



BARRINGTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

• ESTABLISHED 1979 •

PRESERVE. ADVOCATE. EDUCATE. ENGAGE.

Featured property: Little Mussachuck Creek

At the southern end of Appian Way, a narrow path leads to Mussachuck Beach. Those who follow the path to the end find a gently curving beach that is ideal for walking, hunting for sea glass and shells, or watching the sun set over Narragansett Bay.

Mussachuck Beach also serves as a barrier beach for the Little Mussachuck Creek Marsh. Comprised of four parcels of property donated to BLCT by several neighbors in the 1980's, the marsh is adjacent to the Mussachuck Grove and the PIC-WIL Nature Preserve. The marsh consists of about 25 acres of estuarine wetlands and some 10 acres of open water and mudflat habitats.

Mussachuck Beach and Little Mussachuck Creek Marsh have been significantly affected by changes in sea level and localized effects of barrier beach migration, storm over wash events and shifts in the tidal inlet. Over the years, the outlet of Little Mussachuck Creek into Narragansett Bay shifted from the northern end of the beach to an ebb/flood-tide delta at its southern end, resulting in a reduced flow of salt water into the marsh. BLCT became concerned that a reduction in the salinity of the marsh would allow an expansion of the invasive *Phragmites australis* and endanger several rare wetland plant species in the marsh, such as



creeping spike rush, maritime sea blite, salt marsh bulrush and leafy bulrush.

As the steward of the marsh, BLCT utilized advice from Save the Bay and the R.I. Habitat Restoration Team to restore the tidal hydrology of the marsh by excavating a connector channel to the existing channel at the southern end of the marsh. In April 1998, armed with shovels, scythes and buckets, almost 100 volunteers dug the new channel and hauled hundreds of pounds of saturated peat and *Phragmites* rhizomes to PIC-WIL for proper disposal.

This grass-roots volunteer effort allowed more salt water to flow into the marsh. Although *Phragmites* remained the dominant species, the rare native plants began to re-colonize the

marsh. The rejuvenated mud flats provide habitat for numerous birds, including greater and lesser yellowlegs, glossy ibis, and great and snowy egrets, all of which feed on the mummichogs, silversides and herring that use the creek to access the marsh.

Nature doesn't necessarily respect the efforts of such well-meaning and hard-working volunteers. BLCT has continued to monitor the marsh in the 20 years since the connector channel was built. As the course of Little Mussachuck Creek has shifted and once again reduced the flow of salt water, BLCT has taken various actions to combat the infiltration of *Phragmites* in order to maintain the ecological balance in the marsh. BLCT's stewardship efforts at this property will never end, especially as sea level rise threatens to erode

Mussachuck Beach.

The beauty of Mussachuck Beach makes it a perfect location for BLCT's 2019 International Coastal Cleanup event. See page 5 for details, then come out to enjoy the beach and marsh and help BLCT steward this spectacular property for all to enjoy.



Photo by Ian Donahue

Hurricane Awareness and Preparation

BLCT and the Barrington Public Library will be presenting *One Day . . . The Story of a Storm, A Video Documentary of the 1938 Hurricane in Rhode Island*, by Carla Ricci on Thursday, October 10 at 6:30pm in the Salem Auditorium, Barrington Public Library.

"One Day" is a film about how life can change without warning. Your life can be perfectly normal when you get up in the morning and in a shambles by sundown. In this case, a hurricane was the culprit. The Hurricane of '38 was devastating to the state of Rhode Island. This short film focuses on the families of a tiny mill town, Carolina, Rhode Island (which straddles the towns of Richmond and Charlestown) and their relatives in Providence.

Although this awful event happened seventy-nine years ago, its relevance is apparent today. As a state we are overdue for the next big hurricane. The good news is that we are partly prepared for it. Providence has positioned itself as one of the few American coastal cities that can actually protect itself from future hurricanes, but other coastal communities remain vulnerable.

Following the movie, Teresa Crean from the URI Coastal Resource Center will speak on hurricane preparation and awareness.

Please join us for this special event. Attendance is free of charge.



Donations to BLCT in 2018-2019

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust relies almost entirely on donations to support its mission. It is with tremendous appreciation that we recognize our donors during the past fiscal year.

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BLCT Needs Your Help – Please Give Generously!

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust depends upon the generosity of its members and friends for the funds necessary to steward the 76 properties it has conserved, to protect the animals and plants that live within those properties, and to share the natural wonders associated with this flora and fauna with school children and residents of Barrington.

Please help to ensure that BLCT can continue the types of activities featured in this newsletter in the future by making a donation today. The Barrington Land Conservation Trust and all those who depend on its efforts appreciate your support!



Deer at Pic-Wil. Photo by Robert Puckett

Visit Grapes and Grains and Support the BLCT

Grapes & Grains, located at 24 Bosworth Street (next to Shaw's), has chosen the Barrington Land Conservation Trust as its September "giveback" partner. During the month of September, Grapes and Grains will donate to BLCT 10% of the purchase price of each bottle of 2018 Moulin de Gassac Guilhem Rosé purchased at the store. This excellent Rose is a blend of 50% Syrah and 50% Carignan. From 25- to 50-year-old vines grown on stony soils of the famous Mas de Daumas Gassac winery comes this thirst quenching, absolutely delicious organic Rosé! Hailing from the Languedoc region in Southern France, this rosé has a pale carnation pink color. Nuances of peach, strawberry, wildflower and "flint" all harmonize on the nose. Flavors of



not-quite-ripe raspberry, apricot and peach delight the palate and finish with crisp sweet/tart acidity balanced with a hint of minerality.

If you drink wine, please give consideration to trying this one and encouraging your friends to do so as well!



BLCT and Barrington Public Library Host Twilight Paddle



On August 16th, BLCT and the Barrington Public Library teamed up for the annual twilight paddle on Hundred Acre Cove. This year's event "sold out" with over 40 participants joining together to embrace summer, water, and the very special geography of Barrington, which we sometimes take for granted. The weather was perfect, everyone had a great time, and we can't wait for next year's event. Keep an eye on the BLCT Facebook page or the Library's events page for other fun and exciting events to share with your family and Barrington neighbors.

Join BLCT for Coastal Cleanup 2019



BLCT will again be partnering with **Save The Bay** for the 2019 International Coastal Cleanup event, one of over 80 to take place in Rhode Island. BLCT will be working at Mussachuck Beach on Sept. 28th beginning at 1 pm. Parking will be along Grove Street, at the end of Drowne Rd. Access to the beach will be through the path at the end of Appian Way.

Ocean trash is a serious pollution problem that affects the health of people, wildlife and local economies. The International Coastal Cleanup is the world's largest, annual, volunteer effort tackling this problem for our ocean and waterways.

On average, more than 2,000 volunteers participate annually in the Rhode Island ICC at more than 80 sites, typically removing about 20,000 pounds of trash and debris and documenting what they find. Over 700,000 volunteers across the globe take a stand against ocean trash by joining the ICC. Visit www.savebay.org for more info.

Barrington Residents Vote to Protect Lot 3A!

Barrington voters at the Financial Town Meeting showed their support for conservation with an almost unanimous vote in favor of the Town's acquisition of Lot 3A. BLCT appreciates this affirmation by the taxpayers, the efforts of the Town Council and Town Manager to get this deal done, and the support of all of those who have worked to maintain this property as open space. Thank you!

