



Newsletter

Late Summer 2019

HPWA is a 501(c)3 Charitable Organization

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Directors

Don Williams, President
Phil Angell, Vice President
John Foye, Treasurer
Peg Burke, Secretary
Beth Sobiloff, Webmaster
Lee Pulis, Education Committee
Paula Kuketz, Water Safety Committee
Martha Sheldon, Membership Committee
Geri Williams, Newsletter Editor

Don Williams and Jack Kedian, Water Quality Committee Co-Chairs

Jerry Levine, Invasive Species Committee

Ramona Krogman, Government Liaison

Patrice O'Connor, Board Member-at-large

Website

www.TheHerringPondsWatershed.org

Upcoming Events

HPWA Annual Meeting
Mon. August 19, 7pm
Cedarville Fire Station
Presentation by Capt. Michael Burns of MMA on their small tanker training program. Election of officers and time to mix with refreshments.

HPWA General Meeting
Thurs. Sept. 26 7pm
Little Red School House
Come learn all about pollinators and specifically Monarch butterflies: how to increase their population by raising some in your home to release. Program by local resident Gail Conner.

President's Message

Don Williams, President

Our Watershed Community

We are lucky to live in this watershed – the ponds are relatively clean, free of invasive species and cyanobacteria and have very low E. coli in swimming areas. Our Board of Directors has incorporated the following primary goals into the Herring Ponds Watershed Association Mission Statement:

1. Monitor and Improve Water Quality
2. Promote Good Watershed Land Practices and Land Protection
3. Provide Constituents with Watershed Educational Materials and Events
4. Encourage Water Safety

We thank you for your generosity in contributing to our membership drive. We have two major exciting new projects in the works. You remember our efforts to secure funding for generating a Water Quality Management Plan? The Town of Plymouth has offered to fund a substantial portion of the estimated \$80,000 cost. If we are able to raise the remainder, this important project could start by next summer.

The Town of Plymouth is interested in purchasing a 54 acre parcel in our Great Herring Pond recharge area (goal 2). The Board of Directors has unanimously voted to pledge \$9,000 from the Treasury to help the Plymouth CPC and Wildlands Trust purchase this land to preserve it, and individual HPWA donors have added significant pledges to this amount. This property is pristine habitat and backs onto other protected lands. Septic systems from any housing development on that tract could adversely affect pond cleanliness. Moreover (and many do not know this), such housing developments are a net tax

loss to Plymouth since it costs far more for services (schools, police and fire protection) than those residents' taxes.

During Board discussions of these goals, it was suggested that we should also promote a sense of community and have fun together. We certainly had fun together at the August 3 HPWA picnic!

Finally, I have a good story to tell. The Shed Faire raised enough to cover the scholarships that HPWA provided to Camp Bournedale, Camp Clark and Hedges Pond Day Camp for needy campers and an extra \$500 donated to Camp Clark. Most of the Board and many of their spouses worked the Shed Faire. We all had a great time meeting all of you. I was helping a young mother bring her purchases to her car and by chance, I asked her if she knew that the proceeds were being donated for camp scholarships. She then told me that her autistic 6-year old son was the beneficiary of one of those scholarships. She was so happy to see him blossom at Camp Clark and thanked me profusely. I introduced her to our Board and her story was retold many times. It was a timely reminder that we are all involved in the community of life and helping others pay it forward. Please help us keep the momentum moving forward – with your time or with your donations. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

HPWA Annual Meeting – Monday August 19 at 7pm

Please join us at the Cedarville Fire Station. Have you ever wondered what those red and green markers in Great Herring Pond were for? Capt. Michael Burns of the Mass Maritime Academy will be explaining their use in the tanker training program on the pond. We will elect our VP and Secretary for the coming 2 years. You will also learn more about the work of our committees and can ask questions. After the program we will socialize and enjoy cookies and drinks brought by members.

Education Committee News

by Lee Pulis, Education Committee

HPWA's second Water-"Shed Faire 2019" was a huge success on Saturday, July 13 at the Cedarville Fire Station! Not only did many members clear out truckloads of gently used items, reclaim their storage spaces, and pass on to others countless re-usable household and recreational items, but also **HPWA exceeded our post-expense fund-raising goal of \$1500 by more than 30%**. The entire HPWA Board of Directors plus several spouses and members functioned as an enthusiastic and committed team for the full week before and during the event to solicit, collect, publicize, transport, arrange, price, and cashier, then assist buyers with loading items, and at the end clean up and transport all leftovers to donate to Savers in Plymouth. HPWA's earlier advance of \$500 from treasury to each of the three camps in the ACEC (YMCA Camp Clark, Camp Bournedale, and Hedges Pond Day Camp) was fully restored, and the excess of \$500 over goal was donated mid-season to Camp Clark. All three camps have clearly made an impact fostering future stewardship among youth by providing experiences in our globally rare Atlantic Coastal Pine Barrens ecoregion. Our selection of Camp Clark for the additional mid-season funds was based on the impactful heartfelt thanks from a mother of an HPWA-sponsored Camp Clark youth visiting to meet us at Shed Faire. Several Board members toured Camp Clark on August 8 to present the additional Shed Faire 2019 proceeds.



John Foye, treasurer, with Lee Pulis present a check to Martha Costello of Camp Clark for additional camperships.

Water Quality

by Don Williams, Water Quality Committee Co-Chair

We have excellent news from the Town of Plymouth! The Division of Marine and Environmental Affairs has offered \$40,000 (and perhaps more) to HPWA toward a Water Quality Management Plan. The Plan is important because it will:

- definitively identify the sources of the phosphorus that cause algae blooms (aquifer spring, the areas surrounding Little Herring Pond, Carters River and Great Herring Pond)
- quantify how much phosphorus is present in the pond sediments of both ponds
- quantify how much phosphorus is derived from septic, sediment and runoff
- suggest ways to reduce this contamination

This valuable information will sharpen the focus of water quality improvement efforts by clarifying priorities and their relative costs. In future meetings, the Board will discuss how the additional money for the Water Quality Management Plan might be raised. If approval is given, the work might start next year.

The E. coli sampling of the swimming sites in GHP was conducted in July by Jack and Denise Kedian. We are happy to report that E. coli levels were either at the minimum or below detection limits – excellent news for swimmers.

Samples collected by Jim Smith indicate E. coli bacteria levels in Little Herring Pond, the source of most of Great Herring Pond's water continue to remain very low. Nitrate levels (indicator of negative human impact from fertilizer, septic, etc.) from the Little Herring Pond spring source also remain low. It is interesting that the average Little Herring Pond nitrate level is 3 to 5 times higher than the incoming spring source value, indicating that there is some human pollution from around Little Herring Pond but not enough to cause concern. We are also looking at how phosphorus levels change from the spring downward

to Great Herring Pond but need more data points before any conclusions can be drawn. Stay tuned! Your dues are working to help us better understand how our watershed works.

Please consider joining the Water Quality Committee. Email me at donald_r_williams2003@yahoo.com and help improve water quality!



Photo by Denise Maccaferri of OCM

HPWA Annual Picnic - a perfect day for lots of fun!

August 3rd had not a cloud in the sky, the pond water was warm yet refreshing, approximately 50 people took the opportunity to enjoy food and friendship at the Annual HPWA Picnic at the Weston's bog on Herring Pond Road. Hamburgers and hot dogs provided by the Association were grilled by a board member's husband Roger Jones, baked beans, stuffed mushrooms, salads, watermelon, cookies and other desserts were brought by the guests for all to share. Children enjoyed swimming in the pond and jumping off the floating dock. A special treat - a bald eagle was sighted flying overhead. All enjoyed a lovely afternoon.

A big thank you to VP Phil Angell for all his work organizing this annual fun event, and to the Westons for allowing us use of their pond front property. To see even more photos by OCM's reporter on Plymouth Wicked Local: <https://plymouth.wickedlocal.com/photogallery/WL/20190806/NEWS/805009984/PH/1> Also shared to HPWA's Facebookpage: <https://www.facebook.com/HerringPondWatershedAssociation/> Other photos on our website: www.TheHerringPondsWatershed.org

Election of Officers

According to our bylaws each year at our Annual meeting we elect two officers for 2 year terms. This year we are due to elect the Vice President and Secretary. The nominating committee has presented a slate with Phil Angell continuing as Vice President and Christine Yorty nominated for Secretary. Members will vote for this slate at our meeting on August 19 at the Fire Station. Don Williams will continue as President for another year and John Foye as Treasurer.

Membership Note

by Martha Sheldon, Chair

Thanks to our long-term and new supporters, this year's dues have nearly met last year's total and are expected to surpass it. Some of you have asked about the growth of HPWA membership. I recently made a graph of our growth covering a 5-year period from 2014-2018 showing long-term trends. Figure 1 shows positive trends in both **number of memberships** (the red line) and **yearly dues totals** (the green line) from 2014 to 2018. I added a second Y axis to better show the increase in memberships (see the vertical axis on the right side of the graph). Members' dues are the bread and butter of our treasury and have helped us accomplish a great deal – thank you! To submit this year's dues, you may mail a check to HPWA at:

P.O. Box 522,
Sagamore Beach, MA 02562.
Individual Membership (\$15)
Family (\$25) Contributing (\$55)
Sustaining (\$100)

Number of Memberships and Yearly Dues Totals since 2014



HPWA Fall Meeting

On Thursday, **September 26 at 7pm** we will have our final meeting of the year in the Cedarville Little Red School House Community room.

Our program will be presented by Plymouth resident Gail Conner, who is a bee keeper. She has been converting her yard and gardens into pollinator and butterfly habitats, and for the past couple of years she has been raising Monarch butterflies in her home to release. Less than 5% of the Monarch eggs and caterpillars survive to become butterflies. Gail will demonstrate how we too can help increase the dwindling Monarch butterfly population and save these migrating wonders from extinction. It isn't difficult to do, this summer Lee and Joan Pulis are raising 22 Monarch caterpillars and so far have released 12 butterflies and Geri Williams is doing the same.

Gail will also discuss how to protect our honey bees and other native pollinators. So join us Sept. 26 for an interesting program to learn more about butterflies and bees.



Raising Monarch butterflies and chrysalis in a home habitat.



Many of the Exec Board members at the Annual Picnic: Don Williams, President, Lee Pulis, Beth Sobiloff, Jack Kedian, Geri Williams, Phil Angell, Patrice O'Connor, John Foye, Martha Sheldon, and Brian Harrington, past president.

Photo by Denise Maccaferri

Water Safety Committee

by Paula Kuketz

Riding jet skis is a popular activity on Great Herring Pond, but it can also involve a serious risk for injury. There was an unfortunate jet ski accident on White Island Pond a few weeks ago in which a young woman was seriously injured when thrown from the jet ski she was a passenger on when two jet skis collided, and the drivers abandoned her floating unconscious. Luckily she had a life jacket on and an off duty fire fighter was able to rescue her.

For everyone's safety please follow the Massachusetts Boating Safety Rules regarding operation of jet skis.

- * Life Jackets must be worn by all riders.
- * Absolutely no towing behind a jet ski.
- * Drivers must be at least 18 years old (16 with a Mass Safe Boating certificate.)
- * Operate 150 ft. from shores and 150 ft. from all other crafts and swimmers.
- * The coves present a particular safety issue as they are small areas with lots of activity and swimmers. Use extra caution!

Let's all follow the safety rules, respect others and enjoy the rest of the summer on our beautiful pond.

Freshwater mussels are one key to keeping our watershed healthy

By Brian Harrington, President emeritus

Freshwater mussels and snails (like their cousins, saltwater mussels) eat plankton and other small things by filtering water that passes over them. This filtration doesn't just take nutritious bits out of the water for the mussels to eat, it also takes floating debris like silt and algae out of the water, making the water cleaner for everyone. One mussel can filter up to 15 gallons of water moving over it in a single day. That's a lot of cleaning going on for an animal that most of us mistake for a rock.



Fresh water mussel photo from Ivan Mikolji

In a very unscientific survey, I estimated that there were roughly 7-10 pond mussels per square yard of sandy bottom on one little piece of Great Herring Pond. The pond has a 376 acre surface area, the bottom area is probably 2-3 times greater than this, but for fun, assume 376 acres, which is 1,819,840 square yards. If there were 8 pond mussels per square yard, then roughly 220 million gallons of pond water is being cleansed each day!

We are very fortunate having a healthy population of pond mussels in our Herring River Watershed. But they are very susceptible to even low levels of chemical pollution, including herbicides, pesticides and many household

chemicals. Help protect our mussels. Be vigilant to keep lawn chemicals, pesticides and household chemicals away from waters of the watershed, and never dispose of them in or near watershed rivers and ponds. If you must wash your boat, use gentle chemicals, or better, take it out of the water for washing. Some of the information in this article comes from the MassWildlife magazine.

More scenes from the Picnic



Josh Noe, one of the recipients of HPWA's camperships to Camp Clark, at the Annual Picnic. He came with his mom and sister.

Photo by Denise Maccaferri



Roger Jones manned the grill at the HPWA Annual Picnic.

Photo by Denise Maccaferri



Lee Pulis was glad to see the former Rising Tide intern he supervised at the picnic. Tess Goldmann is home from Smith College for the summer. Also pictured is granddaughter, Claire Estermann, a recent environmental science graduate of Amherst College

Photo by Beth Sobloff



Some of the members of the Water Quality Committee enjoyed the picnic: Christine Yorty, Denise and Jack Kedian, Carol Morley, Don and Geri Williams and Joe Solimini. Members missing from the picture are Bob McDonald, Jim Smith, Chris Lewis and Jerry Levine

Photo by Beth Sobloff



Part of the spread of delicious foods brought for sharing to the Potluck Picnic by members and friends

Photo by Beth Sobloff