



SUMMER 2024



Pen and ink illustration by Margaret A. Race

Our Mission: The Winchester Land Trust serves as steward of the town's rural character and open spaces, striving to foster the preservation of Winchester's unique lands and natural resources forever. The Trust informs and educates the community to promote the benefits of land conservation and balanced growth.

Winchester Land Trust (WLT) PROJECT UPDATES

Cannavo Spring Watershed: WLT hopes to close on the 22-acre parcel by the end of September. The property will be re-named in honor of Antonio & Maria Cannavo, the first owners from the Cannavo family who opened the spring to the public.

WLT thanks the general public who contributed over \$3,000 and the organizations from whom we have received grants to make this purchase possible: State of Connecticut DEEP, Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition grant of \$90,000; Northwest Community Bank Foundation, \$5,000; Farmington River Coordinating Committee, \$10,000; Fields Pond Foundation, \$10,000; Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy, \$10,000.

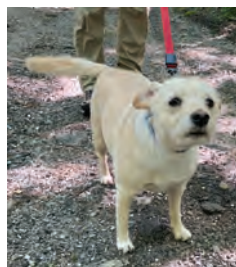
Laurel Ridge: WLT eagerly awaits the announcement of this year's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) grants – which could cover up to 75% of the appraised value. Grantwriter Shelley Harms is ready to write additional grants to cover the cost of preserving Laurel Ridge, the 500-acres between Route 800 and Highland Lake. This tremendous project will protect both the Still River Watershed and its immensely popular Sue Grossman Greenway, as well as the critical Highland Lake Watershed, which helps maintain good water quality in Winsted's "gem."

Sucker Brook Preserve: The 12 acres on Platt Hill Road was generously donated in 2023, and includes access to a beautiful pond. Look for announcements on Facebook and via email for a Fall Migrating Waterfowl birdwatching event.

McNiff Woods: In December 2023, WLT received a donation of 25 acres on Losaw Rd near the border of Colebrook. The parcel feels almost primaeval with dense laurel, thick mosses and ferns, shaded by towering trees. WLT thanks steward Jay Martin for his countless hours tracking down old maps and surveys, and then finding fence posts, corner pins and drill holes in the woods as he marked the boundaries.

Connecticut Trails Day Walk

by Louise Van Alstyne



Lyra is eager to start the hike!

Winchester Land Trust (WLT) led a one-hour hike at 60-acre Rosgen Woods, on Saturday, June 1 to participate in CT Trails Day. It was a beautiful day to be in the woods, listening to various birds which were identified by veteran hikers using bird identification apps. The forest was green and fresh as we walked by the Rugg Brook which flows all the way into Rugg Brook Reservoir. One of the many goals of WLT is to protect and preserve watershed areas. WLT was delighted

to host 17 hikers and invite all of you to join us on our next adventure! Watch your email and WLT's Facebook page.



Hikers gather at the Great Red Oak in Rosgen Woods.

PHOTOS BY JEFF JAKOBSEN

SAVE THE DATE

An Fun Program Sponsored by WLT

Furry Scaly Friends will visit Beardsley Library **Saturday, August 10** at 11AM. Guests may include ferrets, guinea pigs, sugar gliders, rabbits, hedgehogs, chinchilla, prairie dogs, hamsters, tortoises, ackie monitor, iguana, blue tongue skink, hermit crabs, bearded drangon, tarantulas, axoloti, and snakes!

What an opportunity to meet some unusual critters!

REWILDING

by Doug Pfenninger

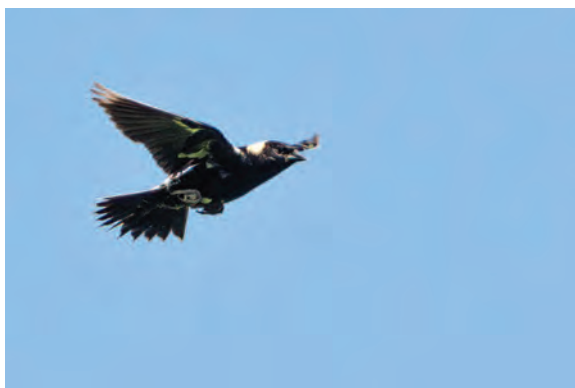
In many places around the planet there is a movement to restore landscapes to something that approximates what they were like before human habitation. Known as Wilding or ReWilding, one of its main goals is to restore biodiversity and resilience to our environment. Hundreds of thousands of acres have been dedicated to this effort, which can be as passive as letting farmland revert to scrub and brush, or as intensive as reintroducing apex predators such as wolves, to restore ecological balance in areas of vast wilderness.

Here in New England, a great deal of rewilding has taken place on its own – our forest have largely recovered from being cleared over the past centuries, and many animal species that were extirpated have returned, including turkeys, bear, beavers, eagles and moose. While it is exciting to witness the return of wilderness icons, the

more important aspect of rewilding is improved resilience of the environment we inhabit. Our changing climate will result in the demise of some species and the success of others. It is critical that we have a large and diverse selection of species to ensure that future ecosystems will be vibrant and healthy.

Land Trusts are playing an important role by preserving properties that contain ecological niches which may harbor fauna and flora that are critical to the survival of a healthy ecosystem, albeit one that may be very different than the one we inhabit today. When the Winchester Land Trust evaluates a property for possible acquisition we consider many potential benefits. In recent years the advent of changes to our climate has made protecting a diverse population of fauna and flora a critical part of our mission.

WLT is fortunate to host nesting bobolinks at both Hurlbut Field and Houlihan Woods – Michael Giordano Tribute Area. Bobolinks nest on the ground in grasslands and are listed as a species of Special Concern. Our farmers delay mowing to allow bobolink young to fledge.



PHOTOS BY CARL WEISEL

NW Regional 7 High School Capstone Students Complete Projects for WLT

High school students in Connecticut must complete a Capstone project before graduating. The Winchester Land Trust (WLT) has been lucky to work with four students from Northwestern Regional School #7. Each student attended part of a board meeting and presented their project to board members.



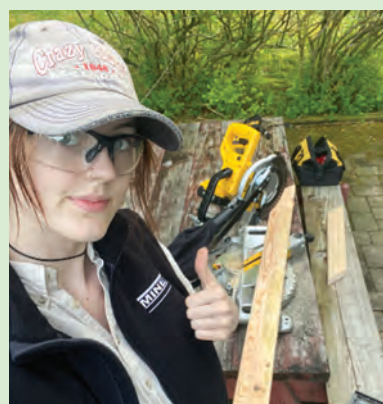
Bella Bird "re-blazed" the Anvil Trail at the Michael Giordano Tribute Area and then led a hike for the general public. Check out the bright blue markers the next time you visit.



Lexi Colpitts is working to remove invasive Winged euonymus (burning bush) from the Blacksmith Homestead property. She is also exposing the beautiful stone walls that surround this parcel which has an old stone foundation.



Reid Hester removed invasive plants (barberry and multiflora rose) at WLT's Marshall Street property and then transplanted native laurel shrubs.



Bella Murphy constructed a kiosk for the Cannavo Spring Watershed property. Bella decorated the kiosk with her own artwork.

Be part of our mission. Stay in touch!

Please make sure we have your current contact information.



Winchester Land Trust

See the latest WLT information on our Facebook page

Visit our website: www.winchesterlandtrust.org.

Email us at winchesterlandtrust@yahoo.com

Call us at 860.379.9622.

Mail to P.O. Box 10, Winchester Center, CT 06094

Winchester Land Trust is grateful for the support to help preserve the beauty around us.

Board of Directors

Jennifer Perga, President

Doug Pfenninger, Vice President

Louise Van Alstyne, Secretary

Joey Pierce, Treasurer

Alan Colavecchio

Barbara Douglas

Gayle Moraski

Kamaren Suwijn

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the Winchester Land Trust will be held on Sunday, August 25 at 4 pm in the gazebo on the Winchester Center Green.



P.O. Box 10
Winchester Center, CT

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
WINSTED, CT
PERMIT NO.11



Do you want to volunteer for Winchester Land Trust?

WLT needs property stewards: a board member will walk a property with you.

Then, as a steward of that property, you visit it at least once a year.

You can also volunteer on clean-up days or trail maintenance days.

Email: winchesterlandtrust@yahoo.com or look for updates on WLT's Facebook page.



PHOTO BY JEFF JAKOBSEN

On June 1, Connecticut Trails Day hikers cross Rugg Brook to enter Rosgen Woods, Winchester