



Newsletter

May 2017

HPWA is a 501(c)3 Charitable Organization

Volume 8, Issue 2

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John Foye, Treasurer

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Geri Williams, Newsletter
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Lee Pulis, Education and
Outreach Committee

Don Williams and Jack
Kedian, Water Quality
Committee

Dennis White,
Government Liaison

Jerry Levine, Invasives
Committee

Phil Angell and Ramona
Krogman, Members-at-
Large

Website

www.TheHerringPondsWatershed.org

Upcoming Events

**May 24, 7:30 am Spring
Bird Walk** Meet Pres.
Brian Harrington at the
north end of Little
Herring Pond Rd. for a
bird walk around the
conservation property
between Triangle and
Little Herring Pond.

**July 10, 7:00 pm HPWA
General Meeting**
New Testament Church
Learn how to make your
yard more appealing to
butterflies and birds with
Michael Talbot of
Ecological Landscape
Consultants.

President's Message

Brian Harrington, President

What a pleasure to look out my window today and see a tiny screech owl peeking out of its new nest-box on the side of my yard. The sight prompts me to think back to a February workshop where HPWA taught attendees how to assemble an owl nest box (bluebird boxes too), and how much fun it was to do this with neighbors and friends. From an owl's perspective, life in Plymouth was improved.

Your Directors have worked to have our Association be *proactive*. What can we be *for* rather than *against*? The owl story is a simple example, showing fun, building community spirit, and helping our environment. On perhaps on a more weighty level, our watershed stewardship guide offers all watershed residents ideas for taking better care of our valuable natural assets. Proactive... we inform, you choose.

Much of our Association's activity focuses on education. Our thousands of herring comics (see them on the HPWA web site www.theherringpondswatershed.org) are repeatedly showing up in schools and at festivals, introducing children to the values of the resources we share with herring. Our stewardship booklet is a model to other watersheds. Our public programs and newsletters inform residents with tips for compatible living in a watershed. More behind the scenes, HPWA works closely with government to help protect our watershed. The list is long. I'll spare you.

Although our preference is to be proactive, we sometimes *react* to ideas or

proposals we feel would be harmful to the watershed. In two instances, properties proposed for development, and key to the health of the watershed, have been purchased for protection, thanks to key roles that HPWA has played. Our water quality and invasives monitoring programs are proactive, and will be reactive if necessary. We watch carefully. Our Association has adopted stewardship of a river/pond and upland system that was declared by our Commonwealth, in 1991, to be of very special value – an “*Area of Critical Environmental Concern*” (ACEC). It is one of just thirty in Massachusetts. Without being both watchful and proactive, and without public support, we can slip on our stewardship mission. You need us, and we need you.

In closing, I want to thank our fantastic Board of Directors for the noble work they do for all of us. Quite simply, you have an incredible assembly of volunteers managing your Association. Thank them when you have a chance.

Save the date for the HPWA



POTLUCK PICNIC ON THE POND

Saturday August 6, 3:00 - 6:00 PM

Rain Date - Sunday August 7

Westons Bogs, 173 Herring Pond Rd.

Please bring an interesting appetizer,
salad, main dish or dessert to share
along with beverages & chairs.

Plates, cups, forks, napkins, grill provided

RSVP: jkedian1@hotmail.com

Spring Bird Walk

Join President Brian Harrington at 7:30 AM on 24 May for our annual spring bird walk. We will meet (rain or shine) at the turn-circle at the north end of Little Herring Pond Road in Cedarville (Plymouth) and walk through woodlands between Little Herring Pond and Triangle Ponds. No guarantees, but this is a good place to find Scarlet Tanagers! Bring what you might need, including binoculars if you have them. We will try to have one or two extra pairs of binoculars for loan.



Attracting More Birds and Butterflies

Please join us on Monday, July 10 at 7pm for an interesting presentation on 'Making your Yard More Appealing to Butterflies and Birds'. The speaker will be Michael Talbot of Ecological Landscape Consultants, who was a well-received presenter at an earlier HPWA public meeting, and is a highly respected landscape consultant.

We enjoy watching the birds and butterflies that might visit our property, why not come learn how to attract more of them from an expert? We will meet in the basement meeting room of the New Testament Church.

This will also be an opportunity to learn more about the programs and upcoming events of HPWA.

Election Day is Saturday, May 20

Local Elections make a difference in our community and watershed. Read about the candidates and **Please Vote**.

Invasive Committee

by Jerry Levine, Chair

The Invasive Species committee is in the process of arranging with Jim Straub of the Department of Conservation & Recreation DCR, Lakes & Ponds Program, to do a training session for the identification of invasive species. The seminar will be a hands-on instruction, providing the ability to identify non-native species that have established themselves in the Plymouth area. The non-native species that have been introduced generally do not have predators to control growth within our region. These species are destructive to our environment and are very difficult and expensive to eradicate once they are established.

I would like to have the seminar in the early summer, as soon as the plants are available.

The goal is to establish trained monitors who can assist DCR in identifying areas of invasive activities, and possibly be involved in eradication of the problem. DCR is actively involved in educating the public about invasive species and how to control their spread.

The seminar will be open to anyone who would like to attend. Please contact me and I will keep you informed on the progress of this project.

Also, I would like to have additional members on the Invasive Species Committee. Come out and enjoy the sun, be on the water, protect your pond. Contact:

Jerry Levine
781-985-5225
Jersail123@gmail.com

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS! IT IS THE LAW

Clean Boats Mean Clean Ponds

Great Herring Pond is currently free of aquatic invasive species, according to last summer's monitoring surveys.

Fortunately, this means we have a pond that is not overgrown with "weeds".

Unfortunately, this means we are vulnerable to invasions brought from

other ponds. Any time a boat enters our pond it could be carrying invasives.

So, what can we do, and more importantly, what should responsible boaters be doing? We/they should keep their boat clean by checking it before and after boating and not transporting hitchhiking organisms from one pond to another. The basic guidelines are CLEAN, DRAIN, and DRY. These guidelines apply not only to motorboats but also to jet skis, non-motorized craft like kayaks and canoes, and boat trailers. CLEAN: Remove any plants or animals from all parts of your boat, paying special attention to places where plant fragments might get tangled (like your propeller). Dispose of anything you find in the trash. Do not transport bait from one pond to the next. Dispose of unused bait in the trash.

DRAIN: If you've been fishing, dispose of live well water away from any water body. Even if you can't see anything in the water, there could still be fragments of plant or planktonic larvae of animals like mussels present.

DRY: Wash your boat, preferably with hot water. Allow it to completely dry before bringing it to another pond.

Preventing the spread of invasive species into our ponds is increasingly important as invasion pressure from other water bodies grows. Hopefully we will stay as lucky as we have been thus far, and continue to enjoy a pond free of invasives for years to come.

(Information from Massachusetts DCR Lakes and Ponds Program)

Nominating Committee

Election time is here again for the HPWA. Our Nominating Committee this year consisted of Martha Sheldon, John Foye and Geri Williams. They have chosen nominees to fill the offices of Vice President and Secretary for two-year terms; the terms for President and Treasurer continue for another year. The nominations of Don Williams for VP and Peg Burke for Secretary will be announced at the July 10th meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at that time. The election will take place at the August 21st Meeting.

Watershed Water Quality

by Don Williams, Water Quality Co-Chair

The first water sample was taken in April by the Town of Plymouth and sent to UMass Dartmouth (Ed Eichner) for analysis. No results from that sampling have been received as yet. Plymouth will be taking (and paying for) monthly samples, April – September, for Great Herring Pond and July – September for Little Herring Pond. In addition, as a precautionary measure, the HPWA has decided to pay for 10 monthly samples near watershed beach sites from June - September for E. coli.

A new dissolved oxygen (DO) meter, purchased by HPWA, has been received and Kim Tower has calibrated it and set it up for operation. Jack Kedian will oversee frequent DO measurements during the fishing season. HPWA hopes to track the DO levels to assess pond health for more desirable gamefish such as bass. Summer reductions in DO level is an indicator of the severity of undesirable algae blooms.

Invasive plant species have a way of clogging water intake ports on boats and excessive milfoil and yellow floating heart can crowd the pond surface preventing boat passage entirely. Jerry Levine has posted signs at the Bourne boat ramp advising boaters to clean their boats before launch in order to prevent contamination of Great Herring Pond by hitchhiker invasives.

Runoff is a significant contributor to pollution in our ponds. The Town of Plymouth secured a grant of \$54,000 to design ways to remediate runoff in the two most significant runoff areas in the Eagle Hill section of Great Herring Pond. The design was presented to 12 residents of Eagle Hill on May 3 by Kim Tower and Neal Price (Horsley Witten consultants). The proposed design includes 3 main sub-road water collection and purification systems that will remove 48% of the contaminants and significantly improve area drainage. The construction grant application is due

the end of June. If the grant is approved, construction could start this fall.

One way to estimate the effect of man-made pollution on the aquifer is measurement of nitrate level in the watershed ponds. The data from the past 8 years has been reviewed and there is good news on this front. The nitrate levels have not risen significantly over this time period; we still need to do better with phosphorus control to reduce the algae blooms, however. Work is in progress on simplifying water quality data and making it more meaningful to our readers.

Education Committee News

by Lee Pulis, Chair

Full cost recovery and generous proceeds of our February Screech Owl and Bluebird Nest Box Building Workshop allowed HPWA to donate \$500 to Mass Audubon toward purchase of Tidmarsh Wildlife Sanctuary. Our donation was matched by an anonymous Mass Audubon donor. All 100 nest boxes (50 Screech Owl/Kestrel and 50 Bluebird/Tree Swallow) were assembled and dispersed for placement in time for these species' early spring nesting seasons.



Owl in new box at Brian and Martha's
Superhero Herring Comics
17,000 HPWA river herring comics were printed in April in a joint effort by HPWA, the Middleborough-Lakeville Herring Fishery Commission, and the North and South Rivers Watershed Association for free distribution at the organizations' herring festivals, in-school programs, and other future environmental events. Manomet Elementary hosted an assembly with Herring Woman, and HPWA hosted a kid's activity table at Plimoth Plantation's 4th

annual Herring Run Festival. Visit HPWA's table at the **SEMPBA Pine Fest at Charge Pond in MSSF on Saturday, May 20th, 10-4** ... the next opportunity to get copies for your kids, grandkids and great grandkids!



Alewife migrating by Jerry Prezioso

River Herring migration counting at Little Sandy Pond Rd bridge got underway April 1 and continues through the end of May. Sixteen HPWA volunteers are valiantly stretching to provide 6-9 ten-minute counts 7 days per week to ensure this third annual count meets statistical requirements for mathematical validity. Teri Pekol Kreitzer saw the first herring on April 19, and so far, Jim Smith has had the highest 10-minute count on May 6. If you would like to help out in the remaining two weeks, it's fun and easy, and you will be appreciated. Contact Brian at brian.harrington205@gmail.com to volunteer.

If you missed the Watershed Action Alliance's Solutions for Healthy Waters Conference, March 16 at Camp Kiwanee in Hanson, you are in luck: Full length Youtube videos of several of the presentations have been added (and more are coming) to the WAA conference page at: <http://www.watershedaction.org/index.php/2017-conference/2017-videos-pdfs>. The first three posted were particularly well received and worth a look if you missed the conference:

Strategies for Engaging New Water Protection Ambassadors, Sunshine Menezes, Ph.D.

How to Educate, Inspire, and Connect Using Social Media, Kate McClellan Press

Innovative Tools and Tactics for Water Conservation, Samantha Woods

Water Safety Committee

by Paula Kuketz, Chair

Our focus for 2017 is SAFETY FIRST. With an increase of recreational activity on the pond, the need for all to practice SAFETY is greater than ever.

Just a few rules to mention:

Very important is wearing PFD/LIFE JACKETS for all boaters, jet skiers, when sailing and paddle boating.

Persons under 16 years of age are prohibited from operating a PWC/JET SKI even if they have a Mass Safe Boating Certificate.

Safe distance is 150' from shore, 150' from swimmers, 150' distance from any motorized boats or jet skis. That includes 150' behind any craft.

According to MASS LAW it is illegal to tow any person in any manner behind a JET SKI.

The maximum speed is 45 mph.

By encouraging everyone who uses our beautiful pond to observe the safety rules and use common sense on the water, we all can hope for a safe and fun filled summer to be enjoyed by all.



Welcome Ramona to the Board of Directors

We welcome Ramona Krogman as a Member-at-Large to our Board. She joined the Board awhile ago and made some great contributions, but had to resign due to some family and work responsibilities. We are delighted her life now allows her to rejoin us. Her creativity, enthusiasm and technical knowledge will be so helpful with our projects.

Our Yearly Membership Drive kicks off in May

By Martha Sheldon, Chair Membership

HPWA's membership year runs from June 1 until May 31 of the following year. Expect a mailing in late May asking you to renew your membership for 2017-2018. Enclosed with this request will be a postcard that you can use to give a neighbor or friend who is not already a member a free 6-month membership when you renew.

It is important that you supply an email address as we are 'going green' and soon all communications will be by email.

If you received a complimentary 6-month membership, we hope you will consider becoming a HPWA member.

Perhaps you enjoyed our owl nest box workshop or the coyote talk or our informative newsletters. An added benefit of membership is a 10% discount at Emerald Landscaping if you mention you are a HPWA member.

Membership dues help us keep our pond water, ground water and our watershed clean and healthy for future generations. If you have any questions, please contact Martha Sheldon, Membership Chair at Martha.Sheldon205@gmail.com.

HPWA Membership Form 2017-2018

Name _____

Address _____

City/Town _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

___ \$15 Individual Membership

___ \$25 Family Membership

___ \$55 Contributing Membership

___ \$100 Sustaining Membership

Make checks payable to:

The Herring Ponds Watershed Association, Ltd.

Mail to: HPWA

P O Box 522

Sagamore Beach, MA 02562

Save the date:

Dedication of the 43.6-acre David E. Alper Nature Preserve (at north end of Little Herring Pond Rd) – Friday Morning, July 21st. More details to follow.

Care for your Septic System

By Dave Clark

The septic system buried in the yard has to be treated as a living organism. Let's review what should and should not be put into the system. Bleach and Drano are some of the worst chemicals that could find their way into a septic system. Why? Because bleach is designed to kill bacteria and Drano is extremely caustic. Both will kill the beneficial bacteria that the septic system requires to enable it to perform as designed. Pool chemicals, water and oil based paints, fats and grease, and just about anything that you would not eat or drink should also not be sent to the system.

Something else never to be put into a septic system would be any medications. These will not only destroy the beneficial bacteria, but end up in the ground water and in our drinking water.

It is important that everyone know where the various components of the septic system are located for several reasons. It is important that vehicles not be allowed to drive or park on top of the leach field and distribution box. Shrubs and trees should not be planted in the vicinity of the septic system as their roots can enter the components and cause a costly failure. Locating the components for inspection and pumping every three to five years will make the job much easier. Look at the area where the septic system is located once in a while for signs of excess moisture as this can signal a problem is developing. The quicker a problem is caught the less potential damage will occur and the repair will not be as costly.

We should be mindful of water usage. The ability of the leach field to absorb water is time dependent and will be affected by soil conditions. Try to space out the use of the clothes washer. Running the dishwasher only when full will also save water.