



Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge

Spring Newsletter 2022

Bird's Eye View Cape Cod Osprey 'Nest Cam'

As a result of a collaboration between the Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (a Refuge partner), and Comcast, a 4k live-streaming 'nest cam' was installed above a nest at the Waquoit Bay Reserve featuring an active pair of ospreys. "One of our goals as a community-based nonprofit is to give the public opportunities to enjoy and interact with nature and wildlife," said Glenn Davis, President of the Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge. "Thanks to Comcast, this osprey nest live stream will broaden our reach to all of Cape Cod and beyond. We are grateful for the opportunity to use the live cam for



observation, research and education purposes."

Osprey, also known as "fish hawks," are easily recognizable by their brown and white coloring and intense yellow eyes. Due to their diet of 99% fish, Cape Cod is an ideal location to build a nest. The birds arrive in March from wintering in Central and South America and don't vacate their nests until it is time to fly south again in September. Mated osprey pairs typically remain together for life - often returning to

their previous nest and adding to it. They prefer to build their nests as high as possible to protect their eggs and offspring and to gain a great vantage point for hunting. Ospreys have about one to four offspring each season. Live stream viewers can expect to see the birds soar overhead and return to the nest with sticks to build the nest and fish to feed their family.

"We're delighted to partner with the Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge and Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve to provide our fast and reliable

internet service to power the osprey live stream,” said Barry Bader, Vice President of Comcast Business for the Greater Boston Region. “As a Cape resident myself who loves fishing and bird-watching, I’m really looking forward to this front row seat to the daily lives of these special and majestic birds.”

The live nest cam will also be incorporated into an exhibit at the Waquoit Bay Reserve Visitor Center. It will facilitate research and monitoring of the ospreys’ arrival dates, when their eggs are laid along with their incubation period, how frequent the birds are feeding and other behavior.



Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Director Tonna-Marie Rogers remarked, “Reserve volunteers have monitored many nests over the years, however, this will be the first time we will be able to get an up-close look to learn more about the behavior of the birds. This is a great opportunity to educate people about these raptors with such strong ties to the estuary.”

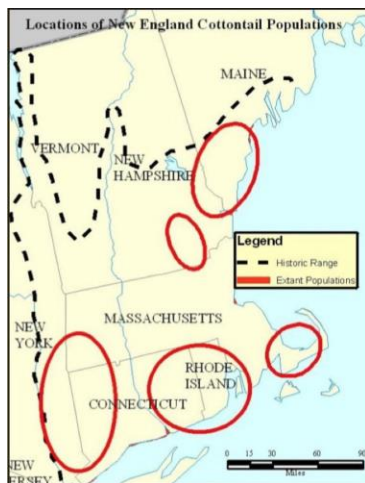
The ospreys have been named “Rachel and Carson” after the famed environmentalist Rachel Carson. There are now four eggs in the nest and we anxiously await for them to hatch around the end of May.

Check out the live stream of the osprey by going to the Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge website and clicking on “Osprey Cam!” or the link below <https://www.friendsofmashpeenationalwildliferefuge.org/osprey/>

Rabbitat Brochure

Late last year, the Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge published a brochure about rabbit habitats for the New England cottontail. The brochure covers ways to create and maintain habitat for the New England cottontail and a bit about the biology and history behind the rabbit.

The New England cottontail is Cape Cod's only native cottontail. Its friend, the more common Eastern cottontail, was introduced in the late 19th century and early 20th century to enhance game populations. Once occupying the majority of New England, nowadays New England cottontail



populations are just found in a few locations. But the New England cottontail needs your help. The New England cottontail prefers habitat with thick shrub cover like forests with thick understory, shrublands or forest wetlands. This thick coverage provides the rabbits protection from predators like owls, hawks, foxes, and coyotes. A way you can help is by making brush piles in your own backyard. Aside from managing land to provide native plants for food, the best thing you can do for the NEC is give them somewhere to hide. This is where you can make a rabbitat! First, lay down logs in a crisscross pattern. This provides the entrances and exits for the rabbit. Make sure to keep them small enough that predators won't fit. Second, pile on smaller limbs and branches. Third, pile on any loose leaves, twigs, and other plant detritus. Fourth, keep adding to the piles throughout the year. It is important to remember that one or more brush piles offer important hiding spots, which is extremely beneficial to this woodland rabbit.

Special thanks to our partners U.S Fish & Wildlife Service, Partners for Fish & Wildlife, National Wildlife Refuge System and AmeriCorps for helping create and publish the brochure to inform more people about our native rabbit. The brochure is available at Mashpee Town Hall and other locations, and can be downloaded from the Friends' website.

Creature Feature

North American River Otter

These adorable mammals are known to live across the United States into parts of Canada, and can be found right here at the Mashpee NWR! They are known for their playful socializations within family units. Sliding down snow-covered, icy, or muddy embankments into rivers, they swim underwater, and use their whistles, yelps, and growls as a form of communication. North American river otters have a thick dark brown top coat with short legs, webbed feet, and a long, strong tail which is ideal for living a semi-aquatic life. The thick fur protects them from cold water and their strong tail helps them propel through waters quickly.



Their flexibility throughout their bodies and quick movements makes them excellent hunters for fish and other aquatic wildlife. River otters eat a variety of aquatic wildlife from crayfish to crabs, frogs, birds' eggs, birds and reptiles such as turtles. They sometimes even prey on other small mammals like muskrats and rabbits and are known to munch on aquatic plants.

These mammals thrive in any water habitat,

such as ponds, marshes, lakes, rivers, and estuaries. The water temperature can be warm or cold- as long as the habitat provides adequate food. River otters breed in the late winter or early spring with litters between one to three pups. They can live up to 8 to 9 years in the wild but in captivity they are known to live up to 21 years.



The North American river otters were hunted and trapped extensively for their fur in the 19th and 20th century, and are still hunted in some places today. However habitat destruction and water pollution still puts these animals at great risk, especially since they are such specialized mammals.

Please check our website for upcoming events, activities and volunteer opportunities like work days in our pollinator gardens. Also, don't miss the Town of Mashpee Interpretive Nature Tours on Saturday mornings!

Written By: Emilie Brush, AmeriCorps Cape Cod Year 23 member

2022 Friends of Mashpee NWR Board of Directors

Glenn Davis, President, Katelyn Cadoret, Vice President

MaryKay Fox, Treasurer Nancy Church, Clerk

Joan and Neil Barkin, Membership Committee

Thomas Fudala, Historian

Membership Form

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

Name: _____

Phone: (H) _____ (C) _____

Street: _____

Town: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Email: _____

Date: _____

Enclose payment for the membership - please make checks payable to: **FMNWR**
Mail to: FMNWR, P.O. Box 1283, Mashpee, MA 02649

Thank you!

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Junior (18 and under) - \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Refuge Sponsor - \$500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Gift - \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Gift - \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Friend - \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other - \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Sponsor - \$200 | |
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Volunteer Form

I would be interested in the following opportunities listed below:

- Webpage
 - Fundraising and Events
 - Stewardship Projects
 - Newsletter
 - Native Pollinator Gardens
 - Education Talks/Walks, Events at Schools
 - Other _____
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***The Friends meet monthly on the first Tuesday at 5pm on Zoom.
Please, come join us and get involved with Refuge projects,
Friends group, pollinators, and community events!***