few groups needing guides on the weekends, the majority are school groups that come during school hours. You may serve as often as you would like and as time allows. Schools are scheduled almost every day during the Spring. The Education Coordinator will try to schedule you far enough in advance so you may plan accordingly. Each tour lasts between one to two hours

What Are the Benefits?

- Valuable experience
- Attend free, the many programs offered at NBS
- Personal satisfaction of sharing your love of nature with children and adults
- Working closely with NBS staff
- An opportunity to meet new like-minded people
- Working outdoors in a beautiful setting



How Do I Become A Nature Guide?

In order to become a guide, you must attend a three part training seminar. The details of the training sessions are listed below:

Session I

Intro to Becoming an Environmental Educator

Wednesday, March 20th
6:00 to 8:00 pm

Session II

Natural History Lessons

Saturday, March 23rd
1:00 to 3:00 pm

Session III

Outdoor Learning Activities

Saturday, March 30th
1:00 to 3:00 pm

Please call for more information and registration!

Announcing New Membership Benefits

Our members are the most important asset of the Norman Bird Sanctuary! Now numbering more than 1,500, our membership provides necessary revenues, attends our educational programs and most importantly assists in carrying out our very important mission.

In an effort to increase benefits to our members, our membership committee has been working this past fall to develop an offer to good to refuse. If you join or renew before October 31, 1996, as a Patron member you can receive a FREE 1 year membership to Mystic Marinelife Aquarium in addition to guest passes, gold decal for your car, 10% discount in our Barn Owl Shop! As a Supporting member you receive all of the above plus FREE admission to Blithewold Mansion and Gardens and a private guided birdwalk for up to 8 people.

It is a great time to be an NBS member! We hope you will all take advantage of our new membership benefits!



REGISTRATION/MEMBERSHIP FORM

PLEASE JOIN US!
NBS Membership Form

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

- ☐ Patron/Business (\$100)
- ☐ Supporting (\$250)
- ☐ Benefactor (\$500)
- ☐ Osprey Circle (\$1,000)

ADDRESS & PAYMENT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

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: _____

*Don't Forget the Norman Bird Sanctuary
Has Great Trails For Cross-Country Skiing!*

OR TO CURRENT RESIDENT

Norman Bird Sanctuary
583 Third Beach Road
Middletown, RI 02842

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**

WINTER HOURS

TUESDAY-SUNDAY
9 am to 5 pm

Open
Monday Holidays