



# Little Compton Landscapes

Newsletter of The Sakonnet Preservation Association

Summer 2013

## 2013 Annual Meeting: Sea Level Rise Impacts on Coastal RI

Following a short business meeting, Sakonnet Preservation Association's 2013 Annual Meeting will feature RI State Geologist Jon Boothroyd. He will discuss the topic of "Sea Level Rise Impacts on Coastal RI." Dr. Boothroyd is well equipped to share his knowledge of the history and projected consequences that result from increased storm activity and rising tides for coastal communities such as ours. He works to develop planning and policy that will direct state regulatory agencies as well as local planners on how best to prepare for and deal with these consequences.

regulations and policies for those living along the coast. (For more information on Beach SAMP, visit the website [www.seagrants.gso.uri.edu/coast/beachsamp](http://www.seagrants.gso.uri.edu/coast/beachsamp))



presents

**Jon Boothroyd**  
*Sea Level Rise Impacts on Coastal RI*

**Tuesday, July 9, 2013 6 to 8 PM**

Join the SPA for refreshments with a cash bar  
Suggested Donation \$5

**Sakonnet Golf Club Playhouse**  
*All are welcome!*

An ongoing education campaign to inform the public about the impact of shoreline change is part of the plan. First-person accounts of changes at shoreline properties will be documented, along with historical information. Residents will be asked to complete surveys and attend stakeholder meetings. Phase I, studying Block Island and Rhode Island's South Shore, is underway. Phase II of the project will focus on the east

facing shoreline of Narragansett and the south facing shorelines of Aquidneck Island and Little Compton. Phase III will examine upper Narragansett Bay.

The public is invited to hear Dr. Boothroyd speak about this significant topic for our community. His talk will follow a brief business meeting. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Sakonnet Golf Club Playhouse from 6 to 8 PM, Tuesday, July 9. A voluntary donation of \$5 is requested.

Dr. Boothroyd works closely with the RI Coastal Resources Management Council, as well as the University of Rhode Island's Coastal Resources Center and Sea Grant Program, to study and map RI coastal erosion that has occurred since 1930. The work is integral to the development of a plan, called Beach SAMP (Shoreline Change Special Area Management Plan), that will take three to four years to develop and will result in new



Sakonnet  
Preservation Association

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## *President's Letter*

With a focus on "stewardship" in this newsletter, it might be useful for readers to understand what SPA does when it agrees to take on a conserved property. To start, it depends...

It depends on the property and the purposes for which it is conserved. For SPA, stewardship means protecting a property's conservation values, a perpetual responsibility for each deed or easement it acquires.

Stewardship tasks range from visiting the property to make sure all is in order, to mowing field habitat to keep it open, to controlling invasive plants on our properties such as phragmites on the Ponderosa. Volunteer jobs include monitoring properties annually with a camera in hand to document important changes, finding boundaries, removing vines that are strangling trees, and picking up litter. Major equipment or professional skills may be needed for mowing fields or spraying invasives. If a violation calls for consultation with a

*The bulk of our stewardship work is accomplished by our mighty corps of volunteers. The expense of stewardship annually is the cost of subcontractors to provide the skilled work and equipment needed for certain tasks.*

lawyer, or a management plan needs to be developed by a conservation biologist, or if a property needs a survey and boundaries set, a specialist must be hired. The bulk of our stewardship work is accomplished by our mighty corps of volunteers. The expense of stewardship annually is the cost of subcontractors to provide the skilled work and equipment needed for certain tasks.

Stewardship is one of three core functions of Sakonnet Preservation Association; the other two are land protection and public education. It takes dedication and attention to detail on the part of our many volunteers. We are indebted to these hard-working community members.

– Abigail Brooks

## Carter Stewardship Campaign a Success

Sakonnet Preservation Association launched its Carter Stewardship Campaign in 2008. The goal was to raise over \$200,000 for reserves to fund our obligation to monitor and protect our accumulated holdings — holdings that date back to 1974. Former Board member Letitia Carter initiated the stewardship reserve fund in 2003. Over the past five years, donations of all sizes have helped us meet our goal.

We are indebted to the following major donors to the campaign: Jack and Lea Angell, Chris and Suzie Burns, Letitia and John Carter, Gib and Diane Conover, the Haffenreffer family, Don and Alison McNaughton, Scott and Marion Morrison, Richard and Sylvia Ross, Heather and Michael Steers, Carol and Larry Strasburgher.

*Thank you to all who have helped SPA build this important fund!*

## Stewardship Support for Each Acquisition

Accreditation preparation focused the SPA Board on the necessity of reserving funds for stewardship with each new acquisition. As one donor put it — “When a university accepts the gift of a building, an endowment for its care is usually expected from the donor.” This same principle should be applied to land conservation.

obligation and ability to fund that obligation for each possible acquisition. Land and easement donors are now being asked to help by making a voluntary gift of stewardship funds. If a donor is unable or unwilling to do so, the Board must decide if it can raise the necessary reserves or allocate the amount needed from its unrestricted funds. The Board's acceptance of an acquisition

must now include an approved plan to secure stewardship funding for every property it acquires. SPA's stewardship responsibility for each holding is in perpetuity.



In 2009, the Board developed policies to guide its deliberations about whether or not to accept each offer of a property or easement for conservation. These guidance documents require the Board to evaluate the organization's long term stewardship monitoring



## Thank You to Our 2012 Volunteer Stewardship Monitors

Stewardship monitoring of all our land and easement holdings forms a significant piece of our organization's work. Each year, the monitoring season gets underway in early January with contacting the landowners of our conservation easements. Next are the actual property visits by our volunteer monitors that take place in winter and early spring. These visits require checking all boundaries for any encroachment and reviewing the permitted and prohibited uses of the property to

determine if the terms of the conservation easement or deed are being honored. Any violations must be addressed quickly. The monitoring season closes with the writing and archiving of the year's reports for each property. All told, it is an enormous job covering nearly 420 Little Compton acres. It would not be possible to accomplish this annually, as we must, without a cadre of willing monitors and the dedicated work of Heather Steers, Chair of our Stewardship Committee.

**A heartfelt "thank you" is due these amazing volunteers on whom we depend to perform a core responsibility of our organization.**

Calyn Acebes & Ryan Post

Jack Angell

Robbie Apfel & Bennett Simon

Ron Bogle

Bob & Dorothy Brayley

Fred Bridge

Abigail Brooks

Jay Burns

Phoebe Cook

Geoff Dennis

Sally Gilliatt

Nan Haffenreffer & Larry Anderson

Charlie Hall

Warren Jagger

Peter Lozier

Donald Machado

Sheila Mackintosh

Dick Menoche

Jana Porter

Jenny Prior

Jack Selvaggio

Cindy Sheldon

Heather & Mike Steers

Bill Theriault

Margaret Tirpaeck

Betty Torphy

Charlie Whipple

## SPA to Benefit from Garden Tour on June 12

"Country Gardens of Little Compton and Westport" is a tour of eight private gardens sponsored by the Little Compton Garden Club on Wednesday, June 12 from 10 to 4 PM, rain or shine.

As of this writing, tickets are on sale at the Little Compton Community Center, the Little Compton Wellness Center, Partners Village Store in Westport, and Milk & Honey at Tiverton Four Corners. For more information, contact [www.littlecomptongardenclub.org](http://www.littlecomptongardenclub.org)



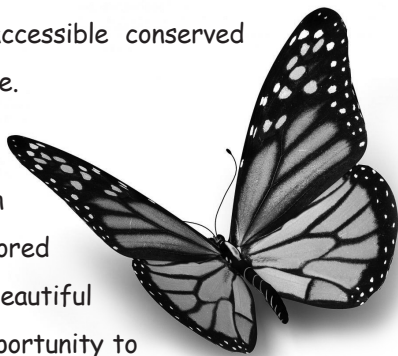
Conservation has long been an interest of the Little Compton Garden Club, with involvement in the preservation of Wilbur Woods and work with The Nature Conservancy at Wilbur Woods and the Goosewing Educational Summer

Programs. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Sakonnet Preservation Association, as well as the Westport Land Conservation Trust and LC Garden Club community projects. Many thanks to the LC Garden Club!

## Nature Walk: Migrating Monarchs at P.T. Marvell Preserve

At 7 AM on Saturday, September 21st, the Sakonnet Preservation Association, in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy of RI and the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust, will sponsor a walk at the P.T. Marvell Preserve adjacent to South Shore Beach. This event is part of the statewide RI Land Trust Days, an effort by the RI Land Trust Council to introduce RI residents to publicly accessible conserved properties. The event is free.

We hope to witness some portion of the monarch butterfly migration at a favored site used annually by these beautiful travelers. The walk is an opportunity to learn about monarchs, their amazing migratory journey, and threats to their survival. Warm drinks and refreshments will be served. We recommend reading Barbara



Kingsolver's book *Flight Behavior* in advance of the walk.

Last year *The Sakonnet Times* newspaper featured a stunning photograph by Geoff Dennis. In the early morning hours of September 20, 2012, he documented a gathering of thousands of monarchs at Goosewing Beach that literally covered trees with their orange and black wings. As the sun rose, warming their bodies, they began to open their wings and drift away, a phenomenal sight. Geoff will be with us to share his experience.



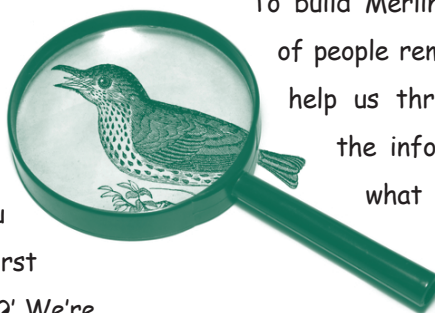
Sakonnet Preservation Association holds an easement on the portion of the P.T. Marvell Preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy of RI and takes annual responsibility for its stewardship. A portion of the Preserve is owned by the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust.

## Merlin Project Sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Want to learn more about identifying unfamiliar birds? Would you like to add to an online game that will help others learn too? You can get background information from a report about the Merlin Project at the website [www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/21782/20130411/cornell-project-uses-artificial-intelligence-to-id-birds](http://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/21782/20130411/cornell-project-uses-artificial-intelligence-to-id-birds).

To participate, log on to [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org). Request "merlin project" in the search window.

This is how the Cornell site describes what you can do: "When people notice a new bird, the first question they often ask is, 'What bird did I see?' We're building Merlin to help people find the answer.



"Merlin will be a new kind of bird identification tool — one that combines artificial intelligence with input from real-life bird watchers to produce an online 'wizard' that helps people ID birds quickly and connects them to more information.

"To build Merlin, we need to know how thousands of people remember and describe birds. You can help us through online activities that gather the information to help Merlin understand what bird watchers see. The more you play, the more you'll help Merlin become a true bird ID wizard." Have fun learning and participate in this unique bird identification project!



## Sakonnet Preservation Association

P. O. Box 945, Little Compton, RI 02837 • Phone/Fax: 401.635.8800

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A NEW MEMBER.

*Enclosed is my tax deductible membership contribution.*

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1,000+
<input type="checkbox"/> Special Gift	\$ _____

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Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Summer Address \_\_\_\_\_

*A membership in SPA makes a great gift for family and friends!*

sakonnetpreservation.org

401.635.8800

For Information:

The Sakonnet  
Preservation Association,  
a non-profit land trust,  
is dedicated to preserving  
the rural character  
and natural resources  
of Little Compton  
for the lasting benefit  
of the Community.

Our Mission



Sakonnet Preservation Association

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