



Annual Report 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Stewardship is a very important responsibility of all land trusts. Overshadowed by the excitements of land acquisition and potential research discoveries, protecting land for conservation purposes, by paying close attention to what is happening on that land, can be dull work. It costs money, and it never ends. The Tuckernuck Land Trust now owns nine parcels totaling about 106 acres. Each property is different. Their habitats range from beaches to oak forests, and all need to be monitored. On our three-acre parcel on the Lagoon, for example, TLT strikes a balance between responsibly preserving that land for conservation while providing an important community benefit by allowing landowners to leave vehicles temporarily on the southern portion.

During 2016, many of TLT’s directors and friends worked diligently to raise significant pledges and gifts from our wonderful members to help pay for TLT’s \$800,000 purchase of 26 acres of heath and old oak forest. However, in 2017, it seemed as if folks took a break from that concerted push, and TLT, compared to recent years, raised much less for regular operating needs. I trust we all can gear back up in 2018 and 2019 and create the momentum for a final effort to complete that important project, while still keeping TLT running throughout the year.

I can walk from west to east across Tuckernuck Island in half an hour, which has its advantages when I am late for meeting a guest at the Lagoon, but it also means that this small island is on the radar of only so many charitable donors. The resident birds and plants cannot contribute, so it is up to their human neighbors and fans to step up and give to preserve their habitats—and, in return, to enjoy the unmatched beauty of Tuckernuck Island. You, TLT’s valued members, are vital to our nonprofit work. Thank you for supporting our day-to-day operating expenses and our conservation programs: TLT’s summer coastal steward, weekly Education Walks, land acquisition projects, scientific research, and the ongoing stewardship of TLT’s properties.

Thank you, wholeheartedly, for your continued partnership in our vital work.

Jameson French
President



President Jamey French and
1st Vice President Lynn Zimmerman

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- Allison Black, 2017 Coastal Steward



The Tuckernuck Land Trust works to preserve land and promote stewardship and education for the conservation of Tuckernuck Island’s rare natural communities and unique coastal ecology.

EDIE RAY



Blunt-leaved Milkweed (Asclepias amplexicaulis)

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

The Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2017, are currently under review by our accountant, and information is therefore presented here in draft form.

Following 2016's concerted effort to raise as much as possible of the \$800,000 purchase price of the Jackson land, the pace of fundraising slowed in 2017. Tuckernuck neighbors and friends continued to show their support of TLT's conservation mission: 120 donors contributed \$69,760 toward TLT's regular operations (lower than \$113,365 in 2016, which included an extraordinary Annual Fund challenge gift of \$50,000) and an additional \$5,325 toward the ongoing campaign. A gift of \$100,000 toward past mortgage debt, combined with investment yield, brought TLT's total 2017 income to \$175,061.

Operating expenses for the year totaled \$109,208, including \$22,800 in old and new mortgage interest. Expenses were approximately \$12,000 more in 2017 than in the previous year because of higher mortgage interest; greater accounting fees for a full audit, as required by the IRS based on the large amount of funds raised the prior year; and increased wages for the three-year veteran Coastal Steward.

Net income for 2017, including campaign and other restricted funds, was \$65,853. Against the \$109,208 operating expenses, unrestricted income of \$69,736 resulted in an operating loss of \$39,472.

On December 31, 2017, assets included \$5.141 million in land, buildings and equipment and \$207,154 in cash/savings. Among liabilities, TLT owed \$400,000 to the North Pond Foundation and \$500,000 to the Agua Fund, resulting in total equity of \$5.395 million.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Taylor
Treasurer



CATLYN BLOSS

EDUCATION

The spirit of discovery abounded on Tuckernuck throughout the summer of 2017. TLT's Education Walks not only offered the Tuckernuck community numerous opportunities to learn more about its island surroundings; they also connected the island more closely with the local scientific community, with four of the program's leaders joining TLT for the first time and two of those visiting the island for the first time. Topics ranged from anthropology to medicine to astronomy to spongiology, and participants of all ages explored the realms of earth, ocean, the heavens, and history to learn more about their singular island.

The 2017 schedule also included two variations on the Education Walks' philosophy of fun learning. The Family Scavenger Hunt, a trophy-inspired race to collect the most items and photos from a list that ranged from a quahog shell to flotsam footwear, encouraged Tuckernuckers to delve into the many habitats around the island (and if the teams tidied the island a bit more, no one complained in the least). And TLT Volunteer Day, while both fun and educational in a different way, brought islanders together to improve the TLT Field Station property, and to find out what scientific treasures were hidden in TLT's attic.

TLT owes the success of its 2017 education program to organizers, Edie Ray and Susie Robinson; Education Walks facilitator and sometime leader, TLT Coastal Steward Allison Black; and to the learned walk leaders: historian and author, Frances Ruley Karttunen, Ph.D.; Nantucket surgeon, Timothy J. Lepore, M.D., F.A.C.S.; Director of the UMass Boston Nantucket Field Station, Yvonne Vaillancourt; expert birder and columnist, Ginger Andrews; and the Maria Mitchell Association's Director of Astronomy, Regina Jorgenson, Ph.D. We are extremely grateful for their generosity of time and effort in opening the wonders of Tuckernuck to its human company.



Volunteer cataloguers Grace Walker and Diana Brown

JENNIFER AHLBORN

LAND PROTECTION

by Lynn Zimmerman



JENNIFER AHLBORN

In the 22 years since its founding in 1996, the Tuckernuck Land Trust has acquired nine parcels totaling more than 100 acres, about one eighth of Tuckernuck Island. Naturally, each is unique in soils, flora, and fauna. On the 37-acre parcel at the East End, pockets of heathland and shrubland intersperse the predominant (and rare) sandplain grasslands, combining shrubs like bayberry with grasses and native wildflowers. This is ideal habitat for northern harriers, once called marsh hawks. Less than a mile away, in stark contrast, five central parcels feature oak forest, where black and white oaks intermingle with pitch pines and sassafras. Neotropical birds use this land as stopover habitat during their migrations. TLT's most recent, 26-acre purchase exhibits a wonderful diversity of habitat: on the northern portion, in the heart of Tuckernuck, dry oak forest predominates, while further south, the landscape transitions to scrub oak barrens and mixed coastal heathland, and further to sandplain grasslands along the south shore.

To protect TLT's two largest properties in truly permanent conservation, two significant mortgages need to be retired. During 2017, TLT worked to raise these funds and will need to continue with increased vigor in the next few years.

COASTAL STEWARDSHIP

TLT was fortunate that Allison Black, while putting the finishing touches on her master's thesis, was available to return to Tuckernuck Island as the Coastal Steward for 2017. In her third year serving as TLT's ambassador to the summer community on Tuckernuck (following 2014 and 2015), Allison oversaw the weekly Education Walks, monitored compliance with state laws concerning the protection of endangered and threatened species on the island, and generally interacted within the community to share information about the Land Trust's efforts to preserve land, natural habitats, and the elements that comprise the uniqueness of Tuckernuck Island.

One of the Coastal Steward's most frequent activities is to serve as the shorebird monitor for Tuckernuck. In this area, and in comparison with her previous two years' experience, Allison reported a difficult and largely unproductive year for Tuckernuck's shorebirds. Extreme high tides during new and full moons discouraged the beach-nesters, including the Least Terns that had returned to Tuckernuck by the thousands in 2016. In all, Tuckernuck hosted nesting activities by three pairs of Piping Plovers, fledging a total of two chicks out of a valiant six nesting attempts; eight pairs of American Oystercatchers fledging seven chicks in total; and no Least Terns.

Among the Education Walks, Allison made special note of the annual Bam's Ramble, which she led with Ginger Andrews, the bird columnist for Nantucket's *Inquirer & Mirror*, who channeled Ramble progenitor Bam La Farge by identifying flora during the walk. Allison also quite enjoyed the family scavenger hunt, from its egalitarian focus on targets both natural (shells and rocks) and not (common and exotic beach trash) to its fantastic sea-themed trophies. She especially reveled in her (benevolent) sergeant status for TLT Volunteer Day in August, which improved the Field Station property through enthusiastic digging, hammering, raking, caulking, and general high spirits and grit.

A birder even on her own time, Allison keeps lists of species she has spotted, and in 2017 she logged the most of her three years on the island: 136, including a Buff-breasted Sandpiper and a Black-headed Grosbeak. In assisting MAPS (Mapping Avian Productivity and Survivorship) bird-banding activities with Dr. Dick Veit, she also helped document Tuckernuck's—and Nantucket County's—first breeding Ovenbirds, a forest-specific breeding species.

Upon departing to complete her master's degree, Allison expressed many thanks to the Tuckernuck community and their support for her work on behalf of TLT and conservation. "Tuckernuck is such a unique place," she wrote, "and I am forever grateful. . . . [T]hank you to all the Tuckernuckers who hosted me for a meal or gathering, gave me some tidbits of Tuckernuck history, or just stopped by to say hello. Your kindness was, as always, above and beyond expectations, and I am privileged to have spent time with you on your wonderful, magical island. Thank you."



JENNIFER AHLBORN



TLT ARCHIVES

Bird Camo: An American Oystercatcher chick hides in plain sight



2017 CONTRIBUTORS

The Tuckernuck Land Trust is grateful for the generosity of the following individuals and organizations.
This list represents contributions received between January 1 and December 31, 2017.

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Gifts were made in memory of the following individuals.

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Gifts were made in honor of the following individuals.

Phinney Poor Bennett
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Story Clark and Bill Resor Family
Sean and Terumi Harris
Francis W. Pease
Malin Pinsky
King Poor
Lynn Zimmerman
TLT Volunteers

Gifts In Kind

The following businesses, individuals, and partner organizations supported TLT's mission by offering discounted goods, services, and other in-kind contributions, enabling us to apply our monetary resources more directly toward our mission.

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Michael and Terry Taylor
Tucker Taylor
UMass Boston Nantucket Field Station
Yvonne Vaillancourt
Richard R. Veit, Ph.D.
Grace Walker
Lynn Zimmerman

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