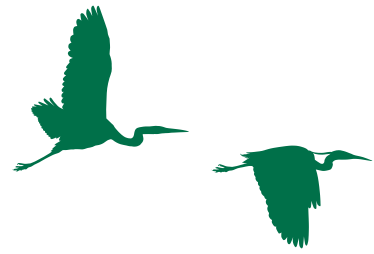


IN THIS ISSUE

Lions and Bobcats and Bears, Oh My! • Teen Stewards,
Full Moon Hikes • Plimpton and Bloom Legacies • Paying
Attention: Children and Nature • Moore Trail Map



THE LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER

New Riverside Preserve overlooks the Eightmile River

In early summer of this year, the Lyme Land Trust received a donation from Barbara David of 6.08 acres of woodlands, open fields and floodplain along the East Branch of the Eightmile River, just upriver from where Ed Bill's Pond Dam on Salem Road was removed in 2015. This restores unrestricted river conditions and provides clear access more than ten miles up the river for native fish species such as brook trout, as well as migratory alewife, blueback herring, American eel and sea lamprey.

The new preserve serves as a road buffer for 1,250 feet of Eightmile River frontage, where wildlife and native plants are colonizing this newly created floodplain habitat. The Nature Conservancy planted native shrubs and trees on the newly exposed soil after the dam removal.

This acreage is directly across the Eightmile River from several hundred acres that are under conservation easement with the Lyme Land Trust. Now much of the frontage along the East Branch of the Eightmile River is under permanent protection, including a few thousand acres of conserved uplands, vital habitat for interior forest species. Barbara stated, "I pictured conserving a connectivity corridor. Now that the dam is out, both sides of the river can be protected." This



Photo by Sue Cope

Parker Cope enjoying the river on a recent expedition.

will lead to larger wildlife populations, especially since larger mammals will be able to travel greater distances.

The Land Trust is committed to returning this land to a natural condition, while also allowing some passive recreation. Environmental Director Sue Cope hopes to have conservation work, including removal of invasive plants, completed by Spring 2019, so the land can be opened to the public. The new preserve will be called Riverside.

Sue said, "We're excited about this new acquisition and can't wait to share its unique attributes with our members. We're hoping to create a quiet spot to sit and reflect. We are honored to have received this generous donation from Barbara David."

Lions and Bobcats and Bears (Oh my!)

By Douglas Nielson, *Amateur Naturalist*

Mid-winter, it's getting dark, about seven inches of snow on the ground. I'm driving through Tiffany Farm. And there he is. A bobcat. Once he catches sight of me, he's gone. But that image has stayed with me for years. Seeing a large predator in the wild is a powerful experience. There is a sort of disconnect: you think, "This isn't Wild Kingdom. It's real life, less than a mile from my house."

In late September of this year, a 200-pound male black bear was seen on Birch Mill Road in Lyme, on Sterling City Road,

and on Route 156 just north of Joshuatown Road. The bear killed a sheep on the same day on Brush Hill Road in Hadlyme. This appears to be the same bear that was seen in August and September near Whalebone Creek, near Gungy Road, on Beebe Preserve in Lyme, and in East Lyme near the Lyme border.

Bears are now dispersing into this area slowly, mostly southward from Massachusetts, since the Connecticut River slows dispersal from the northwest. Landowners experiencing a bear problem should contact DEEP to develop a management plan.

In the decades after New England was settled, most large mammals were largely wiped out by hunting and trapping. As

continued on page 2

Lions and Bobcats, continued from page 1

forests were cleared for farming, and cut down for firewood and lumber, much of the natural habitat of these animals was lost.

By 1825, only 25 percent of Connecticut was forested. The last native wolf in the state was killed in 1742, the last native “catamount” or eastern puma in 1881 in Vermont. Bears most likely were eliminated and only small isolated populations of bobcats remained.



Bobcat in East Lyme. Photo by Sherwood Lincoln.

With 60 percent of the state now forested, many of these animals are reappearing: bears, moose, bobcats, beavers, and river otters, in forests, wetlands and sometimes suburban gardens.

As exciting as their presence is, there is also a downside. We're all aware of the damage that deer and beavers can do, and car collisions with deer, moose and bears can be fatal. There is also the loss of pets and livestock, and, when coyotes and bears become too accustomed to people, potentially dangerous interactions can occur.

Black bears started to reappear in Connecticut in the 1980s. They are now fairly common in the northern part of the state and their population is growing about 15 to 20 percent annually. Bears are omnivores; males weigh 150 to 450 pounds, with females slightly smaller.

Coyotes are not native to Connecticut, but with changes in land use and the destruction of wolves in the last 100 years, they started heading east, showing up in Connecticut in the mid-1950s. Along the way they interbred with dogs and wolves and are now somewhat larger than western coyotes. They are omnivorous and social, hunting in packs; they are also smart, opportunistic, and adaptable. They can now be found along the entire east coast and in every town in Connecticut.

DEEP reports that there were 39 incidents of coyotes threatening people in Connecticut in 2017. Most incidents resulted from people trying to protect a pet from attack. If this seems frightening, compare it to the over 4.5 million dog bites per year in the US.

The bobcat is the most common wild cat in the US, with about 1,000 in Connecticut. Population varies from year to year based on the availability of rabbits and squirrels. They also prey on smaller rodents, birds, raccoons, skunks, and deer. Males weigh 18 to 35 pounds; despite their name, their tails are six inches long. Bobcats usually have faint black spots on



Black bear on the patio of house on Rt. 156.
Photo by John Falstrom.

the sides and back, prominent cheek ruffs, tufts of black hair on pointed ears and a black tail-tip. They avoid people, but bobcats have learned that the squirrel population is denser near bird feeders, so they are now more common in suburban areas. Many Lyme residents have reported seeing them during the past few months. Wildlife biologist Jason Hawley estimates a maximum of 30 bobcats in Lyme, including females and young. Males require a territory of at least 10 square miles. Sightings should be reported to the DEEP Wildlife Division at deep.wildlife@ct.gov, or by calling 860-424-3011.

Mountain lions (also called “cougars” or “pumas”) are large cats; males weigh from 110 to 220 pounds, and stand two to three feet tall at the shoulder. Their tail is quite long, 30 to 36 inches, with a black tip. Coloring varies widely, from tawny to silvery-gray to reddish. They prey mostly on deer.

At this time, DEEP says that there is no breeding population of mountain lions in Connecticut. One killed on the freeway in Milford in 2011 was shown to have travelled from South Dakota. In the last few years, there have been a number of sightings reported in the Lyme area, but none confirmed by DEEP.

If you see a bobcat, or bear, you can also report it on iNaturalist.org; photos can be posted and viewed. To report threatening animals or those behaving abnormally: 860-424-3333, also the DEEP black bear hotline. For tips on differentiating bobcats from mountain lions, see: <https://animals.mom.me/cougar-bobcat-similarities-3729.html>

BE PREDATOR AWARE

- Don't feed wild animals; keep bird seed, pet food, garbage, etc. cleaned up.
- Don't let pets run loose or unattended, especially at night.
- Don't run from or turn your back on a large predator.
- Report aggressive, fearless animals immediately.
- Do not create conflict, harass or aggravate a wild animal.
- When bears may be around, put away bird feeders between March and November.
- Protect beehives, livestock and berry bushes with electric fencing.

Paying Attention: Children and Nature

By Mary Guitar, Newsletter Editor

"[The] kind of deep attention that we pay as children is something that I cherish . . . because attention is the doorway to gratitude, the doorway to wonder, the doorway to reciprocity. And it worries me greatly that today's children can recognize 100 corporate logos and fewer than 10 plants. That means they're not paying attention." — Botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer, interviewed by Krista Tippet, *On Being*

For more than a decade, we've heard that being out in nature is essential for children, that there are real costs for being disengaged from the natural world, including behavioral problems, ADHD, increased rates of anxiety, obesity and depression.

This retreat from nature has occurred because of many social and cultural changes in the last decades: lack of time in busy family schedules; parental concerns about animal and insect bites, injuries and overexposure to sun; lack of outdoor space in urban areas; the lure of digital devices. A recent Shape of the Nation report cites that just 16 percent of states require elementary schools to provide daily recess, and, according to Frances Moore Lappé in her 2011 book, *EcoMind*, only 6 percent of American children ages 9 to 13 ever play outside unsupervised.



Photo by Mary Guitar

Kids get a close look at some of the inhabitants of Roaring Brook at the Earth Day celebration last spring at NaturePlace in Banningwood Preserve.

The small amount of time that children are outside during the school day is usually taken up with games organized by adults, not with looking at birds and bugs, figuring out how to climb the big maple tree, digging a hole to China, or other sensory pleasures. In fact, when working and playing in environments that require digital interactions, both children and adults spend a lot of energy blocking out sensory input in order to focus on what's happening onscreen.

Unstructured play, on the other hand, changes brain structure, and strengthens neurons in the brain's problem-solving areas. The uncomfortable sensations that may occur outside, such as being cold, or wet, or muddy, can challenge the child's idea that experiences should always be pleasant and easy. Being

able to deal with discomfort or even fear leads to a sense of mastery and self-confidence. Over time, being in nature and becoming attached to specific natural spaces can lead children to realize the importance of caring for nature in both specific and abstract ways.

"The reason that I'm so good at this is because I've been doing it for years."

Three-year-old to his teacher
on a hike through the woods

It also promotes healing. A 2001 study noted that the effects of having children spend time in a natural environment included increased focus and a reduction of symptoms of ADHD. A 2018 report concluded that school gardens can promote positive emotions, including empathy, self-esteem, and cooperation.

Richard Louv, who coined the term "nature deficit disorder," was one of the first people to examine the phenomenon, in his 2005 book *Last Child in the Woods*. He has since co-founded the Children & Nature Network (childrenandnature.org) to connect children and their families to nature through research, training, community forums, education, and grassroots action.

Ways to Connect

- Spend 15 minutes in a wild place trying to be as quiet as possible and watch what happens.
- Pay attention to each sense in turn. Notice what you smell, feel, taste, hear, and finally, see.
- Dip a bucket in a pond and see what you find.
- Pick a spot in nature and go there often until you get to know everything that goes on there.
- Leave a board in the back yard over bare dirt, check it periodically to find and identify what has taken shelter.



Photo by Sue Cope



Look—Swallows!

On September 21, a group of Land Trust members and guests enjoyed an evening cruise down the Connecticut River on the CT River Expedition cruise boat *Adventure* and saw a spectacular display of swallows gathering to roost for the night. An estimated million swallows come together at an island near the mouth of the river in the weeks before migration.

Tour de Lyme 2018



The 6th annual Tour de Lyme was a great success, in spite of a foggy beginning. The big question until the day of the event was whether it was going to rain. We woke to fog and a little mist which made for a cool start for our riders, but it ended with the sun coming out! The success of this event depends on so many people working together. We had over 75 volunteers helping this year. They do everything from clearing and flagging the whole mountain bike course, marking the road routes with signs and arrows, managing the parking of hundreds of cars, checking in close to 700 riders, offering them food and water at our multiple rest stops on our routes, to helping at the picnic and cleaning up after the event. We could not do this event without the support of the town of Lyme, the Lyme Fire Company and the Lyme Ambulance. They are on standby and ready when needed. We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge with thanks the residents and motorists in the six towns we ride through for their courtesy, patience and good humor as hundreds of cyclists dominate the roads for a few hours. Last, but certainly not least, we thank the enthusiastic riders who supported Tour de Lyme. Many return year after year to ride in this great event, coming from six states and over 100 Connecticut towns. Tour de Lyme is a wonderful way for us to showcase 51 years of land conservation, to support those who choose to get outside and enjoy what nature has to offer, and to encourage others to join them.

Kristina White
Executive Director



Platinum Sponsors



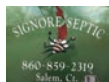
Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors & Supporters



Teen Stewards, Full Moon Hikes NaturePlace Programs Starting Up

NaturePlace, the Land Trust's new environmental education center in Banningwood Preserve inspired by Diana and Parker Lord, is becoming a reality. A third field has been cleared on the red trail ridgetop, a new blue loop has been created that passes a fascinating rockface, and a bridge that floated away during heavy rains has been found, repaired, and replaced. A small kiosk will be put in Diana's field this fall. Also planned are a large welcome kiosk, and an elevated deck platform with a vista on the upper red trail to be called "Parker's Perch". Both will be built by Block Design Build.

Informal programs have already started, with an equinox party in Diana's Field in September, complete with a bonfire and snacks, and a full moon hike in October. Other informal programs will be advertised through social media as they are scheduled. Environmental Director Sue Cope, Board member Regan Stacey, and intern Sarah Manstan are already working on more formal programs for the coming months.

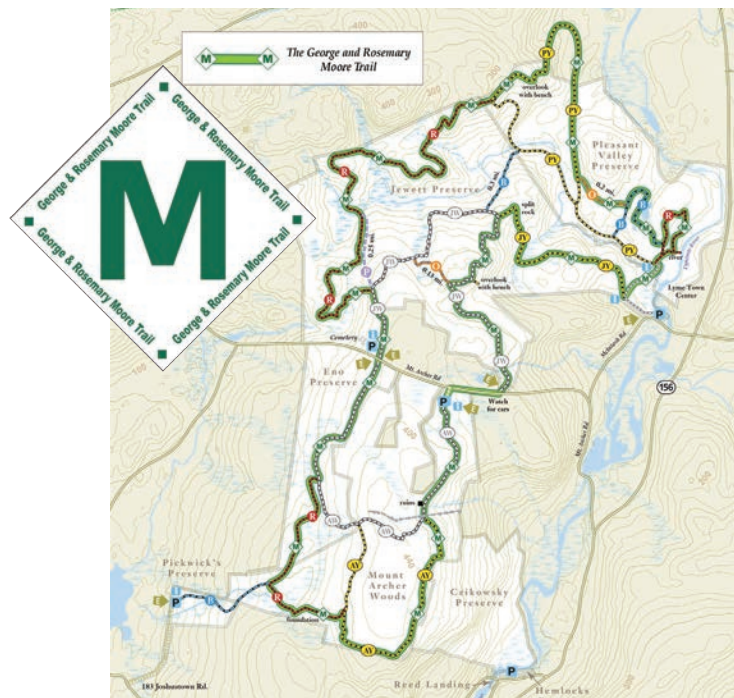
Regan is also working on a small pilot program to teach the skills of environmental stewardship to teens ages 14 to 18. Stewardship is one of the most important concepts for working toward land preservation: land must not only be used responsibly, but it must be managed and protected for the long term. It is part of a land ethic, as environmentalist Aldo Leopold put it, that "simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals."

The program, held once a month on every third Sunday, will give teens a chance to enjoy being outside with a group, participating in field trips, and projects such as trail work, helping to build kiosks and benches, making trail reports, and working with master naturalists to learn how to observe the details of the animals and plants they encounter. Regan hopes that such programs will contribute to children and teens' knowledge and curiosity about the outdoor world, and give them some less structured time outside.

The teen stewardship program is still accepting new members; those interested can contact Regan directly at regan@reganstacey.com.

Land Trust Receives GuideStar Platinum Rating

The Lyme Land Trust recently earned a Platinum seal of transparency from GuideStar USA, the world's largest information service specializing in reporting on U.S. nonprofit companies. The seal signifies that the company's listing for the Land Trust includes not only basic contact and organizational information, but also in-depth financial information, quantitative information about the Trust's goals, strategies and progress toward our mission.



At the 2018 annual meeting of the Lyme Land Trust, retiring Executive Director George Moore and his wife Rosemary were honored for their fourteen years of service and dedication to the Land Trust. A seven mile loop trail in the River to Ridgetop Preserve will be named the George and Rosemary Moore Trail; the ribbon cutting will be held on December 1. *(See Calendar of Events for more information.)*

A Gift from the IRS?

YES. In fact, it's part of the tax code. By formula, if you're 70½, it is mandatory to withdraw money by December 31. There are severe penalties if you don't. Here's the IRS gift: give up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to charity accounts of your choice (and, of course, we hope the Lyme Land Trust is at the top of your list).

Here are the benefits: the gift does not count as income for federal and state income purposes (and depending on your income, those 3.8% excise taxes may be reduced too). There are no taxes on the contributed portion. Mandatory withdrawal requirements are reduced dollar for dollar. If you don't have an IRA, converting a 401k, SEP, etc., is easy. Call your financial advisor to make the conversion.

These direct transfers to charities must occur before Dec. 31. Does your spouse have an IRA (or 401k or SEP) to convert? You would then both qualify for this IRS gift. If you have questions, call or email Milt Walters, (203) 485-6070, milton.walters@lymelandtrust.org

THE LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER

Published by The Lyme Land Conservation Trust, Inc., PO Box 1002, Lyme, CT 06371
info@lymelandtrust.org Tel: 860-227-0930



Board of Directors

John Pritchard, *President*
Milton Walters, *Vice President*
George Lombardino, *Treasurer*
Melvin Woody, *Secretary*
Brantley Buerger
Jonathan Butler
Wendolyn Hill
Dan Hulseberg
Anthony Irving
Nancy Newcomb
Ann Rich
Regan Stacey
Joe Standart

Publications Committee

Marta Cone
Wendolyn Hill
Kristina White
Melvin Woody
Mary Guitart, *Newsletter Editor*

Staff

Kristina White, *Executive Director*
Sue Cope, *Environmental Director*

Plimpton and Bloom Legacies

By Anthony Irving, *Land Trust Director*

Two longtime supporters of the Lyme Land Trust who made significant contributions of property to the Trust passed away this past August. Dr. Barry Bloom and Ken Plimpton were longtime residents of Lyme, loved the outdoors, and along with their families, were supporters of conserving the town's cultural and landscape values.

Barry Bloom, a former Executive Vice President at Pfizer, was born in 1928. Ken Plimpton, born in 1925, worked at UARCO in Deep River for many years, was a charter member of the Lyme Fire Department, and was active as a fireman and then as member of the fire police.



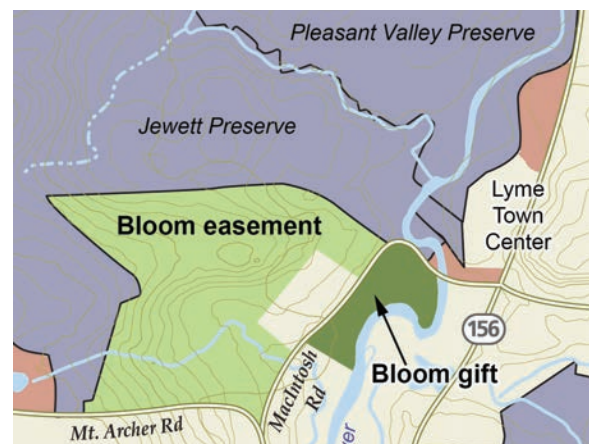
View of Hamburg Cove from the Plimpton Preserve overlook.

In 2001, Ken came to the Trust to gauge our interest in purchasing 80 acres he owned in the hills above his house on Sterling City Road, overlooking Hamburg Cove. Not only was this parcel important from a scenic perspective, but its proximity to Nehantic State Forest and other protected land helps to minimize fragmentation of this large forest block. As part of the purchase agreement, Ken proposed donating a conser-

vation easement on an additional 23 acres, bringing this block to over 100 acres. Today the Elizebeth Plimpton Memorial Preserve, named in honor of Ken's wife, is a popular hiking destination in the heart of Lyme.

Barry and Joan Bloom's home on MacIntosh Road is in a block of property that grades from the Eightmile River up to the border with the Jewett Preserve. In 2001, the upland portion of 73 acres was given in a conservation easement to the Land Trust while an additional 10 acres along the river was an outright gift. This floodplain parcel has been in agricultural use over the decades, and the trust has honored the Bloom's request to continue the farming tradition. In addition to these gifts, the Blooms were substantial donors to the preservation effort for the 435-acre Jewett Preserve.

The Plimpton and Bloom gifts are legacies that serve us all and contribute to the special nature of our town. These contributions illustrate the obvious love of the land and the place that Lyme has played in the lives of these families.



Bloom easement and gift. (Pink indicates other easements.)



LYME LAND CONSERVATION TRUST
PO Box 1002, Lyme, CT 06371

Events Calendar

All events subject to change. Dates and times will be announced by press release and email, and posted on the Land Trust website and Facebook page. Consult the Upcoming Events page at lymelandtrust.org/news/events/ for the latest information.

Treasures of Southeastern Connecticut

Saturday, November 3, 2:00 p.m.
Lyme Public Library

LLCT and the Lyme Public Library host Great Outdoors columnist Steve Fagin, who will narrate a presentation of photos from The Day's newest hardcover coffee-table book, *Treasures of Southeastern Connecticut: Our Proud History of Preserving Scenic Woodlands, Farms, the Shoreline and Other Natural Gems*. The book highlights many of the land preserves, waterways and farms that the Lyme Land Trust has worked so diligently to protect. Event attendees will be able to pre-order the book at \$10 off.
Contact: Info@LymeLandTrust.org

Dedication of Thach Preserve **Sunday, November 4, 2:00 p.m.**

131 Brush Hill Road, Lyme

This new preserve honors Jim and Margaret Thach. The walk includes a view of a vibrant beaver pond. *Contact:* stewardship@lymelandtrust.org

Enhancing Wildlife Habitat

Tuesday, November 13, 7:00 p.m.
Lyme Public Hall, 249 Hamburg Rd. (Route 156), Lyme

Sponsored by Audubon CT, with Lyme Land Trust and Town of Lyme.

DEEP wildlife biologist Peter Picone will talk about enhancing wildlife habitat for songbirds, wild turkeys, and beneficial insects. *Contact:* openspace@townlyme.org

Ribbon Cutting and Tours of George and Rosemary Moore Trail

Saturday, December 1, 10:00 a.m.
Mt. Archer Woods parking lot, Mt. Archer Road, Lyme

Dedication of seven-mile trail system to honor the Moores for their many years of service to the Land Trust. Guided tour of the loop, and two tours of shorter portions. Bring a picnic lunch.
Contact: openspace@townlyme.org

Don't Forget! Land Trusts Amateur Photo Contest

Deadline February 28, 2019

Amateur photographers of all ages, may submit photos that focus on the countryside of Lyme, Old Lyme, Essex, Salem, Old Saybrook and East Haddam. Details to follow at landtrustsphotocontest.org