

IT'S SUMMER! WE'RE OFF TO THE RACES!

A brief history of the Chetolah Yacht Club

One day in 1923, Long Pond summer families sat on their porches and watched a neighbor sail his gaff-rigged, sneak-box hulled sailboat called a Pumpkinseed. They decided that learning to sail would help their children develop self-reliance and sportsmanship as they grew older. Thus, the Chetolah Yacht Club was born. The name was believed to be a Native American word meaning "this peaceful place." That autumn the neighbor's boat was sent to a Plymouth carpenter named Nickerson who, as the story goes, had never built a boat before. Nickerson built six new Pumpkinseeds which were delivered to the pond in time for the summer of 1924.



Gotta love those knickers!

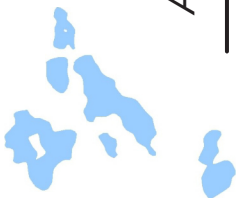
The Pumpkinseed is unique, found nowhere else but on Long Pond. And yes, the eponymous Pumpkinseed is shaped like a pumpkin seed! Most of those original seven boats are still active. After engaging other boat-builders from time to time, the most recent Pumpkinseeds have all been owner-built. The highest hull number today is now 36.



Sooo relaxing!



#1 – the first Pumpkinseed



Bloody Pond - Gallows Pond - Halfway Pond - Little Long Pond - Long Pond - Round Pond

The first race took place on July 19, 1924. The boats were outfitted with cotton sails made by a Plymouth awning maker named Longonotti. The sails were held on the mast with hoops and onto the other spars with grommets and rope, and the boats were outfitted with “barn door” rudders, removable daggerboards, steel and bronze hardware, and home-made wooden bailers. The Club log reports that it was “a fine day with a brisk north by west wind and a course of twice around the Steinway-Morgan-Hitchcock buoys.”



One of those porches where Chetolah was born.

Pumpkinseeds were named after birds, prompting the fleet to be dubbed the “Bird Class,” despite one stubborn holdout naming his boat after a flying mammal. Races were held every weekend and meticulous records were kept of results, courses, and weather.

Three more boats were commissioned for the summer of 1925. The Club governance became quite formal, with officers including a Commodore, a Vice-Commodore, a Secretary-Treasurer, and a variety of Fleet Captains who do most of the work on race days. The Club did not have, and has never had, a clubhouse or other facility. It has always been just a group of people who enjoy racing their sailboats.

In 1931 the Club adopted the racing rules of the North American Yacht Racing Union, and still sails today under the rules of its successor organization. In the early 1930s the Club challenged both the Duxbury Yacht Club and the Pilgrim Yacht Club to a series of races, both on the pond and on the salt water, generally losing to more experienced sailors. Many specialty and novelty races were added to the schedule. “Brats” races for those 15 and under were started, and Ladies Races were held mid-week. Both these traditions survive to this day. In the late 1930s more families joined the Club and the fleet expanded to 15 boats. Many Club members served in World War II, but the racing continued. Right after the war, more Pumpkinseeds were built, and the fleet grew to 23.



Bloody Pond - Gallows Pond - Halfway Pond - Little Long Pond - Long Pond - Round Pond



The 1950s saw the first home-made Pumpkinseed, and the old wooden hulls started to be covered with fiberglass, which quickly proved to be an improvement. All wooden hulls were fiber-glassed by the 1970s. A movement towards all-fiberglass hulls was soundly defeated!

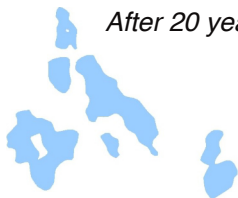
In the late 1970s a group from the new housing development north of Long Pond started racing around the Club buoys in their Sunfish, and after much debate, the Sunfish was adopted as an additional class. New Sunfish-owning families were welcomed into the Club, and Sunfish racing remains a staple of race days.

Races are held weekends from July 4th through Labor Day. Club membership is open to anyone in the Six Ponds area with a Pumpkinseed or Sunfish who wants to race on the weekends. If you would like to be part of this great tradition, send an email to info@sixponds.org.

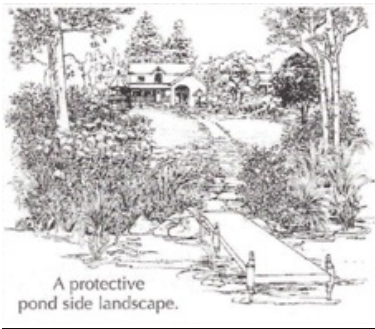


Rick Conant in Redstart. Yes, it's a bird!

After 20 years, #1 sails again!

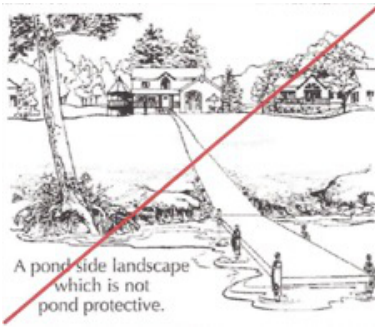


Pondside Vegetation - It's a good thing!



We love to live on the edge of waterbodies but changing our shorelines can threaten the health of our ponds and streams. To the novice eye, tall shoreline grasses and plants around a lake or pond may seem like an unnecessary nuisance that impedes views and enjoyment of the water, but this vegetation serves an important purpose.

Native trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers along our shorelines help slow down, trap and filter runoff, trash and excess nutrients before they enter ponds. Plants absorb and reduce nutrient availability, slowing algae growth, including toxic cyanobacteria blooms. Plants also absorb nutrients in the water from fish waste which can reduce algae blooms.



Green buffers add beauty and preserve habitat for wildlife. They are a nursery for beneficial insects like dragonflies which eat mosquitoes. Plants can provide shade for fish and a hiding place from predators both above and below the water. Flourishing vegetation can also help attract desirable wildlife while deterring pets, livestock, or undesirable animals, like geese, from entering the waterbody. When native aquatic plants are allowed to take root, they help stabilize delicate shorelines, preventing erosion.

What we do can help keep our ponds healthy. Maintaining a natural shoreline dense with native plants is the way to do it.

Woodland Neighbors



This little vole is cute, but what the heck did he do to the lawn? This channel appeared after a drenching rain. The tunnel this fellow uses to escape predators collapsed from the deluge. Voles are typically viewed as pests, burrowing under vegetation and eating or girdling plants that are desirable, including grasses, bulbs, and small trees.



Voles actually do play an important role in the ecosystem, though. They are a food source for species like hawks, raccoons, and snakes. Although their burrows may seem unsightly, they also help spread nutrients in the upper soil layer. This just goes to show that even a small animal such as a vole provides important functions. So unless they are damaging an orchard or nursery, or occur in large enough number to decimate lawn grasses, it is best to coexist with them and appreciate the benefits they can provide.



Short Cuts

Time to renew – Six Ponds is an all-volunteer neighborhood association. To work optimally for our neighborhood, Six Ponds needs you to renew! The \$25 annual membership fee gives you regular updates on what is happening around here, tips on how to live around and protect our ponds, and items related to Conservation, Planning, Zoning and other Town Departments. Please update your membership TODAY! Renew online at www.sixponds.org

This sky lantern landed in a tree at a house on West Long Pond Road. Sky lanterns are classified as fireworks in Massachusetts, and it is illegal to sell them here. They can be purchased online, but please don't! Large, costly fires, in both property damage and lives lost, have been attributed to sky lanterns. Debris from lanterns landing in water and on land is a danger to wildlife that might try to eat it. Choosing a more eco-friendly way to celebrate is the way to go.



Stay tuned - lot's happening around the ponds.

- **September 11** - Potluck Supper, Douglas Davis Farm - our first in-person get-together
- **October 2** - Town-wide cleanup

Thanks to these contributors to the Summer edition of the Six Ponds News

Meg Carver
Sam Chapin

Emily Davis
Love Albrecht Howard

Six tips for dark skies and a brighter future

1. Use the least amount of light to accomplish the job.
2. Choose 'darksky approved' shielded lighting fixtures. No part of the bulb should be visible, and most of the light should shine down at 70 degrees or less. No light should show above 90 degrees.
3. Use flood lights only with motion detectors or timers and aim away from neighboring homes. Flood lights on our ponds confuse wildlife and interrupt natural cycles. Please NEVER shine flood lights on to the ponds!
4. Use energy efficient light sources, including energy saving lamps and fixtures, and solar options. Avoid 'blue' toned lighting which is particularly bad for wildlife; choose warm or full-spectrum lamps.
5. Use occupancy and motion sensors, time controls and dimmers wherever possible.
6. Turn off lights!

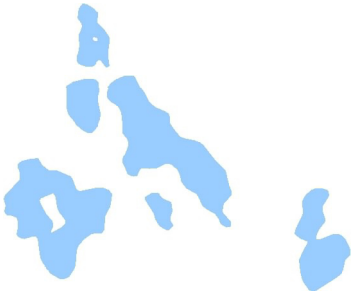
Learn more at www.darksky.org

The last intersection to be realigned in the Six Ponds area is where Long Pond Road meets Halfway Pond and Bloody Pond Roads. The work is being paid for by A.D. Makepeace as part of their Redbrook Development agreement with the Town of Plymouth.

Utility work is anticipated to happen this Fall – telephone poles and utility lines will be moved as a first big step towards the realignment. In 2022, the roadways will be reworked to allow for right hand turns while waiting for traffic, and new traffic lights will go live. The original proposal was for an interim four-way stop, but traffic numbers have increased enough to justify lights now. And, most importantly, the neighborhood and abutters primary concern is for safety, and they strongly support traffic lights.

So look to have a much safer intersection at Halfway Pond Road, Bloody Pond Road and Long Pond Road in the next year.

Six Ponds
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Enjoy the final days of Summer.
See you in the Fall.