

WATERWAYS

FRIENDS OF CHATHAM WATERWAYS NEWSLETTER

The purpose of FCW is ensuring that the management of Chatham waterways is accomplished in ways that are compatible with the conservation of the community's natural resources and the character of the area.

FCW Spring 2023 Newsletter



Water Monitoring Programs

Our freshwater programs need more volunteers so please consider volunteering.



Cyanobacteria Monitoring Program

Cyanobacteria are commonly found in our freshwater ponds, however when concentrations of certain cyanobacteria are high, they pose a health risk to people and pets.

FCW collaborates with the town of Chatham and the Association to Preserve Cape Cod to monitor five of our ponds to identify any potential toxicity of cyanobacteria. We test: Lover's Lake, Stillwater, White, Schoolhouse, and Goose Ponds. The program runs June through October. For more info: [cyanobacteria testing](#). To volunteer please contact pondstudy@chathamwaterways.org

Pond Water Quality Monitoring

Pond volunteers collect data on turbidity, dissolved oxygen levels, and temperature. Volunteers are trained and certified in the use of the water sampling equipment and data collection is done up to three times per summer—generally once in May, July, and Sept. For more info: [water quality](#). We need several volunteers for this summer pondstudy@chathamwaterways.org

Water Watchers

Water Watchers collect and test water samples biweekly in Chatham's saltwater estuaries five times per summer to directly assess water quality by measuring water clarity, salinity, temperature and dissolved oxygen content and taking water samples at varying depths.



In 2022, 38 FCW Water Watcher volunteers monitored 15 stations in Chatham's estuaries, completing the 23rd consecutive year of the Coastal Water Nutrient Monitoring Program. For more info: [FCW WaterWaters](#) To volunteer, please contact waterwatchers@chathamwaterways.org.

Styrofoam Floats

The blue styrofoam from floats breaks down into pieces when damaged and disintegrates with age contributing to microplastics in our natural ecosystems. The blue styrofoam has been observed on the shorelines of Goose Pond, White Pond, Schoolhouse Pond and along our many miles of coastline. We know



that plastics in the water column are mistaken to be food and consumed by wildlife. When the particles are ingested by birds and other aquatic life, they can kill through starvation.

Please check the condition of your floats. Now is the time to upgrade your float to encapsulated flotation.

And as a reminder, anchored floats in freshwater ponds in Chatham need an annual permit from the [Harbor Master's](#) office.



Herring



Silver herring (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), also known as alewives, and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) spend much of their lives in the open

ocean. They eat plankton and swim in large schools, covering great distances throughout the Atlantic. As anadromous fish (species that live most of their life in the ocean but return to spawn in fresh or brackish waters), these two herring species return each spring to some of our freshwater ponds and streams.

Alewives and herring return from the Atlantic Ocean each spring to the

Cape's streams and rivers to breed. They return in April and May, to specific location, swimming upstream to our lakes and ponds to spawn, spending the summer there until the autumn when they return to the ocean. Due to predation, the populations have declined. It is estimated that one percent of the juveniles survive to return to the ocean.

Herring survival have a direct impact on the food chain as feed for striped bass, cod, bluefish as well as birds, whales and osprey. Their population has been greatly reduced by drought, bycatch and restricted access to rivers.

A federal judge overturned a reform that was having positive increase in herring population. Trawlers are now allowed to fish as close as 3 miles and are catching herring as bycatch.

Visit Stony Brook in Brewster by the Stony Brook Grist Mill or the Harwich Herring Run off Depot Street in the Bells Neck Conservation Area mid-April to mid-May to see the herring return to the freshwater ponds where they were born.

More info: [Association to Preserve Cape Cod herring](#), [Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance](#), [CapeCod.com herring run article](#)



Fertilizer Impact on Chatham Water

Spring is the time when homeowners begin thinking of their property maintenance. Fertilizers used on lawns and gardens add nitrogen and phosphorous which have a negative impact on our saltwater and freshwater bodies. Nitrogen addition to our coastal waters from septic systems, run off and fertilizers cause eutrophication and decrease in marsh health. Eelgrass has been on a decline due impart to nitrogen abundance, eelgrass decline is directly tied to bay scallop decline. In freshwater, phosphates stimulate excessive plant growth and

cyanobacteria blooms.

Consider having a Cape Cod lawn, decrease the size of your lawn, and landscape with native, drought resistant plants. For more information [Association to Preserve Cape Cod](#)



Goose Pond and Goose Pond Forest

Goose Pond is a kettle hole "great pond" (greater than 10 acres and owned by the Commonwealth). Its shoreline is sparsely developed. The town of Chatham purchased about 73 acres of land abutting Goose Pond for conservation and passive recreation.

The property has several natural resource values, including two vernal pools, open space and walking trails. The public access is for fishing as the pond is stocked by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Massachusetts. Access is a dirt road off of Old Queen Anne Road.

Goose Pond is one of the ponds that FCW monitors for cyanobacteria. For information and trail map visit [Goose Pond Forest](#)

Earth Day and Arbor Day

Earth day, April 22, is a celebration of our environment and reminds us of the importance of our surroundings and to celebrate nature.

Arbor day, April 28, is a day to plant trees and recognize the important role of trees to provide habitat for wildlife, to clean our air and water.



Three local groups have joined to provide 8 events from April 22 to April 30 to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day. Activities include roadside clean up, a celebration at Oyster Pond, a walk at Sylvan Gardens, walking tour of trees, free native oak tree seedlings and a tree identification webinar.

For more information and the schedule of events visit [Chatham Conservation Foundation](#).

Barry Commoner's First Law of Ecology states that: "Everything is connected to everything else." What you do on your land may have widespread impact beyond the boundaries of your property.



Friends Of Chatham Waterways | 6j Munson Meeting Way, Chatham, MA 02633

[Unsubscribe rjsamuelson@comcast.net](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by rjsamuelson@comcast.net in collaboration
with



Try email marketing for free today!