ORENDA Wildlife Land Trust
orendalandtrust.org

Summer 2018

The Chronicle of Woodlands and Wildlife

A Quarterly Newsletter of Orenda Wildlife Land Trust

The State of Nature, Wildlife & Land Conservation on Cape Cod

Are we as members of a civil society conserving enough land on Cape Cod to protect and preserve habitat for native and naturalized wildlife, and to safeguard our sole source aquifer?

We're going to try to answer that key question in a public forum entitled ***A Conversation on Conservation*** that Orenda Wildlife Land Trust will moderate on Tuesday, June 26, at 6:30 p.m., at Sturgis Library located at 3090 Main Street (Route 6A.) Hosted by Sturgis, and sponsored by The Cooperative Bank of Cape Cod, this thought-provoking and interactive dialogue is free to the public. Listen to the frank assessments by guest panelists as audience members directly question these subject-matter experts in land conservation, wildlife, and clean water.

Margaret Wyman Sanctuary, West Barnstable

Guest panelists are: **Zenas "Zee" Crocker**, executive director of the Barnstable Clean Water Coalition; **Heather McElroy**, natural resources specialist at the Cape Cod Commission; and **Mark Robinson**, executive director of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, or, The Compact.

Despite the best efforts of local, state and federal resource managers and decision-makers, our colleagues at other land trusts, and our friends in wildlife rehabilitation, challenges lurk. Orenda is leading the conversation to mitigate these challenges on behalf of wildlife that provides intrinsic value to Cape Cod.

"The species most at risk from loss of open space over the years are the specialists that have specific habitat requirements (from piping plovers, to spadefoot toads and wetland creatures to American Kestrels,)" explained Ian Ives, director of Massachusetts Audubon's Long Pasture Sanctuary.

At Orenda, we firmly believe that land conservation and water quality go hand in hand. That's why we closely collaborate with the Cape Wildlife Center (CWC,) where Executive Director Zak Mertz thinks the State of Nature on Cape Cod is going strong. "Our Island hosts over 400 native and naturalized species, and is one of the most bio-diverse and productive ecosystems in the Commonwealth." Our geographic strength, Zak thinks, is access to a shoreline that is a critical migratory and year-round route for avian species.

"As new less-predictable weather patterns become the status quo, and episodic storm events continue to impact our forests and coastlines, we at Cape Wildlife Center are struggling to keep up with the demand for wildlife care. After each major Nor'easter, algal bloom, heatwave, and snowstorm, our hospital is flooded with patients. From downed trees and habitat loss, to neuro-toxin outbreaks we see just how damaging these events are on our local species and their habitats," Zak added.

That said, Cape Codders have not lost their need to conserve land, according to Mark Robinson, executive Director of The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, or, simply, The Compact. "There was a fever pitch in the mid-80s to preserve open space owing to the rapid rate of development that peaked in 1986," said Robinson, adding, "everyone could see the Cape slipping away in big chunks of new subdivisions. What is different now is that Cape voters accept preserving open space as a standard practice, not a spasmodic activity of the towns." Robinson added: "The best deals are when priority and opportunity meet."

A Conversation on Conservation is an event that should be on the calendars of anyone who cares about wildlife on Cape Cod. Please join us! (Refreshments will be served.)

A Note from the Executive Director

Theresa Barbo

By Theresa M. Barbo

Unexpected visitors dropped by the house the other day, and preferred only the backyard.

The first was a ruby throated hummingbird dressed in iridescent green that spent about ten seconds at the feeder I had just hung off the back porch. I sat feet from her, mesmerized by nature's most delicate avian gem and wings flapping at a good 60 times per second.

At three other feeders abutting conservation woods more visitors arrived: the pedestrian House Sparrow, a Blue Jay, even a Carolina Wren. And lastly, my absolute favorite, a bright red male Northern Cardinal. A few Eastern Cottontails, and a juvenile red squirrel, rounded out the visitor list.

Is there nothing more beautiful than the sight of songbirds, a hummingbird, and small mammals nearby? I certainly don't think so!

And that's why I'm here. Accepting the post of Executive Director at Orenda Wildlife Land Trust in March 2018 was a no-brainer for two reasons: I'm simply obsessed by trees—always have been, and, by wildlife. This juncture of nature—wildlife and their habitats—proved an irresistible tug, and I'm grateful to the Board of Directors at Orenda for the opportunity.

Let me share that Orenda is springing into 2018 with an updated format for this newsletter. We are also producing compelling and informative content for our website (orendalandtrust.org), and tinkering with social media. All to constantly look for ways to share our mission with diverse stakeholders. And, of course, to provide supporters with key information that'll inform your giving choices. We depend upon your help in our critical mission to preserve and protect open space for wildlife habitat and water quality.

I'm at Orenda because I believe that wildlife provides intrinsic value to people. Growing up, nature ruled my life. As a corporate brat, my family moved around several times to accommodate Dad's executive career first at Bendix in Detroit, and then at Motorola, where my five brothers and sisters and I lived in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, a western suburb of Chicago. Later, we settled back in South Bend, Indiana, where my own folks grew up. As a kid coming of age in the Lake Michigan watershed we played outside every day for hours, no matter the season. And I built the best forest forts: spacious interiors with swinging doors. In winter, I came inside only to change mittens. In summer, Mom kept a batch of baking soda-and-water paste handy for when I invariably stepped on ground nesting bees as I explored both wood and lawns, usually barefoot, in search of nature's creatures.

My love of wilderness and its inhabitants have led my professional immersions for nearly 15 years at other Cape Cod-based organizations with missions in marine mammal rescue, ocean conservation, wildlife rehabilitation, and most recently, water quality. Now a firm East Coaster, as an author and journalist I've composed articles and books on wildlife. It's a life-long passion. I'm laser-focused on land conservation and wildlife habitat protection and hope to spend many years here at Orenda with you.

Beyond a safe haven for wildlife, land conservation is a priority in a civil society. Our air is cleaner, our drinking water purer, and food healthier, when we conserve land as a priceless resource. As humans, we need nature and time outside to restore ourselves, and bring balance to our souls.

For these reasons, I'd like to personally thank you for supporting Orenda's wonderful mission! Your sustained engagement helps secure habitat conservation efforts for native and naturalized wildlife, and leads to a healthier Earth.

If ever you want to offer any questions, suggestions, or concerns about Orenda, please feel free to contact me at theresa.barbo@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Orenda welcomes another scholarship recipient

Jack Olson is the 2018 recipient of the $500 Orenda Wildlife Land Trust scholarship awarded at the Cape Cod Community College Evening of Excellence May 17th.

Jack is majoring in Environmental Technology. His career goal is to go to a four-year college in Massachusetts and pursue a Bachelor's degree in either Communications or Environmental Technology.

Ticks: Nature's Tiniest Enemy

By Kim Newton

Ticks are as ferocious as they are tiny.

Three types of ticks are in Massachusetts: the American dog tick (which can spread tularemia and Rocky Mountain spotted fever,) the deer tick (which can transmit anaplasmosis, babesioisis, Lyme disease and Powassan virus,) and most recently, the lone star tick (which can transmit Erlichiosis, STARI and tularemia.)

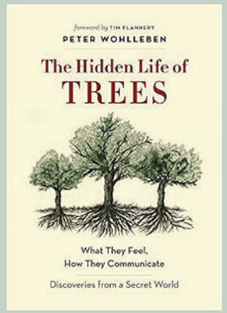
For each stage of their life cycle, ticks must feed on a host such as mice, so you'll need to make your property less hospitable. Because ticks require cooler, high humidity habitat, they seek shade and moist environments such as leaf litter and debris. For these reasons, ticks are abundant in the woods, along trails, and in the grassy, brushy areas adjacent to woods. Here's what you can do:

Mow lawns frequently and keep leaves raked. Prune trees to let in more sunlight, and clear leaf litter, tall grasses, and brush from around homes, stonewalls, wood piles and along the edge of lawns. Use only native plants that do no create microclimates for ticks. Plant deer-resistant varieties of plants. Remove woodpiles to discourage rodents onto which ticks cling. Hang bird feeders in open spaces, and position playground equipment, decks, and patios in sunny locations away from yard edges. Minimize tick migration by installing a three-foot-wide barrier of wood chips, mulch or gravel between lawns and wooded areas. Remove trash, brush piles, old furniture and motor vehicles where ticks and tick hosts such as mice love to hide.

Be careful about which commercial products you use to kill ticks, because some are harmful to beneficial insects like bees. Some less harmful natural alternatives have been evaluated by the Centers for Disease Control, and you can read about those options and research on their effectiveness here: https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev/natural-repellents.html

If a tick bites you, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention recommends a fine-tipped tweezer to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible, and pull upward with steady, even pressure. Then thoroughly clean the bite area, and your hands, with rubbing alcohol or soap and water. Never crush a tick with your fingers, or kill it in other ways (like covering it with Vaseline or putting a hot match on it.) While killing a tick does make it easier to remove, it also increases the chance of transmitting any diseases as the tick dies. You can also have your tick tested for multiple tick diseases through the UMass Amherst Laboratory of Medical Zoology. Cape Cod residents currently benefit from a grant that reduces the cost of tick testing from $50 down to $15.

Book Review



Once in a while a book enchants. Such is the case with Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees* (Random House 2016.) As if the title isn't enchanting enough, the book's subtitle, What They Feel, How They Communicate, is worthy of a time investment.

Wohlleben is a long-time forester in Germany who now runs an environmentally-friendly woodland. He advocates for the "return of primeval forests." Using scientific principles, but with an artistic flair, Wohlleben reintroduces readers to trees as living beings who nurture, protect and live with one another.

The premise of *Hidden Life* insists that trees are terribly social. They take care of one another by sending nourishment including sugars and soil fungi to sick family members through a complex underground network of roots. Trees communicate news via this complex root system, including potential threats. about all sorts of things, including potential threats. You'll never be the company of trees again without seeing these magical creatures in a new light.

Stay tuned to our website for more information on these upcoming 2018 events:

- A Conversation On Conservation, Tuesday, June 26, at Sturgis Library
- Brewster Conservation Day, Saturday, July 14
- Cape Cod Wildlife Festival, Saturday, September 8

Orenda Wildlife Land Trust in Barnstable Awards $30,000 Grant to the Cape Wildlife Center

The Orenda Wildlife Land Trust has awarded a $30,000. grant to the Cape Wildlife Center (CWC,) a non-profit wildlife hospital and education center in Barnstable that provides veterinary care and rehabilitation to over 2,000 sick, injured and orphaned wild animals. Last fall Orenda also donated $5,000. to the CWC.

"We are grateful for this critical infusion of cash support that will help us treat thousands of patients in need this year," explained Zak Mertz, executive director of the CWC.

Funds for the grant were made available thanks to the recent sale of a property in West Barnstable that was donated to Orenda by one of its board members, Jeffries J. Wyman. The remainder of funds will be invested for the organization's long-term growth to provide capital for future purchases of land as wildlife sanctuaries.

From its inception, Orenda has had a productive and meaningful history with the Cape Wildlife Center, and this grant aligns perfectly with missions of each organization. In fact, in its earliest days Orenda staff cared directly for injured and sick wildlife. Within a few years, however, the caregiving arm of Orenda evolved into the Cape Wildlife Center, which today is an independent organization.

"A key sector of our mission is all about the animals and safeguarding their environment," said David H. Tately, president of the Board of Directors of Orenda.

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Orenda's Mission

Founded in 1986, Orenda Wildlife Land Trust (orendalandtrust.org) works to preserve and protect open space for wildlife habitat, fresh air, and water quality, in sanctuaries on Cape Cod and throughout Massachusetts.

All contributions to
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