

# Findings from the Field

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"Alewives in Our Marsh"  
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Nature Note

## Alewives in Our Marsh



Geese found in the marsh



A view of the marsh

Our marsh is located in Tenants Harbor near St. George School. You often see geese, ducks, gulls and other different species there. The marsh has become an important part in our classroom. On Thursday April 25th around 1:00 PM, my class went down to the marsh to test the salinity of the marsh. We have been going down to the marsh around once every week, testing the water in the marsh so we know what the salinity is. We wonder if it affects the adult alewives spawning in the marsh.

When we tested the water we ended up getting 0.06 ppt, 0.06 ppt, and 0.27 ppt. What is so significant about the 0.27 ppt sample is that it is in our freshwater marsh and it is near alewife spawning habitats. The samples that we took were each sampled in different spots. On Thursday there had been a previous high spring tide that could be a reason why one of the water samples had a much higher content. At such a high tide water flows freely from the creek into the marsh, up over the little waterfall of the dam.

There have been very few alewives in our marsh ever since 1986, but then the state restocked our marsh with five-hundred alewives each year from 2009-2013. Other re-stocking efforts in Maine have been successful but not here in St. George, and we want to know why.

Our question is "Is the salinity affecting the alewives?" The experiment that our class is planning on doing to answer that question is to have five different fish tanks with alewife eggs and to put different amounts of salt in each tank to see if the alewife eggs are affected by different levels of salinity. We are hoping to share all the information that we have learned with our community. We hope that this information is useful for proving that alewives can survive.