



**Brewster Conservation Trust**  
P.O. Box 268, Brewster MA 02631

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**Brewster Conservation Trust**

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**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**Annual Meeting of Brewster Conservation Trust**  
**Thursday, August 12th, 5:30 pm at Ocean Edge**



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**Brewster Conservation Trust**

[www.brewsterconservationtrust.org](http://www.brewsterconservationtrust.org)

Spring 2010



View north to herring ladder showing Fishing Rock to purchase on Lower Mill Pond

**Funds needed to preserve two strategic parcels**

**WEST BREWSTER**

You're a herring in Stony Brook and you struggle upstream, resting before making the last leap into Lower Mill Pond. You're a human and you follow them up the paths by the fish ladder. You want to extend your walk along the pond edge, but there is a private property sign that stops you. Large boulders jut out into the pond and you think they would make a fine spot to sit and watch the scene, musing on migration.

Now, with your help, the Brewster Conservation Trust has a chance to make that possible. BCT is poised to buy the half-acre with the boulders, opening up a public path. But we need to raise \$10,000 by July to make the deal happen. *continued on page 2*

**EAST BREWSTER**

We have secured a purchase agreement on eight acres of pine-oak woods in a part of Brewster far, far away, a corner tucked between Route 39 in South Orleans and the Mid-Cape Highway. Chances are you have never been there or ever will go there. But it is a vital chunk of forest crucial to the quality of drinking water and Pleasant Bay. And the Brewster Conservation Trust is proud to be a part of a joint venture to protect it.

We can buy the land for its assessed value of \$72,700. The State has approved a grant to us for half that amount. If we can raise the remaining \$36,350 in private funds by June, we can buy the land. Will you help us?

*continued on page 3*

**BELOVED BREWSTER:** (cont. from page 1)  
**Help us open the path to The Fishing Rock**

Ransom and Esther Somers bought this land along the pond in 1944. Their son Allen Somers and granddaughters Caroline Trickey and Addie Walker now own the family home on the point. "We want to honor Ransom and Esther, who spent years studying and enjoying Stony Brook, its wildlife and geology," says Caroline. "We are delighted to make this land available to BCT and the public."

Esther was a founding member of the Brewster Garden Club and Ransom, who held a PhD in Geology from Cornell, was a senior Professor at the University of Pittsburgh as well as a founding member of the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History Museum. He was also an instructor at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

His description of the geology of the kettle pond and brook is on display at the millpond's kiosk. "They loved sharing their experience and knowledge of the Cape with others, especially young people. They would have loved that their legacy will continue in a very real way," says Caroline.

The half-acre parcel is very steep, part of the gorge carved by glacial meltwater that now hosts Stony Brook. A manmade gouge

in the bank is a remnant of the days a century ago when cranberrying was one of the industries served by the brook; farmers mined sand from the borrow pit to spread out on the bogs of the Stony Brook Cranberry Company; rocks were also pulled out to form dams.

The Somers family has always referred to one of the boulders as "The Fishing Rock," from which pickerel, bass, sunfish and herring are often caught as they have been for millennia. Indeed, archaeologist Fred Dunford of the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History has done extensive archaeological survey work of the banks of the Mill Ponds and found continuous occupation by the Saquatucket tribe (or sachemship) dating back more than 7000 years.

Help us raise \$10,000 by July, so BCT will be able to open the trail to the Fishing Rock for the public.

It's easy to contribute online at [www.brewsterconservationtrust.org](http://www.brewsterconservationtrust.org).



Photo credit: Jo Ann Muramoto, APCC

**FORGOTTEN BREWSTER:** (cont. from page 1)  
**Pine woods and vernal pool up for purchase**

Our land buy is off Clay Hole Road which is a dirt road leading west from the South Orleans General Store (affectionately termed SOGS.)

Our joint venture involves the Town of Brewster, which can purchase an adjoining 23 acres for \$750,000, with a subsidy from the Town of Orleans. (The maximum cost to Brewster will be \$375,000.) The land protects Orleans' public wellfields. Brewster will also apply this summer for a State LAND grant towards the purchase. Town Meetings in both towns will vote the land buy in May.

Also, the Town of Brewster voted at Town Meeting to dedicate 8 acres of tax title parcels it owns in the Clay Hole Road vicinity to conservation and watershed protection. In sum, the two towns and BCT would preserve 39 acres of forest in this area.

Our land includes two small kettlehole ponds at the bottom of steep ridges, ringed with highbush blueberry and red maples.

You can help us succeed: make a generous donation towards our \$36,350 cost.

It's easy to contribute online at [www.brewsterconservationtrust.org](http://www.brewsterconservationtrust.org).



*This spring, Jim Van Baalen, volunteer for BCT & the Museum of Natural History, documented the presence of fairy shrimp (shown below) and salamander egg masses in the two small ponds on the land BCT hopes to buy in June. This evidence*



*proves the use of the ponds as "vernal pools" for breeding amphibians and aquatic life that cannot co-exist with ponds hosting fish.*

In 1984 when my wife and I built our home on Lower Mill Pond at the beginning of Stony Brook Valley, it seemed just another pond to row on. All birds were just birds to me, all ducks just ducks. We had to walk through 800 feet of brambles on a long narrow lot to peer down the 30-foot rock-strewn bank at the pond.

Only over the years did I come to realize that Stony Brook passes through five inter-connected but dramatically different ecosystems in its 4 ½-mile journey to the sea: all stunningly attractive.

The first 2 ½ miles transverse three tranquil freshwater ponds blocked on their north by steep, rocky banks deposited by the terminal glacial advance. At 'Factory Village' the draining water powered Brewster's and Cape Cod's first industries, the mills. The same water, as it breaks through the rocks and begins to tumble down to sea level, hosted the harvest of river herring (the Cape's first regulated industry).

What's special about living here is how much townspeople care. More than a thousand acres have been

purchased, salt marshes and historic sites restored and maintained by the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, the Brewster Conservation Trust, and most of all the Town of Brewster at our unique town meetings. No state park or federal wildlife refuge here, just what townsfolk have done.

Last evening as I gazed out the window I saw four black-crowned night herons perched in a tree, resplendent in blue breeding suits and pink socks. I now know what they are. Years ago, I'm told, there were so many night herons townspeople shot them to quiet their squawking; these were the first that knowingly came back to visit my home.

The Stony Brook Valley can never again become what it once was. But at least the tide has been reversed and is headed back where it came from.



*Black-crowned night herons by Sue Carr*

**TOWN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN UNDERWAY:**

*Public Input Needed; Next Meeting is June 3rd*

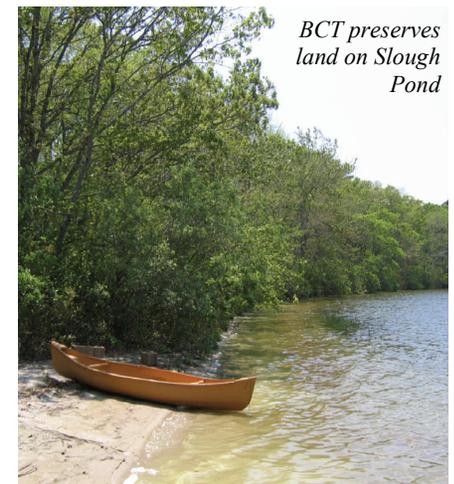
Headlines in our newspapers repeat the concerns for the health of freshwater ponds, question the purity of drinking water, decry nitrogen going into Pleasant Bay and the estuaries along Cape Cod Bay, and broadcast the looming need for wastewater management.

Brewster is fortunate in having sufficient drinking water; its quality remains a concern. We have not yet faced the imminent need for sewage treatment as have some of our neighboring towns, but that time is coming.

The Selectmen appointed the Comprehensive Water Planning Committee to address water quality in the town: the present situation, current and future needs, and strategies. CDM, Inc., international consultants, will guide the first phase of the Committee's work. CWPC Chair Pat Hughes expects the public to help develop the Integrated Water Resources Management Plan to 1) protect ground water and surface water, 2) develop programs for wastewater and stormwater management; and 3) reduce nitrogen going into Pleasant Bay and estuaries on Cape Cod Bay.

While Brewster, along with all of Cape Cod, has experienced explosive growth, we are fortunate in having many acres devoted to open space. Conservation land and the town watershed work to filter

out pollutants before they reach groundwater. The study will determine the relative contributions of stormwater run-off, lawn and garden fertilizers, bird and animal waste, and atmospheric deposition, as well as human wastewater.



*BCT preserves land on Slough Pond*

Residents can do much to reduce pollutants. We can maintain our septic systems, use no more fertilizer than our plants need, maintain buffers of native plants along ponds and wetlands, and use phosphorus-free detergents. We can clean up after pets and responsibly dispose of waste from boats.

The next public water meeting is expected June 3, 2010. Visit: [www.town.brewster.ma.us](http://www.town.brewster.ma.us); click on Comprehensive Water Planning Committee under "Committees."

## Contributions to BCT...

### In Memory of

Wallace G. Baker  
David C. Schrumm  
Jennifer K. Baringer  
Nancy & Charles Baringer  
John G. Cawley  
Marian E. Cawley  
Mary Louise & Ruth Eddy  
Stephen & Diane Jones  
Betty Eldredge  
Daniel N. Eldredge  
Doris Carlson Fisher  
Virginia Toone  
Anthony R. Gervascio  
Lois M. Gervascio  
Paul & Dorothy Grueninger  
Susana B. G. Lopatka  
Colleen Heaney  
Robert F. Heaney  
Andrew M. Kamarck  
Brewster Men's Coffee Club  
Robert & Barbara Burger  
Helen W. Campbell  
Elliott & Sue Carr  
Corrine M. Cirella  
Thomas & Barbara Connors  
Catherine Fitz  
Jane & Joel Furman  
Sally Gunning  
Harvard Club of Cape Cod  
Ellie & Peter Johnson  
Lynn Kamarck  
Thomas Kamarck  
Eric Lacoma/Linda Kadluboski  
Robert & Jane Loeffler  
John & Nancy Malloy  
Jane G. Mensel  
Inge Morrison  
Richard Muniz  
Mutt Family  
Nancy & Louise Mutt  
John & Mary Myers  
Liz Perry & Carl Ahlstrom  
Arthur & Pamela Praetsch  
John Redfern/Ellen Barber  
Janet Spence  
Len & Mindy Smollen  
John & Nancy Taft  
M/M J. Randall Williams  
Carol Anne/Douglas Yeaple

Seward Highley & Dot Lamont  
Joan Fasser  
Dottie Johnson  
Charles M. Johnson  
Edward O. Kassman, Sr.  
Elizabeth C. Gardiner  
Kimberly Schultz  
Gerald & Roberta Sitomen  
Richard Kingston  
Jane Sterling  
John Knight  
Marie Knight  
Daniel A. Leone, Jr.  
Dorothy D. Leone  
My Parents  
Katherine S. Reynolds  
Georgia Pantos  
Chris Pantos  
Nancy Scott Waltz Peach  
Ellie & Peter Johnson  
Edward T. Peach  
Audrey C. & Robert Petermann  
Audrey B. Petermann  
Werner Plaut  
Dee & Stu Anson  
Jeanette Herrmann & Chris Owens  
Elizabeth Rice  
Ellie & Peter Johnson  
Florence Rogala  
Jennifer & Joe Pereira  
Peter Schilke  
Margaret L. Schilke  
Malcolm Wells  
Elliott & Susan Carr  
Ellie & Peter Johnson  
John & Nancy Landon  
Linda & Jim Mills

### In Honor of

Alexi's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday  
Victor & Gail Gulino  
All the kids  
Carroll & Jane Johnson  
B.L. Library Book Sale Helpers  
Linda & Jim Mills  
Brewster  
The Lurier family  
Patricia Clark & Mary Duerr &  
Bob & Diane King  
Cynthia Gage  
Pam Demetron  
Mary Ellen Kelly  
Debra Johnson  
E. Beverly Johnson

## Call for Land Stewards: Volunteer for the land

Land management volunteers are chiefly responsible for visiting properties owned or under conservation restrictions held by the Brewster Conservation Trust. Land management volunteers are given a map and description of the properties they select to visit. The purpose of the visit is to see that the property is in good order, that there is no trash or brush dumping, the bounds are apparent, and there is a sign or other indication that it is BCT property.

As part of your visit, you may walk the perimeter or interior of the property, remove trash, trim growth that is obstructing the BCT sign or abutting public property, and identify follow up action to address other issues. After the visit, we ask you to complete a brief form reporting the findings.

As a volunteer, you may also participate in the outdoor crew work where we visit sites which have significant dumping or other violations and clean them up, remove trash or invasive species. Sometimes the crew is rewarded by finding treasures: a metal dairy carton, wood for fencing, a sturdy trash can with a spring lid, old bottles. One man's trash is surely another man's treasure. The crew work can be rewarding as we remove old tires, bottles, scrap metal, dismantle an abandoned shed or fort and see the land restored to its natural state.

Contact us at [info@brewsterconservationtrust.org](mailto:info@brewsterconservationtrust.org) or call 508-896-9556 if you would like to join our work crews or adopt a BCT parcel to look after.



*BCT volunteers  
Brent Bowers and  
Peter Herrmann  
helped to clean  
up a Trust parcel  
this spring.*