



Annual Highlights

Maintaining the marsh for future generations



The highly successful *Welcome Spring!* Bird Walk, May 2024.
Photo courtesy of Ken Grille Photography (c) 2024.

Annual Meeting Saturday, July 13 at 11:00 am

The Friends' 2024 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 13 from 11 am to noon at the Southeastern MA Pine Barrens Alliance's Community Conservation Center, which is located at 158 Center Hill Road, Plymouth. Join us for reflections on the past, eventful year and a look forward to the year ahead. Your inputs, ideas, and feedback will again be welcomed. Coffee and donuts will be provided. Bring a picnic lunch if you want to fully enjoy this scenic coastal location after the meeting. We hope to see you there!

State of the Organization

It was another solid year for the Friends of Ellisville Marsh. We gained a significant number of new members, spending was tightly controlled, and our financial condition remained healthy. We strengthened our working relationships with the Town of Plymouth, Wildlands Trust, Manomet, and Mass Audubon. News about Ellisville Marsh was shared through our revitalized social media presence and resonated with a broad audience through connections of interest. Most importantly, our volunteers and donors continue to provide enthusiastic support.

A Record-setting Season for Nesting Plovers

Last summer (2023) was a great season for Piping Plover nesting on Ellisville Beach within the Wildlands Trust's Shifting Lots Preserve. Five pairs of plovers nested here, producing a large cohort of chicks, twelve of which survived long enough to fledge. This beat our previous record of eight fledglings (2021) and is a remarkable result for a nesting area only about an acre in size. We believe this is one of the highest density nesting areas in the Commonwealth, out of more than 120 sites. The 2024 nesting season has gotten off to a promising start with multiple plover nests and a Least Tern colony in the making.



Female Piping Plover and Chicks. Photo courtesy of Geoff Kronik, (c) 2023.

Inlet Maintenance and Permitting Update

The Ellisville Marsh inlet remained open and in its desired location through the winter of 2023–24, largely because New England was bypassed by major winter nor'easters. Because of this, the Friends' board was able to defer inlet maintenance. The fact that the inlet and channel remain straight assures efficient tidal exchanges between the salt marsh and Cape Cod Bay, supporting a healthy ecosystem in the marsh.

Nevertheless, the Friends' Massachusetts General Permit, issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers for dredge discharge in federal waters, has now expired. The town's project to obtain all new local, state, and federal permits for continuing maintenance of the Ellisville marsh inlet is well underway and we expect to begin submitting notices of intent and permit applications to regulatory agencies later this month. The project is funded by an \$89,000 grant from the Commonwealth with the town of Plymouth acting as project leader. We are working closely with the town and its consultant on this project.

Annette Leckie to Join Friends' Board

Annette Leckie is no newcomer to the Friends of Ellisville Marsh. She and her husband Rob have been enthusiastic Friends' members since 2010. According to Annette, "Not only do we love walking the beach, but we also swim, snorkel, and scuba dive just offshore." Annette has been an integral part of the Friends' Threatened Shorebird Monitoring Team for the past two seasons, after she completed Mass Audubon's training session. We look forward to Annette joining the board in July! The other members of the 2024-25 board are: Eric Cody, Linda Frascarella, Adela Hruby, Diane Jordan, Paula Marcoux, Susan Pleadwell, Ellen Russell, and Jack Scambos.

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