



BOURNE
CONSERVATION
TRUST

Wild Turkeys
(See page 2)

FALL/WINTER 2020

Number 54

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WILD (AND NOT SO WILD) TURKEYS

Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his farm yard with a red coat on.

—Benjamin Franklin

It was not long ago that drivers pulled to the side of the road and stopped at the sight of a Wild Turkey in a distant roadside field. The birds nearly became extinct in New England, a by-product of deforestation, farming and over-hunting in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their return to the countryside was truly inspirational.

Turkeys were first domesticated by the Aztecs and later by Native Americans. Fossils of the birds going back more than five million years have been unearthed in the Southern United States and Mexico. The revival of these prehistoric creatures was greeted with great enthusiasm and celebrated as a triumph for wildlife officials who labored for decades to reintroduce the birds from upper New York State. Currently

numbering more than 25,000 in Massachusetts, they now are the official State game bird.

Turkeys became popular food at the colonial table due to the birds' diet that includes wild nuts and berries. Not surprisingly, they soon became extremely popular with Europeans who delighted in their succulently superior taste, as compared with the much-too-chewy stork, crane and bustard.

Today, these "birds of courage" are a common sight along the roads of BCT properties, once again stopping traffic, but now in "crosswalks" of their own choosing. They have become neighborhood residents, occupying dooryards, patios, decks, and vegetable gardens. On occasion, they have even taken over entire roofs of local homes, which perhaps

is the reason large groups of turkeys are not known as flocks, but as "rafters." They roost in treetops, often in the same one each evening, where they can be boisterous until sundown.

So, let's "talk turkey" about tur-



A "Tom" tries to attract attention near DeNormandie Woods.

keys, an idiom that connotes getting down to hard facts. These birds are indeed worthy of the respect Ben Franklin gave them; although they spend most of their time on the ground, they can explode into short bursts of flight that have been clocked at more than fifty miles per hour. Their wide-angle vision is so acute that, when coupled with unusually extreme neck rotation, they can detect the slightest movement in a 360-degree arc. This characteristic comes with an additional ability to see in ultra-violet light, useful in spotting predators as well as prey.

They are not shy birds as anyone knows who has challenged a "Tom" or a hen when they are with their poults. At an imposing height, often of more than three feet, both can be fiercely protective of their offspring and a male's head color can go from blue to bright red when stressed, an early warning of possible trouble ahead. Although our Wild Turkeys will never be domesticated, they are not as wild as they used to



Audubon's rendering of a turkey hen and poults.

be, except when exhibiting some understandable parental behavior. Also, at times, Turkeys have been known to chase humans, and several were video-recorded as they confronted a cat with no obvious means of escape other than a Cheshire-style exit. With conspicu-

ously limited elaboration, an area town official advised worried citizens never to turn their backs on the birds and, "Step toward the bird and act confidently."

As the season turns to giving thanks, we all can appreciate John Audubon's words: "The great size

and beauty of the Wild Turkey, its value as a delicate and highly praised article of food...render it one of the most interesting of the birds indigenous to the United States of America." Present-day descendants of dinosaurs have returned to New England to walk among us!

BCT EVENTS

Easter Egg Hunt

The annual Easter Egg Hunt, a favorite children's event every year, was cancelled due to Covid-19

*Cross Your Fingers and
Save the Date!*

Saturday, March 27

10:30 am, for the

2021 Easter Egg Hunt

at Spring Hill Farm

1079 County Road Cataumet
Covid-19 permitting.

restrictions. This event is sponsored by the Cataumet Civic Associates, and hosted by the BCT at Spring Hill Farm. Instead of the hunt, the CCA and BCT emailed to members a children's coloring and activity book filled with bunny images, pictures of children searching for Easter eggs, and even a "virtual hunt". The Friday before Easter, the CCA Easter Bunny also delivered bags filled with treats and small toys to children living at our local shelter: The Village at Cataumet.

BCT Christmas Tree Sale

This December the annual cut-your-own Christmas tree sale sponsored by the Dimmick family will not be held. This is due to Covid-19 restrictions and concern for our family and friends. It also gives the trees extra time for added growth. We hope to sponsor this event again in 2021.

Looking ahead, the Dimmick family planted a couple dozen baby Christmas trees this past spring, which should be available for sale in 2027. It will be fun for all to watch these trees "grow-up" over the next few years. Every year that there has been a tree sale, all the proceeds have been donated to the BCT. Thank you Dimmick family!



Dave Dimmick, with a seedling.



The planted Christmas tree patch.

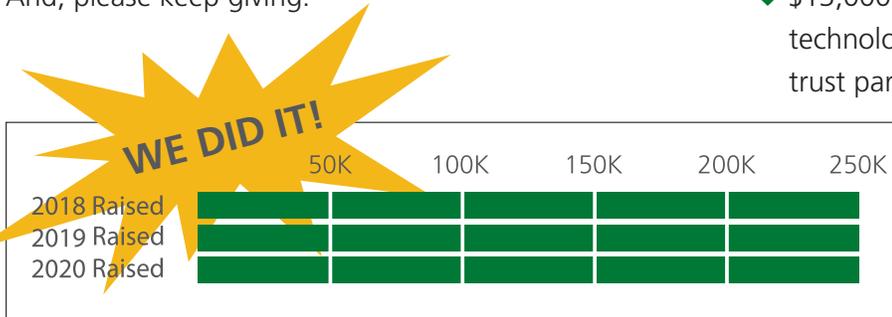


Tod Dimmick, planting.

BCT FINANCIAL UPDATE

A Great Success!!! The Matching Challenge for the Endowment Has Been Met

Congratulations to all our donors. And thank you for all your donations! Our goal is, of course, to keep this fund growing to a level that will support the BCT in the future. Enjoy the land you have helped to preserve. And, please keep giving.



And On to Another Project

The BCT has an agreement to purchase 10 acres of woodland and marsh in Gray Gables, stretching from Monument Neck Road to Mashnee Road, protecting a scenic wildlife corridor. With a purchase price of \$400,000, your help and support for this project will be critical. More information will be forthcoming.



Property Update

The final payment on the loan for 27 Ocean Avenue in Cataumet has been made. This critical half acre of land is now protected from development.

Yearly Expenses

This year, expenses to “run” the BCT totaled \$74,500:

- ◆ \$37,000 for maintenance of properties & buildings
- ◆ \$14,500 for the Newsletter and Donor Book mailings
- ◆ \$10,000 for Insurance
- ◆ \$13,000 for other services, such as legal, accounting, technology, office, plus contributions to our land trust partners.

Support for Other Land Trusts

The BCT sends contributions to other local organizations that support our mission of protecting land from development and preserving wildlife

habitats, including:

- ◆ Association to Preserve Cape Cod
- ◆ Buzzards Bay Coalition
- ◆ Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts, Inc.
- ◆ Land Trust Alliance
- ◆ Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition (MassLand)
- ◆ Orenda Wildlife Trust

A Snapshot of Our Accomplishments

- ◆ Estimated property value of BCT land: \$14 million
- ◆ Total acreage: 300 acres give or take a little
- ◆ Number of parcels: 70
- ◆ Five-year average donor revenue: \$360,000
- ◆ Endowment Fund: \$2,500,000

Bequests

This year the BCT received a generous bequest from the estate of Peter Colgan. Peter lived on Scraggy Neck, then moved to Boston but often returned in the summer to Cataumet.

PLEASE NOTE: *In mid 2021, the BCT will send out a complete list of all of those who donated in 2020. As always, we send big thanks to all of you who gave your time and/or money to the BCT and are supporting our efforts to cover our expenses and reach our financial goals.*

GIVE TO THE BCT!

Your Ongoing Financial Support Is Key to Our Success

Donations large and small help maintain the BCT's 501(c)(3) status and grow our general fund. This fund enables the BCT to act quickly on new property purchases and the general maintenance of all our properties. It is also used to hire professional help when needed. These costs can be significant.

Donations of any dollar amount are important, because the number of donors demonstrates to foundations and large donors the degree of local support and helps us to retain our status as an IRS 501(c)(3) organization. This status allows your donation, within IRS guidelines, to be tax deductible. In other words, please contribute what you can, as often as you can.

Ways of Giving

- ◆ Cash, check, money order, wire transfer—all are quick and easy.
- ◆ Name the BCT in your will or as beneficiary of a life insurance policy.
- ◆ Donate appreciated securities.
- ◆ Contact your bank or financial institution to automatically send a monthly donation to the BCT from a checking or savings account.
- ◆ Give the gift of real estate or sell it to the BCT for less than its fair market value. The difference is considered a charitable gift.
- ◆ Offer a matching gift to support our efforts to purchase property. Our donors respond generously when they know gifts will be doubled.
- ◆ Consider a gift from your Traditional IRA. If done correctly, it can provide a tax break for you. Contact your financial or tax advisor for more information.

Contact the BCT office at 508-563-2884 or log on to www.bourneconservationtrust.org for more information or for answers to your questions.

It Works

The BCT's soft-sell approach to fundraising works because our woodlands, shore frontages, marshes and walking trails speak for themselves. And, because we are surrounded and supported by people who understand the value and importance of open space, who realize how important it is for the character of our town, and understand that it is everyone's responsibility to enjoy, protect, and maintain it.

Fall fungi along the BCT trails.



The Bourne Conservation Trust is tax exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Within IRS guidelines, contributions and gifts may be tax deductible from your taxable income. The Trust's tax identification number (TIN) is 04-2767827. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

OUT ON THE TRAILS

Report from the Trail Meisters

There has been a big lesson learned from this pandemic: the importance of open space. With the quarantining and social distancing rules, people have been flocking to places where they can safely get out of the house, into fresh air and nature. The BCT trails are the perfect escape and they have never been busier. So many people have come to our area from cities and busy suburbs, have stayed for months and months, and have happily walked along our trails and shores.

There is one group to thank for the maintenance and close to perfect condition of our trails: the BCT Trail Meisters: Dick Boyden, Ron Boucher, Jay Fisher, George Gillis, John Holden, Joe Hurley, Dick Murphy, Rick Rheinhardt, Paul Rossi, Carl Wirsén, and John Woodley. This team cuts up and clears fallen trees and branches, hauls off trash and debris, clips overgrowth, and repairs and installs benches and signs. (Let us also give thanks to Mother Nature, who has mostly treated us very kindly over the past several months.)

Many thanks to all Trail Meisters and all walkers who support their efforts by picking up trash, twigs

and branches, doing side trimming and reporting fallen branches or downed trees via email or telephone to the BCT headquarters.

John Holden, working at the Red Brook Pond Conservation Area.



Trail Turtles!

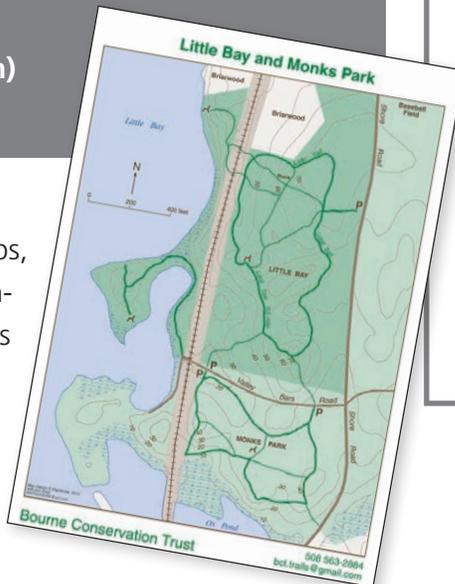
Keep your eye out: There have been sightings of many box turtles along the trails this year. When you walk, bring a camera and take pictures of any wildlife you spot. Then share them with the BCT and perhaps enter one or two into our 2020 Photography Contest (see Kahlin's Korner for contest rules).



Want to Be a BCT Trail Meister?
Email the BCT (bct.trails@gmail.com)
or call 508-563-2884.

New to Town or the Trails?

Why not review (and print) the BCT trail maps, available online at www.bourneconservation-trust.org. Copies are available at Ballentine's Boat Shop, Parker's Boat Yard, Kingman Marine, Bourne Public Library and Bourne Town Hall. Walk along as many trails as you can and email us highlights of your journeys. We love to hear from you.



Important Reminders

With the number of people and pets out on our trails it is more important than ever to:

- ◆ Make sure your dog is under control at all times, and not shaking or jumping on other walkers
- ◆ Keep your dog off private property
- ◆ Pick up the poop from the trails and most especially from the shores (dog feces is a huge pollutant of our harbors), and take it with you for proper disposal
- ◆ Park appropriately and do not back onto private property to turn around
- ◆ Be considerate of other walkers and respectful of BCT properties and private properties abutting our lands.

Please Note:

These reminders also apply when walking the roads, which are privately owned, around our local cranberry bogs.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Michele Mold

Bread baking, puzzles and gardening all took off during Covid-19, as people looked for activities to do while keeping isolated. Spring Hill Farm was a beneficiary. Michele Mold, a seasonal Bourne resident, approached the BCT in May, looking to volunteer in some capacity as a way to productively—and safely—pass some time outside. A retired team manager from a USB investment group, Michele is also an avid gardener, and jumped at the chance when gardening at the farm was mentioned as an option.

Throughout the season, she has



"I've enjoyed every moment of being at the farm..."

—Michele Mold

And her ideas go well beyond gardening. She would love to see the farm become host to outdoor events next summer, such as yoga classes, artistic performances and author presentations (she has already reached out to the Cape Cod Writers about that possibility).

Michele finished her autumn clean up with a bulb planting, and looks forward to continuing her work next spring when she returns from Florida. "I've enjoyed every moment of being at the farm—having the goats for company, talking with people who stop by, and have even made some wreaths



systematically gone through overgrown areas and pulled out messy undergrowth to allow existing shrubs and trees to grow unencumbered. She has wrangled bittersweet and other invasive vines and plants, and has drastically trimmed back the rhododendrons. Those next to County Road are now much less of a visual obstruction for traffic.

Michele has cleaned out old flower beds and replanted them, and has created new beds, contributing

the plants for all beds as a charitable donation to the BCT.

Michele's broader view is to replace invasive growth with native species that attract bees and butterflies, and maybe add an herb or vegetable garden near the existing grape vines and blackberry bushes.

using flora from the farm," she enthused. Anyone stopping by the farm to admire her handiwork will note that she has thoughtfully labeled all her plantings.

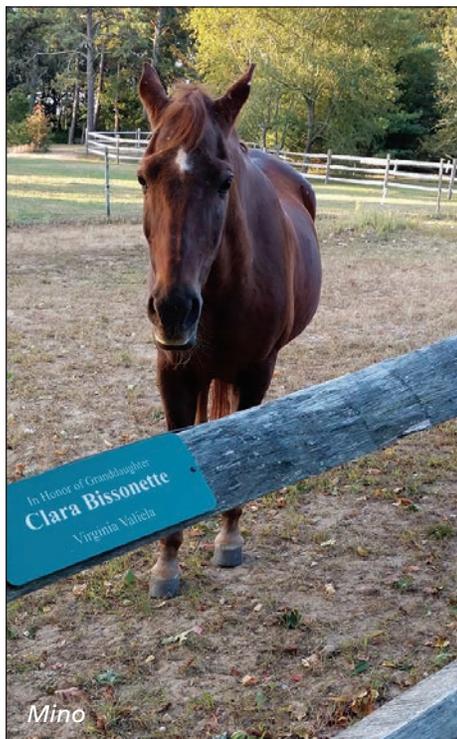
Thank you, Michele, for all your great work in a very unusual year!

Help Wanted: The Trust is always looking for help. You may volunteer at Spring Hill Farm, at the goat house, or join the Trail Meisters out on the trails. Please pitch in any way you can. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the BCT at 508-563-2884 or bct.trails@gmail.com.



SMILE: Shop on Amazon, Support the BCT

The BCT is a registered organization under Amazon SMILE. Once you join SMILE and choose a favorite charitable organization, hopefully the BCT, Amazon will contribute a portion of your purchase price of most all items to the BCT. Learn more at <https://smile.amazon.com>.



Report from Spring Hill Farm, a BCT Treasure

The Fence

The split rail fence at Spring Hill Farm is still expanding. And what a difference this fence has made in the farm's overall appearance. We have more sections to go and continue to need your help to finish

this project. A \$100 donation will buy a rail of fence, which can then be dedicated in memory of, or in honor or celebration of, a pet, family member, friend or whatever or whoever has special meaning for you. The plaque is included in the \$100 donation. To reserve your section, go to www.bourneconservation-trust.org. There is a link on the homepage to the donation form. Simply fill out the form, print it and mail it along with your check to the BCT, PO Box 203, Cataumet, MA 02534.

The Annual Fall Cleanup

Our thanks go to the many volunteers who raked and lugged (actually dragged) leaves and pine needles at last year's Spring Hill Farm cleanup day. And thanks to Linda and Paul Barlow-Palo for organizing the day and energizing the workers with hot cider and snacks. This year, the cleanup will be held on November 14, 9am to 1pm, at the farm, 1079 County Road, Cataumet. Please join us if you can, and bring a rake, gloves, tarp, and a friend or two.

The Goats

Buttercup, Ruff and Tuff, our resident Nigerian Dwarf goats, are happy

and playful in their home on the farm. They love visitors. Stop by anytime and say hello. They also love their helpers and would enjoy some new volunteers to help in their feeding and the care of the goat house.

Interested? Let the BCT know at bct.trails@gmail.com. Treats for the goats are not encouraged, but if you or your kids can't resist, please feed small amounts of raisins, pieces of fruit or vegetables, or an occasional cracker or cookie.

The Volunteers

Besides those who care for our goats, we want to thank each and every one of you who volunteered



your time at the farm this past year: raking and brush trimming in the fall, tending gardens and planting in the spring and summer, and cleaning the barn and farm house. Can't imagine where we would be without your help.

Kahlin's Korner

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.



We think Kahlin would agree there are amazing sights of wildflowers, wildlife, hikers of all ages, and often their canine or equine friends to be seen throughout the BCT properties. For this year's contest, as announced in the BCT Donors 2019 book, we invite anyone of any age to take pictures of these sights.

BCT PHOTO CONTEST *Through the lens*

HOW TO ENTER

Follow the three rules noted below for each submission.

Email to: bct.trails@gmail.com

Meet the deadline: Submit your photo no later than
December 31, 2020.

There are just three rules.

1. The photo(s) must be taken on BCT property, and might include either a BCT bench (there are 22 of them) or an image of people or pets enjoying their favorite BCT trail.

2. The photo must be submitted with: the name and contact information of the photographer, the location and date of the photo, and no reduction in size or editing.

3. The photographer must: Have fun!

First, second and third cash prizes will be awarded. Winners will be announced in the BCT Donors 2020 book to be sent out mid-2021. Winning pictures and other submissions may appear on the BCT web site and in future BCT publications.

Photo by Ken Berk, from the 2019 contest.



Introducing Matthew Stone— A New Member of the BCT Board of Trustees

Matt Stone is a CPA who started a practice outside of Boston that he and his partner managed for 35 years. The firm was sold last summer and Matt and his wife Robin then started a new chapter in their lives, home-based in Cataumet. Matt and Robin met over 40 years ago in Cataumet and have spent summers and weekends here ever since, in Robin's family home. Robin's roots are deep as her great grandfather George Robinson started the boat yard that is now Parkers, and her grandmother Eleanor was a student at the Cataumet School House. In addition to volunteering for the BCT over the years, Matt's firm was the accountant for the Trust for 15 years. He continues to be involved with Tufts Medical Center where he was a member of the Board for 20 years. Matt and Robin enjoy running, being out on the water and spending time with their children and grandchildren. You may see them on the streets in the morning or out in the Bay with the crew aboard Calico Jack.

STAY IN TOUCH

We urge our readers to visit the website: www.bourneconservationtrust.org, to learn more about our history, mission, properties, trails, events and the many ways you can support the BCT. You could also "like us" on Facebook.

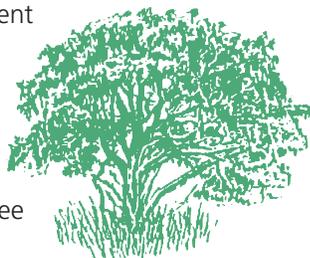
As you navigate through the website, look for pictures contributed by numerous gifted photographers, particularly pictures of local wildlife. Then, as you wander along our trails, enjoying the quiet, peaceful serenity and never-ending wonders of nature, take your own picture of any wildlife or wonder of nature you come across. You can enter the picture in our Photography Contest, or share it with us at bct.trails@gmail.com

Reminders:

- ◆ Enter our photography contest
- ◆ Send us your wildlife sightings, your stories, or other trail trivia.
- ◆ If you see wildlife in trouble, call the Cape Wildlife Center (508-362-0111) for help.
- ◆ Think about donating a section of fence for Spring Hill Farm.
- ◆ Support the Trail Meisters out on the trails.
- ◆ Join the volunteer crew at Spring Hill Farm; home of our goats.
- ◆ Support the BCT! We will recognize all donations in our annual Donors book next year.

Board of Directors

Stephen Ballentine, President
Grace Rowe, Treasurer
Robert Birch, Trustee
Dick Boyden, Trustee
Tom Corcoran, Trustee
Philip DeNormandie, Trustee
Mathew Stone, Trustee

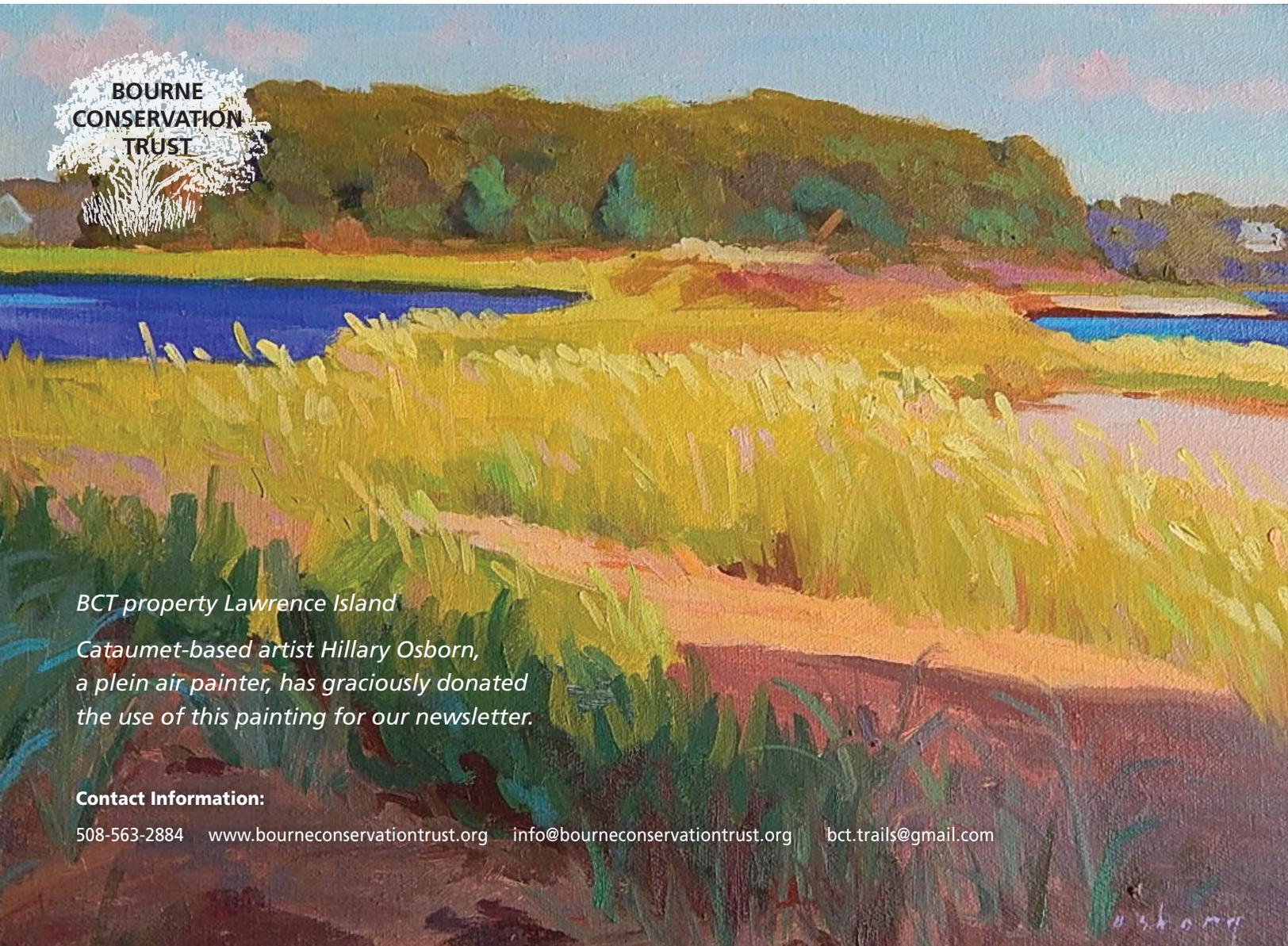


The BCT is a private nonprofit land trust with a primary objective of acquiring land and leaving it in its natural state to: protect habitats, provide groundwater recharge, preserve rural ambiance and make it available for recreational and educational purposes. The BCT owns and maintains approximately 300 acres of open space. Miles of walking trails thread their way through these protected woods and waterfront areas. The BCT is always looking for volunteers and donors to help achieve its mission and both maintain and enhance its properties. Learn more at www.bourneconservationtrust.org.

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**BOURNE
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BCT property Lawrence Island

*Cataumet-based artist Hillary Osborn,
a plein air painter, has graciously donated
the use of this painting for our newsletter.*

Contact Information:

508-563-2884 www.bourneconservationtrust.org info@bourneconservationtrust.org bct.trails@gmail.com