



Summer 2011

ON THE SHORELINE

A publication of Friends of Hammonasset, Inc.

President's Note

Dear Friends,

The Friends of Hammonasset has had a full and very productive spring and summer. The plant sale was one of the most lucrative and would not have been as successful without our wonderful volunteers. We want to give all of you who assisted in the sale a huge thank you. I also want to thank J C Farms and Clinton Nurseries for keeping us supplied with plants and shrubs. A "thank you" barbecue for those who volunteer throughout the year was held at the Meigs Point Nature Center on August 20th.

The next fund raiser will be the annual Christmas Tree Sale which begins the week-end after Thanksgiving. We will have the same great variety and sizes of trees, and of course they will all be fresh cut and purchased from Hartikka Tree Farm in Voluntown. All trees are premium stock; and as you are well aware, we have the best prices in the area. Be sure to support us in this venture.

I'm sure you've noticed Ranger Russ Miller's trailer that he's hauling behind the Meigs Mobile these days. The graphics match the van and are quite eye-catching as he's heading off to his school programs. It's a wonderful teaching aid, and the kids are thrilled to have the Long Island Sound creatures brought to their schools.

The Hammonasset Festival will be held at the park this year on October 1st and 2nd. This is a biennial festival that has been very popular with both children and adults. We have more exhibitors and more Native American vendors and performers this year, so make sure you mark your calendars and definitely plan to attend this great two-day event.

It looks like plans for expansion of the Meigs Point Nature Center are getting closer to fruition. FOH is partnering with the State in this venture, and the State is now in the process of lining up approved vendors and designers. We, along with Ranger Russ Miller, Jack Hine and Bill Mattioli, will work closely with them in meeting the needs for space and storage. This is very exciting for everyone who has been involved with this project. It's been in the planning stages for a long time, and to know that the end result is near has made all the hard work

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*Deanna Becker
FOH President*

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The 2011 Hammonasset Festival - October 1st & 2nd

and planning well worth the many man hours devoted to getting an approval for the building.

I hope all of you have availed yourselves of the beaches in the park this summer. What better way to stay cool when the heat waves have descended upon us than to pack a picnic or buy lunch at the pavilion and enjoy the cool breezes and refreshing water of Long Island Sound. We are so fortunate to have this wonderful park in our back yard. If you're not a beach person just drive down and walk the trails or boardwalk that border the shore. You will enjoy the view and be amazed at how many different birds spend their summers here. Stop in at the Meigs Point Nature Center and check out the exhibits and live animals--you'll enjoy it. Hammonasset Beach State Park is truly a day-trippers delight.

See you at the beach!

Deanna Becker

President

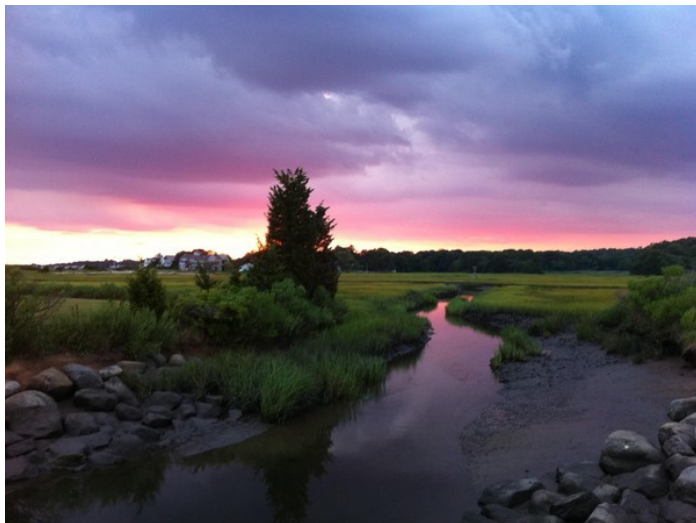
Find us on Friends of Hammonasset Web site and Facebook, and follow Hammonasset Beach State Park on Twitter.



www.hammonasset.org



Grant Writer Needed: Are you passionate about preserving and protecting Hammonasset Beach State Park and educating the public about our shared natural resources? Do you have grant writing experience and/or technical writing skills or a desire to learn? If so, then Friends of Hammonasset is looking for you! FOH seeks volunteer grant writers who can assist in researching potential funding sources, initiating new grant applications, applying for recurring grants and maintaining grant awards. If you have time and talent to offer, please contact Gay Butler at (203) 453.2943.



Sunset at the Park — *photo courtesy of Michelle Kiley*

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Hammonasset Festival 2011

By Dale Carson



What a year this will be for all at the HAMMONASSETT FESTIVAL on October 1st and 2nd 2011. You, our membership of Friends of Hammonasset who are a beloved group of people who care about your fellow man and the

environment, will be so proud this year.

We have many new Native American craft vendors and performers, more food vendors and some new museums and environmental groups joining the fun - The Beardsley Zoo, Mystic Aquarium and the new Connecticut Science Center, just to name a few. There will be old favorites such as the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Natural History at UCONN, the Henry Whitfield Museum, the Institute for American Indian Studies, Habitat for Humanity, A Place called Hope, Operation Music Aid and Trout Unlimited; and the list goes on to include about fifty participants, more than ever.

A huge Atlatl competition will draw in many new advocates of ancient art forms as will demonstrations of canoe making, weaving a fishing net and flint knapping. Also included will be birds of prey activities as well as a reptile show by our own Nature Center Director, Russ Miller. Joseph Fire Crow will bring his beautiful music and words; and there will be dancing with Erin Meeches Native Nations Dance Troup, always a special event.

These times are tough so it's time for the tough to get going. Where else but at Connecticut's most beautiful state park, can we teach our children about the natural world and how to survive anything that may come along. Worries and troubles of any kind can go on the back burner for these two days. We are all one people of one mind – love of our Mother Earth and our families and respect for all those who walk the planet with us. So please pass the word to your circle of family and friends that we would love to see them in October for the biggest and most posi-

tive event of 2011, the HAMMONASSETT FESTIVAL. See our website for more details and information.

Nature Note: Cicada Killers

By Marcy Klattenberg



I recently returned home from vacation to find a Styrofoam coffee cup with a lid on it next to our front door. I asked my husband Ron if he had left it there and he replied negatively so I put it in the trash. About an hour later, we were checking missed calls and discovered one from a neighbor saying he had left

the cup there with a large “hornet” in it and that there were several more in his back yard digging holes. He wanted to know what they were and what they were doing. I listened to the cup carefully to see if whatever was in there might be alive and eager to be released. There was silence so I opened it to discover a large wasp close to 2” long, a black abdomen with yellow markings, a rusty thorax and amber wings - a lovely “gift” to use in classes this fall!

Cicada Killers (*Sphecius speciosus*) are often found working together (females) in sandy soil excavating large burrows. Each female loosens the soil with her front legs and pushes out mounds of soil (like a dog) with their back legs. The tunnel openings are round and about a ½” across. The males will defend their territory aggressively but do not sting. Females are capable of stinging but rarely do. Their emergence is timed with the emergence of the cicada insects which the females will then hunt. When a cicada is found, the female will sting it, paralyzing it and then drag it up a tree to fly back to an awaiting burrow or drag it back where it will be stuffed down the tunnel (over 6” deep) and an egg is laid on it. The hatching wasp larva has a substantial fresh meal to feed on until it pupates for the winter, and the whole life cycle will repeat itself the next year. The whole process is rather macabre but quite fascinating at the same time. I've watched them closely for long periods, and they do not seem to mind an audience at all.

The "Flagship" Report

By Bill Mattioli, Park Supervisor



The summer of 2011 has only a few more weeks remaining, believe it or not. The summer season has really flown by this year. As of now, things seem to

be progressing in a positive direction.

We obverted some very drastic changes to the park staff due to the State Employee Concession deal. We were slated to lose both Jason and John if the concession deal was not ratified. Thankfully the deal was passed on a second try, and they will be staying put for the time-being. I know both employees are very pleased to remain here. Of course, Jack and I are ecstatic about this news.

The new security cameras have worked out very well. There was more than one occasion when I personally put the DVR recorder to use solving disputes between the public and our gate staff. The new cash registers have been a positive addition as well. Park visitors are pleased to learn they can use credit cards to enter the facility or to purchase a season pass. I think as time progresses and word gets out, more and more people will use this method of payment.

Another positive outcome this season is the number of positive comments I've received regarding the conditions and cleanliness of the park. My response is always the same as I speak to park visitors: "Thank you for noticing and telling me your thoughts; our staff does a wonderful job." Our seasonal staff does a fantastic job throughout the season, and it makes both Jack and me very proud when we hear this news.

The campground remains a popular area. We have been sold out most if not all of the weekends in July and August. The attendance during the week is a little more than three quarters full, which is nice to see. Unfortunately, the campground has been all abuzz this season with the discovery of a law on the books (23-16-a) which states the maximum length of stay in any shoreline campground is not to exceed 21 days in

a calendar year. This means if this law remains, no one will be able to stay more than 21 total days in any calendar year. As you can imagine, I have been questioned thoroughly by many campers who stay longer than 21 days. Unfortunately I do not have the authority to circumvent the law, and I'm advising any Connecticut resident who has comments or thoughts to contact their state representative as they are the only ones who can change this. Again, this is not a policy decision by the park or our administration, but it's a law. I have heard and understand both sides of the argument, and I have seen the passion on both sides as well. I believe this situation will find a solution at some point down the road.

As the summer comes to a close I would like to thank all our seasonal and full time staff for their dedication and efforts in making 2011 a very smooth season.



Nature Center Contest: WHERE IS IT?

Folks are asked to submit photos to the Nature Center of unusual sightings for all to search for and find. Above photo submitted by Susan Bukowsky. Search the park and then visit Ranger Russ at the Nature Center to report its location or send answers to Ranger Russ Miller-- rangerruss5@yahoo.com

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2 -- Hammonasset Festival to celebrate nature and Native American culture.

Schedule of Events*

Unless Noted, Same Schedule of Events applies to both Saturday and Sunday

*Schedule Planned as of Newsletter publication date; check FOH website for updates/changes.

ALL DAY	ATLANTL Event	Next to Salt Marsh
ALL DAY	Trout Unlimited	Near Entrance
ALL DAY	Watershed on Wheels	Willard Island
10:00 a.m.	Live Amphibians	Discovery Tent
10:30 a.m.	Opening Blessing	Concert Area
11:00 a.m.	Beardsley Zoo	Discovery Tent
12:00 noon	Grand Entry	Concert Area
1:00 p.m.	Joseph Fire Crow	Concert Area
1:00 p.m.	Live Reptile Show	Discovery Tent
2:00 p.m.	Live Birds of Prey	Discovery Tent
3:00 p.m.	Dance Performance	Concert Area
3:00 p.m.	SAT ONLY: Wooly Mammoth Hunt	Next to Salt Marsh

November—Annual Christmas Tree Sale - to begin the weekend after Thanksgiving. Details to follow on the FOH Website.

Nature Center Programs—Check FOH Website for future programs

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ **Volunteers are needed to assist at various locations during the Hammonasset Festival** which will be held at the rear of the Nature Center October 1st and 2nd. If you have indicated you would like to volunteer for projects, this is your chance to help out. We need help at the entry locations, the Friends of Hammonasset information table, selling t-shirts and hats, setting up and taking down chairs and tables and with other duties that may arise during the day. All volunteers will be issued "Staff" shirts at the beginning of their shifts. They must be returned when their volunteering duties have ended. If you can assist us, please respond with the day(s) and hours you can work. mpncfestival@gmail.com has been set up specifically for this purpose. Please let us know the day and time you can work at the festival. Thank you.
- ◆ We need your help maintaining the Butterfly Garden and Perennial Friendship Pond. If you would like to assist us, please email VOLUNTEERS@hammonasset.org with your contact information and indicate your interest in this area.

Friends of Hammonasset, Inc.
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Name: _____	Address: _____		
City: _____	State: _____ Zip: _____		
Phone: (____) _____	Email: _____		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you want to receive FOH newsletters via email		
Member Levels	Please indicate volunteer interests:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Beach/Trail Maintenance	
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend/Family \$20.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/> Website	
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy/Legislative	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor: \$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Events	<input type="checkbox"/> Publicity	
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$500.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Plant/Tree Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> My employer will match my donation			

(Employer Name)			
Additional Donation			
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ \$____.00			
Total Enclosed \$____.00			
Please mail checks to: Friends of Hammonasset, Inc. P.O. Box 271, Madison, CT 06443	Your gift is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Thank you for your help!		