



Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge Spring Newsletter 2018

Monarch Meadow Habitat Restoration Grant

In October 2016, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program awarded a \$35,000, 2-year grant for habitat creation and restoration of 17 acres for monarchs and native pollinators to three New England organizations: the Friends of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge, Inc. "Friends", the Wampanoag Tribal Council, and the Norman Bird Sanctuary in Rhode

Island. These partnerships joined forces to support these important pollinators by establishing and maintaining fields that provide critical habitat

for the monarch butterfly and bumble bees. Both Monarchs and Bumblebees have declined by 90% in the last 30 years.

Specifically, within the Friends grant, we received \$17,000.00 to create 7 acres of meadows in close collaboration with local conservation partners within the Town of Falmouth and the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge. These partners and acreage are:

1. Falmouth Rod and Gun Club: 5 acres
2. Town of Falmouth (Dupee and Sea Farms north): 2 acres
3. The Falmouth 300 Committee Land Trust: 0.25 acres
4. Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR) to manage the three Educational Teacher Workshops.

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Friends of Mashpee Refuge Honor Janice Walford

The Friends of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge held its 22nd annual meeting on November 2 at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Approximately 40 attendees were treated to a presentation about the Mashpee, Quashnet, Childs and Santuit rivers and the ongoing habitat work aimed at restoring their native brook trout fisheries.

Justin Fleming of the Sea-Run Brook Trout Coalition—a science-based, grassroots alliance of academics, fishery biologists, ecologists, non-governmental organizations, and private citizens whose goal is the preservation and restoration of wild, native coastal brook trout in their historic range—shared past successes and information about future plans for restoring these valuable resources.

2018 Friends Board of Directors

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MaryKay Fox

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Clerk, Town of Mashpee Liaison
Katelyn Cadoret

Historian
Thomas Fudala

Waquoit Bay NERR Liaison
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The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Friends' annual David Ross Palmer Award, named after the group's late founder and first president, to former Mashpee Enterprise editor Janice Walford. The award was presented by board member and Friends Historian F. Thomas Fudala in honor of Ms. Walford's outstanding dedication to and support for the creation and implementation of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge and protection of other conservation lands through both favorable editorials and extensive reporting on the refuge.

Emphasizing Ms. Walford's longstanding support for environmental protection, Mr. Fudala noted that this was the second time he had voted her such an award, having done so in 1989 when on the board of the Cape Codder Association.



to outstanding Mashpee residents Beverly

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Environmental Recognition Award for her work on the Cape Codder newspaper.

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Kane and Mary Scanlan, both friends of hers, and that credit for the award must be shared with the Enterprise and the Hough family, who provided the platform and support for the news coverage of the refuge and the editorial endorsements. She also emphasized the critical role of locally owned newspapers in general as a source of information on local issues.



Ms. Walford ended with a call "to nurture in our children and grandchildren love and appreciation for the outdoors in all seasons. By your example, encourage them to leave their electronic gadgets at home and use all their senses to learn about the life of our ponds, streams, woodlands, marshes, beaches. Beyond the small screen and its earphones is a wonderful world waiting to inspire some of these children to become the stewards of the earth that we so desperately need now. Also engage them in discussions about our civic life and the importance of voting."

The board then conducted its annual election of officers, voting to return MaryKay Fox as president, Katelyn Cadoret as secretary and Doug Roberson as treasurer.

Time to renew your membership!

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To establish these pollinator fields, commercial equipment prepared the soil for native seeds and plants. This first year we utilized a combination of seed mixes, plant plugs and/or mature plants along with seed collected from local sources for milkweed and other native species, providing 8 months of nectar, pollen, and critical late fall nectar sources for migrating Monarchs. Host plants for fifteen regional butterfly species were also included in plant selections. Spring flowering bushes provide an early nectar source and later fall fruit which stretches these wildlife food sources into the winter months helping to sustain wildlife species such as wintering robins, turkeys, quail, songbirds and New England Cottontails. The fields will be annually mowing by the partners, volunteers, business donations and scouts. Other partnerships have emerged over time. The Friends partnered with Bristol Agricultural High School who generously offered to grow 5000 native plants for school gardens and for Teaticket park's pollinator gardens. Additionally, native plants for school gardens were raised at a local greenhouse donated over the winter. Spohr Gardens in Woods Hole plans to release their butterfly species at these newly established garden sites.

The Friends collaborated with Waquoit Bay NERR to provide an educational component which involved holding three Teacher educational workshops that covered native pollinators, garden design, and curriculum for STEM science classes. Originally, we sought to work with 10 local schools with teams of two teachers per school specifically with grades 3-5. Ultimately, the

Creature Feature Corner



The Eastern Towhee...



Male Towhee



Female Towhee

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern Towhee/id](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Towhee/id)

You've probably heard calls from this bird in the woods or in your backyard than actually seeing this secretive bird! It's our Eastern Towhee. Eastern Towhees spend most of their time on the ground, scratching at leaves using both feet at the same time in a kind of backwards hop and utilizes thick underbrush to avoid predators. You may see this bird more often when it climbs into shrubs and low trees to sing. As with most bird species, the male is more colorful and easily spotted with its striking black back contrasted by the white belly and rufous sides but the female is also very attractive. It's about the size of a robin, which it could be confused with, but it has a habit of "flicking" its tail which exposes the white feathers underneath. They will be returning soon so here's a link at Cornell Lab of Ornithology's to become familiar with its calls for your next Refuge outing.

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern Towhee/media-browser/474294](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Eastern_Towhee/media-browser/474294)

final goal for the teachers was to establish, with their students, a pollinator school garden. After the initial press release, there was such a great response by Cape teachers we decided to expand our workshops, schools, age groups, and gardens. Overall, after all was said and done, the educational component included 13 gardens at cape schools ranging from K-12 and one STEM school in the Boston area. Classrooms studied the life-history needs of Monarch



and native pollinators; they were given educational materials, consultation and site visits and all plants needed for creation of a pollinator garden at their school. There were 20 Teachers and 975 children at 13 schools who created their own school gardens in the spring of 2017. Most reported seeing monarchs and other native pollinators within 2 days of planting their gardens. What a nice reward for these young gardeners and nature lovers!

After the first growing season, all 7 acres of fields have gone through field preparation, multiple seeding, planting and establishing new scrubs and trees. Host plants for Monarchs included all 3-milkweed species, and for the rare and endangered Karner Blue and Frosted Elfin butterflies' perennial lupine and false yellow Indigo host plants were distributed throughout the fields. For the fall migrating monarchs, five species of goldenrod, and asters were planted for their refueling needs. The Rod and Gun Club's Pollinator Team accomplished field plantings with 9 work days involving 154 volunteers who contributed in-kind work of 747 volunteer hours and tractor time to equal \$19,600. They planted 326 new species of flowering plants, shrubs and trees such as basswood, pussy willow, redbud, highbush cranberry, and shadbush/serviceberry to name a few. This wide range of plantings should provide nectar from early April to late November while producing nuts and berries for overwintering wildlife. To attract more wildlife, they also created two new vernal pools which the box turtles quickly utilized.

There is lots of excitement, collaboration and good things happening for our local native pollinators and migrating monarchs.

Upcoming Refuge Events

Walks

- A Day in the Salt Marsh Self-Guided Story Walk
Read about the salt marsh as you hike along the bluff at Waquoit Bay Reserve April 14 – 22
- Jehu Pond Conservation Walk – Waquoit Bay Reserve
Adult Walking Club April 29 1:00 – 2:30 P.M.

Cleanups

- Appalachian Mountain Club's Johns Pond Cleanup
April 22 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.
- Mashpee Land Stewards Johns Pond Cleanup
April 28 9 A. M. – 4 P. M.
- Great Massachusetts Clean-Up/DCR Annual Park Serve Day
April 27 9 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Volunteers Wanted! Contact friendsofmnwr@gmail.com for more info.

Educational

- You Are What You Eat: Learn about bird beaks and feeding habits!
April 17 10:00 – 11:30 A.M. Waquoit Bay Reserve
- How the Oysters Saved the Bay: Learn about shellfish cleaning estuaries and decorate an oyster shell.
April 18 10:00 – 11:00 A.M. Waquoit Bay Reserve
- Coastal Waterbird Program Training
May 15 11:30 – 5:30 P.M. Mashpee Public Library

Talks

- Research at the Reserve Coffee House Series
 - Dr. Megan Tyrell - WBNERR, Brad Chase - Mass Marine Fisheries, Sarah Forster - Boston UniversityApril 10, 17, 24 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. WBNERR

Think about starting a pollinator garden at your home this year! And please join us out in the fields this spring as we continue into our second growing season of growing, planting, monitoring pollinators at the fields, and this summer enjoying the colorful flowering plants throughout the season.



Membership Form

Friends of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 1283, Mashpee, MA 02649
508-292-3707

YES! I want to support the **Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge** - enclosed are my due as checked below

Name _____

Phone _____ (H)

_____ (C)

Mailing Address

Email Address

Date _____

Enclose payment for the membership: Make checks payable to : F.M.N.W.R.

- Junior (18 & under) \$10
- Individual \$25
- Family \$50
- Conservation Friend \$100
- Wildlife Sponsor \$200
- Refuge Sponsor \$500
- Lifetime Gift \$1000
- Corporate Gift \$_____
- Other \$_____

Volunteer Form

I would be interested in the following opportunities listed below

- Webpage, Admin, PR
- Stewardship Projects
- Newsletter Guru
- Native Pollinator Gardens
- Educational talks/Walks
- Volunteer & Membership Coordinator