



Friends of Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge

Winter 2024 Newsletter

Hello Refuge Friends!

Over the Winter, while we may not be working outdoors, we don't take much time off! Instead, we've been busy planning programs and events, and working towards furthering our goals for the upcoming year.

Recently our Board sent a letter to the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) supporting proposed DMF regulatory amendments to the **Horseshoe Crab** (HSC) commercial fisheries. The proposed changes are designed to strengthen conservation policies for this species and ensure their sustainability.

Over the coming months, we'll be continuing our efforts to establish a proposed new Mashpee NWR **Visitor Center**. Stay tuned as we work with the Town of Mashpee and MNWR partners to plan details of this exciting endeavor!

Also stay tuned for the expected return of Rachel and Carson in "Season 3" of our **live streaming webcam**.

And **Save the Date** for our third annual **"Walk for the Wild"** 5k challenge: [Sunday October 13th](#).

Several Earth Day activities and volunteer opportunities are listed below.

If you missed our 2023 **Annual Meeting** on February 6th, 2024, you can see the presentation slides of our 2023 achievements as well as what's in store for '24! It was a busy year for the Friends, from Earth Day activities to "Season Two" of our Osprey Cam to the Mashpee Wampanaug Tribal Youth "Preserve Our Homeland" (POH) Camp to progress on a Visitor Center to New England Cottontail Rabbits to Monarch Butterflies to Walk for the Wild, we accomplished a lot! **[View the full presentation](#)** for details.

Our **Creature Feature Corner**, devoted to mammals of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge, was written by AmeriCorps Cape Cod member, Grace Vachon.

And finally, if you haven't heard about this, Mashpee is a finalist in *USA Today's 2024 Readers' Choice Awards* as the Best Small Town in the Northeast - for its walking trails, ponds and cultural significance of our Wampanoag roots. **[Vote here](#)** (you can vote once per day!)

Scroll down to read more or **[download](#)** and print the entire newsletter for later enjoyment.

Thank you for your continued support of our vibrant organization!

Glenn Davis
President
Friends of Mashpee NWR

P.S.: If you haven't already renewed your membership, and/or want to get more involved in the Friends organization, see the mail-in form on the last page (or [click here](#) to donate online). More information is always available on our website, with up-to-date info on upcoming events and other Refuge news. Thank you again for your support!

Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

- Monday, April 1st - FMNWR will be working with AmeriCorps Cape Cod and Mashpee Conservation to clean up and plant in one or more of our pollinator gardens at Jehu, Red Brook and Pickerel Cove. *Times and locations TBD, but please contact us if interested in helping.*
- Friday, April 19, 2024, from 12:30pm - 3:30pm. Beach Upcycle - Making Art from Found Material, *Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Visitors Center, 131 Waquoit Highway, East Falmouth.*
- Saturday, April 20th 10am-2pm "Honor the Earth Fair" sponsored by the Native Land Conservancy at the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Government Center. The Friends will have a table at the event. *Please stop by and say hello or email us if you'd like to volunteer to help staff the table.*
- Saturday, April 20th 10am-2pm - Join AmeriCorps Cape Cod on the 23rd Annual Cape Cod Canal Clean-Up
HERRING RUN RECREATION AREA
810 Scenic Highway, Bourne, MA
Clean-up supplies provided
Lunch, family-friendly activities, and more!
See [flyer](#) for more info and to register.
- Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 9am to 1pm. Textile Recycling, Secure Shredding, and Composting Event, co-sponsored by the Mashpee Environmental Coalition and Mashpee Department of Public Works. Mashpee Senior Center, 26 Frank E. Hicks Drive. *Additional information may be found at www.mashpeemec.us.*
- Sunday, April 21, 2024, from 1pm to 3pm. Tree Planting Event at Santuit Pond Preserve. *Meet at Santuit Pond parking lot at 117 Main Street followed by a short walk.* Sponsored by the Mashpee Conservation Department.

Creature Feature

Mammals of the Mashpee National Wildlife Refuge

Mammals, mammals, mammals! They are so cool! Many mammal species can be found within the refuge, so keep your eyes peeled when you are out and about on the trails. What makes a mammal a mammal, you may ask? Well, all mammals are warm-blooded, have hair or fur, and produce milk to feed their young. While visiting the refuge, look for white-tailed deer bounding through the forest on their

nimble legs, rabbits scurrying under thick brush, otters peeking their heads up out of ponds, and red foxes with their stunning red fur and bushy tails. A few of these species are endangered, including the New England cottontail and Northern long-eared bat. However, the Refuge has worked to address their needs by protecting and creating habitats such as pollinator gardens and “Rabbitats.” See the Friend’s brochures on “[Rabbitats](#)” and [pollinator gardens](#) for more information.

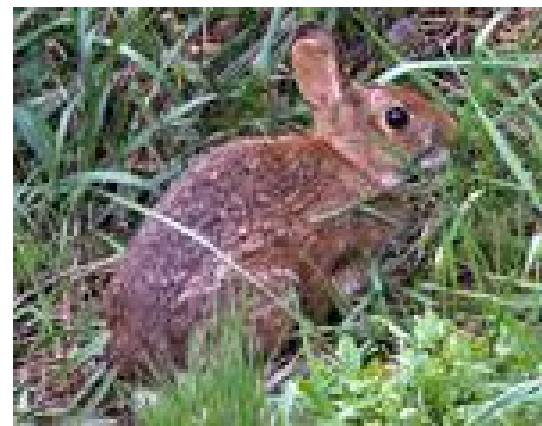


Even if you cannot see any animals, it does not mean that they are not there. Look for signs of mammal activity like tracks, dens, scat, or food scraps. Many of these species may be wary of humans and difficult to spot, but their presence is noticeable if you are observant. Do you see any holes in the ground? These could be homes or dens for burrowing mammals like foxes, groundhogs, voles, and skunks. What about chewed-on acorns or fish carcasses?

These could be signs of hungry chipmunks, squirrels, raccoons, or otters. Also, think about where you are. What animals do you think live in that habitat type, whether its forest, meadow, or pond? For example, cottontail rabbits enjoy brushy habitats with plenty of cover from predators, so there may be a rabbit or two hiding under that tangle of brush and vines, even if you cannot see them.

However, seeing an animal in person is a wonderful experience that can bring a person closer to nature, as long as it is done safely and with respect and consideration for the animal. Here are some tips from Mass Wildlife to enhance your wildlife viewing experience:

- **Sit and Scan** – Find a tranquil place to sit quietly. Be as still as you can but turn your head slowly and scan your surroundings with your eyes or a pair of binoculars.
- **Walk Slowly and Quietly** – Avoid quick movements or creating enormous amounts of noise when you walk in a wilderness area.
- **Time of Day is Important** – Early in the morning or later in the evening or the best times for seeing wildlife.
- **Don’t Knock the Small Stuff** – A squirrel can be just as interesting as a fox or bear, so don’t worry about not seeing any “big” or “rare” wildlife and enjoy the interesting behavior of smaller or more common critters.



Want to learn how to identify mammal tracks? See the following resource:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/identify-animal-tracks/download>

Wildlife Viewing Tips and Tools from Mass Wildlife (Here is the full page):

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/wildlife-viewing-tips-and-tools>

(Article researched and written by Grace Vachon, AmeriCorps Cape Cod)

opportunities. Also, don't miss the Town of Mashpee Interpretive Nature Tours on Saturday mornings (see our [events calendar](#) for detail)!

2024 Friends of Mashpee NWR Board of Directors:

Glenn Davis, President

MaryKay Fox, Treasurer

Lucinda Keith, Clerk

Neil Barkin

F Thomas Fudala, Historian

Nancy Church

Katelyn Cadoret

Tania Lewandowski

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: _____

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

Thank you!

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

[Donate Online](#)

Volunteer Form

I would be interested in the following opportunities listed below:

- Stewardship Projects
- Newsletter Editor


- [] Native Pollinator Gardens
- [] Education Talks/Walks, Events at Schools
- [] Volunteer & Membership Coordinator

The Friends meet monthly on the first Tuesday at 5pm on Zoom. Please join us and get involved with Refuge projects, Friends group, pollinators, and community events! If interested, email us at info@friendsofmashpeenationalwildliferefuge.org for a Zoom invite.

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