



The Field Journal

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 11

AUGUST 14, 2006

THIS WEEK AT THE FIELD STATION:

- **UMass Boston Biology 306 examines Nantucket beaches, marshes, dunes and embayments**
- **UMass Boston Conversational Latin studies in serene harbor setting**
- **Come visit to see all our wonderful plants, birds and scenic trails**

UMass Boston
Nantucket Field Station / Grace
Grossman Environmental Center
180 Polpis Road
Nantucket, MA
02554
(508) 228-5268

Visiting Hours:
9 am-7 pm

Other times by appointment

Field Station Installs Piezometers to Monitor Groundwater

Much progress has been made in recent weeks in the ongoing island-wide piezometer installation project. Spearheaded by Dr. Sarah Oktay, with the help of Water Quality Research Intern Chris Brown, intern Mike Lefevre, and volunteer coordinator Jim Sutherland, the project places monitoring wells, called piezometers, at multiple sites around Nantucket. Once installed, the piezometers provide access to groundwater at various depths.

Samples are collected from the piezometers using electric pumps, and are analyzed on-site for dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, salinity, conductivity, total dissolved solids, and oxidation-reduction po-

tential. The samples are then brought back to the lab at the Nantucket Field Station, and analyzed for nitrate and phosphate content, as well as total coliforms (fecal, including e. coli, and non-fecal).



Above ground portion of piezometer. Photo courtesy of Jim Sutherland

The data is available by request, and is of interest to organizations such as the

Madaket Civic Association, the Nantucket Community Association, the Land Council, the Nantucket Conservation Commission, and the Nantucket Conservation Foundation, as well as to the residents of the areas being monitored.

The ultimate goal of the project is to provide accurate information on groundwater across the island, available for reference to future researchers and residents alike. So far, piezometers have been installed in Madaket, Monomoy, Hummock Pond, and Polpis.

Feature Creature

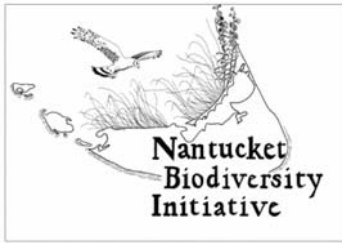


A lot of people visiting the island during the summer will peer

across the landscape and inquire about the numerous telephone poles, standing solitary in their view. These poles are actually man-made nesting habitats that mimic the natural nesting habitat of the Osprey. The majestic Osprey is a type of raptor whose adaptations, such as large talons

and spiny padded feet, help the osprey to fit its niche as a sea-raptor. In fact, 99% of the Osprey's diet consists of fish. This is a large bird whose wingspan can reach over 5 ft. The field station is proud to have a nesting couple on site, a short distance off the walking trail.

NFS Participates in Nantucket Biodiversity Initiative



Logo Courtesy of Claire Dacey

The second NBI assessment week will kick off activities on September 10. The field station has been an important sponsor of the event since its inception., contributing housing, vehicles and laboratory

support for visiting scientists, many of whom come from UMass Boston.

The NBI is currently in its third year of existence, bringing valuable research insight and educational opportunities to the general public. The program aims to study various aspects of the island’s ecology including flora, fauna, fungus and everything else fun.

Other participating organizations include: Maria Mitchell Association, Mass Audubon Society, Nantucket Land Council, Nantucket Conser-

vation Foundation, Nantucket Garden Club, Nantucket Land Back, and The Trustees of the Reservation among others.

For more information please peruse the NBI’s website, www.nantucketconservation.org/nantucketbiodiversityinitiative OR call the Maria Mitchell Association, (508) 228-9198.

“With fun activities for kids and free refreshments, the open house is an ideal day for the whole family.”

Field Station to Host Annual Open House

As the busy summer once again draws to a close, the field station prepares to display its numerous projects and equipment during the annual open house. All are welcome to attend this informative and fun event. It will take place on September 24 from 12 -5 pm. Activities will include: Guided beach and nature trail walks, Nantucket sci-

ence presentations and water quality demonstrations. With fun activities for kids and free refreshments, the open house is an ideal day for the whole family. To request more information or to receive an invitation please contact Sarah Oktay, Director of the Field Station, at (508) 228-5268 or by e-mail sarah.oktay@umb.edu



Thank You Field Station Volunteers!

The field station has been very fortunate this summer to have energetic volunteers helping with ongoing research and educational projects. Blair Perkins, Captain of the Shearwater, has been an invaluable educational resource both on site, with visiting elementary students, as well as aboard his vessel on a seal cruise with a visiting high school group from Brockton..

Jim Sutherland is a retired limnologist who has recently moved to Nantucket and wasted no time getting involved in the water quality projects at the field station. His dedication and vast knowledge of aquatic systems has been a vital resource to the field station’s research.

Mike Lefevre just can’t get enough of the field station. He did a month long internship in the winter, com-

pleted his adopt-a-pond project last month, and has been assisting field station staff all summer.



Field Station Intern Chris Brown and Volunteer Coordinator, Jim Sutherland