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ORLEANS POND COALITION

Photo credit: Sunrise through lobster traps at Snow Shore by Clint Kaiser

Celebrate Our Waters is September 18-20!

Join the Orleans Pond Coalition for our annual *Celebrate Our Waters* festivities, Friday, September 18th - Sunday, September 20. The theme for this year's celebration is, "Our waters as artistic inspiration." Special events aligned with the theme include:

- Juried photography exhibit at Snow Library celebrating the beauty of Cape Cod's waterscapes
- Music and dance performance
- Poetry readings
- Family sing-along concert

- Nature photography by Peter Trull
- Plein air painting demonstrations at Addison Art Gallery
- Open houses at Eastwind Gallery, Frying Pan Gallery, David Hills Gallery, and Galley West Art Gallery.

These events are in addition to our always popular activities:

- Sunset SUP paddle
- Morning dip at Skaket Beach
- Sailing on Pleasant Bay with Pleasant Bay Community Boating
- Bird watching at Nauset Marsh
- Yoga on Nauset Beach
- Kayak to Sipson Island
- Hike to Pochet Island

If you would like to learn more about Orleans' progress with sustainable water management, we are offering tours of the Orleans Water Department and the Wastewater Treatment Facility on Friday afternoon.

The Nauset Beach Bonfire

We will cap off the celebrations with our annual concert and bonfire on Saturday night, September 19 at Nauset Beach. The music will start at 5:30pm with DJ "JT's Chronicles" followed by a live performance by local teen band "Watch Your Step." The evening will close with the bonfire, co-sponsored by the Orleans Department of Public Works.

Registering for *Celebrate Our Waters* Events

Note that the following events require pre-registration due to space limitations:

- Tour the Orleans Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Tour the Orleans Water Department
- Sunset SUP Paddle
- Sail on Pleasant Bay
- Poetry Readings hosted by Christine Jones
- Kayak and Hike to Sipson Island
- Hike to Pochet Island

Registration for events will open for members on Friday, September 4th and on the following Friday, September 11 for non-members. For the complete list of events, with descriptions, locations and registration links, go to the OPC website.

The OPC Annual Meeting is Tuesday, September 29th

Mark your calendars for OPC's annual meeting on Tuesday, September 29th, 4:00 - 5:30pm at the Orleans Yacht Club. Come hear about our efforts over the past year and about exciting new OPC programs on the horizon.

Our keynote speaker is Bill Amaru who will speak on "**The Incredible Waters of Orleans: Our Watershed Moment Is Now.**"

From his unique perspective as a fisherman for over 50 years on the Cape, Captain Bill Amaru will walk through how our choices can protect Orleans' waters that are under threat.

Captain Amaru has spent over fifty years fishing the waters off Cape Cod and the Nantucket Shoals. He continues to harvest surrounding waters in his 36' fishing boat, F/V PALADIN, from Chatham. He was educated in New York and Boston as a classical clarinetist and played in Boston, Albany and with the Cape Cod Symphony before turning to the sea for his vocation. Mr. Amaru is a past member of the New England Fishery Management Council and presently sits on the Massachusetts Fisheries Commission.

Vote YES on 6 to Protect Water and Nature in MA — Without Raising Taxes

OPC is one of 90+ organizations and businesses advocating for the state to dedicate as much as $100 million annually to conserve land and protect clean water, improve outdoor recreation, and build climate resiliency.

Question 6 dedicates the sales tax we already pay on sporting goods to a new Nature for All Fund that will:

- Protect clean drinking water
- Conserve forests, family farms and natural wildlife habitat
- Create more parks, trails, and green spaces for all to enjoy
- Strengthen communities against flooding, heat, and climate impacts

Please vote YES on 6 on November 3rd!

Take the OPC Pond Pledge

If you haven't signed up to receive a new OPC Pond Pledge sign, it's not too late. As a reminder, the Orleans Pond Pledge encourages three simple actions:

1. Avoid fertilizers and pesticides
2. Support local sewering efforts
3. Embrace a Cape-friendly lawn

Signing up is easy. Visit the OPC website to request your new Pond Pledge sign, and one of our volunteers will deliver it to your house. Signs are provided free of charge, but if you would like to help offset the approximately $15 cost of the signs, OPC would greatly appreciate a donation.

If you have any questions about the pond pledge program, email us at pondpledge@orleanspondcoalition.org. Together, we can help protect the waters that make Orleans and Cape Cod such special places to live.

Recommended Reading:

The Cyanobacteria Info Series by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod is taking a deep dive into the topic of cyanobacteria, covering such issues as assessing the risk of cyanobacteria, testing for toxins, and what to look for and how to protect yourself and your pet from possible exposure. We highly recommend taking a look at their articles on the topic.

Native Plant of the Month

Every month, Meg Voorhes profiles a different native plant for the Mayflower Point Association in Orleans, where she lives. Thank you, Meg, for sharing this month's native plant with the Orleans Pond Coalition.

Buttonbush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*

Buttonbush enjoys moist soil so much that it can stand, unperturbed, in a few inches of fresh water. In the wild, it is found in stream banks, marshes and floodplains from Maine to Florida and as far west as Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska.

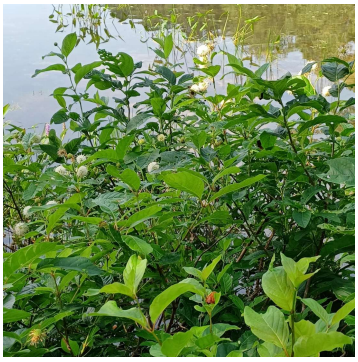
On Cape Cod, this deciduous shrub thrives on the edges of kettle ponds. Local residents can find a hedge of buttonbushes at the Pilgrim Lake landing—right at the water's edge.

Buttonbush is named for its unusual flowers. Their white pompom shapes—imagine a fuzzy pincushion about one inch across—appear in late June or July and are, well, cute as a button.

The fragrant flowers gradually ripen into hard reddish fruits that also have ornamental interest and can remain even after buttonbush loses its glossy green leaves in fall.

Because of the many ecological services buttonbush provides throughout the year, it is prized for wetland restoration plantings. The caterpillars of several native moth and butterfly species feed on its leaves, while native bees, butterflies and hummingbirds turn to the flowers as a nectar source (as do non-native honeybees). Waterfowl and shorebirds eat the nutlets within the fruits, and wood ducks turn to the cover the shrub provides for raising their young.

Buttonbush generally ranges in height and width from three to six feet, according to the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension, but the consensus among off-Cape sources is that it can reach 12 feet in height. In gardens with naturally moist or boggy spots in sun to partial shade, buttonbush is low maintenance. Should it outgrow the space the gardener has allotted to it, it can be cut back in early spring for a more compact size.



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