



Winter/Spring 2015

A NEWSLETTER

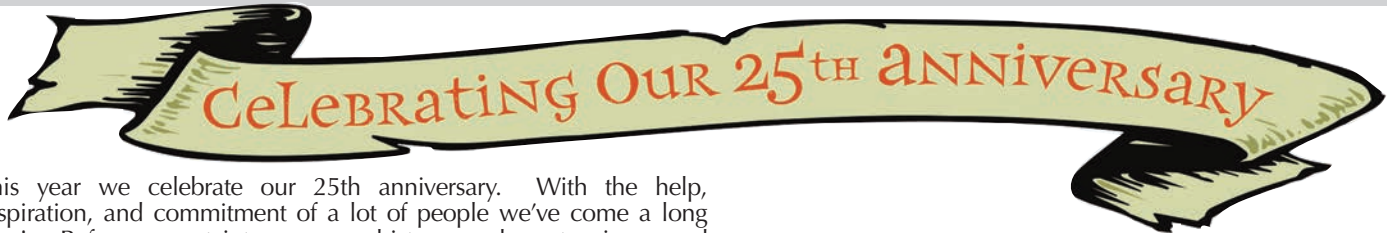
from the

CAPE ANN VERNAL POND TEAM

Website: www.capeannvernalpond.org

Email: cavpt@yahoo.com

THE CAVPT IS A HOPELESSLY NON-PROFIT VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO VERNAL POND CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION SINCE 1990.



This year we celebrate our 25th anniversary. With the help, inspiration, and commitment of a lot of people we've come a long way! Before we get into our own history we have to give a nod to Roger Ward Babson (1875-1967) who had the foresight to preserve the watershed land in the center of Cape Ann known as Dogtown. His love of Dogtown began as a young boy when he would accompany his grandfather on Sunday afternoon walks to bring rock salt to the cows that grazed there. After his grandfather passed away he continued the tradition with his father, Nathaniel. When Nathaniel died in 1927 Roger began purchasing tracts of land to preserve Dogtown. In all he purchased 1,150 acres, which he donated to the City of Gloucester in 1932, to be used as a park and watershed.



CAVPT Executive Director, Rick Roth, has had a lifelong interest in wildlife especially reptiles and amphibians. Caught his first snake (Northern brown) on the way home from kindergarten and he was hooked. Spent as much time as he could in the fields, creeks and swamps of Northern Illinois. Shown here in 1st grade with a boys regular haircut and already with the space between his front teeth in Mrs. McGuire's class at Wildwood School where



he brought tadpoles, crayfish, turtles and snakes for show & tell. He pretty much still does the same thing.

Here are just some of the highlights and important people in CAVPT's history:

- **Rick & Mary Stafford** of the New England Herpetological Society (NEHS) nominated Rick for the NEHS board; he served for several years, including a term as President, and became known in the herp community, giving him some measure of credibility.
- **In 1990 Margaret Flowers, Helen Ann Lind, and Rick** went into the woods to check out salamander, wood frog and peeper breeding activity. These three began work on certification and vernal pond exhibits with live animals.
- One night the young CAVPT group met **Ruth (Kuykendall) Sullivan** looking for salamanders at a vernal pool in Ravenswood Park; as often happens on our field trips, we found a new friend. Ruth became the CAVPT grant writer and a presentation volunteer.
- Several members of the group attended a vernal pond workshop, led by **Scott Jackson, at Laughing Brook Wildlife Sanctuary** (a Mass Audubon property in Hampden), where they learned more about ponds and certification.
- We became connected with **Biologist John Bleiler** who gave us one of his vernal pond surveys to use as a guideline for certification; he also helped us to collect information in the field.

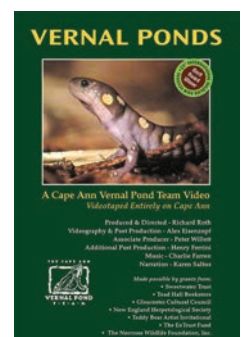
- **The Pole's Hill ladies - led by Nan Andrew, Virginia Dench, and Dina Enos** were inspirational as a small group of people who organized to preserve an important piece of land; the Vernal Pond Team was inspired by their success. Hey, you really can make a difference!
- **CAVPT received its first grant** (\$200 from New England Herpetological Society) for film and developing to aid in certifying pools.
- **By 1995 we certified our first pools**, the cluster of nine ponds on Nugent Stretch at old Rockport Road (where the vernal pond signs are now).



- **CAVPT staged its first vernal pond exhibit** at the Earth Day event at Stage Fort Park.
- **Vintage photo of Team members** who gathered for an interview with a reporter from the Gloucester Daily Times.



- **Barbara Buls**, an interpreter at Harold Parker State Forest at the time, joined the Team and volunteered in various aspects, most notably booking our programs with State parks.
- **Greg Smith** started filming his Saving Cape Ann series for Cape Ann Television (CATV); he filmed CAVPT field trips and rare species habitat turtle surveys which were aired on CATV and posted on Youtube.
- **In 1995 we started work on our movie, Vernal Ponds**; it was filmed entirely on Cape Ann. Alex Eisenzopf did the videography & post-production, Charlie Farren provided the music, Associate Producer was Peter Willett, Karen Saltus narrated; Rick Roth produced, directed, and creatively named it; funded by Toad Hall Bookstore, Gloucester Cultural Council, Sweetwater Trust, New England Herpetological Society, Teddy Bear Artist Invitational, and the EnTrust Fund.



- **Curtis Sarkin** became our first kid volunteer. Curtis is now a full-time educator at Maritime Gloucester.



- **Around 1999 Ileen Graham saw a need and created our first website** (at that time most of the Team didn't know what a website was) She also worked on newsletters, presentations, and lots of other Team stuff.

- **H.A. Lind created the first newsletter in 1990-something.** By 2000 we began mailing our annual newsletter as you now know and love it. She also designed our cool logo.

- Over the next few years we met some notable people who proved important to our growth and fun times:

- **Isabel Natti** was always generous with her time and talents; she lead us to many of her favorite pools in Rockport and shared her beautiful vernal-pond inspired Sarah Elizabeth designs.
- **Tony & Margo Ashton** have done a little of everything for CAVPT; Tony was an especially big help with newsletter mailings for years.
- **Nathan Mineo & Chris Wood** volunteered in many and varied ways: they served on the Board, participated in field work and basically made themselves indispensable.

- **In 2000 Our Vernal Ponds movie was completed** and won three merit awards (educational value, conservation message, excellence in Hi-8 photography) at the 23rd International Wildlife Film Festival held in Missoula, MT. The first showing, for a full house, was at the Rockport Library; sponsored by Toad Hall Bookstore.

- **We held our first yard sale fundraiser**, now an annual event.

- **Nick Taormina**, working on his thesis (comparing wetland habitats on Cape Ann) at Lesley College, joined Rick for a vernal pond field trip; nice guy Nick has volunteered in many capacities since, including serving as CAVPT President from 2009-2013.



- **2002 Jessica Kagle created Ponds in the Classroom**, a vernal pond program for schools; Jessica went on to form Kestrel Educational Adventures (KEA) which was incorporated as a separate non-profit in 2007. The two organizations maintain a working relationship and share space at the Get Outside Center.

- **2003 CAVPT first presented Snakes of Massachusetts and the World** as one of our programs; this later became known as Snakes of New England and the World.



Photo by Lew Dilks

- **Sam Bevins' introduction to CAVPT**,



at age 5, was at one of our snake shows. By age 8 he was volunteering and quickly roped his whole family into the act; they remain major contributors to this day.

- **Starting in 2004 Rick, Nick, and Nathan Mineo worked with Dan Wells of Hyla Ecological Services**; this enabled the group to hone its certification skills and learn turtle-and salamander-trapping for rare species habitat surveys. Dan eventually became a Board member.

- **2005 Cheryl "Char" Briscoe** joined the Team as our official graphic designer.



- **2006 Gloria Parsons and her Leader Scouts, drew up the list of requirements, and together we launched the Cape Ann Vernal Pond Scout Patch Program**; 13 Girl Scouts received a patch in the first year. Over 100 Boy and Girl Scouts have earned their patches.

- **Several members of the Team attended Vernal Pond Association workshops**, led by Leo Kenney & Matt Burne, where we learned more about vernal pools and about updates to the certification requirements. Real fun and informative.

- **In 2005 Ileen Graham** worked her magic to get us incorporated with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

- **Tori Rosati joined the Team as our grant writer.** What would we do without Tori?

- **2006 Our first office** (really just a desk shared with Kestrel Educational Adventures) at Cape Ann Business Incubator (CABI).

- **2006 Obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit status with the IRS.** Which means you can make a donation to us at any time and write it off on your taxes.



- **We met Julia Camille** at a vernal pool field trip for her Brownie troop. Soon Julia began volunteering for CAVPT and recruited her whole family; they became another valuable bunch of stalwarts for the cause.



- **2008 Sam Park (of Gloucester Crossing) donated \$10,000** in mitigation for the loss of upland habitat of three vernal pools. The money was earmarked for vernal pond certification; we used it to certify 30 pools in West Gloucester.

- **Nick Taormina published an article in Mass Wildlife Magazine** about his involvement with CAVPT and our work certifying vernal ponds.



- **2009 We outgrew the desk in CABI** and, along with KEA, moved the office to Lexington Avenue in Magnolia.

- **Nice article by Sarah Leno about CAVPT in Cape Ann Magazine**; she wrote about us again for Sierra Magazine.

- **Julia Camille and Kelly Finnerty certified two vernal pools**



as an extra-credit project for their 7th grade science class at Manchester Essex Regional Middle School.



- **2010 We held our first benefit concert and raffle** with great music by Charlie Farren & Jon Butcher.



- **John Gallagher came to a CAVPT presentation** at the Cape Ann Discovery Center and became a regular volunteer - helping out at almost every single program since then.

- **2014 Boston Globe Magazine published "Two Rick Roths Walk into a Bar"**, written by Nicci Cataldo. Yes, our Rick Roth and

another Rick Roth (from Littleton) both do live animal presentations; the pair was later interviewed by Margery Egan and Jim Braude on Boston Public Radio.



- **2014 We moved the office to The Get Outside Center** at 186 Main Street in Gloucester.



- **Became a Manchester Essex Regional High School Green Team** participating organization with the help of Team Leader Eric Magers; Green Team Scholar Ben Alger will attempt to drag us kicking and screaming into the world of 21st century technology.

A whole bunch of other people have helped CAVPT in other capacities over the years:

Colleen Anderson
Wendy Antrim
Art Haven
Ollie Balf
Mac Bell
Katrina Bergman
Tracy Bowen
Andrew Brindamour
Terri Chace
Sharron Cohen
Sadie Cook
Liz Davis
Anna DiPerna
Susan Emerson
Henry Ferrini
Ben Flemer
George the Cat
Sue Giglio & Animal Crackers
Peter Hackel
Cora & Lila Hawkes
Kathy Heinze
Martha Hoar
Lynne Holton
Yishai Howe
Eleanor Hoy
Cathy Hull
Annette Huskins

Eric Hutchins
Emily Kahn
Ramona Latham
Mariah Lowe
Gail McCarthy
Helen McCrady
Greg Mertz & New England
Wildlife Center
Julie McMahon
Kate Mineo
Katie Misuraca
Deirdre Mulligan
New England Herpetological
Society
Cynthia Nichols
Sinikka Nogelo
Dan Pierson
Dennis Pyburn
Buck Robinson
Joe Seta
Desi Smith
Tessah Stanton
Ben Wildrick

And countless others who have contributed in one way or another over the years.

The Future of CAVPT

We've come along way...but we're not anywhere near done yet.

We need to:

- Get paid staff
 - Make better use of our Main Street location, The Get Outside Center
 - Do more and better programs
 - Do more conservation: vernal pool certification and rare species habitat
 - Get serious about our fundraising

The real goal is to open a Nature Study Center on Cape Ann with:

- Live animal and other exhibits
- On site and off site presentations
- Field trips to nearby wildlife habitats
- and more.....

CAVPT Certification Report 2015

Data was collected in the field for over 15 pools in 2014 for certification. Vernal pool surveys include photos of the pool (full of water in the spring), evidence of obligate species-usually wood frog or spotted salamander egg masses, and a description of the pool; length, width, depth and location-GPS coordinates. Field work for 2014 was completed by Matt Burne, Nick Taormina and Rick Roth.

Certification information was entered online into the database of the Vernal Pool & Rare Species (VPRS) Information System that Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) maintains. NHESP is part of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. Sam Bevins, Matt Burne, Nick Taormina, Rick Roth and Ben Alger worked together in this effort.

The window of opportunity to collect the necessary data to certify pools is short. Evidence is documented most easily in the spring when amphibian egg masses such as wood frog and spotted salamander are in the pools. This time can be a matter of 3-4 weeks. This is why it is important to have trained volunteers and a good strategy when locating and surveying vernal pools. Last spring Sheila Wilson, Nick Holland and Matt Natti lead us to some of their favorite pools, and some were found using maps generated by Dan Wells. If you would like to volunteer please contact us at cavpt@yahoo.com.

Back in Gloucester after a long hiatus...

The Fools!

Please join us for our 25th Anniversary Fundraiser.

A benefit concert with music by The Fools (*how appropriate*)
Friday, September 18th, 8-11pm
at the Mile Marker One in Gloucester.

Tickets will be available soon.
\$20.00 in advance, \$25.00 at the door.

Check our website - capeannvernalpond.org for updates.



Don't miss any of our exciting upcoming events!
check out our website at:

www.capeannvernalpond.org

and Like Us on Facebook

Fundraising

CAVPT is working on many different fronts to raise money and awareness. In December we partnered with Kestrel Educational Adventures for our first-ever online auction. It was a great success. Together we made close to \$5,000.

And of course there's our famous Yard Sale! This year's sale is planned for May 23 (the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend – rain date May 30). This is how it works – you get to clean out your house, basement, kid's room, neighbors' yard, etc . . . and bring the stuff to us on the morning of the sale between 7:00 and 9:00 AM. No need for you to hassle with organizing a yard sale – just bring it to us and say goodbye. (And stay and make a good buy of your own!) Do you have something too big to bring to us? Give a call and maybe we can pick it up. Please no TVs, computers, mattresses, or junk. Email us at cavpt@yahoo.com.

This event has consistently brought us over \$1,000 which is a lot of money for us. This is also a great event for which to volunteer. Do you like yard saling? Imagine getting the first pick on everything! We need lots of help – early morning set up, pricing, haggling with customers, and of course, clean up. Please consider volunteering for this one day – it's really a lot of fun!

You can donate painlessly all year by choosing CAVPT as your charity of choice with Amazon Smile. At no cost to you, Amazon will donate a portion of each purchase to CAVPT.



Grants & Donations

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- New England BioLabs Corporate Donations, \$2,000
- Cell Signaling Technology, \$3,000

Thanks to everyone who responded to our annual appeal with generous donations, and to those who donated throughout the year.

We are proud, and oh so grateful, to have over fifty volunteers generously donating their time and energy to make CAVPT grow and flourish.

Turtle Trapping

In the spring of 2014 Rick Roth and Nick Taormina conducted CAVPT's first turtle survey. The objective of the survey was to establish Blanding's turtle habitat. The traps, donated by Dan Wells, were set in West Gloucester and checked and re-baited daily for a period of 14 days. Although we didn't find any Blanding's turtles it was a fun project and we plan to try it again this year. Any turtles that are trapped are measured, weighed and marked, then released where they were caught.

If anyone is interested in participating in this year's study please contact us through our website.

Maritime Gloucester

Maritime Gloucester congratulates CAVPT on its 25th anniversary. We are happy to support vernal ponds through use of our bulk-mailing permit. This year Maritime Gloucester proudly celebrates an anniversary too – our 15th. Immerse yourself in our locally-stocked aquarium, sail on the Schooner Ardelie, relax with our beautiful harbor views, and more. Memorial Day through October at 23 Harbor Loop, Gloucester. www.maritimegloucester.org



Last Year We...

- Led our usual nighttime vernal pond field trips
- Certified 9 ponds with several more in the works
- Presented "Intro to Vernal Ponds" at:
 - Cape Ann Discovery Center at Ravenswood, Gloucester
 - Sawyer Free Library, Gloucester
- Presented "Snakes of New England and the World" at:
 - Crane Estate (The Trustees of Reservations), Ipswich
 - EarthFest at Lynn Woods
 - Lincoln Land Trust
 - New England Herpetological Society
 - Riverfest, Great Meadows, Sudbury
 - Scout Troops in Malden
 - Waltham Land Trust
- Presented Vernal Pond/Snake Exhibit at:
 - Essex County Greenbelt Earth Day
- Held a Vernal Pond Workshop and Field Trip with:
 - The Trustees of Reservations at Agassiz Rock
 - Manchester Girl Scouts
- Presented Snake Exhibits at:
 - Cape Ann Farmers' Market
 - Gloucester Block Party
 - Gloucester Pride Stride
 - Gloucester Sidewalk Bazaar
 - Manchester Library Book Sale
 - Maritime Heritage Day, Maritime Gloucester
 - Rockport Unitarian Universalist Church
- Visiting Scientist Day at:
 - O'Maley Middle School, Gloucester
- Hosted Wicked Scary Pumpkin Carving Event,
 - The Get Outside Center, Gloucester



Snake drawing by Ollie Balf

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Every spring CAVPT members lead nighttime field trips to the ponds to see the amphibian-breeding activity. Check your flashlights, get new batteries, and put your rain gear on the hook by the door. To avoid habitat destruction and critter disturbance, we limit the number of participants on each trip. We also ask that you leave your dog at home. Interested? Email us at cavpt@yahoo.com.

The CAVPT newsletter committee is powered by



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PIZZA

332 Main St., Gloucester
978-282-7878

If we value wildlife, we must protect vernal ponds.....

What a CAVPT membership offers:

- A really neat CAVPT car decal
- Subscription to our annual newsletter
- Email updates of vernal pond activities and events
- Guided field trips to local vernal ponds
- The satisfaction of knowing you are helping preserve these unique and vital habitats

Our programs & activities include:

- Vernal pond certification
- Exhibits & presentations
- Daytime & nighttime field trips
- Certification workshops
- Posters
- "Vernal Ponds" video
- Website: capeannvernalpond.org
- Scout patch program
- Snakes of New England & the World

Salamander linoleum cut by Isabel Natti

For school programs, including Ponds in the Classroom, contact our sister organization, Kestrel Educational Adventures: www.kestreleducation.org.



Photo by Colleen Anderson

A field trip to vernal pools at Agassiz Rock in Manchester, MA for Ramona and The Trustees of Reservations.

The funding for our programs is provided by:

- Corporate gifts
- Grants
- Sale of our merchandise
- Donations from community members like you
- Memberships

CAVPT thanks the following organizations and foundations for their generous support over the years:

The EnTrust Fund • The Norcross Wildlife Foundation • GoodSearch
New England Herpetological Society • Sweetwater Trust • TD Bank
Toad Hall Bookstore • Gloucester Cultural Council • Sam Park & Company
New England BioLabs • The Bellevue Fund • The William P. Wharton Trust
New England Grassroots Environment Fund • Cell Signaling Technology

Support the Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team. Become a member or renew today!

The Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to vernal pond conservation and education since 1990. Our focus is vernal ponds. The issue is the preservation of wildlife habitat, which ultimately is about the health of the planet.



Photo by Lysa Leland

At the Cape Ann Farmers' Market everyone enjoyed meeting our live snakes and painting wooden ones with the crew from Cape Ann Art Haven.

CAVPT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
your contribution is tax deductible

www.capeannvernalpond.org

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

(address required if paying by credit card)

Phone _____ Email _____

☐ Send me email updates about field trips and events

☐ Yes! I'd like to be a volunteer

☐ Lifetime Membership \$200

Annual Membership

☐ Individual \$20 ☐ Family \$35 ☐ Junior (under 16) \$10

☐ Additional donation \$ _____

☐ Check enclosed: \$ _____ Payable to: Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team

☐ Charge my credit card (Visa, MC, Amex, Discover)

CC # _____

exp date ____/____ CVV code (on back of card) _____

Signature _____

(required if paying by credit card)

Please detach this form and mail with your donation to:
Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team
P.O. Box 12, Rockport, MA 01966



Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team
P.O. Box 12
Rockport, MA 01966

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
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Block print by Isabel Natti

The Need for Protection...

The temporary nature of vernal ponds often belies their importance. Countless plants and animals live in vernal ponds. Insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals visit to drink, feed, breed and nest. Some species, such as spotted salamanders, wood frogs and fairy shrimp are totally dependent on this habitat.



Photo by Nathan Milne

Come see us this spring! CAVPT leads nighttime field trips to witness the annual migration and breeding of wood frogs and spotted salamanders...see inside, or our website, for more details.



Monarch print by Isabel Natti

How to Protect...

The best way to protect vernal ponds is to own the property. The next best way to protect them is to certify ponds with the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program. Certification application reports include photographs, maps and field observation forms. To learn more go to www.capeannvernalpond.org or check out the Vernal Pool Association's website at www.vernalpool.org

