

NEWS FROM MASHOMACK PRESERVE | SUMMER/FALL | 2020

Mashomack depends on all of us.

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Director's Message



Dear Friend of Mashomack,

Forty years ago, Mashomack Preserve opened its doors and trails to the public. At the time, protecting these 2,039 acres was the largest purchase in the Conservancy's history. And it was only possible because of a genuine partnership between the community and The Nature Conservancy.

All these years later, the team at Mashomack works every day to continue and grow that partnership and to be of service to nature and people.

These last few months have brought challenges that were hard to imagine before. But they have also shown why caring for nature and people is really a single calling. With every child that walks the trails or holds a spotted salamander for the first time, we are fulfilling a promise made decades ago.

As Mashomack looks to serve the community over the next 40 years, we want to say "thank you" for being our partners.

Nature has a unique ability to bring us peace and solace. And I hope you'll turn to nature—in particular, now, in spring during its rebirth and bloom.

Please stay in touch, and join us as we celebrate the next 40 years of research, education, inspiration and partnership at Mashomack.

Thank you for being a part of this incredible legacy.

Jeremy Samuelson
Director, Mashomack Preserve

Printed on 100% PCW recycled, process chlorine-free paper, creating the following benefits:

5.6

trees preserved
for the future

416.4

gallons water
saved

808.2

lbs. CO₂
prevented

A Bird that Links Continents and Cultures

Summer on Long Island wouldn't be the same without osprey soaring and diving into clear waters. But just 50 years ago, only a few of these magnificent birds remained due to poisoning from DDT. Once the chemical was banned, osprey and other birds of prey like bald eagles and peregrine falcons slowly rebounded. But the osprey return wasn't always guaranteed.

Dr. Alan Poole, an ornithologist and leading osprey expert who has traveled the world studying this iconic species, first came to Mashomack in the 1970s to survey the population. "Their nests were mostly in trees, so they were more vulnerable to predators than nests built on artificial platforms elsewhere. By and large, Mashomack ospreys did poorly reproductively, mostly because their nests were not secure. That started to change when the Conservancy came in and began to shore up some nests, and build predator-proof platforms."

His research on Shelter Island helped make the case for protecting Mashomack Preserve and was key to the species recovery regionally. This rich history came full circle when Dr. Poole returned to share his latest adventures at the Mashomack Manor House last summer.

"We quickly fell into a conversation about his spending more time on the Preserve and one thing led to another," stated Jeremy Samuelson, Mashomack's Director.

Dr. Poole joined the Mashomack Board of Trustees in November and is advising the Preserve's conservation team on research.

"Forty years ago when the Shelter Island community and The Nature Conservancy joined forces to protect Mashomack, it was always about making a difference on a global scale, protecting vital habitats for threatened species and creating links to distant lands," added Samuelson. "It was always envisioned as a globally important research site and educational facility, a true community asset."

"Ospreys undergo such long-distance migrations, from Shelter Island to the Amazon every year," said Dr. Poole. "Each bird, flying alone, makes it to its own chosen spot somewhere deep in the Amazon, returning to the same bend in the same river. This is a bird that links continents and cultures."

Looking back sometimes helps us glimpse what lay ahead.

"Our job today is to make sure there is habitat, fish and people who will all thrive on Shelter Island, and in the Amazon, and around the world for the next 40 years," said Samuelson.

Nearly 260 osprey, also known as "fish hawks," have been born at Mashomack Preserve, contributing to the global comeback of this once imperiled species.
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By the Numbers

40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

800,000

people to date have connected to nature as they hiked Mashomack's trails.

240,000

youth visits to Mashomack inspired a generation of conservation champions.

4,000

guided walks or field trips engaged the public in our conservation work.

1,500

pages in three volumes, The Mashomack Preserve Study chronicles its physical, cultural, and biological treasures.

735

eastern bluebirds and

1,686

tree swallows fledged from our volunteer-driven nest box program.

70

research projects contributing to humanity's understanding of science and nature.

700

species of moths, one of which was newly discovered, live at Mashomack.

600

teens have assisted with our Environmental Education program.

259

osprey born in Mashomack Preserve, contributing to the global comeback of this once imperiled species.

© Charles Gleberman



Bluebird, New York State's bird. © Derek Rogers







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