**2015 Gulf of Maine Council Visionary Award**

|  |
| --- |
| Nominee Information:Name: New England Coastal Wildlife AllianceAffiliation: NECWAMailing Address: 11 Clarence Soule Drive, Middleboro MA 02346Phone: 508-946-4345Email: contact@necwa.orgName and contact information of person making the nomination: Name & Affiliation: Carol “Krill” CarsonAddress: 11 Clarence Soule Drive, Middleboro, MA 02346Phone: 508-566-0009email: krillcarson@mac.com |

**Background on why organization is being nominated:**

The New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance (NECWA) is a grassroots organization dedicated to the protection and conservation of marine wildlife found in the waters of the Gulf of Maine. Our mission is to connect people to coastal ecosystems through a combination of research, educational outreach and conservation. NECWA is an all volunteer organization comprised of educators, students and interested members of the public.

NECWA sponsors a Marine Wildlife Internship Program for high school, college, and graduate level students. This program provides a range of experiences in the field of marine science, including field research, data collection and analysis, community outreach, and wildlife conservation.

Summer interns work as research assistants aboard commercial whale-watching vessels. When offshore, they provide commentary, assist at an educational table, collect sighting data and photo-ID humpback whales seen from the vessel. During the fall and winter, interns also assist with school presentations, beach cleanups, wildlife strandings, rescue attempts, and necropsies.

NECWA connects with the public through educational programs offshore and when back on land. Our floating classroom programs, public presentations, symposiums, and scientific conferences, provide information and get people excited about local wildlife. Our children’s programs include PowerPoint presentations, hands-on activities, and marine wildlife artifacts. NECWA also built an inflatable humpback whale made from construction plastic and packaging tape. Students can go inside this life-sized model to get a better perspective of their immense size.

NECWA sponsors the New England Basking Shark and Ocean Sunfish Project (NEBShark), a community-sighting network for two large, pelagic species that feed in the Gulf of Maine. Citizen scientists send in their observations and by doing so, connect with marine wildlife in their area and provide crucial data on these species.

NECWA also collaborates with many local organizations to help support our mission. Each fall and early winter, NECWA works with Mass Audubon Society to rescue cold-stunned sea turtles from Cape Cod beaches. Live animals are transported to rehabilitation facilities while dead animals are necropsied at a later date.

NECWA thanks you for this opportunity.