



The Lyme Land Conservation Trust

2016 Summer Newsletter

Restored River Thriving After Dam Removal

Sally Harold

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A dam removal project is always full of excitement and unknowns. Certainly there is the anticipation of how the river will form, what welcome surprises may be uncovered, and the ultimate return of migratory fish and river species. And then there are the unknowns of *just* how the river will form and what unanticipated challenges might appear. The Ed Bills Pond Dam Removal and River Restoration project on Salem Road on the East Branch of the Eightmile River in Lyme had surprises and challenges.

When the dam demolition crew began work early last fall, the pond level was dropped slowly and the new

much of the former impoundment. In places the leaf layer was over seven feet thick. This made access to the historic stream channel challenging for heavy machines (and people). This situation required us to make changes to the planned access. Working closely with our regulatory agencies, we added large stones and logs along portions of the channel to provide stability while the river channel settles and vegetation develops.

Over time, these built features will become less visible and the site will look more natural. As planned, root wads (the lower trunk of a tree with intact roots) were installed in the streambank to create habitat, and a gravel point bar at the big stream bend was constructed. With a warm start to the winter, the construction crew worked until January 5, returning this spring to complete site work, including the planting of trees and shrubs.

We wondered about the viability of the dormant seed bank, and how the excessive upland leaf pack would decompose. This site continues to surprise us. The old pond lilies are trying to grow in the upland leaf pack and despite the leaf layer, the upland area that was seeded is greening up. Most thrilling is the look of the southeast corner where no work was done. This corner is thriving. Small seeps off the southern hillside create a rich mosaic of wetland and watercourse. This area



**The new section of the East Branch
of the Eightmile River after the dam removal**

and the entire site will continue to restore natural function over time, offering insight into how systems rebound.

In early June, Steve Gephard (CT DEEP) and Sally Harold (The Nature Conservancy) snorkeled the new river channel. Downstream of large rocks they saw ruby red sands from garnets. Brook, brown and rainbow trout were swimming in the channel, as were three little musk turtles. At that old riffle, a longnose dace swam in place. The stream is coming back and the site is looking better and better.

We haven't had a big storm since the project was completed, but we are enthusiastic about how well the site is coming along already. As the adage says "Some things improve with time." We believe this to be true in terms of this dam removal.

This project couldn't have been completed without the assistance and support of our many, many project partners who offered critical technical assistance, hands-on labor, funding and so much more. We are so grateful.



Photo courtesy of The Nature Conservancy.

Amy Singler (left) and Sally Harold on site

channel began to find its course. The river scoured long-hidden boulders and a rock riffle. The beavers moved out, providing an interesting glimpse into their normally underwater dens.

The draw down also exposed a deep deposit of leaves throughout

E-Bird App

Lisa Niccolai

Environmental Director

Do you love bird watching? The Land Trust needs your help.

Knowing what species of birds are found on Land Trust Preserves can help guide our management and future acquisition. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society have created eBird, a powerful real-time, online checklist program that collects and tracks data entered by enthusiastic bird watchers all over the globe.

Visit ebird.org and click on "Submit Observations," where you can

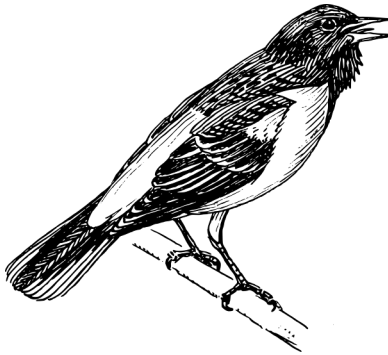


Image: Public Domain

Baltimore Oriole

create a free account and start entering the birds you observe. Or click on "Explore Data" to see what others have entered.

As a Citizen Scientist, the information you collect helps guide strategic conservation and management both locally and on a much larger scale. We would love to have data specific to Land Trust Preserves, but observations from your backyard are also helpful. We can then access the data and use this information for management plans, conservation efforts and education. It's fun, easy to use, with plenty of great information on the website.

Nine Species of Fish Pass Through Fishway

By Tim Wildman

Senior Fisheries Biologist, Diadromous Fisheries Restoration and Enhancement Program, Inland Fisheries Division, CTDEEP – Old Lyme

The Moulson Pond Fishway and infrared video fish monitoring system opened on March 24, 2016, and operated for 100 days, closing on July 1. The fish video review for the season has been completed only from the opening to June 6 so far. Additional fish passage occurred from June 6 to closure, but not in numbers large enough to change the total counts of anadromous species significantly.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

We greatly appreciate the volunteers who contribute many hours to maintaining our beautiful preserves. In the past year, volunteers cleared invasive plants and debris from the colonial foundation in Mt. Archer Woods, trimmed encroaching vegetation on the red trail in Eno Preserve and worked on trails in the Lyme Corner Trails Preserves.

Thanks also to Emily Bjornberg, our fishway coordinator, and all of the monitors who look after the fish ladder.

If you would like to help, please email openspace@townlyme.org to be put on the e-list to get notification about upcoming work parties.

During this time, any fish successfully exiting the upstream end of the fishway were detected by the video monitoring system. Video was later reviewed and fish were identified by species and counted.

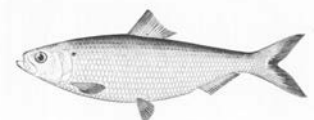
The video monitoring system operated for 98% of the fishway operational season, generating very clear imagery. Normally, fish that migrate at night can behave erratically when encountering bright incandescent light, causing them to drop back down the fishway, but the infrared camera and illuminator seemed to have little effect on their behavior.

During the monitoring period in 2016, a total of 3,844 fish, representing nine different species, passed through the fishway into Moulson Pond. Of these, 3,554 anadromous fish (comprised of four species; 92% of total) were counted; 10 American Shad; 83 Alewife; 3,421 Blueback Herring; and 40 Sea Lamprey. Most of the 290 non-diadromous (resident) species counted were White Sucker (246; 85%). Additionally, 32 Brown Trout and 10 Brook Trout were counted passing upstream.

As in 2015, the 2016 run of Blueback Herring were dominant. Because 2016 is only the second year of collecting fish passage data by this method, it

is impossible to draw conclusions from the data. For example; compared to last year's Blueback Herring run count of 11,690, it appears that 2016 was a poor year for that species, but this assumes that last year's Blueback Herring run was typical for the Eightmile River, which we just don't know. It is clear that the run timing was very similar between last year and this year, but the successive 1,000+ fish days seen in 2015 never materialized this year.

On a positive note, passing 3,000+ Blueback Herring into the excellent spawning and rearing habitat of the Eightmile River is no small achievement and it ensures that the run will continue for years to come. We need to continue monitoring the fish runs through the Moulson Pond Fishway in order to make any sense of the strength of any single run of fish. We also need continued vigilance in the operation of the fishway, which has always been a key component in its success. The core group of volunteer fishway monitors at this site ensures that the fishway is operating at its highest possible efficiency.



Henry Wood Elliot

The Lyme Land Conservation Trust Newsletter

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Photo by Leonard Green

Making a bequest to the Lyme Land Conservation Trust will help protect what you value most in Lyme — our open space.

Simply name us as a beneficiary of your will. To learn about our Heritage Society for Planned Giving and how to include the Land Trust in your estate plans, contact
Milt Walters at
milton.walters@lymelandtrust.org

**Heritage Society for
Planned Giving
welcomes new members:**
Sue Hessel & Karen Dahle
Shirley Howard
Donald Millerbernd

Earth Day



Photo by Eliza Sharp

To celebrate Earth Day, fifth graders from Lyme Consolidated School took a field trip with the Lyme Land Trust to the Red Mill on Mt. Archer Road to learn about the fish ladder there. Thank you to the volunteers who helped make this possible: Eliza Sharp, Emily Bjornberg, and Sue Cope, and a special thank you to our hosts Sue Hessel and Karen Dahle, who took the time to share the history of the mill with the students.

Habitat Management Helps Rare Wildlife Rebound

By Mary Guitart

Newsletter Editor

Wendolyn Hill

Land Trust Director

And Lyme Open Space Coordinator

In mid-June, in a program sponsored by The Lyme Land Trust and the Town of Lyme, a small group was able to tour a private woodland in Lyme and see first-hand how wildlife habitat management techniques can increase many wildlife populations now in decline.

These techniques have become especially important in the past few decades. As Connecticut's forests have matured, the dense tree canopy has shaded out vital food plants and sheltering cover for a number of species, and many mammal and bird populations have declined as a result. A large deer population has added to the problem by heavy browsing of low-growing vegetation.

The landowner had attended a Coverts Project Seminar several years ago, and she was able to put what she learned into practice, with the help of her property manager, who has a background in wildlife land management. Some of these techniques include opening up larger patches in wooded land, creating brush piles or thickets for small animals, and leaving

songbirds and other wildlife have returned. The woodcock, as well as other species that have become rare in the state, depend upon early successional habitat for survival. This includes meadows with a variety of wild plants and dense stands of young trees and bushes that are created when pastureland is abandoned or after a section of mature forest has

been cleared and allowed to grow back. This process provides food and shelter for many small animals that are becoming rare in the state.

Several years ago, Mark cleared a large section of forest to allow the natural decades-long back-to-forest succession to occur. He was careful to rid the area of invasive plant species first. He does not use herbicides for this, but mows with a brush hog and then, as the stumps regenerate, weed whacks vegetation in order to kill the plants.

As an experiment, Mark divided one section of the property into four lots. He surrounded two lots with fencing to exclude deer. In one fenced lot, he scarified (ground up) the earth and cleared up the debris. In the other fenced section, he cleared the debris but didn't disturb the ground.

The other two lots were left unfenced. In one of these, Mark left fallen trees and limbs as obstacles to make it harder for deer to browse. All the lots were allowed to regenerate naturally. The two fenced-in areas that were protected from deer browse have now grown into dense young wooded areas with healthy and diverse plant populations. The scarified lot is the most abundant. Both unfenced areas are fairly bare. Deer eat the young shoots of most of the vegetation as it comes up, so that the only plants that are doing well in these areas are ferns, which the deer don't eat.

The group members came away with many ideas that could be implemented on their own properties. Even small parcels can be improved by limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers, keeping cleared lawn to a minimum, and removing alien species.



Above:
Hemlock snags left
as bird and mammal
habitat



Photos by Wendolyn Hill

**Field with successional edge and mature forest
help small animals and birds survive**

dead and often branchless trees (snags) standing as habitat for birds such as woodpeckers, who feed on insects that tunnel into the decomposing wood.

"If you build it (the habitat), they will come," the property manager, Mark, noted as he showed the group around. He was referring to the woodcock management area he created. On those areas with dense vegetation, the woodcock,

Fourteen Mile Trail Crosses Four Towns

By David Holahan

*David lives, types and hikes in East Haddam.
(reprinted courtesy of the East Haddam News)*

More than 70 people from Lyme and neighboring towns, as well as representatives from federal, state and local government, gathered on a sunny June morning, at the Patrell Preserve on Baker Lane in East Haddam, to celebrate the opening of the Richard H. Goodwin Trail.

The late Dr. Goodwin was an East Haddam resident, botanist, and a pas-



Photos by Humphrey Tyler

Art Carlson of the East Lyme Land Trust, left, Chuck Barscz of the National Park Service, center, and Rob Smith of the East Haddam Land Trust, cut the ribbon at the opening of the Richard H. Goodwin Trail.

sionate and generous conservationist who co-founded The Nature Conservancy.

The 14 miles of marked footpaths meander through various parcels of conservation land, both public and private, from Route 82 in East Haddam through Salem and Lyme all the way to East Lyme, within 2.5 miles of I-95. Information about the trail and a large map are displayed at the Baker Lane entrance of the Patrell Preserve, where there is parking.

Chuck Barscz of the National Park Service told the gathering: "Dr. Goodwin set in motion what has become the model for what we are celebrating here today and also for what other conservationists are doing around the country, and that is establishing partnerships among various groups." Barscz, who is the Northeast Regional Chief for the

National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, added, "This place is in my blood," explaining that he is a graduate of New London High School and cut his environmental teeth traipsing about Devil's Hopyard State Park.

A portion of the trail crosses the Eightmile River, which is a federally designated "wild and scenic river," which classifies it as a "related area" in the National Park System. Federal grants totaling \$17,300 went toward the construction of the bridge over the river and for trail markings. Other funds came from various sources, including the State of Connecticut Trail Grant Program, East Haddam, and the East Haddam Land Trust.

Many volunteers and officials helped make the trail a reality. Volunteers built the 75-foot bridge where the ribbon-cutting took place; they also laid out, cleared and marked miles of trail. After Barscz told the gathering that 2016 was the centennial of the National Park Service, Rob Smith of the East Haddam Land Trust pointed out, with a smile, that Connecticut's park system is 102-years-old.

David Bingham of the Salem Land Trust said that Dr. Goodwin's example inspired his town to establish its own land trust, adding "We are all very fortunate that Dick Goodwin took a job as a professor of botany at Connecticut College and settled here." Bingham, an avid birder who was sporting binoculars around his neck, pointed out that "There are more bird species here, within five miles of where we are standing, than there are in most national parks."

While he spoke a pair of tree swallows flew overhead, taking insects to their brood. Throughout the ceremony they continued to do what all responsible species do: take care of the next generation.

Starting in East Lyme at Darrow Pond, the Goodwin Trail runs north through property owned by Yale Uni-

versity into the Nehantic State Forest. It then takes a westerly route to Lyme's Hartman Park and then back into Salem through an open space parcel owned by Salem Valley Corp. (with an easement held by The Nature Conservancy). It continues westward through Salem Land Trust's Darling Road Preserve, then through the state's Eightmile Wildlife Management Area, ending at Chapal Farm Preserve in East Haddam, across Route 82 from Hopyard Road.

With all the twists and turns along the way, the trail actually measures out to be more than fourteen miles, from terrain that is easily negotiated to more challenging stretches, making the view at the top of hills such as Bald Nubble Ridgetop in Hartman Park that much more rewarding.

Besides some amazing views, the trail crosses over the East Branch of the Eightmile River in Salem, along with a number of smaller tributaries. While the forest has reestablished over much of the landscape that was cleared a century ago, there are still some impressive stonewalls and old foundations

Dr. Goodwin and his wife, Esther, donated their own land in 1960 to establish the Burnham Brook Preserve, and encouraged neighbors to do the same, leading to the protection of more



than 1,000 acres that fall within the Eightmile River Watershed and border Devil's Hopyard State Park. Goodwin served as professor and Chair of the Botany Department at Connecticut College. Under his direction, the college's arboretum grew from 90 to 450 acres.



Tour de Lyme 2016

... a Resounding Success

Why, you might ask, do we spend so much effort on this annual event? Partly, it's for the money we raise. It is our primary fund raiser and this year we raised over \$50,000 to help cover our Land Trust operating costs. But that isn't all there is to it.

It isn't because we are all passionate cyclists because most of our board members don't ride, although, John Pritchard, who conceived the idea of *Tour de Lyme*, is a long-time rider and three or four others share his love of cycling.

For me, the non-rider who organizes the event each year, it's the gratification that comes from providing 886 cyclists with a great experience. As Kevin Hogan called the start of the 60-mile Challenge Ride, and hundreds of eager riders headed down Bill Hill Road towards Route 156, I said to myself, "What have we done?" At the same time, in an Ashlawn Farm field, Brian Greenho was announcing the start of the grueling mountain bike ride, The Rider's Test.

Over the next few hours, wave after wave of cyclists left on rides of different lengths until all of them were out on the roads in Lyme and the surrounding towns.

It should be noted here how much we depend on the hospitality of our neighbors in East Haddam, East Lyme, Old Lyme, Salem, and new this year, Colchester, for giving us permission to run some of the routes through their towns. Also, special thanks are due our all-volunteer Lyme Fire Company and the Lyme Ambulance who give us the peace of mind that they are ready if needed.

With Ashlawn Farm cleared of cyclists, I then anxiously awaited the arrival of the food trucks. The consequences of hundreds of hungry riders returning and finding no food crossed my mind. Not to worry, the trucks arrived and were set up and ready to serve as the riders returned.

As I have said before, *Tour de Lyme* couldn't succeed without our small army of volunteers, most of whom return year after year; they enjoy the day as well.

Also, *Tour de Lyme* could never be a financial success without the strong commitment of our generous sponsors. We are indebted to them and proudly display their logos.

Thank you riders, volunteers and sponsors for a great day.

George Moore
Tour de Lyme organizer





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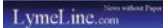
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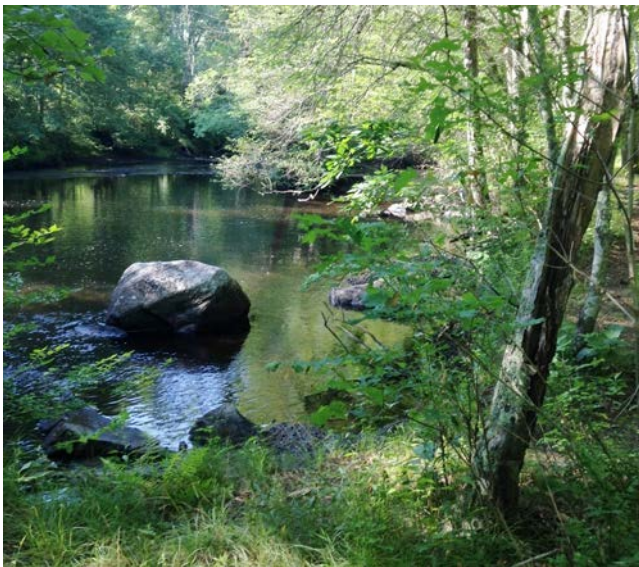
Secret Fields: A Reason for Land Preservation

By Ken Brown

Note: this is the first in a series of pieces about preserves and parks in Lyme that will be published in the Newsletter over the next year as part of the celebration of the Lyme Land Trust's 50th Anniversary year, which starts on October 3, the day that the Land Trust was incorporated in 1966.

The following article is about the piece of land that held special meaning for Ken Brown when he was growing up in a house at the corner of Route 156 and Beaverbrook Road. Exploring this land, he began to understand the importance of open spaces and preservation. It was originally written as a newspaper column and a portion of it was previously published in the Lyme Land Trust Newsletter, and in the newsletter of the Ashby Land Trust in north central Massachusetts where Ken served as a board member for 12 years. He is also a member of the Lyme Land Trust.

Ken's brother still lives in Lyme, and Ken still visits the land, now known as the Pleasant Valley Preserve. In 1991 the land was donated to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) by Catherine and Elizabeth Febrer, daughters of the Lyme impressionist painter Oscar Febrer. The Preserve is now managed by the Lyme Land Conservation Trust under an agreement with TNC. Go to <http://www.lymelandtrust.org/trails-properties/> to find out more about the Pleasant Valley Preserve.



Photos by Mary Guitart

Above, Eightmile River; right, one of Pleasant Valley's secret fields

In 1967 my family moved to the small town of Lyme, Connecticut. One of the immediate attractions to me was a parcel of land near our house that consisted of hardwoods and wetlands with a series of fields set progressively further from the road, connected by dirt trails. As children, my brothers and sisters and I were fascinated with the concept of these hidden or "secret" fields. And so we called this

place the Secret Fields. A branch of the Eightmile River wound its way through the property, and it was to this river that our earliest forays to the Secret Fields occurred. It was full of native brook trout. We spent days there in pursuit of those trout. Sometimes we'd catch nothing, and some days we'd bring home a stringer full.

We also accompanied Dad to the Secret Fields on his hunts for woodcock and ruffed grouse. As I got older, my first hunting experiences were in those woods. My brothers and sisters and I would often go exploring there, or camp with friends in the fields themselves or along the river. As I began to accumulate those experiences, my focus and appreciation began to expand from the animals or the activities to the place.

When you are sitting on a rock hoping to see deer, you

can't help but notice the soothing sound of the trickling stream, the strength and symmetry of a particular oak tree, or the way that the elements have worn grooves in a giant boulder. When you're stalking wary trout along a river's banks, you have to take note of the way the spring thaw has modified those



banks, of how a fallen tree has created a new dam, and where the lower water level below that dam now allows new plants to grow. And in those woods and fields, season after season, you find comfort in that same smell of fallen leaves and mast decaying; that same feel of the winter wind stinging your cheeks and watering your eyes as you come over the hill into the first field; that same spring symphony of birds as the sun's first rays filter through new leaves; and that same feel and taste of the brook's cool water to offset the summer's heat. And you understand that this is what it feels like to have a relationship with the land. And the relationship is no longer about taking; but about *belonging*.

As I grew up and life became more complicated, the Secret Fields often provided solace and a sense of stability at a time when many things were changing. To this day I can go there and sit on the same boulder and lean against the same tree and watch deer come up the same trail. At the same time, the Secret Fields provided perspective, knowing that amidst this base of stability was constant change: new trees and plants, fewer trout, more deer and turkeys. Fallen trees, the carcass of a coyote, and places

Continued on page 9

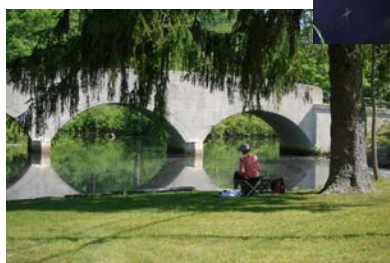
Celebrating Lyme's Beauty: A Sunny Day, a Stunning Exhibit

In June, artists converged on the Hamburg Historic District to participate in a paint-out sponsored by The Lyme Land Trust and the Lyme Art Association (LAA).



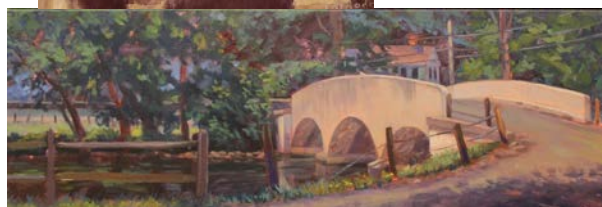
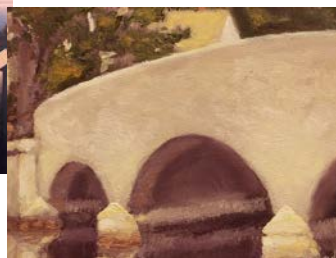
joint effort is a community outreach event, with a portion of each sale donated to the Trust to further its mission to preserve Lyme's natural beauty for the public benefit.

From far left: artist painting on site, photo by Lisa Niccolai; George F. Bottume, *Reed's Landing, 1850* (now hanging in the Lyme Town Hall), the focal point of the paint-out; Mark Patnode, *Hamburg Bridge*, oil; Jacqueline Jones, *The Way Home*, oil.



Inspired by their surroundings, and with the kind permission of many private property owners, the artists produced a wonderful array of artworks. These are now offered for sale in the Goodman Gallery at the LAA through August 26. This

ray of artworks. These are now offered for sale in the Goodman Gallery at the LAA through August 26. This



Secret Fields *continued from page 8*

where people continued to make their presence known in various ways. And with this base of stability, the change was O.K. It should be no surprise then to know that when my wife Karen and I were dating, I shared the Secret Fields with her on several occasions. It was a part of me that I wanted her to know.

Connecticut allows deer hunting on private land only with written permission from the landowner. Two sisters; Elizabeth and Catherine Fehrer owned most of the Secret Fields. Both worked in higher education, returning to Lyme on weekends from their respective cities.

I did not know them well, but I went to visit them one day to talk to them about hunting on their land. Neither was a big fan of hunting or guns and Elizabeth pretty much told me "No," when Catherine stopped her.

She'd been listening much more closely as I described how much I cared for the land and how my brothers and I would act as stewards of the land for them, keeping trespassers off and cleaning up the mess people had a habit of leaving. And she asked me about places in the Secret Fields, like the stone steps leading down to the river and I understood that she knew and loved the Secret Fields like I did. It was obvious that they both did. Catherine talked her sister into letting us hunt there and we did so for years. It was one of the most generous gifts I have ever received.

[After college and a move to Massachusetts] I would return home periodically to hunt and fish with my dad and



Fritillary butterfly on butterfly weed.

my brothers. While we sometimes hunted in other areas, I always relished the opportunities to hunt in the Secret Fields. Then the day came when Catherine told me that the next year would be our last hunting there. They were giving the land to the Nature Conservancy. I have been a member of the Nature Conservancy ever since they acquired the Secret Fields from the Fehrer sisters. In my opinion, the Conservancy is the best run, most even-handed organization dedicated to conserving special places.

The Lyme Land Conservation Trust manages the Secret Fields, and I am grateful for the fact that there is not a development, or a school, or a golf course there.

I am also thankful that I can take my children there and show them where my favorite fishing spot was, or where I watched four deer walk by me and was so enthralled that I forgot to think about shooting. I can no longer hunt there, but I guess I'm O.K. with that.

Thoreau once wrote "Many men go fishing all their lives without knowing it's not the fish they're after." I know the same can be said of hunting and for that matter, hiking, bird watching, or mushrooming. We can all find a reason for getting out there.

I know that the secrets of the fields I found in my youth are here for me and you and our children to find now. All that we have to do is look, and listen, and feel and smell ... and make sure that we take care of these places where we belong.

Nehantic State Forest: An Oasis in Lyme

By Marilyn Wilkins,
LLCT Director 1997-2003

Note: this is the second in a series of pieces about preserves and parks in Lyme that will be published as part of the celebration of the Lyme Land Trust's 50th Anniversary year,

Before there was a Lyme Land Conservation Trust, there were two like-minded friends. Both cared deeply about land conservation and, like John Muir, they felt that special natural areas should be preserved.



Photos provided by the author

Mickey McClernon holding an injured crow on the steps of the boathouse in the 1940s.

In the 1930s, retired Army Colonel Joseph Taneyhill, the owner of a ginger import business, would often visit the forests of Lyme from his home in Madison. He loved to hike, and began to buy small pieces of land as they became available, finally accumulating almost 2000 acres of land bordering Falls Brook, Uncas Pond (formerly called Hog Pond) and Norwich Pond, and including the highest point in Lyme, Nickerson Hill.

My dad, H. K. ("Mickey") McClernon and Col. Taneyhill became good friends because of their mutual love of nature. They would often hike, hunt and fish together on Taneyhill's land in Lyme. There was a boat house that was really like a cabin where the swimming area at Uncas Pond is now. When I was a kid, we'd come out and have picnics.

Col. Taneyhill became ill and died in 1940; a few years later, his wife, Annie, was able to sell 1,000 acres to the state of Connecticut for a state forest. Soon after that, she sold my dad 725 acres, but World War II was looming. As a coach at the Coast Guard Academy, he didn't have to go to war, but felt that he should, so he signed up to go on the U.S. Navy ship, USS *Bayfield*, to carry invasion troops to various Pacific Islands. Since he didn't want my mother to have to deal with the land should anything happen to him, he went to the governor at the time, Raymond Baldwin, and offered to sell his land to the state to adjoin the original 1,000 acres that Anne Taneyhill had recently sold them.

In the early 1990s, my husband and I purchased one of

the summer cottages and two acres on the south side of Uncas Pond. Living here is truly amazing. At a lecture years ago, the (then) President of the Massachusetts Audubon society said that Nehantic State Forest was the finest warbler nesting place in New England. We do see a lot of warblers and many other birds around the house: a pair of orioles, evening grosbeaks, hummingbirds. We see eagles also. Once when coyotes killed a deer across the lake, we would watch them eat the carcass at night, and watch the eagles eat it during the day.

In July 1992, the magazine *Condé Nast Traveler* asked top environmental officials across the country to name the best and cleanest swimming lakes, ponds, and reservoirs in their state. Uncas Pond was one of two listed in Connecticut. Spring-fed, and 40 feet deep at its deepest point, it's wonderful not only for swimming, but also for fishing.

The state usually stocks rainbow trout every spring, and a lot of native fish come up the brook – pumpkinseeds, bluegills, pickerel, and different kinds of bass. I talked to someone who'd caught and released both a 9- and an 11-pound bass. I once rescued a huge bass near the shore that had a bluegill or a sunfish stuck in his mouth horizontally. He couldn't swallow it, and he couldn't spit it out. I finally managed to get the smaller fish out, and threw it into the lake where it swam away. The bass continued to go around in circles gasping for a while.

When my dad sold the land to the state, he wanted to make sure it was protected; they put in metal gates that were locked at sundown and opened at sunup. When budgets



The boathouse/cabin, on the site that is now the Uncas Lake swimming area, was built of chestnut. The author has bookcases made from some of its boards.

were cut, that was discontinued. The homeowners here are concerned about safety issues and possible forest fires, since people come through the state forest at all hours of the day or night. There is a DEEP conservation officer who lives in Salem who will come if he's available and the State Police will also come if we call, but the neighbors on this side of

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Eliminate Barberry for Tick Control

By Doug Nielson

Lyme resident and amateur naturalist

The spiny, red-berried shrub Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is designated invasive in 20 states and the District of Columbia, although it can still be found for sale in some nurseries and on the internet. What's worse is that it is a prime habitat for deer ticks. And, according to Beth Jones in the *Scientific American* (March 30, 2011), "The prevalence of ticks infected with the Lyme disease-causing spirochete (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) is greater in areas with barberry than areas without."

Deer ticks also carry other similar disorders such as granulocytic anaplasmosis and babesiosis.

Japanese barberry is hearty, shade tolerant, drought resistant, and can adapt to almost any environment. It has almost no natural enemies. The damage caused by the shrub is multifaceted. It can raise the PH of soil and affect soil nitrogen levels. Moreover, since deer avoid eating it, it can replace native species in a very short time.

A 2011 study was conducted by scientists from the Connecticut Agriculture Experiment Station and UConn, in 28 study areas around the state, including Lord's Cove and The



Photo: Public domain

Japanese barberry, *Berberis thunbergii*

Land Trust's Chauncey Eno Preserve. It discovered a triangular relationship among deer, ticks and Japanese barberry. Deer act as hosts for adult ticks, while barberry is a virtual nursery for juvenile ticks. The deer ticks favor the high humidity found in the dense foliage of Japanese barberry, where the relative humidity at night is often 100 percent.

As Jones says "Since the majority of Lyme disease cases occur from nymphal tick bites, and nymphs are most active in the summer, risk is highest during the warm months when we're all happily tromping around

wearing shorts and sandals. In forest. In backyards."

The study cited some frightening statistics: that tick populations are 67 percent higher in areas with barberry than those with native plants, and that the number of ticks carrying Lyme disease is far greater, 126 ticks per acre in barberry-infested areas, compared to 10 per acre in areas with native plants. Soon after barberry removal, the number drops by approximately 80 percent.

The Land Trust monitors Japanese barberry and participates in control programs when feasible. Management plans for each property have been developed. A Connecticut government pamphlet, *Japanese Barberry Control Methods*, suggests several control methods, used by themselves, or ideally, in combination: mechanical – cutting away aboveground portions of plants, herbicides – use of products that contain glyphosate or triclopyr; directed flame – use of propane torches or flame weeders on aboveground portions and root crowns. For large areas, prescribed fire/controlled burning may be the best approach.

See http://www.ct.gov/caes/lib/caes/documents/publications/special_bulletins/special_bulletin_feb_2013_ward.pdf

An Oasis in Lyme *continued from page 10*

the lake do most of the monitoring.

A few years ago, I got up in the night and the bay window was lit up like New York City. It was the day that fishing season opened, but this was 3 o'clock in the morning. The pond was full of people in boats with torches and flashlights trained on the water, looking for the groggy fish that had just been released. I thought that wasn't fair to the people who followed the law.

My husband was sound asleep and I didn't want to wake him, so I went downstairs where we had a battery operated megaphone. I sneaked down to the dock and I made my voice as low as possible and I said "Attention, attention – within 15 minutes, the police or the DEEP will be here." Of course it echoed back and forth across the lake so they couldn't tell where it was coming from. Within sixty sec-

onds, all the lights went out and the oars were going. They threw the boats in their trucks and away they went. I told my husband in the morning and he said "You shouldn't have done that by yourself." I said "Someone had to do it."

This land is my oasis – nothing could beat it. It's so quiet; all we hear are the birds and occasional planes going over. I feel very lucky. Frequently I see hikers, long distance swimmers, fishermen, kayakers, and skaters and think how gratified both Col. Taneyhill and my Dad would be to see how many people enjoy this very special place.

To find out more about Nehantic State Forest, go to www.ct.gov/deep/nehantic. The forest takes its name from the Nehantic Indians, whose ranging grounds once extended from the Connecticut River to Weekapaug Brook, near present day Westerly, Rhode Island.



Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

PO Box 1002, Lyme, CT 06371

Lyme Land Conservation Trust Calendar of Events

All events subject to change. Dates and times will be announced by press release & email, and will be posted on the Land Trust website and Facebook page. Consult the Upcoming Events page at www.lymelandtrust.org/news/events/ for the latest information. The Land Trust no longer mails postcard notification of all events. To receive email notifications, send an email to: info@lymelandtrust.org

Celebrating Lyme's Beauty Art Exhibition

When - Through Friday, August 26,
Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

What - Paint-Out Exhibit co-sponsored
by the Land Trust and the Lyme Art As-
sociation. Features works painted in the
Hamburg Bridge Historic District.

Where - Goodman Gallery, Lyme Art
Association, 90 Lyme Street, Old Lyme.
(See article in this issue for more information.)

Annual Tree Swallow Spectacular

When: Friday, September 23, 5:00
sharp-8:00 p.m.

What: A cruise aboard the *Adventure*, to
view this amazing display. \$40 per per-
son for Land Trust members, \$45 for
non-members, includes wine and light
refreshments. Prepay and register
online at lymelandtrust.org. For infor-
mation: info@lymelandtrust.org.

Where: Eagle Landing State Park,
Haddam.

Land Trusts Amateur Photo Contest

When - Deadline: January 31 2017,
5:00 p.m.

What - Amateur photographers of all
ages are invited to share their love of the
natural world.

Participants, no matter their town of resi-
dence, may submit photos that focus on
the countryside of Lyme, Old Lyme, Es-
sex, Salem, and East Haddam. Entry
Forms will be available by email after
December 1, 2016. [http://
www.lymelandtrust.org/news/photo-
contest/](http://www.lymelandtrust.org/news/photo-contest/)

Where Email: [photocontest2017@
LymeLandTrust.org](mailto:photocontest2017@LymeLandTrust.org)

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!

We'd love to hear from you and about you.

What would you like to hear more about? Post your pictures
of favorite Lyme hikes, or Land Trust activities you've attended.

For most current information on Lyme Land Conservation Trust events: www.lymelandtrust.org