

CANTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST, Inc.

P.O. Box 41
Canton Center, CT 06020

NEWSLETTER

Spring, 1991

LAND: OUR MOST ENDURING GIFT

The Canton Land Conservation Trust is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. Its purpose is to preserve the natural resources of the Town of Canton. All Land Trust properties are open to Canton residents for passive recreation. There are currently over 600 acres in Canton and Barkhamsted that will be preserved forever and enjoyed by present and future generations.

1991 Annual Meeting

The 1991 Annual Meeting of the Canton Land Trust will be held at the Smith Christmas Tree Farm on June 1st. The agenda includes hikes and activities followed by a barbeque and the business meeting.

A hike of Ratlum Mountain will leave from the farm at 3 P.M. This will be a fairly demanding trek. Participants are urged to wear appropriate footgear and to anticipate some areas of steep slope.

A shorter hike will leave the farm at 3:45. This will take the Craig Trail to the "Outlook" at the top of the farm. Although there are some steep parts to this trail, there is plenty of level trail and we will maintain a casual pace.

An "orienteering" activity will be provided. Between 3:00 and 5:00 everyone is encouraged to try their elementary map reading and compass skills to find stations located throughout the farm. Maps will be provided and Jay Kaplan will have a nature-related question to be answered at each station. Participants will receive an award for their efforts. This should be a fun activity for the family.

Everyone is invited to visit the house and barn which are now owned by the Land Trust. Soda will be available throughout the afternoon. Hamburgers and hotdogs will be ready at 5:00 P.M.

The meeting of the entire membership will follow the barbeque. The agenda will include nomination and election of new Directors, the Treasurer's report, and an update on recent CLCT news.

Stich Property

Several years ago the Town of Canton took ownership of a thirty acre parcel of land in lieu of taxes owed on it. Because this piece of land, referred to as "The Stich Property", is a unique natural area, The Nature Conservancy, a national organization, considers the parcel to be of prime importance and has offered to buy the land in order to guarantee its preservation. It is the expressed intention of The Nature Conservancy to deed the land to the Canton Land Conservation Trust to carry out the conservation of this parcel.

Presently Canton's Board of Selectmen is considering means of transferring this parcel directly to the CLCT so the land will be owned by Canton residents and will be forever available for passive use by the public.

This beautiful piece of land, very steep and rocky, lies between land already held by The Nature Conservancy and Simsbury's Onion Mountain Park on the Canton/Simsbury town line. Thus, it would be a natural extension of land already preserved.

The CLCT Board of Directors urges residents to look for this issue to be presented at an upcoming town meeting and to express support for having this parcel preserved under the stewardship of the Canton Land Conservation Trust. Letters to the Board of Selectmen in support of preserving this property would be helpful.

Rabies Information

The CT Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) has

alerted Connecticut residents to the potential spread of a new strain of rabies in the northeast. The rabies virus has spread north into Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York, and, in early April of this year, two rabid raccoons were found in Ridgefield, CT, near the New York border.

While it is unlikely that rabid animals will be found in the Farmington Valley this season, it is appropriate that we understand and follow new measures to protect our families from rabies. The DEP has announced that rehabilitation of injured or orphaned raccoons, skunks and foxes will no longer be permitted in Connecticut. (Please note that it is illegal to own or keep any wild animal without a permit from the DEP.) Homeowners should also be aware that the State will no longer allow the relocation of nuisance raccoons or skunks. Animals trapped in live traps must be released on site or destroyed. Live trapping and relocation of other species of other species of nuisance wildlife such as woodchucks, opossums, and squirrels still will be permitted.

The expected spread of the rabies virus across Connecticut in the next several years will require changes in the ways that we live with wildlife. Here are a few steps that homeowners may take to ensure the health of our families, neighbors, and pets against rabies:

- Owners of cats and dogs should make certain that their pets are inoculated by a veterinarian -- rabies vaccination for dogs, and now cats, is required by law. This is particularly crucial with cats, who often share outdoor feeding bowls with wildlife. Rabies can be spread to any warm-blooded animal by bites, scratches or contact with infected saliva.
- Do not feed wild animals in your backyard. Feeding these animals causes them to congregate and helps to spread disease, as well as to expose your pets to diseases such as rabies and distemper.

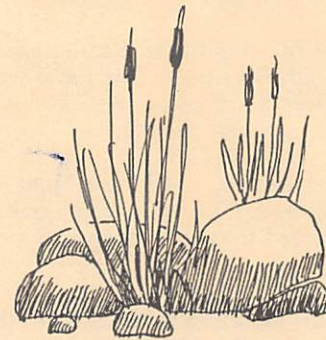
- Make sure your chimneys are capped. As natural den trees are felled, raccoons gravitate toward chimneys since they are dry, warm, and safe from predators. A competent chimney sweep can cap your chimney so that it can be used for fires but becomes inaccessible to wildlife. If you have raccoons living in your chimney, call the Roaring Brook Nature Center for advice. Do not attempt to remove them on your own.

Changing our habits now will make it easier to enjoy wildlife in the future. It is imperative that wild animals be left alone. If you have concerns about animals found in the woods or around your home, please call the Roaring Brook Nature Center before you pick them up or otherwise move them.

Remember that most wild animals are not sick. However, should you see an animal that appears to be acting abnormally, please call the Roaring Brook Nature Center or the DEP's Wildlife Unit. Please keep in mind that rabies is a very serious disease in humans and is almost always fatal unless treated immediately. If you suspect that you have been exposed to rabies, contact your doctor immediately.

Roaring Brook Nature Center: 693-0263
DEP's Wildlife Unit: 566-4683

(Thanks to the Roaring Brook Nature Center for their assistance in preparing this article.)



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Wisley Gardens - Survey