



# COVE CURRENTS

## Greetings from the Executive Director

We take certain things for granted when spring arrives at Palmyra Cove Nature Park: the return of red-winged blackbirds, nesting activity in the peregrine falcon box, fox kits close to their dens, wildflowers in bloom, hundreds of students on field trips, and weekends filled with guests. We look forward to spring for all of these reasons and more, but it is the predictability of their return that brings us comfort.

We seldom consider the possibility that those things that define spring for us could, someday, not return at all. For example, if it were not for the diligence of Rachel Carson, marine biologist and author of *Silent Spring*, whose work forced a ban on the use of DDT, then the Peregrine Falcon would be extinct. Instead, because of Carson's persistence and the work of scientists who came after her, we have an opportunity to observe a nesting pair of the species from a camera in our Environmental Discovery Center.

In an effort to make a difference globally by acting locally, Palmyra Cove Nature Park hosted its second annual Sustainability Fair on Saturday, April 17th.

The word sustainable is being used with increasing frequency when discussing the environment and, at times, may sound like just another buzzword; it isn't. For more and more of us the word has come to include the concepts of renewable and supportable, and to promote the idea of conserving resources now in order to preserve them for future use. Conservation and innovation are closely linked. While coal, oil, and natural gas have been our "go to" energy sources, we are slowly but surely coming to acknowledge that the protracted use of these products is unsustainable and harmful to the environment. Consequently, we are adding sun and wind – renewable, clean energy sources – to the list.

Visitors who attended the Sustainability Fair were treated to presentations by a variety of vendors, including those promoting alternative, renewable energy sources. I was particularly interested in hearing Kris Ohleth, a representative of Deepwater Wind LLC, keynote speaker of the day. Deepwater Wind LLC is an energy company specializing in offshore wind farm construction and is headquartered in Hoboken, NJ.

Clean, renewable wind from offshore farms has been embraced,

as an energy source, by the Europeans. For example, Sweden has used offshore wind as a renewable energy source since 1991.

However, while offshore wind farms have been in the planning and permitting stages for many years in the United States, such a farm has yet to be constructed here. Offshore wind is robust; it is also expensive. In Europe the industry is subsidized by national governments. We in the United States seem to be coming to the offshore part of the industry late. We may not have the same political will to subsidize now in order to enjoy a more secure future. While there are land-based wind farms throughout the country, the offshore turbines make more sense for the Northeast. We are fortunate to have large bodies of water, where the wind is strong, close to highly populated land masses where energy use is heavy.

Deepwater Wind LLC has proposed farms in the Atlantic approximately thirty miles into the ocean along the coastlines of Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, New York (Long Island), Rhode Island, and Maine. The technology is promising and the need is great, but the permitting process is arduous and time-consuming. Ms. Ohleth does not envision construction beginning before 2018 in New Jersey, perhaps sooner in Rhode Island, all contingent upon a successful outcome of the lengthy permitting process.

Interestingly enough, on April 28th, approximately two weeks after the Sustainability Fair, an article by Katherine Q. Seelye appeared in the *New York Times* under the headline "Regulators Approve First Offshore Wind Farm in the U.S." The article stated that "after nine years of regulatory review, the federal government gave the green light Wednesday to the nation's first offshore wind farm, a highly contested project off the coast of Cape Cod." Nine years. The permit was granted to Cape Wind Associates for construction of the farm. While supporters of the \$1 billion project say that it "...would provide a clean, renewable source of energy that could meet up to 75 percent of the power needs on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket..." and that "it would provide hundreds of construction jobs, decrease the region's reliance on fossil fuels and benefit the environment by lowering emissions of greenhouse gasses" the project continues to have its detractors.

(continued on page 3)



## Birds In Folklore

There are birds living all around us. They live in the woods and fields. They live in our parks and backyards. They also live in our imaginations. I think that birds have inspired more folklore, mythology and superstitions than any other living creatures. It's easy to see why. They are colorful. Some can sing beautiful songs. Most of all they can fly. Birds inhabit a dimension that until recently we could only dream of.

Native Americans, who lived more intimately with nature than most of us do today, had many stories and beliefs where birds played a prominent role.

Many Plains tribes admired the eagle for its supposed bravery. An eagle feather was considered to be the badge of a warrior. Only warriors and chiefs could wear eagle feathers in their headdresses. The feather had to be taken from an eagle, not found, and bow and arrow was not to be used to obtain the feather.

A Hopi story says that the turkey was chosen to put the sun in

the sky. In this he was successful, but he stayed too long near the sun and the feathers on the turkey's head were burned off. That is why, today, turkeys have no feathers on their heads.

The mocking bird is known for its wonderful singing and the ability to imitate the songs of other birds. A Pueblo Indian tale says that the mocking bird taught the use of language to humans.

Ancient Aztecs believed that their slain warriors were reincarnated as hummingbirds. This seems silly at first, a fierce warrior reborn as a miniscule bird? I have watched male Ruby Throated Hummingbirds defend their territories and I can understand why the Aztecs believed as they did. These tiny birds are fearless.

Now we come to my favorite bit of folklore. The Belted Kingfisher can be an elusive bird. They are very wary and hard to approach. If you get a little too close they are gone. The Sioux Indians thought that a kingfisher could never be caught. It is reported that the great war chief of the Sioux, Crazy Horse, would ride into battle with a stuffed kingfisher tied in his hair. He believed that the power of the kingfisher would keep him safe from arrows and bullets. It may have been true. Crazy Horse was never wounded in battle. It was the treachery of those he trusted that brought him down.

**Clyde Croasdale, Guest Contributor**



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## Connecting with Nature

with Bonnie Hart, Ecopsychologist

**HIKING with HART**-Guided Nature Walks-Sunday, June 13 and Sunday, July 11, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

“We do not see nature with our eyes, but with our understandings and our hearts.” William Hazlitt

Experience Nature in a new way: with the Heart! Is it possible to hear colors and see the wind? Native peoples throughout the world, say “yes”! We'll practice “tuning into Nature” on our leisure walk through the beautiful trails of Palmyra Cove Nature Park. This moderately paced hike will explore the wooded trails and open fields along with the shoreline of the Delaware River. Join us for all or part of this easy hike. All ages and abilities welcome!

Includes: Brief classroom introduction on Native practices • Guided Nature walk (easy pace for all abilities)• Plant, animal, and bird identification • Silent 15-minute hike to practice “Heart Sensing”

**SOUL to SOUL**-Sunday, June 6 and Sunday, June 27, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

“If you talk with the animals they will talk to you and you will know each other” – Chief Dan George

By “talking with Nature” we are able to find the resources within ourselves to live life fully, overcoming challenges with grace and insight. Indigenous cultures from all over the world know this. In fact somewhere in your own history your ancestors, regardless of your cultural roots, were once an Earth-based tribe turning to the plants, animals, wind, and sun for guidance with everyday affairs. And of course this is true for the Native tribes of North America too. Chief Luther Standing Bear said, “The world is a library and its books are the stones, leaves, grass, brooks and the birds and animals that share alike with us the storms and blessings of the earth.” This inherent wisdom of Nature is something we can all tap into.

The first thing that occurs when you slow down to be in Nature is the melting away of stress. This is followed by and a sense of reawakening as you connect more fully with the world that is not only around you, but within you.

Please join us in a gathering that expands your awareness of the natural world.

Includes: Classroom discussion on the “web of life” • Native concepts that bring us into communion with Nature • Simple breathing techniques to relax and de-stress • A 10-minute guided meditation to quiet the mind and open the heart • Indoor practice session connecting with Nature through the heart • A brief walk on wooded trails (time and weather permitting)

Members free, \$8.00 for non-members. Log onto [www.palmyracove.org](http://www.palmyracove.org) or [www.earthgym.org](http://www.earthgym.org) for additional dates and times.

## News from the Gardens at Palmyra Cove

These are difficult times for many of us. Rising costs coupled with job cutbacks, pay reductions, and a declining real estate market have left their mark on most of us in one way or another. Our towns and communities must cut back services because of declining revenue. Public parks and spaces will be affected by the lack of financial support. Yet with all this grim news, some people in New Jersey proved beyond a doubt that each of us can make a positive mark in our parks and public places. People with a passion for natural environments, gardening skills, and the ability to nurture have left a huge mark at Palmyra Cove Nature Park.

Friday, May 7, Ward Dasey from Medford and Frank Victor from Hainesport weeded and replanted much of the garden in front of the Discovery Center. Jeannie Francis from East Riverton continued that project during the following week.

May 8th was the annual Volunteer Planting Day at Palmyra Cove Nature Park. Ward Dasey had been growing cuttings all winter and sowing seeds for over a month at his home. These tender young plants required many hours of patient care to reach the stage in their growth that would allow them to be planted outside.

The previous week found Ward delivering flats of his young plants daily before he went to work. On planting day more plants arrived at the park. Cars and trucks arrived, carrying plants that will soon feed migrating humming birds and butterflies. Steve Bahr drove a truck filled with many plants grown at his home in New Brunswick. Jeannie bought flats of lavender and other deer resistant plants known to thrive in the sandy soil found here in the park. Ward brought his remaining plants to fill the beds.

Gary Cozens from Pennsylvania kindly brought delicious goodies to enjoy with our morning coffee. Many thanks, Gary. Your kindness got the day off to a tasty start and you brought smiles to our faces. Special thanks go to Clara Ruvolo, Executive Director of Palmyra Cove Nature Park, who provided hungry gardeners with a pizza lunch.

At 9:00 a.m. other volunteers joined the plant growers. Vicki Wozniak from Edgewater Park was joined by Ted Young of Maple Shade, Suchitra Krishnaswamy and her daughter Nan-

dini from Holmdel, Pam Spielmann from Matawan, and I came with gloves, tools and the desire to help nectar-feeding birds and butterflies in their life journey.

At the end of the day, the Bird Garden on the north side of the building and the long Median Garden on Park Drive were weeded, existing plants pruned, and new ones planted. Al Zeigler from the Burlington County Bridge Commission maintenance team drove the watering equipment and Vicki directed the water to the park's newest plants. Kelly Singer of the Bridge Commission manned the front desk, cheerfully helped the gardeners when they needed something and ordered lunch for the experienced hands working so effectively in the park.

I was honored to be part of this day and work with people who shared their time, hands, and expertise with smiles on their faces. I look down the long row of plants in the Park Drive Median Garden and I see that it will make a difference to migrating species and it will be beautiful to see.

It is a wonderful experience to see a job well done; uplifting to know that we left behind something beautiful for the birds and butterflies that will use the fruit of our effort to sustain them. So in this age of cynicism, a garden will bloom because of our volunteers. Many thanks to each and every one who took part in this planting.

Our next big project here at Palmyra Cove Nature Park will be this June. We plan to mulch the gardens to conserve water and reduce weeding. Everyone is welcome to join us. If you would like to be part of our team please contact me at 856-829-1900 ext 270 or [preid@bcbridges.org](mailto:preid@bcbridges.org) and I'll add your name to our contact list. Once again, thank you all for caring enough to put your thoughts into action.

**Pam Reid**, Assistant to the Executive Director



### ***Greetings from the Executive Director*** (continued from page 1)

Several challenges to the permit approval are already in the courts and according to Audra Parker, president and chief executive of Alliance to Protect Nantucket Sound, as quoted in the Seelye article "...nearly a dozen parties have filed notices of intention to sue, saying the project violates various environmental rules and regulations."

We can no longer take for granted that there will be a never-ending supply of fossil fuels and that we can continue to use them without concern for their impact on the environment. I think that if we wish to experience the comfort of predictability that comes with spring then we have to practice, to the best of our ability, living a sustainable lifestyle and become involved in the public debate over energy policy.

**Clara Ruvolo**, Executive Director



Letters to the Editor can be mailed to Clara Ruvolo at Palmyra Cove Nature Park, 1300 Route 73 North, PO Box 6, Palmyra, NJ 08065-1090.

Photos credited to Bennett Landsman, Steve Greer and Jonathan Maccornack.

Palmyra Cove Environmental Education Foundation thanks Ed McCabe for his assistance in editing Cove Currents.



## Education Corner

**Education Corner:** Spring 2010 Staff Spotlight: Our teachers featured in this edition started teaching at Palmyra Cove in the fall of 2004. They came to Palmyra Cove with different backgrounds but share a common dedication to the pursuit of excellence. They are Suzanne Calhoun and Faith Steinfort.

Suzanne graduated from the University of Virginia with a degree in environmental science. She was an instructor of outdoor skills at High Road Camps and the Sierra Club. Suzanne also worked as a

technical specialist for an industrial hygiene company and as an “Environmental Specialist” for the New Jersey Pine-lands Commission. Her interest in the outdoors began on a 6th grade field trip and has never stopped. She, her three daughters, and husband, Chris, still pursue the great outdoors with recent trips to the Rocky Mountains and regular treks in Vermont. Suzanne has become a vital contributor to our educational program. She combines her technical skills and knowledge with a gentle, caring demeanor.

Faith Steinfort is a graduate of Montclair University and taught language arts at Cinnaminson Township Schools for

more than 26 years. Faith, my twin sister, grew up in a Philadelphia row house with one tree on the entire street, but moving to New Jersey, a trip to Stokes State Forest, and summer visits to the Adirondacks kindled an interest in the environment. Faith has retired from teaching in public schools and now uses her teaching skills to share her love for the outdoors. She brings energy and enthusiasm to her work at the Cove because as she says: “I really believe in what I’m doing.”

**Adopt A Beach:** On April 17, 2010, Palmyra Cove hosted its annual spring “Adopt A Beach” cleanup. Many individuals and organizations contributed to this effort. In all more than 100 volunteers participated. Bethany Lutheran Church, including Pack 9 Cub Scouts, had 29 volunteers. Other groups included Our Lady of Perpetual Help confirmation students, Palmyra and Cinnaminson High School Interact Clubs, Charles Street School, Cinnaminson Scouts, and 22 people who attended as family members or individual helpers. Many attendees were alerted about the cleanup by Pam Tidswell of Burlington County Clean Communities. We are grateful to her for helping to get the word out. Volunteers collected more than 1500 pounds of debris. Our cleanup was a small part of a world-wide effort to cleanup coastal areas. For more information on this massive undertaking, please visit the Ocean Conservancy at [www.oceanconservancy.org](http://www.oceanconservancy.org).



**Edward Sanderson, Director, Environmental Education**

## Kids Day



## Naturalist Notes

Palmyra Cove's toddler program, Cove Caterpillars, was very well attended this spring in spite of the rainy weather. All of the classes had full registration and even a waiting list for participants wanting to join our fun outings. The topics covered this spring included: owls, life in logs, birds, snakes, rabbits, flowers, butterflies, frogs and toads, wetlands, and seining the river. The toddlers had the opportunity to observe various animals and learn how they differ from each other, and where the animals fit into their environment. The Fall Cove Caterpillar toddler program will start on September 20, with Monday classes from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., and Tuesday classes from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Palmyra Cove's 2nd annual Sustainability Fair held on Saturday, April 17 was also well attended with new visitors as well as frequent guests to the Cove. We had a great turnout for the beach clean-up. The food vendors, Amani's Veggie Garden and Jersey Q Barbeque, were a big hit. The animal ambassadors with Falconer Jennifer Penna, Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, and the Turtle Lady Cindy Pierson were a delight for the younger visitors. Thank you to all our vendors for making our Sustainability Fair educational as well as fun for our visitors.

Burlington County Bird Quest was very successful. The weather was beautiful and the warm front moving up the coast allowed for a massive migration over the weekend of May 1. In all, ninety-six species were observed in Burlington County. Especially exciting was the sighting of a Red-headed Woodpecker, an endangered species in New Jersey, feeding in a dead tree next to the Palmyra Cove parking lot. All the participants had already returned to Palmyra Cove for lunch and had the opportunity to observe the rare bird. Migrating warbler sightings throughout Burlington County included: Northern Parula, Blue-winged Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, and Hooded Warbler. Other noteworthy sightings included a Bald Eagle, Common

Loon fly-over, Pied-billed Grebe, Common and Hooded Mergansers, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and Baltimore and Orchard Orioles. The winners of the Burlington County Bird Quest were the Moorestown Merlins with sixty-three species observed in five hours. I assume, from the boisterous lunch that followed, that great fun was had by all. I'm looking forward to the Burlington County Bird Quest 2011, which will be held here on Saturday, May 7 (mark your calendars!)



Summer Vacation Family Fun programs, for children of all ages, will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. starting Monday, June 14 with the topic "Wetland Wandering." Other classes will include "Meadow March" on June 21, and "Delaware River Romp" on June 28. Reservations will be required for these classes, as supplies are limited. The cost for each is \$5 per participant, free for members of Palmyra Cove Nature Park.

Cove Campers Summer Day Camp will start July 5 and go through July 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The second week of camp will be held from July 12 through July 16. An exciting new addition for Camp this year will include a Friday evening family hike at the end of the camp week for the participants and their families. We are now accepting reservations for both camps.

Please contact Kristina at 856-829-1900 ext 267 or [kmerola@bcbridges.org](mailto:kmerola@bcbridges.org) to register for any of these programs.

Kristina Merola, *Naturalist*



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## Banding of the Peregrine Falcon Chick



Participants were Kathy Clark, Principal Zoologist for NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Program, John DiGiovanna, Field Engineer, Pennoni Associates Inc., Tacony-Palmyra Bridge Field Office (and photographer) and Kristina Merola, Naturalist.

## Upcoming Events Spring 2010

(For information or to register, please call 856-829-1900 x 267.)

June 19	9:00 -12:00 noon	Beginning Birding for Adults	Adults
June 21	10:00 -11:30 am	Summer Vacation Family Fun Program	Family Program
June 28	10:00 -11:30 am	Summer Vacation Family Fun Program	Family Program
July 3	9:00 -11:00 am	Family Hike	All Ages
July 5	9:00 -12:00 noon	Summer Camp week 1	3rd-6th graders
July 12	9:00 -12:00 noon	Summer Camp week 2	3rd-6th graders
July 17	9:00 -12:00 noon	Beginning Birding for Adults	Adults
August 7	9:00 -11:00 am	Family Hike	All Ages
August 21	9:00 -12:00 noon	Beginning Birding for Adults	Adults
September 4	9:00 -11:00 am	Family Hike	All Ages
September 13	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Pre school Program	2-5 year olds
September 13	1:00 -2:00 pm	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 14	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 18	9:00 -12:00 noon	Beginning Birding for Adults	Adults
September 20	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 20	1:00 -2:00 pm	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 21	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 27	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 27	1:00 -2:00 pm	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds
September 28	10:00 -11:00 am	Cove Caterpillar Preschool Program	2-5 year olds

### COVE CURRENTS Palmyra Cove Nature Park

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