



# Site Lines

Winter 2024  *Open Space Makes All the Difference*



## Back to Basics: What is the South Kingstown Land Trust?

Land trusts are nonprofit organizations that own and steward land and sometimes bodies of water for a variety of intents. South Kingstown Land Trust (SKLT) is a conservation land trust founded with the mission to protect and steward natural resources, open spaces, and cultural landscapes for the benefit of the community, now and forever.

Although many conservation land trusts are municipally operated and funded by local governments, SKLT was founded as a private trust in 1983, and later incorporated as a private nonprofit corporation in 1999. It was created by a small group of passionate local residents and landowners who had the foresight to establish a private nonprofit that can acquire land and conservation easements for the purpose of preserving open space, natural areas, waterways, productive farms, and forests for future generations.

Forty-one years later, SKLT has protected more than 3,000 acres of land across town, has grown its professional staff to five, and has developed a community of hundreds of volunteers and thousands of supporters. SKLT is governed by an active board of directors from throughout the town.

SKLT's work is funded by individuals who share our mission to conserve the land of South Kingstown, by government and private foundation grants, and by landowners who contribute toward the monitoring and upkeep of their protected property.

As a 501(c)3 charitable organization, accredited member of the Land Trust Alliance, and holder of conservation easements, it is the land trust's legal obligation, right, and privilege to monitor each property at least once a year and steward all 178 properties in its care to the best possible standards.

SKLT is the community's best tool for conservation, for safeguarding open spaces that maintain our sense of place. It is an organization to permanently protect forests, farms, streams, and wetlands and provide scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, clean water, clean air, and recreational opportunities.

We like to say, "open space makes all the difference," for our quality of life in the present, and for the benefit of future generations.



SKLT Offices at the Woodcock Campus at Weeden Farm

# MILESTONES

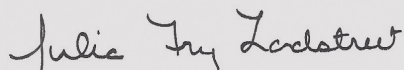
Thanks to the hundreds of people listed here whose contributions result in locally produced food, intact forests, open meadows, Jonnycakes and so much more.

As you can see, it is your support making SKLT possible.

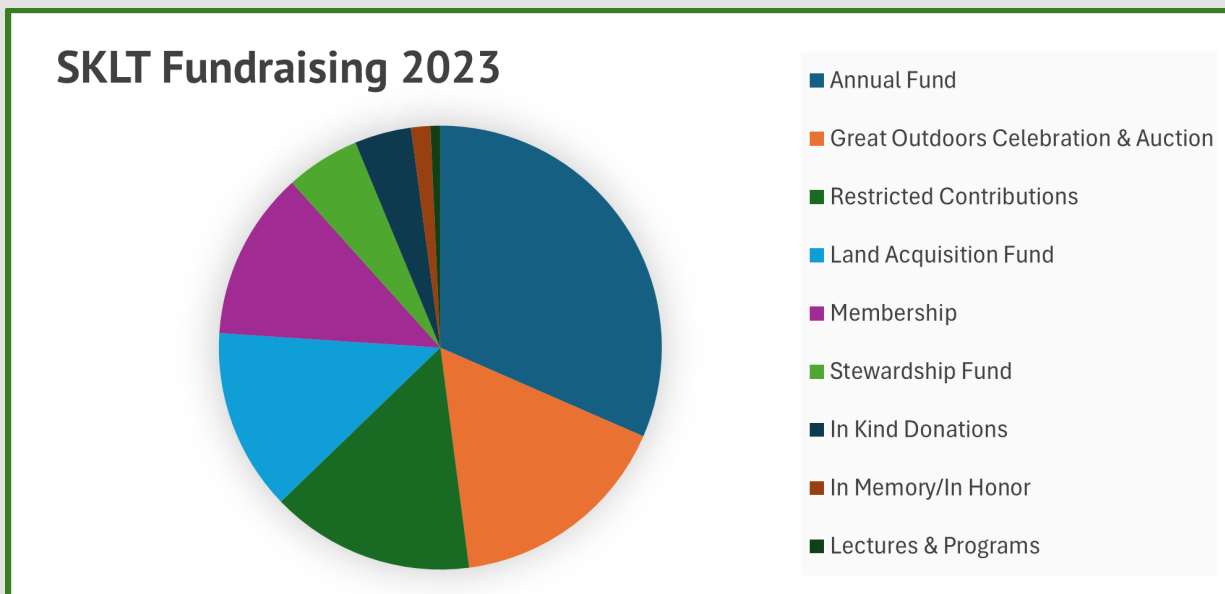
Many thanks from the staff and board.

Open space makes all the difference.

In gratitude,



Julia Fry Landstreet  
Executive Director



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### Address

17 Matunuck Beach Road  
South Kingstown, RI 02879  
401-789-0962

### Office Hours

Monday - Thursday  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
and by appointment

**Website:** [sklt.org](http://sklt.org)

**Email:** [info@sklt.org](mailto:info@sklt.org)

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**The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to protect and steward natural resources, open spaces, and cultural landscapes for the benefit of the community, now and forever.**

A sunny September day, 2013



Aerial photo before restoration began, March 2023



## Land Stewardship: A Case Study at Robinson Farm

Tuesday mornings find SKLT staff, Thomas Meyer and David LaRocque, leading a team of intrepid volunteers tackling various maintenance opportunities. Most recently, the team has been devoting countless hours to the restoration of Robinson Farm.

Decades ago, the landowners sold the development rights to the United States Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) before gifting the land to SKLT. This process enrolled the land in the Grassland Reserve Program, and generated a Conservation Easement that requires the fields be farmed and managed in a manner that maintains or improves the quality of the vegetation from when the farm was protected.

Contrary to the restrictions of the easement, one of the fields was home to a herd of cows. Fed in a single location with easy access to a wooded wetland tributary, the cows degraded the grassland and compromised the water quality.

Beginning in January, the crew started by removing damaged fencing and the thorny mess of invasive multiflora rose that had grown along the edges. They have been clearing fallen branches and trees and begun re-stacking the historic stonewalls. The abandoned cow fields are getting cleaned up and they will be reseeded shortly.

Working with NRCS, the land trust has developed a management plan including the re-installation of a vegetated buffer comprised of native plants and shrubs around a man-made cow pond. This will make the field less attractive to geese who devour the tender grasses we are trying to nurture and lower the bacteria from fecal matter leeching into the Saugatucket River.

It will take at least one full year to bring the farm and fields back. Staff and volunteers will be following the management plan and making improvements before drafting both a Request for Qualification and Request for Proposal to help identify the next tenant(s) to partner with SKLT/NRCS and farm this beautiful land.



Installing new signage.



Clearing invasives.



Cleaning and organizing the barn.



The volunteer work crew!



## Land Protection: The Nuts & Bolts

Donating land for conservation purposes is truly one of the finest legacies a person can leave to future generations. Throughout South Kingstown there are trails, coastal areas, farmlands, forestlands, and scenic open spaces that the public enjoys because of the long-term vision of conservation-minded landowners.

Our staff works with many landowners, providing information on protection options as needed. When the landowner is ready to either sell or donate land to the land trust, we will negotiate an agreement, based on their goals and ours, and on appraisals and other fact-based analyses.

For acquisitions, we will coordinate with our partners to determine the best funding sources, and then proceed with grant applications and other fundraising. Projects have taken between 18 months and 18 years to complete.

There are many types of conservation land donations:

- **Direct donation:** A charitable donation of land is given over immediately to the Land Trust, which takes title to the property, assumes full ownership, and initiates future care of the property.
- **Conservation easement:** An interest in land such as an easement or permanent restriction against development allows the donor to continue ownership of the land itself while providing the Land Trust with the right and responsibility to enforce the conservation easement restrictions.
- **Future ownership:** Another method of donation is to make a gift of future ownership, in which the donor would retain use and possession of the land during his or her lifetime and the Land Trust takes ownership upon the donor's death.
- **By will:** Donors may make gifts of land or conservation easement through their wills.
- **Neighborhood purchase and donation:** In some cases, groups of neighbors have joined together to conserve a special area near their homes for the benefit of the entire community.



Potter Wood Conservation Easement w. Kingston Improvement Assoc, Mar. '22



Smithbridge Stables Conservation Easement w. Bonnie Smith & Family, Jan'22



# 2023 Open Space Circle



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# 2023 Open Space Circle



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We have made every effort to be accurate with our recognition. If we have inadvertently omitted or misspelled your name, please accept our apologies and contact [matt.eldridge@sklt.org](mailto:matt.eldridge@sklt.org) with changes. **Thank you!**

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## Programs & Events

SKLT Potluck Lecture:

### **Arboricultural Oddities with Charles Yurgalevitch Ph.D.**

Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup> (6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.)

#### **An Anatomical & Evolutionary Talk on Why Some Trees Grow the Way They Do:**

Ever wonder why some trees have skin-piercing thorns, or produce fruits that stink?

Join Charles Yurgalevitch, Ph.D., as he explores some of nature's arboricultural oddities, their adaptations, and how they have evolved over millennia.

Free, \$10 suggested donation  
SKLT Barn, 17 Matunuck Beach Road



### **Guided Hike at Browning Woods Trail**

Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup> (9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)

Take a trip back in time on a 3.5 mile hike that travels by the historical stone walls and foundations of Browning Woods Farm.

You'll be on the lookout for the prevalent woodpeckers and spring migrant birds as well as wildlife tracks, interesting plants, mushrooms, and other beautiful sights in the peaceful landscape.

Free. Registration is required.  
Inclement weather cancels. All ages welcome.

### **Youth Fishing Opening Day of Trout Season at Biscuit City Preserve**

Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> (6:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

The perfect chance to teach your kids how to fish!

Join the opening day of trout season at the youth-only fishing Scott Evans Memorial Pond at Biscuit City Preserve in Kingston.

The pond will be stocked with brook and rainbow trout by RI DEM. SKLT staff and skilled volunteers will be on hand to assist as needed.

No registration required. Staff/volunteers will be on site until 4:00 pm. ONLY children ages 14 and under may fish.



### **Guided Hike at Crawley Preserve Trail**

Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> (9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)

Explore a variety of thriving habitats in spring bloom at Crawley Preserve, a beautiful trail shared between SKLT and the Richmond Rural Preservation Land Trust.

You'll cross over the bubbling Sandy's Brook and see massive boulders and ridges left behind by glacial retreat. You'll also be on the lookout for migratory birds and other wildlife as well as interesting trees and spring flowers.

Free. Registration is required.  
Inclement weather cancels. All ages welcome.

# Join Us in Preserving Open Space in South Kingstown

Your support for open space preservation continues to strengthen our organization and invigorate our work. Join or renew your membership, make a general donation, or become an EverGreen member! The South Kingstown Land Trust is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, so your donation is tax-deductible. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## MEMBERSHIP

I want to  Join  Renew

- Individual..... \$30       Family..... \$50  
 Steward..... \$100-\$249  
 Guardian..... \$250-\$499  
 Conservationist..... \$500-\$999  
 Benefactor..... \$1,000-\$2,499

## GENERAL DONATION

I'm already a member, but I would like to make an additional donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.



## EVERGREEN LEGACY SOCIETY

I have already planned a legacy gift to SKLT and qualify to be an EverGreen member through

- Estate Plan  Trust  Other  
 Please contact me about making a legacy gift

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to: South Kingstown Land Trust, 17 Matunuck Beach Road, South Kingstown, RI 02879*

## SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

This program allows our donors to easily establish and maintain their membership through a monthly, automatically recurring gift.

- I want to become a sustaining member at the monthly amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card:

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER SUPPORT

- I'm a landowner interested in preserving my land.  
 My employer will match my gift. I've enclosed a matching gift form.

## Evergreen Legacy Society

**Evergreen Legacy Society members are visionary supporters who have protected the community's natural resources for future generations by including SKLT in their estate plans. To learn about your options and benefits, visit [sklt.org](http://sklt.org)**

Ira & Karen Asher  
Jim & Karin Aukerman  
Clare Bailey\*  
Helen Behrens  
Robert Blakely & Diane Keehner Blakely  
Zenas W. Bliss\*  
James W. Bowers\*  
Dr. Heather Mae & Frank Breau  
Judy Bucklen  
Drs. Gloria & Ian Callard  
Mark Cantwell  
Leslie A. Chouinard  
Clarkson Collins & Marcie Cummings  
Eliza G. Collins  
Albert Darbey & Dawn Darbey-Dugan  
Martha Day & C.N. Hetzner

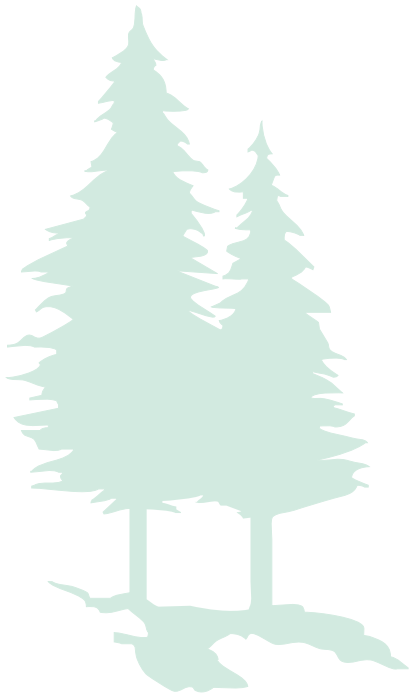
Donna Dexter  
James & Hope Farrell  
Linda Fuselier  
Eric Harrah\*  
Tracy Heffron  
Lorraine Miller Horton  
Janet Inns  
Eve Krzyzanowski  
Charles & Cornelia Lewis  
James Lewis\*  
Sophie Page Lewis  
Christopher & Michelle Little  
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin McDonough  
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Mead  
Henry H. Meyer\*

Anne & Jim O'Neill  
Helen & Tom Rowe-Drake  
Paul & Barbara Schurman  
MaryAnn K. Scott  
Michael A. Sherry & Jan Anthony  
Janice Sieburth\*  
Douglas Smith  
Dr. & Mrs. James L. Smythe  
John & Carroll Tickner  
Edward Watson, Jr.  
Dr. Meera Viswanathan & Dr. Eric Widmer  
Dr. Caroline S. Wilkel  
Ardith Wood  
Kenneth & Dottie Woodcock  
\*deceased



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST  
 17 MATUNUCK BEACH ROAD  
 SOUTH KINGSTOWN, RI 02879

Non-Profit  
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## Join Us at an Upcoming Program or Event

Please register for all programs and events in advance at [sklt.org/event-tickets](http://sklt.org/event-tickets)

March 9	8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	RI Land & Water Conservation Summit, <i>URI</i>
March 21	6 - 8 p.m.	"Arboricultural Oddities" Charles Yurgalevitch Potluck Lecture, <i>The Barn</i>
March 24	1 p.m.	Monitoring Day, <i>The Barn</i>
April 5	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Browning Woods Trail</i>
April 13	6 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Youth Fishing Opening Day, <i>Scott Evans Memorial Pond, Biscuit City</i>
April 22	All Day	Earth Day Spring Cleanup, <i>Various Locations</i>
May 3	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Crawley Preserve Trail</i>
June 7	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Alewife Brook Trail</i>
June 13	9 - 11 a.m.	Walk & Talk: Plants & Trees of the DuVal Trail, <i>DuVal Trail</i>
June 23	3 p.m.	SKLT Annual Members' Meeting, <i>The Barn</i>
July 5	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Browning Woods Trail</i>
August 2	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Biscuit City &amp; Potter Wood Trails</i>
August 11	4 - 6:30 p.m.	Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction, <i>The Barn</i>

FOLLOW US ON:



@South Kingstown  
Land Trust



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Not on the SKLT email list?  
 Contact us at [info@sklt.org](mailto:info@sklt.org)

