



Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Field Notes Summer 2010

Welcome



Welcome to the spring edition of Field Notes, a newsletter just for our Great Bay Community Land Stewards. Spring certainly came upon us quickly this year. I heard my first peeper on March 15th! To me, spring is a reawakening of the senses. I love the smell in the air, the warmth on my face, the sight of the first great blue heron at the pond and the sounds of the red-winged blackbirds calling. Each year I am always surprised at how loud spring is after the long winter!

CLS News

Although we, with your help, manage the properties of the Reserve on the local level, we are still part of a bigger National Reserve System and have obligations to meet on that scale. An example of this is the Habitat Mapping and Change project that will take place this summer.

To address goals identified in a system-wide

monitoring program, NERRS has developed a comprehensive way to classify wetland, aquatic,

upland and frozen habitats, as well as all cultural land covers in coastal areas in the United States. This will allow the Reserves to map and inventory land covers in a compatible manner and therefore be able to make standardized assessments and change analyses at the local, regional and national level.

To complete this project, as well as continue to work on others such as the Invasive species project and posting boundaries on the many properties of the Reserve, our GPS system will get quite a workout this season. A lot of this work will be done by volunteers, so if you'd like to lend a hand with these projects, more help is always welcome and appreciated!



Are invasives always bad?

We are planning some Invasive Plant pulling work days for August. I'm sure most of you are aware of the dangers of invasive species and could even name a few you are familiar with such as [Purple loosestrife](#) and [Japanese knotweed](#). We've also asked you to be on the lookout for invasive insects such as the [Hemlock Woolly Adelgid](#) and [Asian Longhorn Beetle](#) when you're out making your visits. Unfortunately, we are all too familiar with the impacts these invaders have had on our native habitats. But are all non-native species bad? Are they all invasive and doing harm by being here? [Click here](#) to read an article that poses that very question about the [Asian Shore Crab](#).

Great Bay News

Time to hit the trail!

Four miles long from Longmarsh Road in Durham to the Great Bay Estuary in Newmarket, the Sweet Trail twists and turns through lands protected, owned and managed by the town of Durham, GBNERR, TNC, NHFG, SPNHF, and private landowners. Hikers will be treated to an array of upland forests,

freshwater wetlands and tidal saltmarsh. Each season will bring its own sights, sounds and smells to enjoy. From the crunch of snow underfoot, to the trilling of toads, to the plop of a painted turtle sliding off a log into the water. This trail was officially opened to the public on April 24th with an Earth Day celebration event that included all of the organizations that are a part of the Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership, representatives from the towns of Durham and Newmarket, as well as many of the volunteers who so generously gave their time to help build the trail. You can read the **Map & Guide** to learn more about this trail and plan a visit.

Great Bay NERR Grows



Again

On March 1, 2010 we permanently protected another property along Back Road in the city of Dover. The Philbrick property includes 1,880 feet of frontage on the tidal portion of the Cocheco River at the mouth of Fresh Creek. This parcel is strategically located just down river from an 85 acre lot with 3,900 feet of property previously conserved by the Partnership. These parcels connect to yet another 81 acres of parkland. Across the river is the Partnership's recently closed 11-acre Wood parcel. The Philbrick property will be open to public pedestrian use and hunting.

The river frontage along this tract includes a New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau designated "exemplary low brackish tidal riverbank marsh natural community". The Philbrick property was shown as a priority in the "Ecological Inventory of the Cocheco River Watershed and Follet's Brook Watershed" (December, 2004). This report documented that 66 bird species use this section of river and just down from this site is the only known bald eagle nesting site in the Great Bay region. The large trees along the property's shoreline are likely to provide good perching sites for the eagles. With a likely transfer date in the fall of 2010, this property will be managed by the Reserve. The work to conserve properties is ongoing, in addition to Philbrick, GBNER has recently closed on four other properties.

Professional Development

Spotted any salamanders lately?

The data is in from last year's **Reptile and Amphibian Reporting Program (RAARP)**. Fish and Game has found this to be a very useful tool for gathering information in NH. The information provided helps biologists determine the distribution of species in the state and assess conservation actions. Species of priority to be documented this year include, among others, Blue-spotted salamanders, Fowler's toads, Northern leopard frogs, Eastern box turtles and Black racer snakes.



So as you head out to visit your properties this summer listen for gray tree frogs as they begin to call and keep your eye out for snakes and turtles basking in the sun. Turtle nesting season extends through early July. Be sure to bring your camera as reports with specific locations and photographs are the most helpful.

Watch the night skies for bats



Did you know that one bat can eat 50% to 75% of its body weight in flying insects in one night during the summer months? And that there may be fewer of them to see and a lot more mosquitos? Unfortunately our bat population is facing a crisis known as **White Nose Syndrome** and 5 out of the 8 species we have in NH are affected by it. Last summer many people reported seeing dead and dying little and brown bats at their summer roosts in attics, barns and other outbuildings in the Northeast. If you, or anyone you know, sees multiple dead or dying bats in your area please report them online through the NHFG website at www.wildNH.com or send them information at wildlife@wildlife.nh.gov or 271-2461.

You can visit the **Fish & Game website** to learn more about other volunteer opportunities that you can use while visiting your property this summer.



The lazy days of summer

Enjoy them while they last because they seem to slip by so quickly. Enjoy the smell of the rain after a thunderstorm, the feeling of bare feet in the grass or your toes in the icy ocean water, or the sight of the last rays of the sun streaking across the skyline. Hope you all have a wonderful, fun filled summer.