



CANTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

**Spring 2009
Newsletter**

Enjoy Winsor Woods!

Winsor Woods is one of the Land Trust's newest acquisitions, a 16 acre property on the north side of Route 309, the road to West Simsbury. It is the generous donation of Chris and Helen Winsor. Hiking access is provided via a path at the edge of the Winsor's pasture, just east of the Evonsion farm.

Hike in and cross a stone wall to find a carefully laid-out and maintained trail network, the result of years of work by Chris, Helen and family members. There is an intricate system of beautiful trails with white, blue, red and orange paint blazes to guide you through the trails. The hiker who is fortunate enough to discover Winsor Woods will find wonderful mature evergreen and deciduous trees. The trail from the roadside runs along a traditional New England stone wall into the woods. Multiple elevation changes make the hiking interesting as well as a bit challenging.

Having completed the Winsor Woods trails, do a CLCT double! Right around the corner on Case Street is the entrance to the Swan Preserve. Swan has the beautiful Sawmill Brook, as well as four trails for your hiking enjoyment.

To access Winsor Woods by car, park behind the North Canton Firehouse on Cherry Brook Road (please do not block any areas needed by fire apparatus). Walk north on Cherry Brook Road to Route 309 (West Simsbury Road) and make a right. Once you are past the driveway for 10 W. Simsbury, look for an opening in the fence along a stone wall. Follow this trail into Winsor Woods and enjoy!

Hunt for Wild Food with "Wildman" Steve Brill

On Saturday, June 6, 2009 The Canton Land Conservation Trust and Roaring Brook Nature Center present world-famous naturalist "Wildman" Steve Brill, who will provide both a one-hour morning lecture and an afternoon hike through Werner's Woods in search of wild edibles. Brill is best known for having been handcuffed and arrested by undercover park rangers for eating a dandelion in Central Park!

Brill is the author of *Identifying and Harvesting Edible and Medicinal Plants in Wild (and Not-so-Wild) Places* and *The Wild Vegetarian Cookbook* and stars in *Wild Edible Basics*, the first of a video-DVD series on foraging. Brill will offer a lecture in the Center's auditorium beginning at 10:30 AM. Following a one-hour lunch break, an afternoon walk will begin at 12:30 PM.

The cost for both lecture and walk is \$10; any remaining spaces will be \$15 at the door. Pre-registration with payment is required. Additional information is available by calling the Nature Center, 693-0263.

Trailblazer Program at the Connecticut Land Conservation Conference

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) annual Conference was held at Wesleyan University on April 4th with almost all Land Trusts from across the state attending. CLCC had a day filled with workshops and meetings covering a wide array of informative topics.

Mary Ellen Mullins was the presenter at a conference workshop describing the Land Trust's award-winning Trailblazer program. This workshop had the most participants of any at the conference.

The Land Trust's Trailblazer program has involved over 130 families. Fun, family friendly hikes with a theme have brought many families into the Land Trust, and has resulted in increased awareness of the Land Trust and its many hiking trails. The Trailblazer Program received an Education Award from the Land Trust Service Bureau in 2003 and has been increasing in popularity ever since.

Bill Duncan prepared a very artistic slide show presenting a wide variety of Trailblazer activities over the last few seasons including Letterboxing, Orienteering, Fairy House Building, Tree Planting, Full Moon Hike, Sledding and more. The success of the program was highlighted on the big screen by the smiling and enthusiastic faces of the children and parents enjoying the fun, family friendly hikes and spending time in the great out-of-doors. In an age of video games, computers, ipods and cell phones it is more important than ever to get kids to connect to the outside world.

Mary Ellen presented to the Conference ways to start and maintain a Family Adventure program like the Trailblazers in their community to help draw families to participate and donate to their Land Trusts.

The Canton Land Trust is very fortunate to have such a great group of families who enthusiastically participate in the Trailblazer program. We are also fortunate to have people like Rhonda DeWeese, Jan Tanner, Bill Duncan, Alison Ide Pech and Mary Ellen Mullins who regularly give their time and energy to make this program successful.

The monthly hikes run from October to April. The season has come to a close but we will be starting up again in the fall. Families interested in joining the email list should contact MaryEllenMullins@comcast.net.

Eagle Scout Project

In fifth grade I crossed over from Cub Scouts to Boy Scouts. Our first official Boy Scout activity was a campout at the Canton Land Trust Capen Cabin property. As we walked the path to the cabin, I noticed the decrepit pump house with the broken window. Each April when the new scouts joined we'd go to this property and spend the night; each year the building was deteriorating. When I became a Life Scout, I started looking for an Eagle Scout project and decided to work on the pump and the house.

After receiving the necessary approvals, we removed the old pump house. I then rebuilt the pump and had a new reinforced concrete base formed at Tanx R Us. We built the Adirondack style lean-to in sections in my backyard and then had it and the base moved to the site. To complete the project, we landscaped the immediate area and brought in gravel for erosion control. Thank you to all of the scouts in Troop 177 who helped and to the Canton Land Trust for this opportunity.

— Matt Casey, Eagle Scout, Collinsville Boy Scout Troop 177

Uplands Work Party

On a beautiful Saturday, April 18, 2009, a group of volunteers cleared and marked a trail on the Uplands property, which was purchased by the Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT) in the fall of 2006. The group was led by Drew Stone and included CLCT Directors Bill Duncan, Mike Ignatowicz and Barry and Gail Deutsch. Also providing able assistance were members of Girl Scout Troop 66205, including Troop leader Teresa Tracy and Girl Scouts Justine Collins and Leslie Tracy. Nathan Tracy also helped in the clearing and marking effort. After 2 hours of fun work, a well-defined trail was marked providing hikers with a loop to walk the Uplands property. The trail may be entered from a cul-de-sac at the end of Westwood Drive.

Work parties meet the 3rd Saturday of the month (weather permitting) to maintain the many hiking trails that are found on the CLCT properties. If you would like to volunteer for a work party, please contact Drew Stone at drew.stone@comcast.net or call Drew at 860-693-



This sighting of a bobcat was at the home of Canton Land Trust members Mike & Norma Ignatowicz, adjacent to the Uplands Preserve.

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
CANTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST'S ANNUAL PICNIC**



When: Sunday, June 14th
Where: Barry and Gail Deutsch's home, 2 Frey Road, Canton, CT 06019
(Route 44 to Breezy Hill Rd., to Frey Rd)
Time: 4:00 The picnic begins!
There will be election of officers for the coming year and a brief business meeting.

and

2:00 There will be a fun hike. If you want to join the hike up Breezy Hill, onto Tommy's Trail, around the Mary Conklin Nature Preserve and back, please meet at the Deutsches. The hike will be about 4 miles and take about 1 1/2 hours.

*You do not need to bring anything to come, but if you want to bring something, please let Gail know
(693-8454, or b-gdeutsch@comcast.net):*

Appetizer
Vegetable

Dessert
Rolls

Drinks
Paper / plastic goods

Wildlife Research on Land Trust Properties

The Canton Land Conservation Trust is not an organization that actively engages in wildlife research. Yet, as steward for more than 1800 acres of preserved lands in Canton, the Trust does have the opportunity and, in fact, an obligation to assist in determining the presence and status of a wide variety of wildlife in the Farmington Valley. With a number of unique habitats amidst its holdings, there are a number of citizen-science projects with which Land Trust members can participate over the course of the year. Perhaps the most well-known of these studies is the annual Audubon Society sponsored Christmas Bird Count. The Christmas Count is the longest running of all citizen participation field studies. The first Christmas Count was held on the White House grounds during the administration of Teddy Roosevelt as an alternative to hunting birds with a shotgun. Christmas Bird Counts are done throughout North America, as well as in numerous tropical countries. The Count has been a valuable tool for monitoring population trends of migrants and resident species. The objective is to Count all birds seen and heard within a fifteen mile diameter circle. Much of Canton is within the circle encompassed by the Barkhamsted Count. Land Trust preserves harbor many wintering birds from hawks and owls to woodpeckers, finches, and tiny kinglets. If you don't care for the cold of winter, the Connecticut Ornithological Association sponsors a Summer Bird Count in June. This Count may provide more pleasant weather conditions, however, tallying birds is far more difficult. There are many more birds to find, and they are often hidden in the tree tops making identification difficult. Knowledge of bird songs can be extremely helpful on the Summer Bird Count.

If waking early in the morning is not your cup of tea, perhaps the Farmington Valley Butterfly Count will be more to your liking. Sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association, this year's Butterfly Count will be held on Saturday, July 25th. Butterflies are easily photographed and can be later identified by those more familiar with the species that are found in our area. Watch for parties of observers fanning out throughout town with nets and cameras in hand.

There are also a number of more informal surveys now ongoing. Since 1999, Roaring Brook Nature Center has been conducting a box turtle survey in Canton. Residents finding box turtles in Canton are urged to contact the Center, as this study has been providing valuable information on this Connecticut species of special concern. In spring, there has been an ongoing search for unusual amphibians. A goal of this project is to find and preserve the vernal pools that these animals use for breeding. Frogs and salamanders are important indicators of environmental health and there is still much to be learned about these animals. Ten years ago, a second grade student at Cherry Brook Primary School found two Jefferson's Salamanders in her backyard. In spite of repeated searches, these remain the only individuals of this rare species to be found in Canton, although vernal pools on the Land Trust's Upland Drive are one area of interest in the search for this elusive creature.

One last study, and a relatively new one, is an ongoing survey of another group of valuable species – the dragonflies. The fastest flying insects, dragonflies are fascinating creatures that shared the skies with pterodactyls. For the past several years, Roaring Brook Nature Center has offered a summer program for students inventorying dragonflies of Canton. Among recent finds is a population of the Tiger Spiketail, a rare species for which only three small populations have been found in the entire area. Land Trust preserves, large and small, provide important habitats for many of these sought after creatures. Additional work is planned for early this summer. In your travels through Land Trust properties this summer, why not take along a camera in order to document your observations. Perhaps you can make the next important wildlife discovery in Canton.



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cantonlandtrust.org

SPRING / SUMMER 2009 CALENDAR

JUNE

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| Saturday, June 6 | 10:30 | Lecture by "Wildman" Steve Brill- Roaring Brook Nature Center |
| | 12:30 | Hike with Steve Brill at Werner's Woods |
| Sunday, June 14 | 2:00 | Hike around Mary Conklin Preserve-meet at the Deutsches |
| | 4:00 | Annual Meeting and Potluck Dinner-home of Barry & Gail Deutsch |
| Saturday, June 20 | 9:00-12:00 | Work Party - Meet at Cherry Brook Grocery |

JULY

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| Saturday, July 18 | 9:00-12:00 | Work Party - Meet at Cherry Brook Grocery |
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AUGUST

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| Saturday, August 15 | 9:00-12:00 | Work Party - Meet at Cherry Brook Grocery |
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