



Sound Waves

A Monthly Newsletter from Save Our Sound

MARCH 2025

Alliance News & Notes



This month, I want to take a moment to highlight one of the key elements of the Alliance's work: our grassroots efforts. As a small staff, each of us wears many hats. From fundraising, communications, and educational outreach to speaking engagements and meeting with elected officials, we work to advance the long-term protection of Nantucket Sound. Our mission depends on a community-driven approach, and every conversation, connection, and collaboration plays a vital role.

Building relationships with stakeholders and supporters takes time, energy, and determination. Maintaining support and welcoming new partners to our growing coalition of stake-

holders requires countless hours of work behind the scenes. From initial outreach to developing shared goals, these partnerships are the result of dedication and persistence.

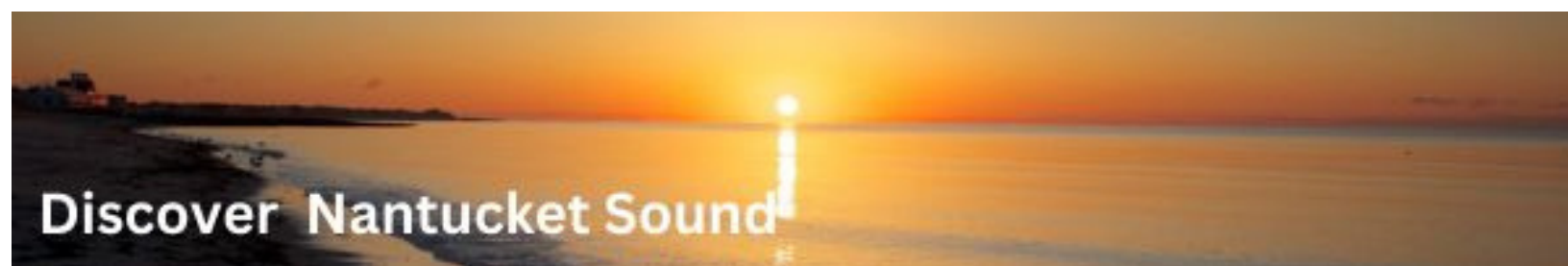
Another challenge we face is adapting to changes in leadership within organizations. Maintaining strong relationships requires ongoing outreach and engagement, ensuring that new leaders understand the importance of protecting Nantucket Sound. For example, we have worked to keep key stakeholders such as **Preservation Massachusetts**, **Orenda Wildlife Land Trust**, and the **Barnstable Municipal Airport Commission** engaged and supportive of our mission. These sustained connections are crucial and represent the behind-the-scenes efforts that keep our coalition strong and effective.

Recently, I am pleased to welcome two new stakeholders to our expanding network of supporters: The **Cape Cod Museum of Natural History** in Brewster and the **Thornton Burgess Green Briar Museum** in Sandwich. Their support reflects the strength and momentum of our grassroots efforts and our shared commitment to protecting the unique environmental, cultural, and historical significance of Nantucket Sound.

Our outreach efforts continue to grow. Just last week, we had the pleasure of attending and speaking to the **Cape Cod Salties**, one of our stakeholder groups that support the designation of Nantucket Sound as an **National Historic Landmark** (NHL) at their 2025 **Cape Cod Salties Community Open House** in Yarmouth. It was an engaging and productive conversation, with an estimated 100 people in attendance, reinforcing the importance of connecting with local groups who share our passion for the Sound. We will continue to meet with community organizations and stakeholders throughout the region, ensuring that our message is heard and our efforts to secure **National Historic Landmark** designation for Nantucket Sound continue to gain ground.

Together, through these community-based efforts, we will protect Nantucket Sound for generations to come. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to this critical cause

Warm regards,
Audra Parker, President



Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR) is a must-visit destination along Nantucket Sound. This 2,700-acre reserve, managed by the **Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation** and the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA), is a living laboratory dedicated to researching and protecting coastal ecosystems. **WBNERR** is part of a national network of 30 estuarine research reserves across the United States.

What You Can Do:

- **Hiking & Nature Trails:** Explore scenic walking paths through salt marshes, pine forests, and along the bay, offering picturesque views and great birdwatching opportunities.
- **Boating & Kayaking:** Paddle through the calm waters of Waquoit Bay for an up-close look at its diverse habitats.
- **Fishing & Shellfishing:** The bay is popular for recreational fishing, with opportunities to catch striped bass and bluefish.
- **Educational Programs & Visitor Center:** Learn about coastal ecology and the cultural history of the area. The Reserve offers programs for all ages, including guided walks and workshops.

Waquoit Bay has been inhabited for thousands of years—archaeological sites on Washburn Island reveal Native American settlements dating back over 10,000 years. Whether you're interested in science, outdoor recreation, or simply taking in the beauty of Nantucket Sound, this is a destination worth exploring.

For more places to discover in and around Nantucket Sound, please visit our website at www.saveoursound.org/explore.



*This month, we put a spotlight on **Mark Alan Lovewell**. Mark is a maritime renaissance man from Martha's Vineyard - sailor, fisherman, self-taught singer-songwriter (playing guitar, banjo, concertina and harmonica), gardener, astronomer, weatherman, professional photographer, writer...whatever he sets his mind to, he figures it out, and does it with plenty of good cheer! You can catch Mark and his wife **Molly Conole** on their "Sunday at Sea" **Facebook LIVE program**. If you'd like to view our ACONS webinar with Mark presenting us with some wonderful Songs & Stories of Nantucket Sound, visit our website at saveoursound.org/acons.*

1. What does Nantucket Sound mean to you?

Nantucket Sound is a destination, a place, a connection I have with my community. Whether I am sitting on a boat crossing the Sound or walking a beach along its shorelines, I feel connected to a world that has greater depth and mystery than I can see, feel, or touch. Though in the scale of greater geological features, Nantucket Sound may not be as so big as a vast ocean or sea, but to me, it is no less a gem in this necklace I call home.

Nantucket Sound is big enough, its expanse goes farther than I can see, its water depth is too great for me to ever venture. Its boundaries are marked by sweet beaches, tall lighthouses and colored hills and beaches. And at night the sky holds a canopy of stars overhead. It is a theatrical show when changing wind, rain and waves converge and work together during a passing weather system. For me, Nantucket Sound is also a sanctuary, a step away from the human bustle of other busy places.

Nantucket Sound is no less than the land, no less than the Island where I walk. The Sound separates large islands, and the Cape. It is far bigger and far more vast and more mysterious than I grasp in any one moment. The place harbors stories going back centuries, and a millennia, beyond human presence. And the story of how it came to be is as much a reminder of how small I am, standing under a star-filled Milky Way.

2. What are your favorite spots to visit around Nantucket Sound?

I'll take any sunrise where the sun pokes its head above the water. Living on Martha's Vineyard, we can watch the sun rise behind the Cape Pogue Lighthouse. Or see it rise over the waters of Nantucket, as seen from East Beach on Chappaquiddick.

There is no greater joy than sailing between Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, and passing over the shallow waters of Tuckernuck Shoal, where we can see and almost touch the shifting sands below. Or, bouncing up and down on a fishing boat near one of the shoals that separates the two islands, where fish are plentiful and are purposefully pursuing bait all around us.

At other times, when the winds and waves are acting up, being in a fishing boat is like being at a rodeo. Every muscle, every piece of my flesh is tuned to the morning mission of seeking out and catching fish to take home.

Crossing Nantucket Sound on any vessel offers a welcome experience. In a slow sailboat, we feel the currents moving under us, feel the surge of water as it rises up over underwater hills and falls back down into hidden valleys. On a fair, light-wind day, the current moving underneath is most alive compared to the calm surroundings. There are fish underneath, there is life there.

Even gazing across the Sound in a fast-moving passenger ferry is a treat; a bit of a ride up and over white capped swells.

3. Why do you support the efforts of the Alliance?

From the very beginning, I have been a supporter of the Alliance, and an enthusiastic friend to this great sea between islands. The early mission of The Alliance was really hard, but today, Nantucket Sound waters are better for these efforts. As a Martha's Vineyard resident, I hear the concerns of my neighbors.

I feel fortunate and grateful that Nantucket Sound is still clear today. Our waters remain a huge resource, a valued resource, and they color the spirit of our community. I like the idea that there is a large spirited crew of people trying to look out, trying to preserve, protect and treasure what Mother Earth has given to us – Nantucket Sound.

4. Tell us a bit about yourself - how can we enjoy your music and see you perform live!

I am a descendant of the original white settlers who came to Martha's Vineyard, the Pease family. While I am but a tiny piece of the family island story, I feel I am a steward and carrying what generations of my family have carried. My family was made up of seafarers, whalers, farmers, government and business workers, and craftsmen and bankers, all storytellers.

My greatest connection to this island is through its music. I sing old sea songs and tell stories about our maritime ways.

For 46 years, I worked at the Vineyard Gazette. It too has a long history, going back to 1846. For over 30 years I wrote about the fishing and farming community, and the affairs of the Island. I wrote a number of different columns, my favorite being "With the Fisherman." I still write "Vineyard Skies," a column about backyard astronomy. I was also an active photographer throughout all those years.

Molly Conole and I have been performing on stage and online. Playing mainly sea shanteys and maritime songs, we use a variety of musical instruments: guitar, harmonica, flute, violin, recorders, banjo, and give our audiences a waterfront melodic experience. We are both songwriters with a high regard to the old folksongs of another day.

Music to us is fun. And while it is also a teaching tool, a storytelling tool, an instructive tool, for us it is mostly fun.



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