Sea Grant
CONNECTICUT

Editor
Judy Benson

Graphic Design
John Lucas

WRACK LINES is published twice a year or as resources allow by the Connecticut Sea Grant College Program at the University of Connecticut. Any opinions expressed therein are solely those of the authors.

Electronic versions of this issue and past issues of Wrack Lines can be found at: https://seagrant.uconn.edu/publications/wrack-lines/

There is no charge for the magazine, but donations to help with postage and printing costs are always appreciated. Visit: https://giving.uconn.edu/campaigns/60852/donations/new

Change of address, subscription information, cancellation requests or editorial correspondence should be sent to the address below:

Connecticut Sea Grant
Communications Office
University of Connecticut
1080 Shennecossett Rd.
Groton, CT 06340-6048

To be added to the mailing list for a free print copy or the list serve to be notified about the electronic version, send your street and email addresses to: judy.benson@uconn.edu.

www.seagrant.uconn.edu
www.facebook.com/ctseagrant
www.instagram.com/ctseagrant

CTSG-26-05
ISSN 2151-2825 (print)
ISSN 2151-2833 (online)

For archived digital issues and subscription information, tap QR code on your smartphone.

From the Editor

Take your urge for a creative outlet outdoors, and bring a shovel

Creativity is about much more than making something new, be it a song, sculpture or garden.

It can also be about taking what already exists and making it new, while not losing its essence. Take this example of what's called an erasure poem. I crafted it from phrases chosen from the first paragraph of Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1836 "Essay on Naure."

Emerson and me
Solitary, not lonely
great and tranquil thoughts
of October trees
Nature entrances
Sunny hours of longevity
tempered light of the woods
persuades us
to quit our solemn trifles.

What started as more than 350 words was whittled down to just 28. The result, I hope, is a distillation of the original that reflects both the master transcendentalist and the modern reader of his work. Perhaps it's effective at revealing Emerson's relevance in this age of underdeveloped attention spans.

This was, of course, a solo exercise, as are many artistic endeavors, whether it's writing a novel, painting a landscape or composing a symphony. The larger community gets involved when it's shared.

Nature restoration can also be a creative act, but it's one that by definition is more about the larger community of people and wildlife from the start. Individuals who work to restore their own yards recognize that their property is part of the larger environment and seek to contribute to a healthier planet.

When taken up as a group effort, restoration projects bring people together for the greater good throughout the process. Some examples are described in this issue: a degraded marsh is cleared of invasive plants, making room for native wildflowers and shrubs that attract pollinators and birds; a dam is removed from a river, allowing migratory fish to return to spawn upstream. Once thriving oyster beds are replanted, and thinning eelgrass meadows regrow after reseeding projects, both expanding habitat for juvenile fish and other marine life.

"Restoration has to be part of the future, not to replace conservation efforts but to add to them," said Douglas Tallamy, one of the nation's leading advocates for native plant gardening, who shares his vision in one of the articles.

He advocates for doing what we can to fix our own yards, as well as restoring public parks, preserves and other outdoor spaces into places with more kinds of native wildlife. It may be the kind of creative expression we most need to better the world and stay hopeful.

"What (people) are excited about," he said, "is being empowered to be part of the solution."

Judy Benson
judy.benson@uconn.edu

Cover: Skylar Bartels washes off shells before planting them in a restoration site as her father, oyster farmer Spencer Bartels, works at the back of the boat. Photo: Kim Granbery

Above: Growing native plants such as cardinal flower and turtlehead in your garden is a great way attract pollinators and contribute to environmental restoration. Photo: Judy Benson

Contents

4
INVASIVES REMOVAL

7
REVIVING OYSTER BEDS

12
RESTORATION STORIES

14
WHAT'S THE DAM PROBLEM?

18
10 QUESTIONS WITH DOUG TALLAMY

21
EELGRASS RENAISSANCE

UCONN UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Sea Grant CONNECTICUT NOAA

About Our Contributors

ANNIE SHERMAN

Annie Sherman is a seasoned independent journalist, editor, and author who centers her work on the environment, food culture, and travel. A contributing editor at RI Sea Grant's *41⁰ N* magazine and *Boston Magazine*, she has been published in *Travel + Leisure*, *The Boston Globe*, and *Rhode Island Monthly* among other esteemed regional and national publications. She is an 11th generation Rhode Island native and penned *Legendary Locals of Newport*. AnnieShermanLuke.com

TESSA GETCHIS

Tessa Getchis is an extension program leader for the Connecticut Sea Grant/UConn Extension Program. She has worked with seafood businesses for more than 20 years, offering training, technical assistance, decision-support tools and conducting collaborative research on projects that help regulatory officials site responsible aquaculture operations. She has a bachelor's degree in marine biology from Roger Williams University and a master's degree in aquaculture from the University of Rhode Island.

ERICA CASPER

Erica Casper is the Long Island Sound outreach support coordinator for Connecticut Sea Grant and the Long Island Sound Partnership. She advances science communication related to the protection and restoration of Long Island Sound and its watershed. With over a decade of experience in writing, content development, and outreach, she has translated complex topics for both scientific and public audiences. Casper holds a master's degree in marine science from Boston University and has supported initiatives at universities and research institutions.

DOUG TALLAMY

Doug Tallamy is the T. A. Baker Professor of Agriculture in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 120 research publications, several books, and has taught insect related courses for 45 years. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. In 2021 he cofounded Homegrown National Park with Michelle Alfandari (HomegrownNationalPark.org).

JUDY BENSON

Judy Benson has been communications coordinator at Connecticut Sea Grant and editor of *Wrack Lines* since 2017. Before that, she was a newspaper reporter and editor, concluding her journalism career at *The Day* of New London covering health and the environment. She is the author of two books, the latest titled, The *Book of Todd*, a collaboration with her late husband published in cooperation with New London Librarium (nllibrarium.com). She earned both a bachelor's degree in journalism and a Master of Science in natural resources from UConn.