

Taisto Ranta Memorial

A memorial for Taisto Ranta, the first Natural Resource Officer in Barnstable and maybe the country, was established at Sandy Neck Beach Park this spring. Members of the Ranta family, Sandy Neck Board, and Barnstable Natural Resources attended the ceremony to pay their respects. Ranta was influential in creating conservation areas in Barnstable, educating the public about environmental resource protection, and founded many hunting and shellfishing groups on the Cape. He retired in 1982 as the Director of Barnstable Natural Resources. The memorial was placed in the education and outreach meeting place at the Sandy Neck gatehouse.



MBBA Beach Cleanup



Sandy Neck Park Manager Nina Coleman rallies the group prior to the cleanup.

The Massachusetts Beach Buggy Association (MBBA) joined by Boy Scout Troops 54 and 56 performed its yearly cleanup of Sandy Neck in late April. The groups cleanup efforts of the beach and dunes filled a dumpster of various items such as tires, wood, and lots of glass. MBBA members also dug hundreds of posts to install dune fencing along the Bodfish Beach parking lot. This event is a huge help to Sandy Neck staff in preparation for the upcoming summer season. It is also a great way for people to get out on the beach and help for a day. The event includes a free raffle for Sandy Neck gear and is concluded by a cookout for all the volunteers provided by gracious members of MBBA. If you are interested in helping out next year contact the Sandy Neck gatehouse for information.

Spadefoot Toad Husbandry

If you found yourself in the Sandy Neck gatehouse this spring you likely noticed a tank full of rare tadpoles. Spadefoot toads are a species of toad that breeds in ephemeral or temporary wetlands just like the kind near the ORV access trail. Their development is timed to occur within shortlived wetlands that quickly fill with spring rains. This strategy decreases competition by typical inhabitants of wetlands such as fish and aquatic insects. Ian Ives, from Mass Audubon's Long Pasture Sanctuary, collected and hatched the little guys and transported the young tadpoles to us. Once the tadpoles metamorphose into toadlets they will be released back into the wild to increase the natural population. The record amount of rainfall this spring has lead to a bumper year for the toads. Watch your step when walking and driving around SNK... theres baby toads everywhere!





TERRAPIN RELEASES

Each year local schools and community centers raise hatchling diamondback terrapins throughout the winter months and release them back into the marsh to increase the wild population. These young terrapins are collected from nests laid in precarious locations in the dunes on Sandy Neck. Because they are raised in captivity, the 8 month old, headstarted turtles will be the same size as a three year old turtle. Releases are held throughout the month of June.

Shout Outs

Moving into the summer season Sandy Neck would like to thank all of the volunteers and visitors that go out of their way to help keep Sandy Neck safe, clean, and preserved for future generations. By reporting concerns, volunteering time, or picking up trash, you have contributed immensely to preserving the integrity of this wonderful resource. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed.

JOINING OF FORCES

West Barnstable Fire Department, Barnstable Fire Department, the State Fire Wardens, Sandy Neck Staff, and Barnstable Lifeguards joined forces to prepare for the upcoming summer season. The purpose of the training was to share knowledge of the beach, discuss emergency procedures, and give hands on training extinguishing fires. This yearly training has been valuable for all involved when responding to emergencies on the beach. Emergency personnel get detailed information about the beach and beach staff learn skills that will be useful to first responders.



BEACH CONDITIONS

Sandy Neck beach topography changes with every tide cycle. Sometimes the sand and rocks are added sometimes they are taken away. If you've driven on the beach recently you've seen the effects of the storms this winter. Extreme high tides have been pinching several parts of the beach to ORV traffic. Please be aware of the tides when planning your trip to the beach.

SANDY NECK BEACH PARK

Park Manager
Nina Coleman

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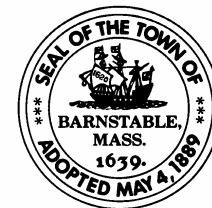
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For the latest Sandy Neck information
visit the Sandy Neck website at:

www.sandyneckbeachpark.com



Sandy Neck TRACKS is written and compiled by
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All questions and comments are welcome.
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