

Fall in New England...

We're having a beautiful October, with warm days and sunny skies. Did you know that the Salem Sound watershed has some truly scenic spots? We hope you can find time to enjoy some of our hidden treasures like these:

- Tuck's Point, a lovely seaside park off the beaten path in Manchester-by-the-Sea, or
- Castle Rock on Marblehead Neck with its rocky coast and spectacular views of the ocean.
- While you're on Marblehead Neck, another hidden treasure is the Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary. Its swamp, thickets, and woodlands are a haven for migratory birds.
- Brooksby Farm in Peabody is a 275 acre working farm and conservation area. Pick your own apples (or buy them fresh-picked in the farm store), hike the trails, or visit the petting zoo.
- And don't forget Salem Woods, the 160 acre jewel in the heart of Salem adjacent to the Forest River Estuary. Perfect for hiking and viewing fall colors.

Let us know your favorite spots in the area. Contact us at info@salmesound.org or call 978-741-7900.

Presentation on Climate Change - November 13. Save the Date!

SSCW is pleased to invite you to join us for our Annual Meeting on **Thursday, November 13**. John Hayes, Professor of Geography at Salem State College will be speaking on "Climate Change in New England."

The presentation and meeting will be held in the Phillips Library of the Peabody Essex Museum, which is located in Plummer Hall on Essex Street in Salem, next to the National Park Service Visitors Center and Armory Park.

The evening will start at 6:30 pm with refreshments; the official program will begin at 7 pm. In addition to our guest speaker, Barbara Warren will review SSCW's accomplishments over the past year.

The session is free and open to the public.

Counting Clams--SSCW at Work in the Mud

On two beautiful days in early October, at least 20 volunteers participated in a survey of clams found in the mudflats of Gloucester's Mill Pond. It was heavy and dirty work, lugging buckets of mud that had been dug from randomly chosen sites and then combing through them looking for clams, worms, and other signs of life.

Mill Pond was once a productive estuary where salt water washed in from the sea mixing with fresh water flowing from the Mill River. But many years ago a tidegate was closed, blocking influx of the salty seawater. Mill Pond became a fresh water pond; the invasive reed phragmites overtook the edges, and the mudflats disappeared.

Estuaries play an important role in the ecosystem. They are a nursery for many species and provide food and habitats for birds, fish and other wildlife. Now there is an effort underway to restore this estuary by opening and enlarging the tidegate which will allow seawater to come back in.

As Mill Pond once again becomes a healthy estuary, it is anticipated that the commercially important softshell clams will return, the phragmites will die back, and small fish that provide food for other species will thrive.

Salem Sound Coastwatch is helping to evaluate the success of this project by conducting baseline and post restoration clam surveys. The baseline survey is done, and we will be out in the mud again next autumn for the first restoration survey. (Let us know if you would like to help out next year.)



The clam survey is being funded by the MA Coastal Zone Management Wetlands Restoration Program, the Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, and the Bruce J. Anderson Foundation. Many thanks to the volunteers who braved the mud to help with the survey.

Cheers for COASTSWEEP Volunteers!

During September, 34 volunteers of all ages pitched in to clean up Dead Horse Beach at Salem Willows, Furlong Park along the North River in Salem, Coney Island in Salem Sound and the beach at Salem's Collins Cove. Together we picked up almost 700 pounds of trash.

The most common objects we found were cigarette butts, food wrappers/ containers and plastic bottles.

Plastic and cigarette butts can kill birds, fish and marine mammals. Plastic bottles, which take 450 years to decompose, break into small pieces and are often mistaken for food by seabirds and other marine life. Birds will even feed bits of plastic to their young.

Think about this--the UN Environment Program estimates that each year, plastic debris causes the death of more than 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals.



Cigarette butts, which are easily washed into the waterways through the storm drains, contain plastic resins which do not biodegrade, along with numerous toxic chemicals such as arsenic and cadmium. As with plastic, birds can die from eating cigarette butts thinking they are food.

They may be small, but cigarette butts are not harmless!

It is estimated that 80% of marine debris comes off the land. You can make a difference by picking up trash and debris before it's blown into the water, washes off the beach, or is swept out through the stormdrains.

Thanks again to our COASTSWEEP volunteers, which included 3 generations of Beverlie McSwiggin's family, and one young man, Geddy Kaulenas, who celebrated his birthday by volunteering.

In Search Of: State Employees

Do you work for the Commonwealth of MA, or know anyone who does? If so, SSCW would like you to help spread the word that we are once again participating in COMECC, the State's employee payroll deduction charity campaign.

For those who give through COMECC, this is an easy and painless way to support SSCW. **Our number is 793522.** We are listed on page 41 of the COMECC brochure.

We also have a flyer if you would like to post it at your worksite, or send to your friends. Just let us know--send an email to susany@salemsound.org.

Spread the word. Help support Salem Sound Coastwatch.

We'll close by saying we hope you enjoy the autumn, and we look forward to seeing you on November 13 at our Annual Meeting and Global Warming presentation.

Sincerely,

Barbara Warren, Executive Director,
Susan Yochelson, Outreach Coordinator

If you have access to email please let us know. Send your email address to info@salemsound.org and we will send you the newsletter electronically. You will be saving a tree and saving SSCW time and money!