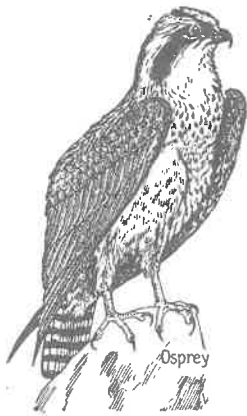


Bourne Conservation Trust

NEWSLETTER Number 22

Late Fall 1994



FISH HAWKS, NOT SEA EAGLES

(Spelled with and E not an A)

Osprey. The sea-eagle, of which it is reported, that when he hovers in the air, all the fish in the water turn up their bellies, and lie still for him to seize which he pleases -- Johnson's Dictionary, 1755

A muted splash momentarily fractures the serenity of a windless summer dawn on Red Brook Pond when, plunging from one of a half-dozen lookout trees, an osprey-- six-foot wings furled, talons cocked-- shatters the Pond's glassy surface and emerges with his breakfast. From as high as 150 feet his keen eyes easily distinguish a small floating stick from a six-inch basking perch, but his splash-and-grab style of fishing takes practice, lots of it. An immature and inexperienced osprey often misses. He hits the water too hard or at too steep an angle, submerges, reappears dripping and fishless, then struggles to become airborne and try again. Only after a series of fishless dives and thorough soakings does he retreat to a favorite perch high in an oak where he balances with wings half-spread, half-adroop to drip dry.

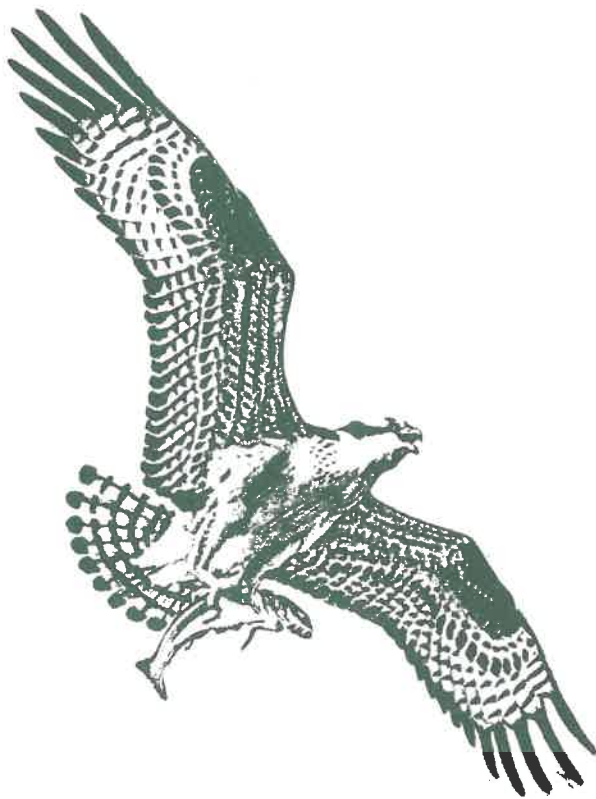
A lone osprey who repeatedly plummets into the water is probably a mature male after a meal for himself, his mate or his chicks. Two ospreys circling and swooping in concert above the Pond are likely to be a young couple casing it. Before starting a family, they spend at least one summer-- sometimes several-- assaying a locale's fitness for family rearing. In the process of becoming better acquainted, they bathe, splash about, swoop, soar and plummet. Often they appear to be showing off for one another, playing follow the leader, circling over the Pond when abruptly one may reverse into a mirror-image circle and meet the other head-on. Or they may fly in tangential, horizontal circles-- one clockwise, the other counterclockwise-- each tracing half of a five-acre figure-of-eight. Occasionally they even drop awkwardly toward the water like kids hatching funny dives at the old swimming hole.

Because of their superb eyesight, fishing ospreys normally circle and hover high above the Pond, but a mature male-- seemingly in hungry frustration-- will sometimes skim the Pond's surface with talons dragging in the water, ready to snatch anything in his path.

The Pond's resident swans and mallards are sure that the osprey's only quarry is fish, but when not-quite-so-sure redwinged blackbirds are nesting, the Pond's northeast quadrant is off limits, and an intruding osprey is harried on his way by swooping and darting sentries.

An osprey with a just-caught fish in his talons may retreat to a familiar tree to devour it. His great size, however, does not guarantee him an undisturbed meal, particularly if there are nestlings nearby, nestlings whose parents, despite their smallness, dive at him each time he lowers his head to tear off a morsel. Hungry crows, on the other hand, are not interested in driving off a feeding osprey. They are interested in his catch. They join him on a branch, approach him slowly and cautiously, but when they get too close, the osprey shrugs his formidable shoulders and the crows back off-- just a bit and not for long. They repeatedly edge up on him, are shrugged off again and again until the osprey's attention flags, then they deftly snatch something.

During this past summer the ospreys ignored the nesting platform built especially for them but kingfishers found it a convenient conning tower, and soggy cormorants stopped by to dry off in the intense August sun. Even in late summer the ospreys seemed indifferent to the platform, ignoring it until



one dazzling September morning. On the platform four cormorants were sleepily drying their water-soaked wings when an osprey, wings fully extended, launched himself from a lofty oak limb-- not downward to snatch a lazing pickerel, not upward to command a better view, but right at the cormorant quartet. Shrilling his warning whistle, he levelled off at about six feet and sailed straight for the occupied platform. A moment later there was an explosion of departing cormorants and the platform stood vacant. The message was clear. The cormorants have not returned.

Ospreys fly south for the winter months, some crossing more than sixty parallels of latitude to fish in Peru. On their return to Red Brook Pond in the spring, the nesting platform will still be available.

A Couple of Q's and a Couple of A's

Q. When I donate to or buy something at the semi-annual auction, why doesn't the BCT Newsletter list me as a donor?

A. The auction held at Parker's Boat Yard is not a BCT fund-raising event. It is sponsored by the Cataumet Beautification Committee (a sub-committee of the Cataumet Civic Associates) which for the past three auctions has voted to donate a substantial portion of the proceeds to the BCT; thus, your donations and purchases are counted as indirect (and greatly appreciated) donations to the BCT.

Q. Why does it sometimes take quite a while for my gift to the BCT to be acknowledged and for my check to be cashed?

A. Each donation goes through four or five steps:

1. The computer is updated (date of donation, address of donor)
2. The amount and date of the donation are recorded and the donor's address checked and updated on a 3x5 index card
3. If applicable, notification of a memorial donation is sent (this is always done within 48 hours)
4. An acknowledgement card is filled out, an envelope addressed and mailed
5. The check is deposited

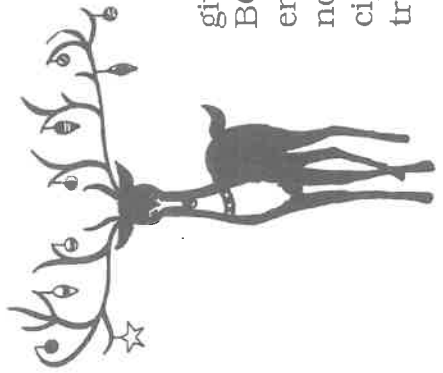
All of this is done by volunteers with jobs and/or families. We try to process donations in batches because it is more efficient and we try to do it in a timely fashion, but sometimes we fall behind. Your patience and understanding (as well as your gifts) are heartily appreciated.



SOME FUNDING NEEDED!

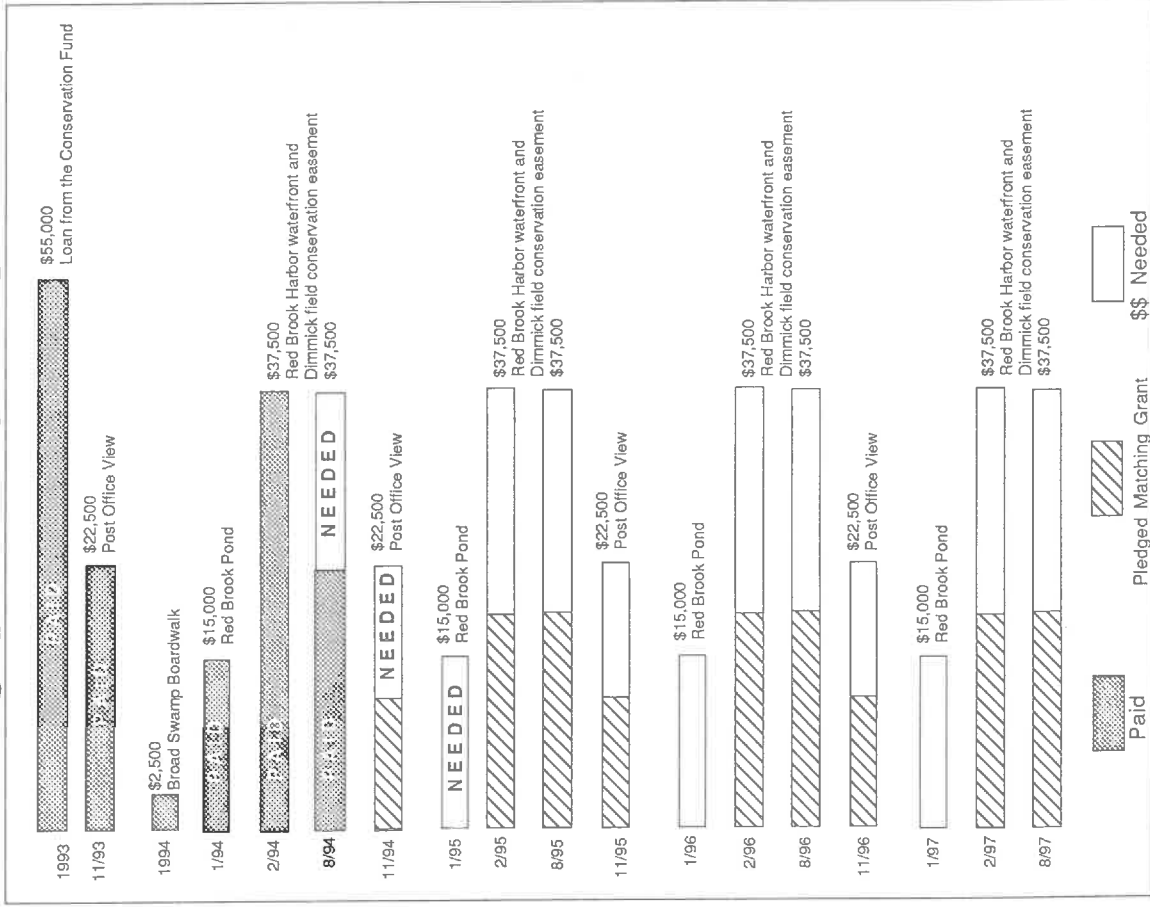
The following graph illustrates both our progress and problems in meeting our financial goals. Since the last newsletter (Spring 1994) we have paid \$33,500 toward debt and/or land purchase. Our current most urgent need is the past due increment (8/94) on the Red Brook Harbor waterfront and Dimmick field conservation easement. **By the end of January we will need \$55,000; of this \$11,250 has been pledged as a matching grant-- an opportunity to double your contribution's clout.**

The graph's symbols, of course, represent more than money. They will expand into acres of open land, vistas of trees, sea, ponds and marsh: all of those elements that form the kind of Cape that we are dedicated to preserve. The symbols show the means by which we can insure-- as one of our correspondents stated so well--"a continuity of the serenity and beauty of the community for future generations."



Remember, you can give contributions to the BCT as Christmas presents. BCT will send notifications to the recipient. It's a gift that truly lasts!

Review the graph. Won't you help to . . .



. . . fill in the blanks?

And the Band (did not) Play On!

Our first Annual Dinner-Dance Fund Raiser was an invisible success: nobody came! We fulfilled Oscar Wilde's definition of a party as "something a hostess wishes she had not given."

Of the 570 invitations sent, 176 responded (including two who did not receive invitations), representing 318 people who enjoyed a quiet evening at home. However, despite a 100% absentee rate, participants were well represented by their donations. We raised \$14,685.17; postage and printing costs were \$985.00.

For those of you who did not receive invitations, we apologize. Unsure of their reception, we decided to keep printing costs under \$1000. It is however, never too late not to attend, so here is *your* invite. Enjoy! Let's party!

*The Bourne Conservation Trust
cordially invites you
to enjoy a quiet evening at home
by not inviting you to the
First Annual Dinner-Dance Fund-Raiser.*

There will be no entertainment.

No tedious speeches.

No feelings of guilt if you don't attend.

No need to find 'something to wear.'

No rush to the beach for 'that glow.'

No designated drivers.

There will be no valet parking,

No open bar, no music,

& no food whatsoever.

Please don't come.

Dress optional

Tax deductible

M. _____

will not attend.

Number _____ of guests not attending.

_____ \$100 a plate not for dinner

_____ \$50 per person not for drinks

_____ \$25 not for the babysitter



Our stealth-approach generated the following comments-- as well as donations:

- ... loved the innovative and clever solicitation!*
- ... sorry we're late in responding-- we had a lovely time.*
- ... need a couple (babysitters) for me, myself, and I, as we are always in a lot of trouble.*
- .. I'll have the wind pudding and air sauce.*
- .. the easiest invitation we never received.*
- .. may I not bring a friend?*
- .. (babysitter for) two 86-year-olds.*
- .. dinner is totally cholesterol-free?*
- ... thank you for giving us the pleasure of not attending.*
- .. your decision to skip the fancy dinner is most admirable but the cutesy invitation was a little much for my taste (donation included).*
- .. !Bravo!*
- ... best party of the year. Put on most comfortable jeans, take off shoes, sit back and think about BCT's great achievements.*
- ... fun to receive and right on target for today's economy.*

Special Donations

In honor of
Steve & Sally Ballentine
from
Joan Mayhew

Happy 1st Anniversary
to
Bethany & Maurice
from
The Jason Family

Happy Birthday Kay Laurie
from
Debbie Laurie

In memory of
"the fireplaced cottage"
from
George & Julia Eckstrom



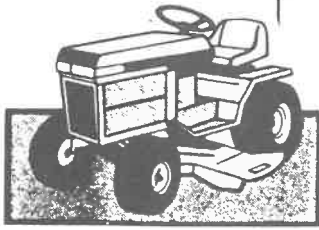
First Annual Dinner-Dance Fund-Raiser Non-Attendees

(not in alphabetical order)

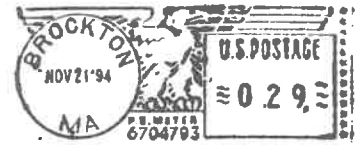
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"I'd love to know what kind of machine did the trail makeover." (It was a small Mitsubishi tractor.)



"We love your trails. We ride mountain bikes over the Red Brook Pond Area". (As the Rev. Spooner said, "There's nothing so fine as riding a well-boiled icicle")

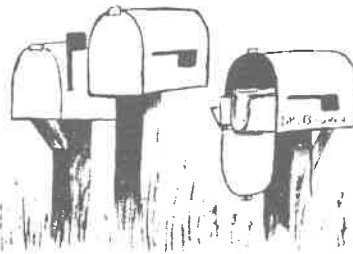
"Delighted. Perfect. Well-done appeal!

"We enjoyed your recent newsletter."

In the Mail



"Thanks again for all you do."



"BCT-excellent idea. Newsletter-interesting & informative."

"Good luck in reaching your goal"

"Thanks to the BCT portions of County Road would still be recognizable for my grandparents! That's 70+ years!" (We have slowed down the ever-whirling wheel of change but it's a continuing effort.)

"The BCT sets the standard for community conservation. By the way, if I had known my last letter would be quoted, I would have been more profound." (Profundity, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. We have assessed your letter & declare it . . . "pro-fund".)



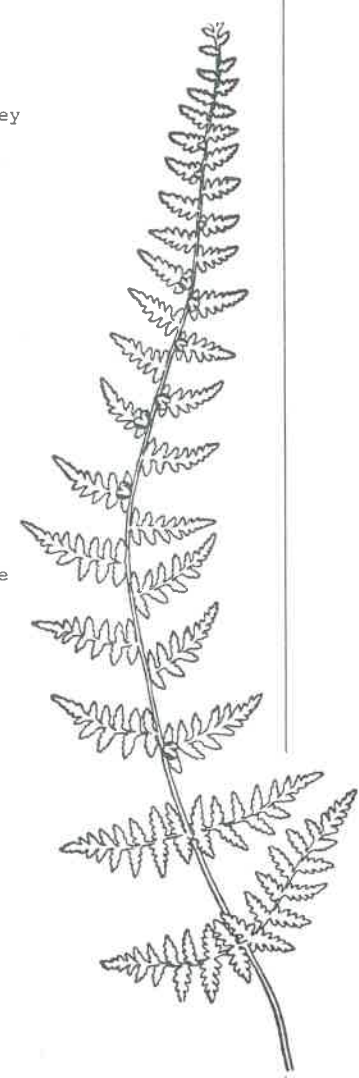
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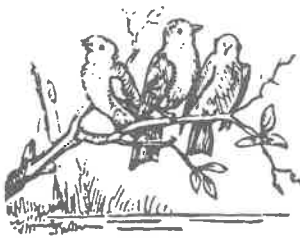
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Tempus Fugit

Perhaps you can't recall when you made your last donation to the BCT? Check the mailing label on the envelope of this newsletter. The number in the upper right corner represents the date of your last donation--first the year, then the month. For Example, "8906" means June 1989. A "g" following the number (8906g) means that a donation was made in your honor in June of 1989. No number? We hope you will send us a donation soon.

\$\$ Help Us Save Postage Charges \$\$

If you receive more than one Newsletter or have a new mailing address, please let us know.



The BCT is tax exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Within IRS guidelines contributions may be deductible from your taxable income. (ID Number: 04 2767827).

Otis Landfill Plume Update

Two years ago, 16 Cataumet residents met to assess the threat to Cataumet and North Falmouth posed by the Otis Landfill Plume. (A plume is a moving, expanding mass of fluid, in this case, underground water.) As the LF-1 Committee, they found that containment of the Otis plume is possible, as has been demonstrated in both this country and in Canada. Otis cleanup program manager, Mike Minior, projects that the containment process will get underway in July of 1996, and the Department of Defense has ordered financial support of \$250 million over a 20-year period. Most experts agree that there is a 60 percent chance that the plume can be stopped short of the eastern border of Cataumet.

The mile-wide plume, now at Route 28, carries low concentrations of TCE and PCE. It stretches from Scraggy Neck Road, Cataumet, to Perry Road, North Falmouth and at its present rate of movement could reach Route 28A in March of 1996 and Red Brook Harbor and Megansett Harbor by the end of 1997.

Because Bourne Water District wells 2 and 5 are directly in the plume's path, replacement sites are being sought in the northern part of Otis. A threat to the 130 private drinking wells on Scraggy Neck also exists.

More immediate threats are of an economic and social nature. (For more specifics, Contact the LF-1 Committee, P.O.Box 401, Cataumet, MA 02536 or committee members George Seaver, John Noonan, Peter Fisher, or George Schuck.)

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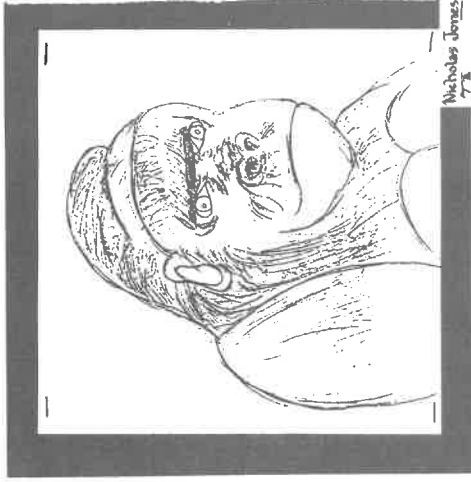
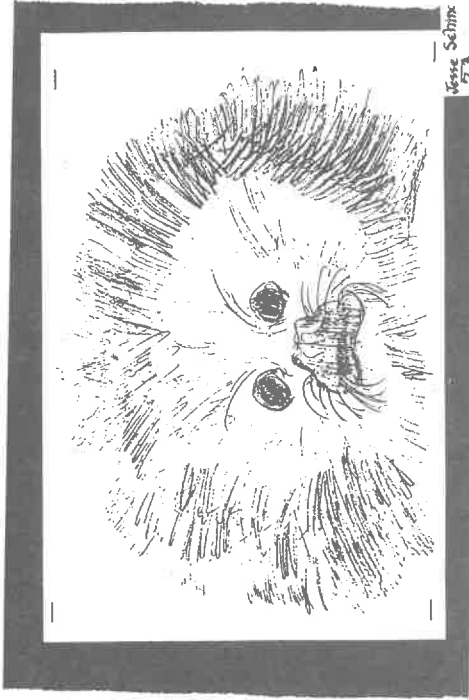
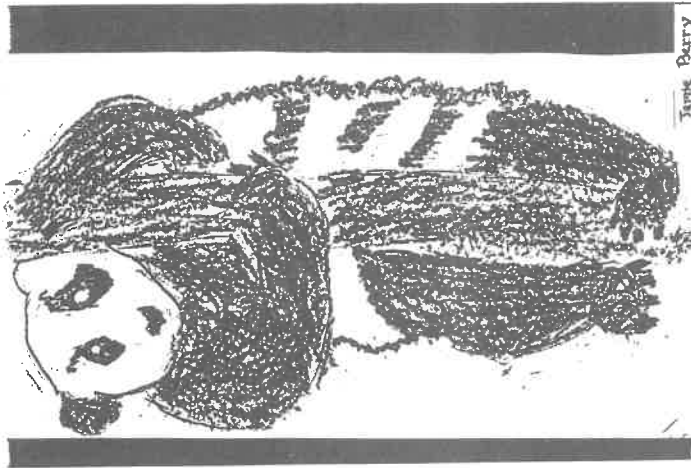
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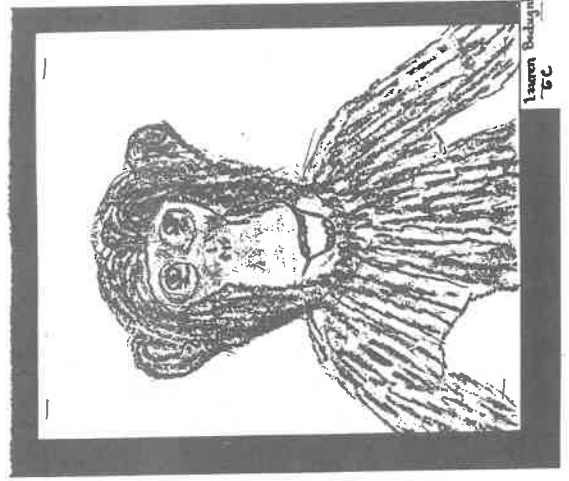
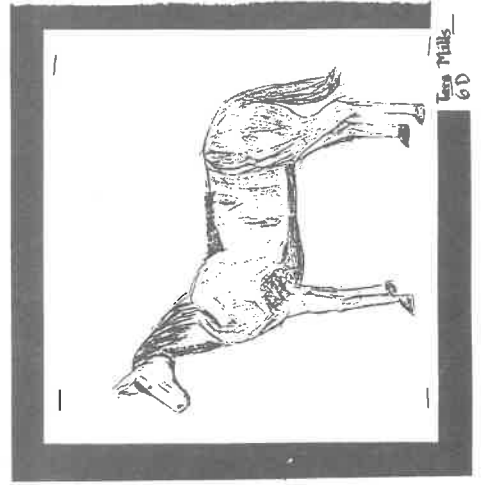
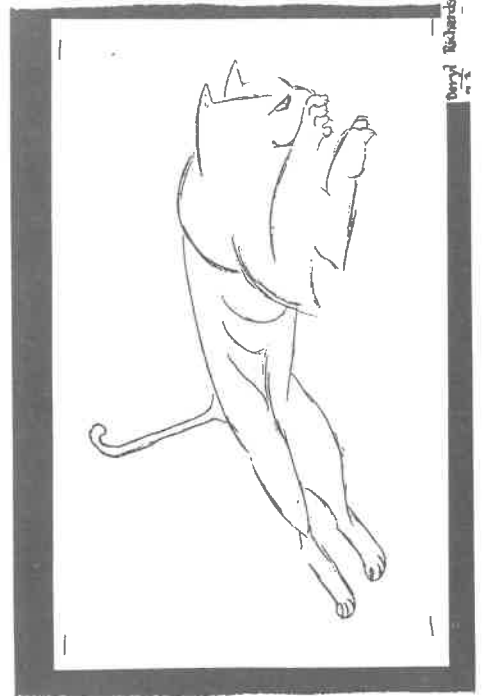
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The Stephen Ballentines



Kahlin's Korner is dedicated to the memory of Kahlin Jespersen, a child full of sunshine and a love of nature, and also to all children for whom we preserve a part of the natural world.



Kahlin would have loved these pictures by students at Stone School.



BCT Mini-Doc



A new Bourne Conservation Trust film includes shots of BCT properties-- Lawrence Island, several wooded areas, marshes and fields, and Red Brook Pond-- and glimpses of local bird, animal and plant life. Copies of the locally-produced 10-minute VHS cassette are on sale for \$18.00 and can be ordered by calling (508-563-5196) or writing (Box 203, Cataumet, MA 02534) the BCT. Proceeds will be used to help pay off mortgages on some of the pictured BCT locales.

*Bourne Conservation Trust
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