

For Immediate Release

The Newburyport Literary Festival

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A World of Nature at the Literary Festival

Newburyport, located where the Merrimack River meets the Atlantic Ocean, is a city inextricably tied to the sea and to the natural life that the river and the ocean support. Residents and visitors alike treasure these resources, and in 2007 the Newburyport Literary Festival will both celebrate nature and call on us all to recognize our role as its steward.

For All the Water in the Sea: The Future of the Oceans

For all our reliance on the ocean, we know surprisingly little about it. Covering 71 percent of the earth's surface, producing more oxygen than the rain forests, and providing more than 100 million tons of food per year, the world's oceans make life possible. But few Americans understand the importance of the oceans to our health and well being, and fewer still recognize that the oceans are under siege.

Two acclaimed authors on the science and future of oceans will discuss the sea's imperiled future. **Deborah Cramer's** book, *Great Waters: An Atlantic Passage*, has been hailed as lyrical, a "vital and eloquent narrative, biblical in scope." In it, history, geology, and warnings of environmental catastrophes are woven into the log of her own voyage across the Atlantic Ocean in a research vessel. **Colin Woodard** is an award-winning journalist and author of, among other books, *Ocean's End: Travels Through Endangered Seas*. To write this "passionate, powerful travelogue," Woodard journeyed from the Grand Banks of Newfoundland and the coral reefs of Belize to the tiny atolls of the central Pacific and the collapsing ice shelves of Antarctica—to witness how people's

lives are already being affected by the impoverishment of our ocean planet.

Birds Being Birds: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Birds and Birdsong

Bird behavior, and birdsong, is as endlessly variable as the colors and patterns of the feathers that birds wear. Even the reasons birds sing are individual, and fascinating for anyone who loves observing the birds living and traveling through the places we call home. **Mike O'Connor** and **Donald Kroodsma** have amassed a wealth of wisdom about this rich and textured world, which they'll share with birdwatchers, nature lovers, and all those interested in learning more about birds. We can learn amazing lessons if we simply pause and take the time to listen to the hidden dramas in our backyards.

Celebrating Rachel Carson

May 27, 2007, is the one-hundredth birthday of Rachel Carson, America's pioneer of the modern environmental movement and author of the landmark book *Silent Spring*. Seldom has a book stirred such emotion, sparked so much controversy, or inspired so many people to act, but *Silent Spring* was no ordinary book and Rachel Carson was no ordinary author.

Rachel Carson worked for many years as an aquatic biologist for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and served as its editor-in-chief from 1949 to 1952. Among her writings is a piece about the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on Plum Island. On Sunday, April 29, the Parker River Refuge will celebrate her life and work with a talk and reading by **Mark Hamilton Lytle**, the author of *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement*.

Nature Books Workshop: Bringing Nature to Life

At Massachusetts Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center, kids and their parents are invited to drop in and take part in book- and nature-related activities for every grade level. Games and science experiments will focus on developing an appreciation and awareness of the natural world and the adventures it holds in store for curious minds of all ages.

About the festival

The 2007 Newburyport Literary Festival (NLF) runs from Friday, April 27, through Sunday, April 29. A three-day celebration of reading, writing, and the love of books, this year's festival features more than 70 writers of distinguished fiction and non-fiction—including short story writers, children's authors, biographers, nature writers, critics, screenwriters, poets, novelists, and journalists—who will read and discuss their work in venues throughout Newburyport's historic downtown.

The vision of the Newburyport Literary Festival is shared by many individuals and organizations. The NLF is especially grateful for the generous support of our founding sponsors, the Newburyport Five Cents Savings Bank Charitable Foundation and the Institution for Savings, who have made it possible for the festival to take root and flourish. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Newburyport Cultural Council, a local agency that is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

All festival events are wheelchair accessible and open to the public. All events are free, except for the opening night gala. For complete information about the festival, including event times and venues, please visit: www.newburyportliteraryfestival.org.