

## Annual Report 2019

### Mission Statement:

*"To preserve the Georgica Pond ecosystem for future generations through science-based, watershed-wide policy and restoration"*



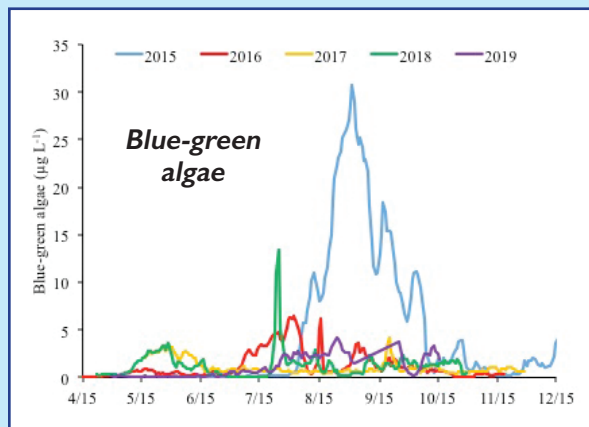
## Letter from the President

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Your generous support over the last five years has established Friends of Georgica Pond Foundation (Friends) as a catalyst for action and collaboration at Georgica Pond.

Our long-term monitoring program in conjunction with the Gobler Lab at Stony Brook University's School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SOMAS) has established a baseline of water quality conditions and documented the ecological impacts of traditional management techniques such as the opening of the pond, and newer remediation approaches such as installation of low-nitrogen septic tanks. We were the first coastal pond in Suffolk County to have a telemetry buoy to monitor water quality.

Toxic blue-green algae or cyanobacteria blooms were a major impetus for our founding. There has not been a major (pond-wide) blue-green algae bloom since 2015. The use of the aquatic weed harvester between 2016-2018 and longer pond openings are helping, but they are only part of the solution. Long-term reduction in the use of synthetic fertilizer and upgrading septic tanks are key.



Continuous blue-green algae concentrations ( $\mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ ) taken from a monitoring buoy in Georgica Pond from 2015 – 2019. The Gobler Lab.

Fortunately, we are in good hands with an outstanding team of people including Dr. Christopher Gobler of Stony Brook University who is a world expert on harmful algal blooms (HABs), Sara Davison, our Executive Director and Larry Cantwell, our government relations advisor, and an outstanding board of directors including Annie Hall, Jonathan Wainwright, Anna Chapman and Kathy Rayner.

I hope you enjoy our first annual report. We are happy to answer your questions and welcome your comments. Thank you again and I look forward to seeing you on the pond.



Photo Sasha Whittle

Our results-oriented approach requires close collaboration with partners and especially local government. Working together with the East Hampton Town Trustees and the Town and Village of East Hampton, the 10-year maintenance dredging project at the gut got underway in 2019, continued in 2020, and is having a positive impact including: more effective openings and improved water quality.

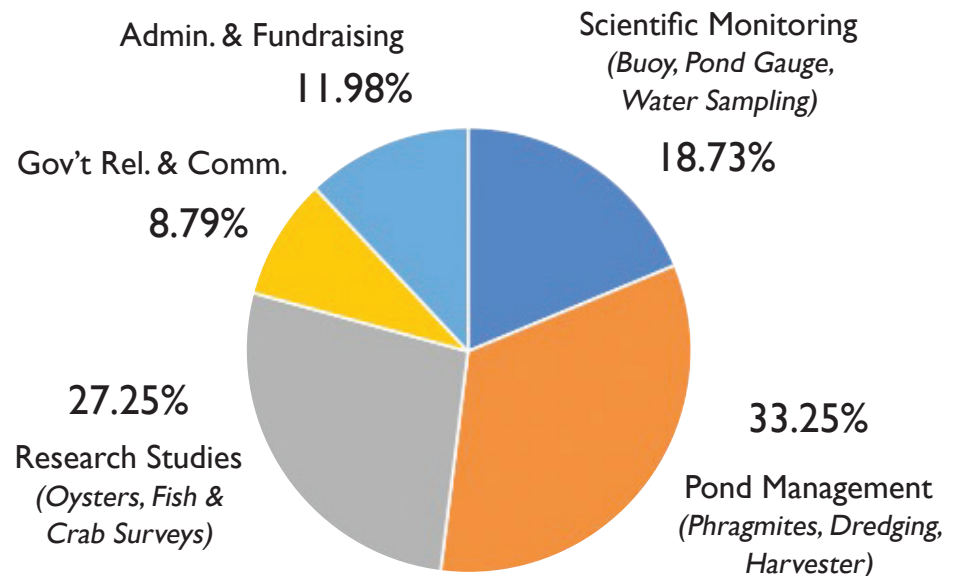
While we can celebrate these successes, we must remember that conditions at the pond can change rapidly and unpredictably. New threats including rising pond temperatures are likely to have unforeseen impacts on the Pond's water quality and ecology.

*Piusella Rabbazzi Whittle*

President

## 2019 Expenses by Category

Category	Scientific Monitoring	Pond Management	Research	Gov't. Rel. & Communications	Administration & Fundraising	Total
Amount	\$86,330	\$153,259	\$125,606	\$40,478	\$55,234	\$460,907
Percentage	18.73%	33.25%	27.25%	8.79%	11.98%	100%



## Two Noteworthy Birds

In 2019, for the first time in a century, bald eagles nested at Georgica Pond. The pair successfully raised one chick and are back again this year. Eagles are returning to Long Island thanks to heroic restoration efforts and have been removed from the endangered species list.



Adult piping plover on nest

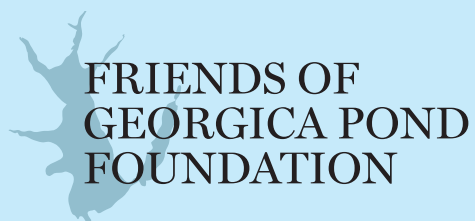


A juvenile bald eagle perches at Georgica Pond

Photo Alfred Ross

More efforts and progress towards recovery are still needed for the piping plover before it can be removed from the endangered species list. Everyone at Georgica Pond can help by staying clear of the fenced and posted plover nesting areas. With your help, these vulnerable, small birds can still be a part of the future of our unique coastal dune community.

Photo Town of East Hampton



# FRIENDS OF GEORGICA POND FOUNDATION

## 2018 – 2019 Donors

### **Bald Eagle - \$100,000 + over**

Anna Chapman & Ronald Perelman  
Katharine Rayner

### **Blue Heron - \$50,000-\$99,999**

Noam Gottesman  
Annie & John Hall  
Candace & Jon Wainwright  
Priscilla Rattazzi Whittle & Chris Whittle  
Janine & Jeffrey Yass  
Anonymous (2)

### **Osprey - \$25,000-\$49,999**

Alexa & Michael Chae  
Jill Davis & Ed Conard  
Susanna & Peter Kagan  
Kelly Klein  
Calvin Klein  
Lenore & Sean Mahoney  
Cynthia & Tom Ogden  
Ashley & Sid Perkins  
Janet Ross  
Richard Ruben  
Kim & Josh Targoff  
Anita & Byron Wien

### **Egret - \$15,000-\$24,999**

Rachel & Neil Blumenthal  
Laura & Robert Hogue  
Leslie & Tom Maheras  
Jane Overman  
Rick Reiss

### **Oystercatcher - \$10,000-\$14,999**

Suzanne Peck & Brian Friedman  
David Gallo\*  
Sima & Morad Ghadadian  
Rosalind & Ken Landis  
Bonnie & Don Maharam  
Ellen Chesler & Matt Mallow  
Brooke Garber Neidich & Dan Neidich  
Lisa & Michael Schultz  
Janine & Jon Weller



*Kayaking on Jones Creek*

### **Plover - \$5,000-\$9,999**

Sarah Walker & Kurt Chapman  
Milly & Arnie Glimcher  
Sara & Patrick Handreke  
Susan & Morris Mark  
Robert Nederlander  
Jane & Alfred Ross

### **Tern - \$1,000-\$4,999**

Betsy Battle  
Cynthia & Rick Del Mastro  
Patty & Harvey Karp  
Pannonia Foundation  
Hugh Parker  
Emilia Saint-Amand  
Lynn Tishman  
Peter Wolf

### **Sanderling - \$1-\$999**

Carolyn Logan-Gluck  
Amy Goodfriend  
Sarah & David Johnson  
Robyn Joseph  
Nancy Kelley  
Virginia & Sandy Osborne  
Letty & Ryan Patino

*\*Denotes a multi-year pledge*

*As of August 1, 2019*



## Oysters, Nature's Engineers

We began an experimental oyster reintroduction project on the Pond in 2019. Known for their remarkable water purifying abilities, oysters are present at similar ponds such as Mecox Bay and Edgartown Great Pond in Martha's Vineyard, but not known historically at Georgica Pond. Mike Doall, Associate Director of Bivalve Restoration at the Gobbler Lab introduced three stations of oyster cages at three locations with differing salinities. The oysters were provided by the Town of East Hampton's shellfish hatchery. During the first year, both high survivorship and growth were noted. Pond salinity was higher than normal due to the pond being open for an unusually long period. This may have affected the results and the experiment will be repeated in 2020 when pond conditions may be different.



Photo Michael Doall

Oyster Cage

## Wastewater Fix – Install a Low Nitrogen Septic System

Twelve homeowners have installed low nitrogen septic systems and 22 old systems are currently being targeted for upgrades. With over 50% of the nitrogen entering Georgica Pond originating from septic system wastewater, it is a no brainer what must be done. Excess nitrogen in our groundwater threatens the Georgica Pond ecosystem and our precious drinking water. State, County and Town (including the Village) programs provide funding incentives to install the I/A (innovative & alternative) septic systems. (<http://ehamptonny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2415/Town-of-East-Hampton-Septic-Incentive-Program-PDF>) At least five types of systems are now approved by the Suffolk County Health Department and the number of experienced installers is growing every day. Friends encourages everyone within the two-year groundwater travel time to install a system as soon as possible.



A Fuji Clean septic tank being installed

## Monitoring Pond Water Quality

In 2015, Friends installed a real-time telemetry buoy in Georgica Pond, the first coastal pond in Suffolk County to receive a buoy so that water quality data could be recorded 24/7. Completely funded by Friends, the buoy allows us to see not only year over year trends but, seasonal changes and day and night differences. The buoy measures key environmental parameters such as temperature, pH, salinity, dissolved oxygen, blue-green algae and chlorophyll. When compared against NYSDEC baseline standards for water quality, we are able to track when different parameters are not normal or identify long-term trends. The real-time buoy data can be accessed on the Friends website and the East Hampton Town Trustee website ([ehtrustees.com](http://ehtrustees.com)). The buoy data is augmented by weekly water sampling at several locations around the pond.



Telemetry Buoy

## Who We Are

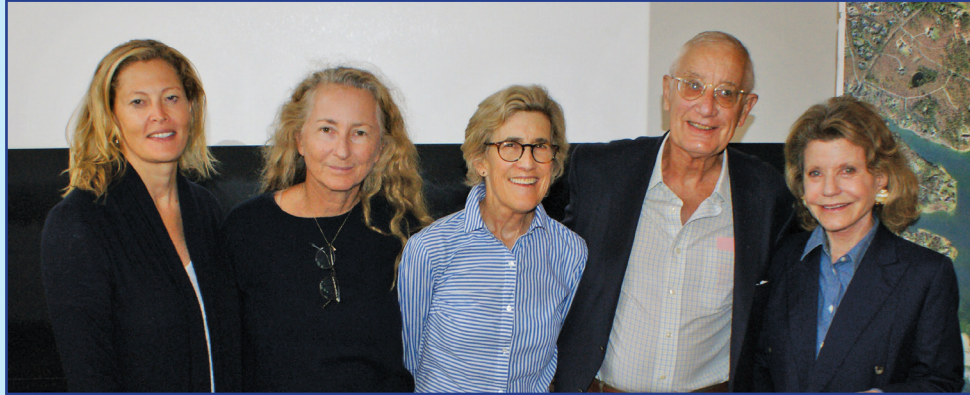


Photo Michael Hansen

From left to right: Anna Chapman, Priscilla Rattazzi Whittle, Anne Hall, Jon Wainwright, Kathy Rayner

Priscilla Rattazzi Whittle, *President*  
Anne Gilchrist Hall, *Vice President*  
Jonathan M. Wainwright, Esq., *Treasurer*  
Anna Chapman, MD, *Secretary*  
Katharine Rayner, *Board Member*  
Sara Davison, *Executive Director*  
Larry Cantwell, *Government Relations Advisor*  
Anne McPherson, *Program Director, Chapman Perelman Foundation*

### **School of Marine & Atmospheric Sciences (SOMAS), Stony Brook University**

Christopher Gobler, Ph.D, *Endowed Chair of Coastal Ecology & Conservation, Science Advisor to FOGP*

Michael Doall, *Associate Director of Bivalve Restoration, the Gobler Lab*

Bradley Peterson, Ph.D & Stephen Heck, *Marine Community Ecology, Peterson Lab*

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### **Partners**

Our work at Georgica Pond would not be possible without the support and collaboration of the local governments who have jurisdiction over the pond and the other NGOs whose broader missions inform and help direct us.

We are also very grateful to the special team at the **School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook University** and the **New York State Center for Clean Water Technology**.

#### **Non-Governmental Organizations:**

East Hampton Village Preservation Society  
Group for the East End  
Peconic Land Trust  
Perfect Earth Project  
The Nature Conservancy, Long Island Chapter  
Surfrider Foundation, Eastern Long Island Chapter

#### **Governmental:**

East Hampton Town Trustees  
State of New York  
Suffolk County, Reclaim Our Water Program  
Town of East Hampton  
Village of East Hampton

*Unless otherwise noted, all photos by Priscilla Rattazzi*



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