



# FRIENDS OF ELLISVILLE MARSH NEWSLETTER: MONITORING, MENTORING, AND MEETING JUNE, 2014

*This newsletter is produced on a periodic basis to keep members of the Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc. apprised of developments and opportunities to become involved.*

## Join us for our Annual Meeting

Please join us for our 2014 Members' Meeting, to be held at the conveniently located Cedarville Fire Station this year, Saturday, July 19th at 10:00 am. Come meet other interested members and learn more about the work that you support. More details coming soon.

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## Renewal Reminder!

Don't forget the Friends of Ellisville Marsh membership year runs from July 1 - June 30th, so we all need to renew ASAP to be current members for 2014. Please renew online with Paypal at <http://tinyurl.com/ellisvillemembership> (or go to [www.ellisvillemarsh.org](http://www.ellisvillemarsh.org) and download a hard copy renewal form under "donate"). Mail checks to Friends of Ellisville Marsh, Inc., PO Box 1728, Sagamore Beach, MA 02562. Membership levels start as low as \$15, but donate what you can - the organization's continued successes depend on your support!



Photo courtesy of Diane Fletcher

## Our First Intern: Sarah Cowles

Our beautiful ecosystem will have a new pair of eyes focused on documenting minute changes in its vegetation, water quality and tidal hydrology this summer. The Friends of Ellisville Marsh has created our first Salt Marsh Assessment Internship to continue data collection under several key environmental monitoring programs it launched five years ago. The internship is entirely funded by a grant from Entergy Corporation, owner/operator of Plymouth's Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station, the latest in a series of grants the company has awarded to the Ellisville Marsh project since early 2008. Ms. Sarah Cowles, a rising senior at the University of New England in Biddeford, Maine, was selected from a pool of highly qualified candidates who expressed interest in the internship opportunity. According to Eric Cody, who served on the selection committee, "Sarah has



Sarah in her natural habitat Photo courtesy of Sarah Cowles

closely related, prior experience on the Saco River Project in Maine so we expect she'll be quick study here at Ellisville Marsh." Sarah will work under the supervision of Ellen Russell, a former Friends director who is completing work on her doctorate in Plant, Soil and Insect Science at UMass-Amherst and has focused on the health of Ellisville Marsh for her thesis. Friends' president Jack Scambos views Entergy's continuing support for the revitalization of Ellisville Marsh as strategic. "Entergy/Pilgrim has been there whenever we needed financial help over the past seven years," says Scambos. He adds, "The fact that they have awarded us six grants speaks loudly to their commitment to our project, and we sincerely appreciate that."

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### **President's Corner: Update on Friends' Meeting at the State House with Acting Secretary for Energy and Environmental Affairs**

On Friday, May 16th, Friends board members Eric Cody and Jack Scambos traveled to Boston for a meeting with legislative staffers, agency heads and

regulators regarding the success of our program. Facilitated by our own State Senator, Senate President Therese Murray, and her extremely helpful Plymouth-based staff, Monica Mullin and Lance Lambros, the meeting was a break-through for our little not-for-profit. In attendance were Under Secretary for the Environment and Energy, The Honorable Maeve Vallely-Bartlett; Bruce Carlisle, Director of Coastal Zone Management; Elizabeth Kouloheras, Mass Department of Environmental Protection Southeast Region Wetlands-Waterways Program Chief; and several other legislative liaison and support personnel.

The group met for over an hour to discuss the progress that the Friends have made, the monitoring programs currently implemented, and the outlook for our renewed permit applications in the next 18 months. The meeting was extremely productive and has resulted in a flurry of effort in support of our initiatives in Ellisville. Friends President Jack Scambos is confident that a lot of headway was made in firmly establishing the Program at Ellisville as an exemplary effort in public private partnership benefiting our natural resources.

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## Vandals and Victories:

### Piping Plover Updates...Not Everyone Cares

As far as threats to wildlife at Ellisville Marsh and Ellisville Beach, this summer has started out no differently than past years. During May, two horseback riders repeatedly ignored signs prohibiting horses on the beach during shorebird nesting season posted by the Wildlands Trust at Shifting Lots Preserve and rode onto Ellisville Beach. Hoof prints were found within a few feet of an area that was about to become a Piping Plover nest (called scrapes). And several times an ill-mannered individual vandalized string fencing that protects nesting areas (fencing is placed only where nesting activity has been found and removed when activity has ceased). There have been no ATVs on the beach in recent weeks but that's another habitual threat. If you see witness any of these activities in progress on Shifting Lots Preserve or the adjacent private beach, please notify the Friends immediately by emailing [incidentreport@EllisvilleMarsh.org](mailto:incidentreport@EllisvilleMarsh.org). We will notify the Wildlands Trust and the Massachusetts Environmental Police. Thanks for your vigilance!

### Amazing Feat! Plover Pair Nests on State Park Beach and Fords Channel with Chicks!

On June 22nd, alert Piping Plover volunteer monitor Bobbi Martino discovered two small chicks on the beach in front of Ellisville Marsh. She knew that no nest had hatched on this side (predators, and possibly dogs had done in the nests found on "our" side of the channel). Finding it very unlikely that a nest had snuck by the watchful eyes of the plover monitors who check the beach daily for nesting activity, Bobbi and other monitors checked with Mass Audubon's Coastal Waterbird Program staff, who coordinate with the volunteer monitors and patrol the State Park side of the channel. Sure enough, CWP monitor Evan Durant did have some "missing" chicks that matched the description (age, number). They were most likely a brood that hatched on the State Park side as a second nest attempt of a pair that had originally nested on the Shifting Lots side. Their parents wisely decided to bring them back "home" across the channel. If you've never seen a cotton ball with legs attempt to swim, as you might imagine, it's quite a feat!



**Bathing, not exactly swimming:  
Little Rosemary, a well-loved  
chick of 2013.**

Photo courtesy of Diane Fletcher

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## Invest in Preserving the Ellisville Marsh Watershed

by Paula Marcoux

The Community Preservation Committee of Plymouth has reached out to the Friends of Ellisville Marsh to let us know that a tentative purchase agreement has been reached with the owners of a strategic and relevant 38-acre parcel adjacent to Savery Pond. This land consists of a mixed pitch



pine and oak forest that protects the subsurface water resources entering the Ellisville watershed from the west.

Last year the town purchased more than 300 acres adjoining this property to the south and west; preserving this additional parcel would create a large and lasting buffer protecting the quality of the fresh water entering Ellisville Marsh.

This purchase is contingent on a vote of approval from Town Meeting, and that "yea" vote depends on a show of interest and support from **our** Ellisville community. Bill Keohan, the Chair of Plymouth's CPC, stresses that public/private partnerships have proven to be powerful tools in such situations. For example, a few years back when Plymouth's heralded Eel River Watershed Restoration Project was getting off the ground, the CPC solicited a show of support — in the form of funding — from the neighboring community. The success of that effort elicited significant third-party grants, as well as town meeting approval for the purchases needed. And today that project is seen as a model for those who would like to see our small waterways restored to their natural form, capable of once again supporting breeding fish populations.

The present goal in Ellisville is far more modest, and **you** can make a huge difference. Join in partnering with the CPC to provide for the long-term protection of the Ellisville Marsh watershed. For further information, contact Bill Keohan, Community Preservation Committee Chair

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### Can You ID This Plant?



Spring is a beautiful time on a barrier beach and Ellisville is no exception. This year has been particularly colorful. Here's a fine specimen - do you know what it is? If not, check out our on-line inventory of plant life compiled by Irina Kadis.

Click on plant sampler at: <http://tinyurl.com/plantIDIrina>

### To Contact the Board or Share Your Ideas:

Please email us at [Board@EllisvilleMarsh.org](mailto:Board@EllisvilleMarsh.org) . We welcome your ideas and inputs.

**And thanks for your continuing support!**