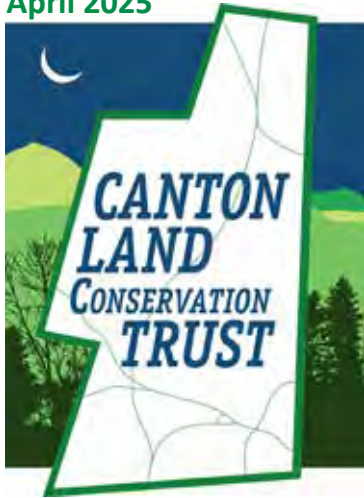


April 2025



Canton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.
PO Box 41
Canton Center, CT 06020

Our trails are open and lovely at any time of year.

Here are a few that are especially beautiful in spring. Detailed directions and maps can be found on the Land Trust's website at cantonlandtrust.org.

View Before the Leaves Fill In

Smith Tree Farm – Doyle Road

Ted Wright Trail, Charlotte Craig Trail

Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve –

East side of Breezy Hill Road
Barbour Woods Spur

Swan Preserve – Case Street

Ted Cowles Trail

Sweetheart Mountain Trails –

Dunne Avenue, Freedom Drive

Onion Mountain Preserve –

Gracey Road, Blue Trail

Listen to Birds

Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve –

East side of Breezy Hill Road
Fred Feibel Trail
West side, Bunny Cut Trail

Vernal Pools

Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve –

East side of Breezy Hill Road
Fred Feibel Trail
West side, Tom Perry Trail

Pratt Preserve – Cherry Brook Road

Uplands Preserve – Westwood Drive

Wild Water

Pratt Preserve – Cherry Brook Road

Goedecke-Humphrey Preserve – West Road

More than Land Preservation

A message from Canton Land Conservation Trust President Phil Philbrick



When you think about land trusts, what comes to mind?

Many people probably think about protecting properties in their natural state. It may well be the most important function of a land trust, and the Canton Land Conservation Trust is happy to note that we have over 2,000 acres either owned outright or subject to a stewardship easement protected against development.

However, there are many other functions which we are working on and hope to do more of in the future.

Invasive Plants Margery Winters, president of the Simsbury Land Trust Board of Trustees and assistant director of Roaring Brook Nature Center, put together an excellent, educational booklet about invasive plants. With some minor changes, we are creating a Canton version for distribution in town. We are also looking into initiatives to work on with the town, both in terms of education and eradication efforts. Our website, under **'What We Do'**, has extensive information on invasive plants with links to numerous external sites for additional detail.

Education The Land Trust has often sponsored or cosponsored lectures on nature subjects, but we are also in the second year of a more substantive collaboration. Many parents

of home-schooled students arrange for experts to provide instruction in their fields. Former Canton resident Samantha Corbett, of Barkhamsted, organizes a class to teach students about nature. She holds spring, summer and fall classes at the Pratt Preserve on Cherry Brook Road, providing an immersive outdoor experience.

Collaboration Board Director Nate Cantwell has been working closely with high school classes. Students have built several projects, resulting in picnic tables and bridges. The Land Trust provides expert advice and funding for materials, while students learn practical wood working and gain the satisfaction that their project will be enjoyed by Canton residents.

Organized Hikes The Land Trust sponsors a series of hikes throughout the year, varying from a simple walk through our properties to themed hikes, led by experts talking about birds, pollinators, lichens or the history of some of the abandoned properties in town.

Still, only 4% of Canton's residents are members of the Land Trust. Please talk to your neighbors, friends and family and encourage them to visit our properties and become members of this volunteer-led organization.

The Mission of the Canton Land Conservation Trust is to acquire, preserve, and protect land of scenic, natural or historic value within the Town of Canton; to maintain this land and its plant and animal life using the best conservation, wildlife habitat, and forestry practices available; and to promote public awareness, understanding, and enjoyment of the land.



Calendar of Events

Tue. March 25 – 6:30 pm

“Bring Back the Pollinators” CLCT sponsored talk by Lisa Newell at Canton Public Library.

Sat. March 29 – 10 am

Vernal Pool Hike with Terri Kucia and Tom Noonan at the Uplands Preserve on Westwood Drive.

April – Hike TBD

Sat. May 3 – 10 am

Invasive Plant Pull at Mills Pond Park. Join the CLCT Pollinator Pathway crew and the Lions Club for an invasive plant ID, cut, pull and dig. More info at CantonLandTrust.org.

Sun. May 4 – 7:15 am

Bird Hike at Sun, Wind and Woodland Preserve with Jay Kaplan. Meet at the preserve’s parking lot off of Breezy Hill Road.

June 7 or 8 – National Trails Day Hike with Nate Cantwell and Sarah Faulkner will be held at the Pratt Preserve. Stay tuned for details.

Sun. June 8 – CLCT Annual Meeting and Picnic at Pratt Preserve

July or August, a hike will be scheduled with Alex Clarke at the Sweetheart Mountain Preserve.

As with all hikes, wear appropriate boots and clothes. Bring equipment, field guides, binoculars, hydration, bug repellent, etc. – and your friends and family.

For more information about any hike, visit the Land Trust [website](http://CantonLandTrust.org) or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/CantonLandTrust) page. If you would like to volunteer to lead a hike or plan an event please contact Scott Persing at spersingcj@gmail.com.



We had many stops in the woods to look at the trees and observe the release of the leaves as we let go of any stress and tension of our hectic lives.

We took time to look and listen and harmonize with the outdoors surrounding us and were lucky enough to spot a wood sprite.



Membership Drive

Board Directors Sarah Faulkner and Holly Hambleton reported that the membership signs this winter were a success. Twenty five lawn-type signs were placed at our trail-heads around town by CLCT volunteer Alisa Phillips-Griggs in late November announcing our Annual Membership Drive. Both old and new members responded. Most of the signs survived intact, but many of the wire supports were bent due to the winter winds. We plan on using them again next year after making a few repairs.

Moonlight Hike

The Board of Directors made the tough decision on Feb. 7 to cancel our annual Moonlight Hike to the Smith Horse Barn due to treacherous conditions. Many thanks to Karen Manternach for the numerous hours spent planning and rounding up volunteers for this event. We appreciate all the volunteers who stepped up. Hope to see you next year.

Vernal Pool Hike

Volunteers Tom Noonan and Terri Kucia led a vernal pool hike on March 29 on the CLCT Uplands Preserve. The group of 14 adults and 6 children took a short hike along the Blue Trail to the vernal pool. Vernal pools are found throughout the forests and are the result of melted snow and rain trickle in early spring amid leaf litter. They make a great breeding ground for salamanders, frogs and peepers.

Hikers were excited to learn about vernal pools – what they are, who lives there, and when to find life in them. The group used nets, scoops, waders, microscopes and lenses to catch and examine life in the pond. They found salamander egg masses and saw a couple of frogs. Soon the eggs will hatch, and the pool will have tadpoles that will grow quickly and move into the forest before the pond dries up in early summer.

November Chi Hike

By Mary Ellen Mullins

The 2024 Canton Land Conservation Trust fall “Chi” hike was a fun outdoor day on the Swan Preserve. We harnessed the energy of autumn while incorporating stretching, grounding and the breathing elements of Tai chi and yoga.



Note: A wood sprite is a pure and sacred spirit; a mythical creature that lives in the woods.



CLCT Volunteer Board of Directors

President:

Stephen (Phil) Philbrick

Vice President:

Jay Weintraub

Secretary:

Sarah Faulkner

Treasurer:

Christian Winkler

Board Members

Theresa Sullivan Barger

Karen Berger

Nate Cantwell

Alexander Clarke

Anne Duncan

Bob Evenski

Mike Gotaski

Zbigniew Grabowski

Holly Hambleton

Jay Kaplan

Peter Keyo

Mary Ann Mahony

Karen Manternach

Jennifer Mason

Harold Mullins

John Pech

Scott Persing

Bill Porri

Betty Stanley

An Office and a Meeting Place

By Anne Duncan

After many years of discussing the idea of having an office, the Canton Land Conservation Trust board finally accomplished its goal. The North Canton Methodist Church offered us space at a very minimal, yearly cost. They also welcomed our use of their large community room for meetings.

Last September, board members gathered all sorts of Land Trust materials that they had been safekeeping. The vast amount of material included historical documents, photos, posters, cabinets and brochures.

Judy Cantwell offered to organize it all, which she did over the next five months. We thank her for all the time she volunteered to help us.



Land Trust Board members gather at The North Canton Methodist Church for our first meeting in our new shared space on March 25.

In May, Land Trust President Phil Philbrick will speak to the church's congregation about our organization. This presentation will be open to the public.

Become a Member or Renew for 2025

Your Membership with CLCT runs from Jan. 1- Dec. 31.

Act today and you will get on the list for year-end renewal.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone (cell) _____

Pay by check payable to:

Canton Land Conservation Trust (CLCT)

Mail to: CLCT, PO Box 41, Canton Center, CT 06020

Pay Online: CantonLandTrust.org/membership

Give a Gift Membership to:

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone (cell) _____

NEW RENEWAL GIFT

\$25 _____ Individual

\$50 _____ Family

\$100+ _____ Conservationist

\$250+ _____ Preservationist

\$500+ _____ Naturalist

\$1000+ _____ Guardian

\$ 100+ _____ Business

\$ _____ Donation

\$ _____ TOTAL CONTRIBUTION

(Membership is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law)



Use the code to pay by Credit Card.

Additional gift memberships can also be entered. Email required to acknowledge your gift.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

CLCT has many ways for you to get involved.

- Trail Maintenance Mowing Tree Planting Invasive Removal
- Social Media Advertising & Photography Event Planning Law
- Finance Grant Writing Property Research Children's Programs
- Hike Leader Property Steward Pollinator Pathway

Stone Steps and Switchbacks Improve Onion Mountain Trail

By Bob Evenski

The Onion Mountain Blue-Orange Trail rewards hikers at the top with an unobstructed view of Talcott Mountain and the Heublein Tower. The hike starts from the Simsbury Blue Trail along West Mountain Road in Simsbury. The Simsbury Blue Trail is flat and easy but does have a lengthy wet area at one point. Last fall, trail crews replaced a "pallet bridge" with stones. That is only one of several improvements along this 1¼ mile trail to the top.

Some very ambitious work was done along the switchback as the Orange-Blue Trail progresses up the mountain. Of course, this is where things become both rocky and steep. The large turn in the switchback was completely rebuilt, and much of the trail along that area was significantly reworked. Toward the upper end of the switchback, two large trees took out the entire trail. The trees were cleared, but the trail needed a small re-route.



Above the switchback, more than 80 stone steps were added to the slope because its steepness made the descent difficult. Six stone steps were also added at a turning point a little below the switchback.

While the upper portion of the Blue-Orange Trail is challenging, it is definitely a more pleasant hike because of all the work done by five work crews who hauled tools up the

trail, dug into the mountain, carried stones across the slope and placed them as steps. You can thank those volunteers as you enjoy the hike to the top with a view to the east.

Onion Mountain Volunteers:

Giorgio Maglia, Tracy Ericson, Martin Dodd, Charlie Page, Phil Philbrick, Steve Jingst, John Bowen, Tim Boncek, Beth McCabe, Roger Frigon, Phil Hartman, Alex Clark, Scott Lonkoski

Swan Trail Improvements

By Bob Evenski

Canton Land Conservation Trust volunteers are constantly working to improve trails for hikers. Over the course of several days last fall, trail crews made improvements to the Red and Yellow Trails at the Swan Preserve.

On a very wet area along the Red Trail, a short distance from the bridge to the north, volunteers added a three-board crossing. The crossing is too small to be called a bridge, but it does keep hikers out of an area that sometimes looks like a small stream.

On the Yellow Trail, just as you step off the bridge to the south, crews made a minor change that will provide a much better hiking experience. They re-routed the trail several feet away from the brook to more even ground. This eliminates a very rocky and somewhat challenging segment.



A little further along the Yellow Trail, as it turns away from the brook, volunteers did additional work. On the uphill slope above the brook, they added eight water breaks to direct water off that portion of the trail. This area becomes very wet in the spring and had begun to erode.

These improvements will make hiking the Swan Preserve even more enjoyable.

Swan Preserve Volunteers:

Scott Lonkoski, Martin Dodd, Steve Jingst, Tim Boncek, Jim Magennis

Two New Bridges on Our Trails

By Nate Cantwell

Two years ago, Canton High School (CHS) students built, as a senior project, a 20-foot arch bridge that now stretches across the stream at the bottom of the Tommy Ryan Trail. The Canton Land Conservation Trust is pleased to now have two more bridges on our trails, both, again, as a result of students' efforts.

An eight-foot arch bridge now crosses the stream at the west end of the Fred and Miller Feibel Trail. It is the work of several class of 2024 CHS students, guided by teachers Eric Tucker and Brandon Richard. The bridge was installed this past fall with 10-foot approaches and was decked on-site with donated planks.

The second new bridge was built by CHS senior Mason Buckley, class of 2025. A 12-foot arch bridge now carries the Arthur and Eunice Sweeton Trail well uphill of the eight-foot bridge. Mason completed the entire

in-shop portion on his own in the CHS shop. He and his father generously moved the bridge to the trailhead for us. In shifts, the Buckleys, plus a number of muscular Land Trust volunteers, carried the bridge a significant distance through the woods and installed it over the stream.

Both new bridges replaced rock crossings that were occasionally underwater. (Dogs, of course, can still take the original wet route if they like). Each of these bridges took 40-plus hours of on-site work to complete and have reinforced concrete abutments that hopefully will last as long as the bridges they support. Thanks, once again, goes out to CHS students and teachers and CLCT volunteers for enhancing our trails.



Driveways, Parking Areas and Riverbank Improved at Pratt Preserve

By Nate Cantwell

The Pratt Preserve received a lot of attention last summer. Eight trees along the two driveways, in addition to others immediately threatening the cabin, were removed professionally by Woodlands Tree Service. A great group of Canton Land Conservation Trust volunteers cleaned up the dropped trees.

The paved apron at the road and the stone-covered parking area along the road were installed after Connecticut DOT approval and receipt of permit. Skip Alford devised our engineering plans, Tom Reardon broke ground and placed stone, and J. Fragale & Sons paved the apron. The parking lot will accommodate eight cars. Additional parking is available on the adjacent grass. We'll be adding an informational kiosk and landscaping.

During summer storms, the brook reached a high enough point

three times to top the large stump by the bridge. Rip-rap has been added near the west side of the bridge for stabilization and at the base of the north driveway to prevent erosion. Once again, volunteers spent a large part of a day getting it done.

The work was funded through a grant and monetary contributions by Land Trust members. Many thanks to these companies, individuals and volunteers for helping to keep the Pratt Preserve safe and functional.

Should anyone wish to identify (and possibly sponsor) other projects on Land Trust property, please contact us.



Adopt or Sponsor a Project

Looking for a way to help out but don't have the time or ability to move mountains? Consider donating money, supplies or services.

Contact Nate Cantwell
at mcclavecantwell@aol.com

CLCT Preserves. Hallelujah, it's finally spring!



Canton Land Conservation Trust
P.O. Box 41
Canton Center, CT 06020

Town Boards Considering 'DarkSky' Guidelines for People and Wildlife

By Theresa Sullivan Barger

For more than a year, the Conservation Commission has been studying the concept of "dark skies" and working with the Planning & Zoning Commission to draft a proposed town regulation to augment town lighting regulations. They plan to suggest taking advantage of updated technology around nighttime lighting.

Nearly half of Earth's species are nocturnal, and darkness is an essential part of their habitat. Many species rely on natural light and dark patterns to navigate, nest, mate and hide from predators.

Conservation Commission members looked at how light pollution affects bird migration, insect mortality, including pollinators like moths, and the navigation and behaviors of other nocturnal animals, said Kevin Erwin, Commission chair. "Insects are key to a healthy ecosystem," he said, but nighttime lighting kills many insects.

Recommendations are still being finalized, but the Commission expects to provide education and recommendations for how town-owned properties, businesses and residents can meet their lighting needs, while promoting public health, safety, privacy and wildlife habitat, said Commission member Garry Tilton. **DarkSky International** is a good resource for more information, in addition to the voluntary **Lights Out CT** pledge.

Canton already has regulations for businesses to limit light pollution while providing lighting for safety and security. The Commission's recommendations will offer cost-saving ideas with added health benefits for people and wildlife.

The Commission is finalizing its recommendations and plans to bring them to the Planning & Zoning Commission for consideration and potential adoption.