



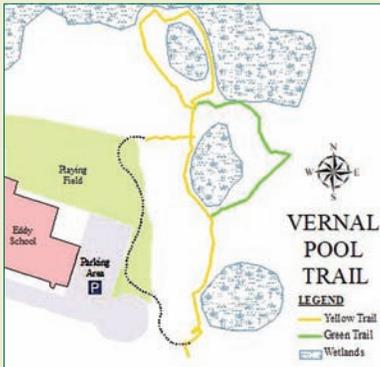
Brewster Conservation Trust

www.brewsterconservationtrust.org

Autumn 2017

TRUST SET TO PURCHASE MISSING LINK PARCEL

Will connect Children's Vernal Pool Trail from Eddy School to Main Street

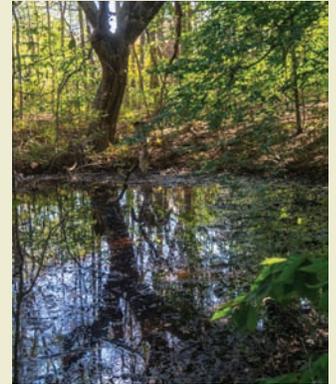


With your help, in January 2018 the Brewster Conservation Trust will buy a 1.85-acre parcel of land and pond located behind The Spa on Main Street. This lot will enable BCT to link up our new Children's Vernal Pool trail loop at the Eddy

Elementary School through to Main Street via a pedestrian easement. The children's trail was dedicated last spring and teachers from the school have been enthusiastic about using the trail as a nature's classroom. A nice feature is the students being able to just walk out their doors to enjoy the trail with supervision – no need to bus them elsewhere!

Steve and Kate Backus own The Spa and over the past several years have cooperated with us to preserve the five acres they also own in the rear. We bought one lot, they donated another and now we have agreed to buy the vacant

lot at a bargain price of \$75,000. We are applying for two foundation grants totaling \$40,000, but even if successful with those we will need to raise the additional \$35,000 before the end of January. That's where you come in – all funds donated to this land purchase go to the sales price.



Every dollar of every donation to BCT is spent on land. Whatever you give, large or small, helps protect the future of Brewster. Your gift dedicated to expand the Vernal Pool Trail at the Eddy Elementary School supports student's understanding of the natural world, provides an improved trail near the center of town for all to enjoy, and protects important wildlife that live around the vernal pool and in it.

The children, the trail walkers and the salamanders will all thank you. It only needs \$35,000. Please help.

continued on page 2



Vernal Pool at Eddy School (cont'd)

On the new lot, almost two acres in size, is an unnamed pond that is part of the Consodine Ditch drainage system that runs from Underpass Road west all the way to Paines Creek, mostly on the south side of Main Street. We think this connected drainage is named after the family of Donald Consodine who served as Selectman and Town Clerk 50 years ago. (Maybe it was his idea? Maybe it was on his land?)

If you know more about the history of the Ditch, please let us know. Reply to dorria@brewsterconservationtrust.org.

**Your contribution will help complete
the Vernal Pool Trail for
the Eddy Elementary School.**



INTRODUCING NEW BCT TRUSTEES

Rachel Hutchinson New Trustee Rachel Hutchinson served with AmeriCorps on Cape Cod in 2005 and returned to work in the Natural Resource Department in Eastham before her current job as Shellfish Propagation Specialist/Assistant Shellfish Constable in Chatham. Her other interests include hockey, Slow Food Cape Cod, and outdoors in her kayak, biking or hiking.

Rachel's education and experience, her enthusiasm for shellfish sustainability and can-do attitude (she taught herself to do the maintenance required on the town's fleet of equipment and vehicles used in the Shellfish job), combine to make her a very valuable addition to the Brewster Conservation Trust board.

Steve McKenna, a graduate of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, was born in Harwich but has been a Brewster resident for 25 years. Before becoming a BCT trustee Steve served on the Brewster Conservation Commission. As the Cape & Islands Regional Coordinator of the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management he works with towns, non-governmental organizations and the general public on a wide variety of coastal issues.

We welcome his coastal expertise and his relationships with the environmental community on Cape Cod.

**To learn more about our fascinating new trustees, go
to our web site at www.brewsterconservationtrust.org.**

**BCT Mission: To preserve open space, natural resources,
and the rural character of Brewster,
and to promote a conservation ethic.**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To say that Brewster's fresh water resources are critical is stating the obvious. We all know that Brewster, like other Cape towns, relies on the sole source aquifer that lies beneath us for our drinking water. Any impingement on the quality of that aquifer threatens public health. Testing by the Silent Spring Institute has revealed that chemicals of emerging concern (CEC's) – pharmaceuticals, chemicals in consumer products, flame retardants, and fluorinated chemicals used in food packaging have found their way into drinking water in many Cape towns, but Brewster has avoided this. The health of our ponds – the visible face of our underground aquifer – is vital to swimming and fishing, to the quality of life we all enjoy.

Protecting this most valuable resource has been the work of many. The Town of Brewster has played a leading role in protecting hundreds of acres of land around the well fields and in the Zone IIs – the area of draw-down for the wells – in east and west Brewster. Brewster has won two awards for the best drinking water in New England in the past five years. Conscientious homeowners play a role by maintaining their septic systems, being careful of what they flush, and managing the storm water that flows off of driveways and roofs.

The Brewster Conservation Trust is proud of the role we've played in the battle to protect our town's water resources. We've protected 55 parcels, a total of 155 acres, in the Zone IIs. We've protected 33 pond front parcels – 82 acres. We've recently cleared our properties under the Eversource power lines so that there is no need to spray risky herbicides. And we've partnered with the Save Blueberry and Sols Pond Coalition and the Brewster Ponds Coalition to build a storm water catchment system that will prevent road run-off from running directly across one of our properties into Blueberry Pond and create an education program based on this experience.

But the battle continues. Only 40% of the land in Zone IIs is protected, so we continue to partner with the Town to protect our drinking water supplies. We continue to look for pond front properties to prevent further development on the shores of these gems. But the most important soldiers in this battle are homeowners who properly manage their septic systems, channel storm water to infiltrate into the ground, and avoid using dangerous chemicals and fertilizers on their lawns. We're all in this together!

Hal Minis
President, *Brewster Conservation Trust*

BREWSTER CONSERVATION DAY – 5TH ANNUAL! SATURDAY, JULY 8, 2017, DRUMMER BOY PARK



With nearly 1,200 visitors and more than 15 new exhibitors, this year was bigger and better than ever. There were more interactive activities for kids, games and demonstrations. Guest speakers told about saving sea turtles and all you want to know about sharks.



The Department of Natural Resources and the Historical Society recreated the Brewster flats where kids learned how a fish weir works, how to rake for quahogs, band lobsters, and save dolphins. The Farmer's Market and the Ponds Coalition told about healthy food

and healthy ponds. There was information on protecting the aquifer, the uses of solar power, and advocating for ocean protection. The kid's passport provided a chance to earn a FREE ice cream from Perry's Last Stand, just by attending exhibits and learning about conservation!



EVERSOURCE AND HERBICIDES

*BCT volunteers clear under power lines.
Ask Eversource not to spray.*

We're doing our best. We're trying to help.

We know water is our most important resource. We know tourism depends on clean water and unpolluted ponds. We know our real estate values are based on what a buyer is willing to pay which, in turn, depends on healthy ponds and high quality drinking water.

We know that, more important than our income or property value, we need safe drinking water and inviting beaches for the very reasons we chose to live on Cape Cod.

Brewster Conservation Trust is doing its best to protect these increasingly fragile resources.

Nearly 26 acres of Brewster Conservation Trust land falls within the Eversource right of way. Some is near private wells; some is near ponds; all lands are over our sole source aquifer, the only source of water for the town.

Eversource says it needs to spray herbicides to clear woody vegetation for access to their lines.

Herbicides contaminate ground water as they seep down through sandy soils to the aquifer which is not far from the surface. So to support Eversource's clearing needs, Brewster Conservation Trust volunteers have spent over 100 work hours clearing woody vegetation from these lands.



Last March we wrote Eversource to inform them of our hard work and to ask that they refrain from chemical spraying. We listed the properties we have cleared. The woody vegetation has been removed. Chemical spraying is not necessary.

Brewster joined other towns to legally appeal the planned herbicide spraying. That appeal has been dismissed.

We're doing our best. What more can we do?

What we all can do is substantially reduce the herbicides and pesticides we use in our own yards. Our protest of Eversource's use of chemicals is undercut by the report that an even greater amount of chemicals reach our aquifer through hundreds of individual lawns and gardens. Be a responsible landowner. Work with us, and perhaps with Eversource, to protect the water that supports us and our economy.

ENVIRONMENTALISTS RESPOND TO TRUMP ELECTION

The featured speaker at the Annual Meeting on August 10 was Jack Clarke, Director of Public Policy for Mass Audubon. This is a summary of his talk.

The environmental community must accept that the current federal government is not supportive of the environmental programs passed in the last 50 years. There's three things we're going to do.

First, with conservation partners across the country, we're going to fight to hold on to what we have.

Since 1969 Republicans and Democrats have worked together to protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we live, work and play on. Congress has also enacted legislation to conserve the nation's forests and parks, historic sites, wildlife and wetlands, coasts and oceans. Millions of American lives have improved as a result. The executive branch is mandated by the constitution, courts and Congress to implement, enforce and execute the nation's laws; but some of those laws are now threatened. To prevent a roll-back of progress, we'll work with Congress and, as a preventive measure, we'll go to court to require that laws be enforced.

Second, we're going to support state and local governments in stepping-up protection of our health and environment.

We will work with state and local governments to produce more green energy, to enforce the Endangered Species Act and to promote laws that provide public health and environmental benefits. For example, Massachusetts cities and towns have used Community Preservation funds to create 10,000 affordable housing units; 26,300 acres of open space; 4,400 historic preservation initiatives; and 1,700 outdoor recreation projects – all without any federal involvement.

The third thing we will do is, irrespective of who controls the levers of government, we will continue to advocate for a progressive environmental agenda in our nation's capital - An agenda that provides for the health, safety, and security of all Americans while protecting the nature of this great land for this and future generations.



GENEROUS FAMILY GIFT PROTECTS BEAUTY AND WILDLIFE

We sat in the warm autumn sun in a garden of Montauk daisies covered with butterflies and bees. It is clear that this family enjoys beauty. The second and third generations were boating today, so my visit was only with the eldest generation. The fourth generation was in school.

The \$500,000 donation to the Brewster Conservation Trust was a family gift from all four generations. My host retired to Brewster a mere 20 years ago. Part of that decision was to be near family, but was influenced by the beautiful ponds, beautiful woodlands. Generation #2 moved here before the parents, some 40 years ago as a young adult looking for a place that was not commercialized. Generation #3 was born here, grew up and went to local schools preparatory to Ivy League educations and careers on both coasts. But Generation #3 wanted their children to enjoy the excellent schools and the outdoor childhood they had known.

As well as boating and gardening, they walk the trails of the Brewster Conservation Trust and have joined the Trail Crews

to create and maintain trails. They have a particular love of the Eddy Bay Trail on the north side of Lower Road. The eldest can only go part way with a walker, but the holly grove provides a peaceful resting place with a special appreciation for hollies that are native.

They all love the natural part of Brewster that will stay natural. They considered a gift to a national nature group, but decided to keep their gift local because they love this community. And they wanted to give the gift now so all four generations can enjoy it.

“I hope more people will give land. Even small pieces that are contiguous can create larger blocks, so important for wildlife.” The generous donor has dreams and hopes the dreams will be able to become reality.

The final comment, “Brewster is fortunate to have volunteers who give time. So much has been able to be done. It makes us happy to see your work.”

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR: THE BREWSTER PONDS COALITION

The Conservationist of the Year award was given to the Brewster Ponds Coalition for leadership in promoting the sound stewardship of Brewster’s ponds.

Judy Pirani of the BPC described their work:

Brewster’s 80 ponds are a special part of our lives – for recreation, habitat protection, and as a looking glass into the health of the Cape Cod aquifer, the source of 100% of our drinking water. But many of Brewster’s ponds have impaired water quality due to historic practices, septic systems, lawn fertilizers, and storm runoff.

Three years ago, the Brewster Ponds Coalition (BPC) formed to safeguard our ponds for current and future generations.



Last spring’s **Pond Education** program involving the Family, Laurel,

and Partnership Schools taught children about pond life and ecology with in-class BPC pond education kits and hands-on activities at field

trips at Long Pond. BPC’s **Citizen Scientists**, working with the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, tested several Brewster ponds, to identify cyanobacteria algae and pinpoint potential blooms. They shared the data online with research scientists. The coalition hopes to expand both programs in the coming year.

In addition, the BPC holds outdoor **recreation programs** like September’s Upper Mill Pond Eco-Paddle. It **advocates** for ponds with the Town of Brewster on relevant regulations, and recently observed the Town’s new eco-harvester harvesting macrophytes on Walkers Pond. **Outreach** at public events is another priority, like exhibiting at the BCT’s annual Conservation Day. And the coalition offers online resources for pond and neighborhood associations on pond-related issues like planting rain gardens to mitigate storm runoff.

All this isn’t possible without the BPC’s dedicated volunteers and the BCT’s guidance in helping the coalition grow into a viable organization.



RAIN GARDEN AT BLUEBERRY POND



It's project that has taken over two years, two years of working with the Town DNR, engineers, the Brewster Ponds Coalition, the neighborhood groups of Save Blueberry and Sol's Pond and Ocean Edge; but now it's done. It is useful and beautiful.

Excessive run off at the bottom of a steep road decline was pouring into Blueberry pond, a well-loved pond that was already in trouble. BCT owns the land at the low point of the road.



- After looking at the problem with neighborhood residents, BCT brought all the stakeholders together to talk about a solution;
- Engineer John O'Reilly of J. M. O'Reilly & Assoc. worked with the group to develop a minimal cost but effective solution: a storm water management system that included catch basins, pipes, outfalls and a rain garden;
- After competitive bids, a local contractor was selected to build the storm water management system;
- We seeded a native grass mix suitable for a wet detention basin to stabilize the soil;
- This fall neighborhood volunteers planted native shrubs that are tolerant of both wet and dry conditions. These further stabilize the soil while providing food and habitat for wildlife – and they are beautiful.

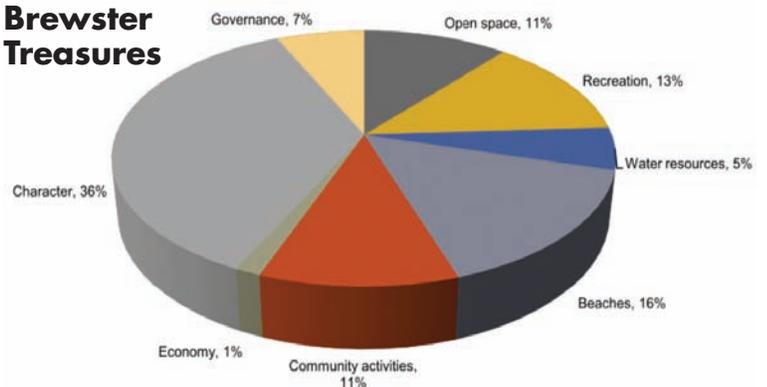
The Brewster Ponds Coalition is making an educational video to use with other pond and neighborhood associations in Brewster. If you have a steep driveway leading to a road or another place where storm water creates a problem, consider a rain garden. For more information:

Association to Preserve Cape Cod: www.APCC.org – Vimeo – A Cape Cod Rain Garden
Brewster Conservation Trust: www.brewsterconservationtrust.org – Blueberry Pond

A VISION FOR BREWSTER

Earlier this year Brewster started work on a vision plan – a long range plan that directs action toward the critical issues we face, as defined by citizens. In late June 135 people gathered in three workshops to answer four basic questions: “What do you value and want to preserve for the future?”, “What are the challenges facing the Town?”, “What are the opportunities the Town can build on?”, and “How do you want to be able describe the Town in 10 years?” The Vision Advisory Group has sifted through all the answers to identify the most important themes – the building blocks to Brewster vision. Open space figures prominently in the results. People valued open space because of its contribution to the character of the town, recreation, drinking water protection, and preservation of fragile habitat.

Brewster Treasures



Open space is also significant in the vision for the future – a town that protected its open space and maintained its rural character. The challenge will come in raising funds and using other tools to continue to protect open space into the future.

Volunteer with BCT!

Brewster Conservation Trust thrives, thanks to our many volunteers. We'd love your help a few hours a month.

- Get out in nature, clear trails and open vistas as a stewardship volunteer!
- Get trained and complete inspections as a property monitor!
- Enjoy a rainy/snowy day by helping us get organized in our office!

Interested? Contact Dorria Marsh dorria@brewsterconservationtrust.org.



MEMORIALS & BEQUESTS Contributions to BCT honor the memory of a loved one; give a donation to the Brewster Conservation Trust "in lieu of flowers". The address for donations: P. O. Box 268, Brewster, MA 02631. For guidance on planning a bequest or gift, contact Jeff Thibodeau at jeff@brewsterconservationtrust.org.

In Memory of

Jane Wagoner & Barbara Albret
Karen E. & Dr. Calvin F. Mutti

Sylvia & Alcide Berube
Guy & Marie L. Berube

Stu Anson
Deanne B. Anson

Kathleen Arico
Christine A. & Stephen C. Richards

Sue Bivona
David C. & Sally B. Schrumm

Dorothy J. Breckenridge
R. Warren Breckenridge

Thomas E. Burrows
Kate Nelson

Ansel Chaplin
Peter R. & Eleanor R. Johnson

Thomas H. Christmas
David A. & Maureen Christmas

Martha Clapp
David E. & Frances Clapp

Edith & Stanley D'Eleronde
Lawrence J. & Suzanne Knowles

Ruth & Mary Louise Eddy
Stephen B. & Diane Jones

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Raymond Girard
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Nelson Graham

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Walter La Liberte
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Jim Mills
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Bonnie Newman
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The Old Cranberry Farmer
Glenn Clark

**Our neighbors in Sheep's
Landing Assoc.**
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Vicki Plaut
Jeffrey W. & Ellen R. Plaut

Carolyn Sprogell
Jonathan H. Sprogell & Kathy Taylor

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Brewster Conservation Trust

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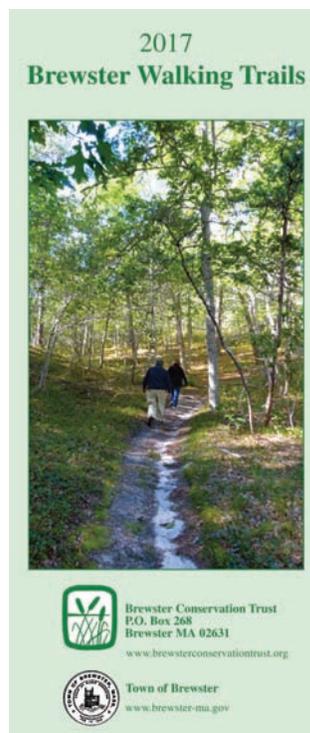
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BREWSTER WALKING TRAILS

This summer BCT and the Town of Brewster rolled out a new edition of the immensely popular "Brewster Walking Trails". This edition includes the new Bakers Pond Trail in East Brewster and an extension of the Quivett Marsh Vista Trail, as well as nine other walking trails. The new guide is available at the Information Center at Town Hall and at the Brewster Ladies' Library.



A note from Mass Audubon:

For two years now, a pair of Bald Eagles has occupied an Osprey nest in Brewster in late winter, only to abandon it in the spring. This is as close as we've gotten to a first modern record of Bald Eagles nesting on the Cape. We're not sure if there is a more hidden nesting site somewhere in the Nickerson State Park or Punkhorn woodlands.

