
KELLY'S CORNER

by Jan Kelly

(Provincetown) The Spring tides of 10, 11, and 12 feet are an active time for coastal plants and animals. The peak of reproduction is evident all around you. Tiny moon snails cling to the eel grass which is itself regreening. Sand lances are in abundance and are being picked out of the low surfaces by nesting terns and gulls. Fluke and skates are flattened to sand patches waiting for the tide to turn. More skates than usual, whether their presence is due to the fluke dragging in the harbor or that they are tossed off returning fishing boats we weren't sure. But my neighbor, Taffy Silva, found an eight-pound lobster in the shallow water. Nobody would throw him off a boat. The fluke dragging must have disturbed him. How do we know it was a male? You look in the obvious area and there are two appendages, doubly a male. We wrapped it up in Taffy's jacket for safe carrying. Quite a surprise to go sea clamming and catch an eight pound lobster. It was delicious. The sea clams have spun out their spawn and will be lean in July.

Days of dining came out of the early morning treks. One creature spied we haven't found edible yet. Since it is regarded as a living fossil we give it the respect of the elderly and don't dream up recipes as we look at it. The horseshoe crab, more closely related to scorpions and spiders, is in the phylum Arthropoda, but has an order to itself, Xiphosura. It has been known in its present form since the Triassic period. Its fossils match its twentieth century form. It does not have a separate mouth but has mouth parts attached to its legs and moves and eats at the same time. Children have been told through the centuries that coins catch up in these leg/mouth parts. This false tale has led to the disturbance of many napping specimens. During the Spring and Neap tides when the water first reaches fifty degrees, the mating begins. The large female comes close to shore. Quickly a male, and sometimes two, will find her. The mating occurs and the female will lay 200 to 300 eggs in three to four nests at the high tide mark.

The smaller male fertilizes the eggs as they are laid. The romance is over, crabs depart and the eggs are left to mature for two weeks, until the next new moon

Spring tide. Laid and fertilized on the full moon and released by wave action on the new moon. One inch replicas of the adults emerge and find their way around the tidal flats and estuaries for the next eleven years. Then they are ready to play full moon—new moon for the next ten or fifteen years. It looks like a Leonardo Da Vinci tank and is so slow moving, it seems innocuous. It does eat clams, but not to the extent to be persecuted. It is of laboratory use because of its blue copper-based blood made up of amebocytes. Cancer research, spinal meningitis, blood clotting study are aided by the research into the properties of this blood. Water pollution is measured by using live horseshoe crabs and checking their bacterial count. Next full moon you may have the chance to check closely the look and activities of this remarkably long-lived species. It is a 20th century inhabitant with a prehistoric look. One way you can gain knowledge of the sea, flats, and marshes is to pick up a schedule of the Center for Coastal Studies' field trips. They go right through September. It's a good activity for entertaining guests, too.

You can get the benefit of Cape Cod air and scenery while learning why it is all so wonderful. The number for the Center for Coastal Studies is 487-3622.

Suzanne Sinaiko has won again. This time a silver medal from the Academie Europeenne des Arts in Namur, Belgium. The Academy has an annual international exhibition, Suzanne has won twice. This time it was a still life of flowers and fruit. With that wonderful garden of hers spanning Commercial to Bradford Streets, the inspiration runs high. Provincetown flowers winning Belgian medals. C'est un petit monde.

The Blessing of the Fleet is toned down. Only the children's Saturday games for activities. The stainless steel fleet of whale watching boats flanking the west side of the wharf will soon outnumber the wooden fishing fleet at the head of the wharf. We'll eat Canadian and Japanese fish sandwiches as we view the humpbacks. And soon Bishop Daniel Cronin will come down to bless our condos.

We had a visitor at our tennis courts this week—many of them really. The Year Rounders' and the Junior Tourna-ent are going on simultaneously.



Suzanne Sinaiko and her art work

Pat Luyrink of Harwich had an added handicap. She played with Que Linda against Ksenija Powers and myself. Ksenija teaches languages at Provincetown High School. Born in Yugoslavia, she speaks several languages. When it comes to quick command and need of an action word, the first language to the lips is Serbo-Croatian. So I had to let the ball "pootsie" instead of bounce. We tried to help Pat with the pronunciation of Ksenija. Sort of like pressing an aerosol can. Lots of sh and ah. But as the game got going and all those innuendos that Que Linda and I throw around started to boggle Harwich Pat.

I keep the score in Italian, sometimes Korean. A ball in the net gets a Japanese curse. We for years yelled "Comin' at ya" when we send a ball over to the server. A long and funny Wendy Willard tale; when Nadia Comineche was so popular at the Olympics, we switched the line to "comin' at cha, Nadia." Pat started calling Ksenija, Nadia. "Nice shot, Nadia." No one

corrected her. We didn't notice, thought it was all part of the play. All the interruptions, accents, jokes, and languages had Pat so exhausted that she had to take two aspirin before she could sit next to us on the deck and listen to our running commentary on a men's doubles match on court one. Pat can't wait to come back again. She's taking extra vitamins, naps, reading *Mad Magazine* and watching *Monty Python* in preparation for a rematch.

Have you seen the fashions at Silk n' Feathers? Looks like inside-out clothes, pockets flapping in the breeze? Will we all be dressing like Jimmy Simmons this year?

What a summer. Provincetown is 300 years old. Town Hall is 100 years old, the Statue of Liberty is 100 years old and we may all feel that old by the time Labor Day comes, from all the celebrating.

Please enjoy Terry Pitzner's photographs of Provincetown off season. They are beautiful and are at the gallery at St. Mary's of the Harbor.