

### Orenda Welcomes New Executive Director, Jeff Thibodeau

Orenda is pleased to announce Jeff Thibodeau as our new Executive Director. Mr. Thibodeau started with Orenda in January. He succeeds Theresa Mitchell Barbo, who left the position in 2019 to pursue her writing career. Longtime Administrator Liz Lewis has also recently left the organization after 17 years to pursue other endeavors.

Jeff brings 25 years of experience in environmental protection to the position after earning a B.S. in General Studies in Agriculture and a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture from Cornell University. Most recently, he was the Land Acquisition and Stewardship Specialist for the Brewster Conservation Trust. Prior to that, he worked in the public sector as a Town Planner and Conservation Agent, the private sector as a Planner and Landscape Designer, and in the non-profit sector for The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts Inc. as its Director of Land Protection, and for the Orleans Conservation Trust as Coordinator of the 200 Coalition Project. Mr. Thibodeau was also President/Owner of a small environmental consulting company. He has worked on environmental

projects throughout the country and has authored hundreds of documents and plans. In his personal time he enjoys being with his daughter, writing and consulting on wellness, and performing music.

Jeff will strive to sustain and build upon Orenda's accomplishments. His initial priorities are to expand Orenda's public profile, raise funds, cultivate new donors and Board members, foster outreach and educational opportunities, collaborate with other organizations, and most importantly, protect more land for wildlife habitat.

Orenda President Daniel Morast says, "It's so exciting to welcome Jeff Thibodeau aboard to continue and expand Orenda's efforts to protect and establish more wildlife sanctuaries".



Jeff Thibodeau

### Wild Imaginings: Global Challenges Promote Positive Growth

By Jeff Thibodeau

We are in a time of great change. Our lives have been affected dramatically by the COVID-19 pandemic and sweeping social transformation. These challenges have been difficult for all of us, and devastating to many. Our economies, health, security and peace of mind feel threatened. We need each other now more than ever to stay strong and positive.

On the bright side, these difficult challenges are promoting positive growth. In only a few short months since the onslaught of COVID-19, the slowing of human activity has resulted in a resurgence of the earth's health. The impacts of human development have become even more apparent in their absence, as satellite imagery reveals a cleaner, greener planet. Similarly, recent socio-political events have shed new light upon unfortunate and long-standing issues.



Jeff Thibodeau

As we find ourselves unable to turn away from the pain, communication and understanding about social, economic and environmental issues is being strengthened. People are speaking up and being heard. Awareness is growing.

There is a deeper realization of the importance of health, family, friends, home, work, community, equality, justice, peace and nature. Sometimes it takes a crisis to show us what we would not otherwise see, enabling positive growth and the strengthening of our resolve to live wisely and with more compassion.

At Orenda, these challenges have strengthened our clarity about the world's sacredness and our interdependence with all life. We depend on each other for our continued health and well-being. Let us continue to take care of this world and her creatures...including people of all races and orientations, plants, water, air and wildlife. Together, we will not only survive, we will thrive!

# Announcing Orenda Director's New *Forever Wild Fund*

By Jeff Thibodeau

Raised on Cape Cod, I have witnessed the sweeping changes that followed a soaring population explosion over the last several decades. My childhood memories of deep woods and dirt roads have largely given way to networks of pavement, signs, traffic lights and buildings. While these changes took place, I watched the pioneers of environmental preservation and their successors race hard to keep pace, and in many ways they have succeeded. So many of our protected places are here today because of them. Orenda was, and remains, one of those pioneers.

Started in 1986 by celebrated environmental advocate and philanthropist Barbara Birdsey, Orenda has protected hundreds of acres across the state for wildlife and environmental conservation. I am honored to be part of

Orenda's current team of dedicated people. We need your help in keeping Orenda at the forefront of conservation efforts by contributing to our new "Forever Wild Fund". This fund will be used for Orenda's operating and land protection efforts so that we can continue to do this important work long into the future.

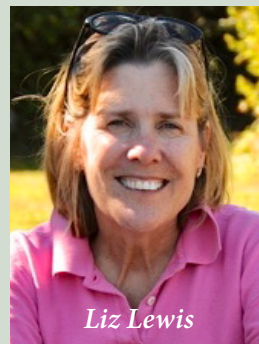
Our mission is one of commitment, conscience and compassion. We are dedicated to protecting the nature that surrounds us. To remain successful, we need money so we can protect more land, take care of it, nurture wildlife and pay for office expenses. Our budget is modest but our sights are high and with your help we can do more, be more and protect more of what is forever wild in our world...the lifeblood of our fragile Cape Cod landscape and the marrow of our lives. Thank you in advance for your contribution!

## Thank You Sincerely!

*Orenda expresses sincere thanks to three of our longstanding Board and staff members who have recently moved on to pursue other endeavors.*

### Liz Lewis

Liz joined Orenda as a board member in 2002. She was attracted to Orenda by our mission to protect open space on Cape Cod. Liz soon became the Clerk and took on the role of Administrator after the passing Linda Bound in 2009. Her greatest joys were helping with fundraising and other outreach events. In 2013, Liz was instrumental in facilitating Orenda's involvement with the NE Cottontail habitat restoration program that helped the rabbit population recover. Because of this program Orenda became a model for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's partnership with private land owners. Liz always enjoyed collaborating with the land trust community. Liz's future plans include co-managing the family farm with her sister. Thank you Liz!



Liz Lewis

### Farley Lewis

Farley Lewis enjoyed many years with Orenda and the greater land trust community. She felt privileged to work with so many dedicated individuals who have made our world a better, greener place. She is thankful to all who spend their time and energy conserving, preserving and maintaining open space! And, we are thankful to her!

### Dave Tately and Jeff Wyman

Dave Tately, long-time President, and Jeff Wyman, Director, have also moved on from Orenda after many years of dedicated service. Please look for more in a future newsletter about Dave and Jeff's tremendous contributions.

## Welcome Aboard!

### Grant Wiklund

Grant joined the Orenda board in 2020 and was soon thereafter elected as Clerk, given his expertise in real estate and finance. A lifelong interest in the outdoors and hiking led Grant to Orenda. Awarded the rank of Eagle Scout as a teenager, Grant believes the woods should always be left better after passing through them. Grant will apply his skills to land acquisition and stewardship efforts, including inspection and mapping of Orenda's many wildlife sanctuaries.



Grant Wiklund

### Orenda Elects New Officers

*At its Annual Meeting on February 22nd, Orenda elected a new slate of officers, as follows:*

- Daniel Morast, President
- Grant Wiklund, Clerk
- Ken Burnes, Treasurer

Other continuing Board Members are Dick Boyden & Diane Salomone

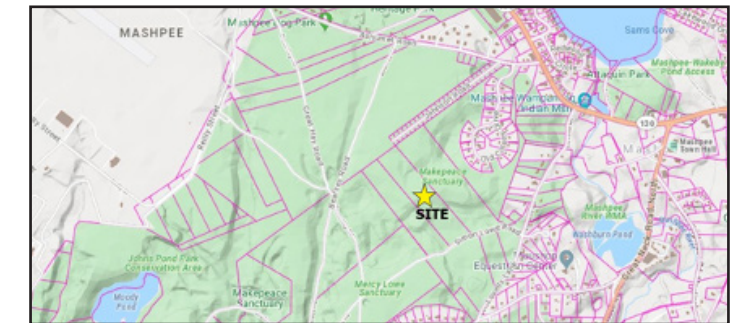
# Your Donation Will Help to Expand the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge!

By Jeff Thibodeau

In May, Orenda purchased a vacant 14-acre privately owned parcel within the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR) for \$225,000, protecting additional pine-oak forest habitat linking our Makepeace and Mercy Lowe Sanctuaries. The land was slated for development and time was short, so Orenda acted quickly. In the span of a few months, we met with the owner, negotiated a fair price and closed on the property. In order to make this happen, we drew from our small land acquisition fund and took a short-term loan from The Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts. The owner also allowed us to finance a portion of the purchase. We are seeking both private and public funding to help us cover the cost of this sanctuary, which is a significant open space anchor within the refuge.

The Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge (MNWR) is a regional and national gem. It is one of 566 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's largest collection of lands and waters specifically set aside for the conservation and management of wildlife resources. MNWR is one of eight refuges comprising the Eastern Massachusetts NWR

Complex. Located in the towns of Mashpee and Falmouth, the MNWR was established in 1995 to preserve and protect natural resources associated with the Waquoit Bay area for the protection of waterfowl and other wildlife. When complete, it will total 5,871 acres, managed through a unique partnership among nine Federal, State and private conservation groups, including the Orenda Wildlife Land Trust, which owns a significant amount of land within its boundaries. The Refuge preserves thousands of acres of salt marshes, cranberry bogs, Atlantic white cedar swamps, freshwater marshes, rivers and vernal pools. Please donate towards this critically important wildlife habitat and groundwater protection area!



# Orenda and Partners Create Centerville Wildlife Sanctuary

By Jeff Thibodeau and Theresa Mitchell Barbo

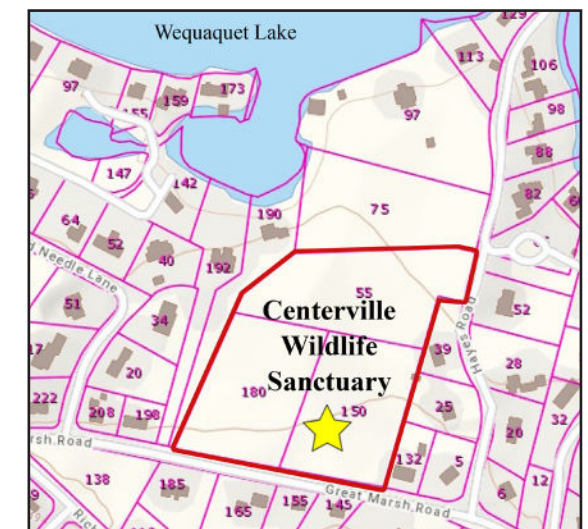
Orenda has been working diligently for over a year with Barnstable town officials and a group of dedicated residents to protect a small forest near Wequaquet Lake, along Great Marsh Road in Centerville.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River is selling this land to Orenda, composed of three adjacent building lots totaling 6.2 acres, for \$500,000. To help pay for the land, on May 7th the Barnstable Town Council approved Orenda's request for \$425,000 in Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding, for which the town will hold a perpetual Conservation Restriction (CR) on the property. The CR will help to ensure its long-term protection as forested habitat, while allowing passive public use of the land for walking and nature observation.

The project also received approvals from the Community Preservation Committee, Land Acquisition and Preservation Committee, and the Conservation Commission. Passed in 2000 by the Massachusetts legislature, the CPA provides funding for affordable housing, outdoor recreation, historic preservation and open space conservation in communities across the state. Orenda plans to close on the property in late June, before the end of the fiscal year. We have received

\$25,000 in donations from a few very generous residents so far, but we still need to raise \$50,000 to cover the remaining cost of the property.

Forests provide critical natural functions and also help to renew our minds and spirits in an increasingly busy world. Please help us protect the Centerville Wildlife Sanctuary by making a tax-deductible donation.

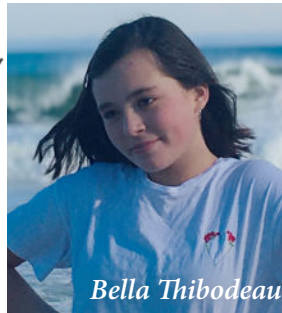


## Cub's Den

Our new "Cub's Den" section spotlights conversations about conservation with our youth. This month we pose our question to Bella Thibodeau, 6<sup>th</sup> grader.



Drawing by  
Bella Thibodeau



Bella Thibodeau

**Question: What Does It Mean To Be Wild? And Why Is Wildlife Protection So Important?**

By Bella Thibodeau

To me, being wild means to have freedom. The habitat that a wild being thrives in is uncultivated. When something is wild it does not have any rules or laws that its wild soul needs to follow. Usually, when a being is wild it lacks domestication.

Plants or animals can be wild, even humans can too. Pets or house plants are good examples of living things that could be wild but can also be tamed. The term wild can be used in many ways. It can be used for living things, but also with different stuff such as art and in the way people express their feelings. If you are wild you are untamed, or not taught manners.

Protecting wildlife is very important because every animal on earth has a

purpose. There are so many animals right here on Cape Cod that we need to protect. We need animals living here because, although not many people think about it, they really do help us with growing food. Animals and insects help because they can fertilize and pollinate.

We also need to protect our plants! It is super important to protect plants because they give us oxygen. We are polluting our earth and so many plants and animals are dying because of it. We need to make sure we are keeping our planet clean and safe for wild things to flourish. If we keep building structures where forests are, then all those animals who depend on that place will die, and the plants will die too. We need to protect these things. Orenda Wildlife Land Trust helps by protecting land that has wildlife on it and preserves it so nobody can build on it. They are taking the next step to helping our planet!

## Andrew Stapleton and Tyler Linnell, Residential Caretakers, Nelson Sanctuary, Plymouth

Andrew and Tyler became the Caretakers of Orenda's Nelson Sanctuary in Plymouth, during the Fall of 2019. Having grown up as neighbors on Cape Cod, they developed a passion for the outdoors at an early age. In their later years, both enjoyed extensive travel across the globe visiting 5 different continents combined.

Having seen much of the world and witnessing its natural beauty firsthand, they deeply appreciate the Nelson Sanctuary and currently reside as guardians of the land and cottage. They are also both avid outdoorsmen and believe strongly in environmental preservation and sustainability. They value the peace and tranquility of preserved land and believe strongly in its value to future generations. We are thrilled to have them onboard.



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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Daniel J. Morast, *President*  
Kenneth Burnes, *Treasurer*  
Grant Wiklund, *Clerk*  
Richard Boyden  
Diane Salomone

### HONORARY BOARD MEMBER for LIFE

Jeff Wyman

### BOARD OF ADVISORS

Barbara Birdsey, *Founder, Past President*  
Laura Herbst, *Past Director*  
Ralph Herbst, *Past President*

### STAFF

Jeff Thibodeau, *Executive Director*  
Andrew Stapleton & Tyler Linnell,  
*Nelson Sanctuary Caretakers*

### WEBSITE MANAGEMENT

Karen Ryder, *Webmaster*  
karenryder.com

Susie Perry, *Graphic Design*  
www.perrydesignonline.com

### AFFILIATIONS

The Compact of  
Cape Cod Conservation Trusts  
Land Trust Alliance  
Mashpee Environmental  
Coalition to Affiliations  
Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge  
Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition

### 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  
Orenda Wildlife Land Trust  
are tax-deductible under  
federal regulations.