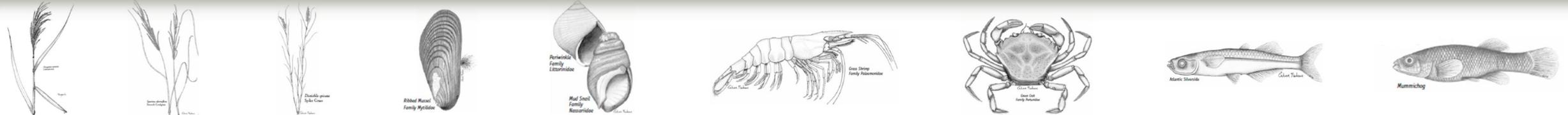




Damde Meadows Restoration

Exploring Damde Meadows



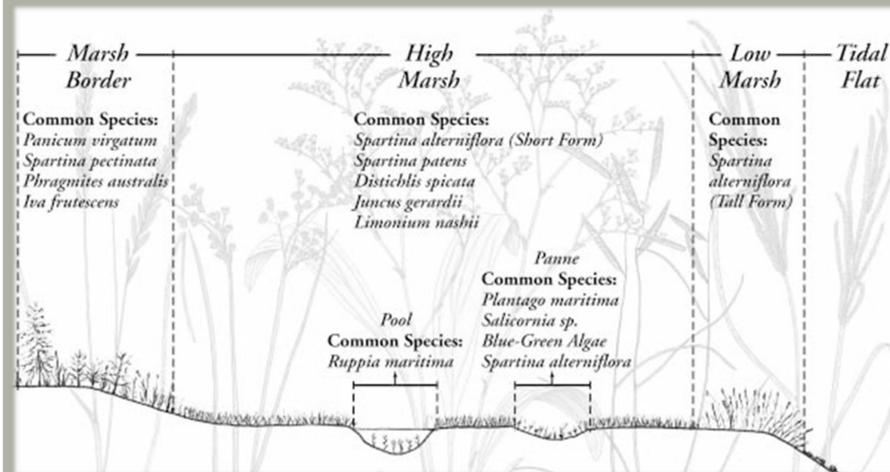
Damde Meadows

Prior to colonial settlement, the 15-acre Damde Meadows basin was a healthy salt marsh ecosystem. However, 300 years of human manipulation have changed the site significantly. Early colonists constructed stone dams at both ends of Damde Meadows to prevent tidal flow from reaching the marsh in order to manage the basin for hay. Over time, the basin became a stagnant pond completely cut off from the ocean. Compared to the originally occurring salt marsh at the site, the resulting pond provided little habitat for wildlife and native plants. To counter this, The Trustees have taken on the restoration of Damde Meadows by removing barriers to natural tidal flow, which will result in the re-emergence of a healthy salt marsh ecosystem.

Understanding the past

Over the past three hundred years many salt marshes were drained and filled because people believed they had little value and were more useful as farmland. As people have grown to better understand the many direct and indirect benefits that salt marshes provide, protecting these unique ecosystems and restoring those that have been altered has become a priority.

Salt Marsh Zonation:



What is a salt marsh?

A salt marsh is a type of wetland that develops in coastal areas which are sheltered from waves and strong winds and subject to tidal flooding. Specialized plants are able to take root in the fine sediment that accumulates as a result of these conditions.

Why are salt marshes important?

Salt marshes are extremely productive ecosystems. They support a great diversity of plants and animals and serve as a nursery for many different types of fish and shellfish. Salt marshes act as a buffer during storms, protecting the shoreline from strong waves and tidal flow. They also anchor sediment, provide erosion control, and take in potential pollutants, helping to keep the water clean. Additionally, they are an aesthetically pleasing coastal landscape.

Restoration of Damde Meadows—What happens next?

With the construction and physical changes to Damde Meadows now complete, The Trustees will continue to monitor the change in plant and animal species using the marsh, water quality, and manage invasive species such as *Phragmites*. The goal of this restoration is to provide a healthy, thriving ecosystem for our native, coastal plants, insects, fish, and birds without limiting public access to the natural treasure of World's End.

Want to help in our efforts? Record your observations of plant and animal life at the ranger station. Remember to include the date and time, so that we can include your sightings in our data collection. Thanks!



In partnership with Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, NOAA Restoration Center, The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, and the Army Corps of Engineers Estuary Habitat Restoration Council.

With special thanks to volunteer Veronica Palermo for her hard work and dedication preparing the ecology content for this sign.