



Site Lines

SPRING 2015

**SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST**

LEARN ABOUT COYOTES AT SKLT's ANNUAL MEETING

Since 2004, the Narragansett Bay Coyote Study (NBCS), led by Numi Mitchell PhD, has been developing science-based coexistence and management strategies for our newest top predator. Originally a prairie species, coyotes have colonized all parts of the continental U.S. in the past 100 years, reaching the islands of Narragansett Bay in the mid-1990s. Since then, they have become increasingly abundant and problematic in some communities. People have tried to eliminate them by hunting, trapping, and poisoning, but while lethal removal works for individual



problem animals, it does not work as a population control strategy.

Describing the NBCS project, which tracked coyotes and identified their primary food sources, Numi will explain how coyotes' reproductive rate is regulated by food competition with other coyotes. NBCS scientists theorize that if we can identify coyote food resources – and control them – coyote populations will decrease on their own. Come to the Barn on Sunday, April 26th at 3 pm for a brief business meeting, followed by Numi's program.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD OPEN FOR SKLT ACCREDITATION APPLICATION

If you have an opinion on how SKLT does our job, the Land Trust Accreditation Commission wants to hear from you! We are pleased to announce that SKLT is applying for accreditation and hoping to earn the right to use the seal shown here.

The accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet high quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs, as well as public comments about how the organization complies with



national quality standards related to the ethical and technical operation of a land trust.

SKLT first adopted LTA's Standards and Practices in 1999 and has continuously strived to improve our procedures while protecting South Kingstown's most important natural places.

If you wish to learn more about the accreditation program or submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org. You may also email your comments to info@landtrustaccreditation.org, fax to 518-587-3183, or mail to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments, 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866. Comments on SKLT's application will be most useful before May 24.

CONTINUING TO PROTECT THE BROWNING WOODS FARM

Conservation stewardship aimed at protecting a rare plant community is underway at SKLT's Browning Woods. In September 2014, conservation biologists Rick & Suzanne Enser and SKLT Land Management Director Clark Collins explored the Healy Brook wetland complex to assess conditions and identify issues.

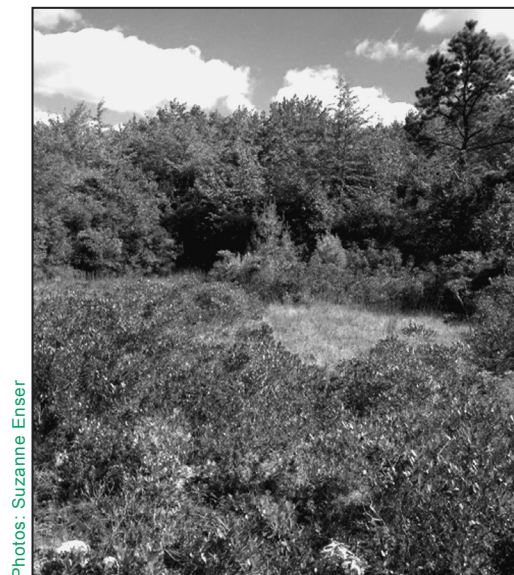
On a gloriously warm and sunny fall morning, our travels involved crisscrossing Healy Brook, nimbly navigating mossy hummocks underfoot, and crawling under and climbing over blueberry, sweet pepperbush and red maple. Eventually, the forested swamp transitioned into an open fen (photo on right), a type of wetland dominated by grasses and sedges. Some of the more uncommon plants that graced our journey were sundews, cotton grass, bog aster, cranberries, sphagnum moss, bog clubmoss, rose pogonia, bidens and cross-leaved milkwort. We also saw Eastern ribbon snake (photo below) and American eel – both identified as Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the 2015



revision of the Rhode Island Wildlife Action Plan.

The assemblage of plants and animals we observed at Browning Woods indicates a relatively healthy functioning system. However, the non-native invasive Japanese barberry in the floodplain presents a threat to this unique natural community.

In November, Suzanne Enser began work to restore the floodplain and control



Photos: Suzanne Enser

the spread of barberry. Hand-pulling and digging, she removed many plants, but the larger plants will require more manpower. Suzanne plans to coordinate a work day (or days) this spring and is looking for folks to assist.

“While the work may be physically demanding, it is extremely rewarding to see a natural community rebound when invasive plants are removed from the picture,” she said. Suzanne conducted similar projects in Vermont with the Upper White River Cooperative Weed Management Association and recently with the RI Youth Conservation League. If you can help out, please give Suzanne a call at 802-417-7430.

STOCK UP FOR NEXT WINTER...

SKLT still has firewood for sale! Mostly oak and maple, cut to 3-4 foot lengths, the wood is ready for your custom cutting and splitting. At \$50 for a standard pick-up truck load, it's a deal! Call Michael Bontecou at 742-4515 for information.



Photo: Claudia Swain



Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

GIFT OF LAND IN PERRYVILLE

At the end of 2014, SKLT received the generous gift of 15.3 acres of land in Perryville from members of the Brown family of Wakefield. Russell Brown coordinated the gift with SKLT and led staff through the beautiful woods of mountain laurel, pine and oaks on the donated property. Adjacent to other SKLT land where the DuVal Trail is located, this gift will serve to further protect this beautiful natural area and provide additional buffer for our trail properties. SKLT thanks Russell, Bonnie, Brad, Scott and Jennifer Brown for their thoughtful and important gift to the natural heritage of our town.

WHY BIRDS EAT FRUITS DURING MIGRATION

On Thursday, April 30th, at 7 pm, Scott McWilliams, PhD, professor of wildlife ecology and physiology at the University of Rhode Island, will give a talk on migratory birds and the food that sustains them.

Migratory birds are incredible endurance athletes. They can fly for days without eating or drinking as they travel from their northern breeding grounds to southern wintering areas, and they exercise more intensely and longer than the best of Tour de France bicycle racers. Migratory birds fuel their long-distance feats by eating a lot and by selecting carefully what

to eat. Wild fruits are usually on the menu, providing important nutrients that seem to facilitate migration. Habitat management for migratory songbirds in southern New England should include planting certain fruiting shrubs and monitoring whether the habitat is providing what the birds seek and require.

McWilliams' research primarily focuses on the nutrition, physiology, and ecology of wild vertebrates, with an emphasis on migratory birds of conservation interest. We hope you'll join us for a potluck supper at 6 pm and the program at 7 pm. If you plan to attend, let Jane Baumann know at jane.baumann@sklt.org.

WILD MUSHROOM HUNTING IN RHODE ISLAND

Few people know how many safe edible mushrooms can be found in our state or how widely varying their flavors really are. On Tuesday, March 10th at 7 pm, Ryan Bouchard and Emily Schmidt of Southern New England Mushroom Hunting will give a slideshow presentation about this fascinating hobby. They'll talk about some amazing edible local varieties, focusing on those that are safe for



Fistulina hepatica, the delicious Beefsteak Mushroom, on an SKLT trail. Photo: Ryan Bouchard.

beginners, and discuss their health and nutritional values.

Bouchard's book, *Gourmet Mushrooms of RI*, the first book about mushroom hunting in the Ocean State, will be available for purchase. Schmidt studies the health and nutritional values of our local mushrooms and the many incredible ways they can be cooked. Together, they educate people about safely hunting for wild mushrooms through their company, Southern New England Mushroom Hunting.

Save These Dates - Events at SKLT Barn (unless noted)

Tuesday, March 10	Wild Mushroom Hunting, 6 pm potluck, 7 pm program *
Saturday, March 14	RI Land & Water Summit, URI (landandwaterpartnership.org)
Sunday, March 29	Monitoring Day, 1 pm *
Thursday, April 2	Raptor program, 5:30 pm, Limited space, reservations required *
Sunday, April 26	SKLT Annual Meeting, 3-5 pm
Thursday, April 30	Food for Migratory Birds, 6 pm potluck, 7 pm program *
Sunday, May 17	Family Treasure Hunt, 2-4 pm *
Sunday, August 9	SKLT Great Outdoors Auction – Save the Date

For information on the English Country Dances held at the SKLT Barn, visit www.kingstonenglishcountrydance.org.

* Please register at jane.baumann@sklt.org or call 789-0962 ext. 1.

TAKE TO THE OUTDOORS ON MONITORING DAY

Can you remember monitoring day last year? Torrential rains and frantic phone calls back and forth here at SKLT - to cancel or not to cancel? Too much preparation had gone into planning for the day, so ultimately the “show” went on! And to our great delight and surprise, everyone showed up.

We already knew we have the best volunteers anywhere, but here again was confirmation. Many of you dressed for the weather and plunged ahead. Others took their property folders home and waited for better weather. Eventually, all the folders came back and another successful year went into the books.

Here we go for 2015! On Sunday, March 29th at 1 pm, we meet at the Barn to monitor all 154 SKLT properties, with a goal of completing



Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

all inspections that day. If you have never monitored, come out and give it a try. It's a chance to see one or more of our protected lands that you may never have seen before. If you're an old pro, we need you once again. This is always a great day that can involve your entire family. SKLT staff are already planning the menu for the dinner we'll make for our monitors, and if the weather cooperates, we'll enjoy a bonfire afterward to end the festivities – our way of saying “thank you” for all your help that day.

For the folks who know which properties they want to monitor, the earlier you let us know the better. If for some reason you can't make it on monitoring day, you can pick up your folders early and return them as soon as you have completed your work. For first-time monitors, we will hold a brief lesson on what to do and try to team you up with more experienced folks. Please register at jane.baumann@sklt.org or call 789-0962 x1.

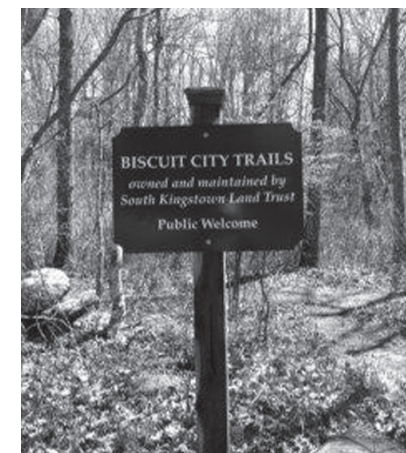
WAYS TO HONOR AND REMEMBER

Memorial gifts are a wonderful way to honor and remember loved ones, friends and colleagues. A gift to the South Kingstown Land Trust in memory of a loved one or friend is a special tribute to those who appreciated the South Kingstown landscape and the mission of SKLT.

SKLT is honored to be the recipient of memorial gifts. We are thankful for the gifts made in memory of beloved individuals, including the following who were remembered in 2014:

- Earl Chambers – December 12, 2014
- Betty Salomon – November 26, 2014
- Betty Robinson – October 17, 2014
- Devon Carlson – October 10, 2014
- Gordon McGovern – August, 19, 2014
- Patsy Howard – August 3, 2014
- Andy Richardson – March 4, 2014
- Nod Meyer – December 7, 2013
- Rocky Staples - October, 4, 2013
- Paul Lovejoy – August 29, 2013

If you would like to remember or honor someone, please contact Anne O'Neill or Jane Baumann at 789-0962.



Last fall trustee Ellen Grebstein orchestrated the planting of hundreds of flowering bulbs, as well as trees and shrubs, at SKLT's Biscuit City property. Check them out this springtime for a real treat!

HAPPY TRAILS

Our trail guru, Michael Bontecou, passes along these important tips about using our popular trails. Help make our trails nicer for everyone to enjoy! Thank you!



Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

1. Stay on the trails and respect our neighbors' private property. It only takes a few incidents to lose the goodwill of our friends along the trail.
2. Report any problems you find: a tree downed across the trail, any dangerous condition, or anything else out of the ordinary.
3. Pack out. That means leave with all the “stuff” you brought, and pick up any litter or debris you might find.

MILESTONES

Get Up, Get Out and Get Moving!!!

With the holidays behind us and the winter pounds packed on, it's a great time to get outdoors and explore the numerous trails of the South Kingstown Land Trust. The cool crisp air and fallen leaves provide a vastly different experience from the other seasons. Visibility is better, ticks are few and the peaceful solitude (especially if it is snowing) provides stress relief and opportunity for quiet reflection.

So, why not add "walks in the woods" to your New Year's resolutions? Try it! The preservation of land has many direct and indirect benefits to the community and the individual.

We would like to know how your interaction with the land trust affects your quality of life. Please email SKLT at jane.baumann@sklt.org and let us know if we may share your story. Happy Hiking!

Sincerely,



Mike Sherry, President

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF SKLT's ANNUAL FUND

The South Kingstown Land Trust's accomplishments are possible because of the support of our annual donors. The annual fund ensures that we can complete ambitious projects which will benefit South Kingstown for generations to come. Our land conservation work, stewardship of our protected properties, community programs and activities would not be possible without your support.

Thank You!

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Like SKLT on Facebook!



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

The mission of the South Kingstown Land Trust is to conserve and protect the natural resources and open spaces of our town for the enduring benefit of our community.

Officers

President: Michael Sherry
Vice President: Martha Day
Treasurer: James Farrell
Assistant Treasurer: Charles Lewis
Secretary: Sophie Page Lewis

Trustees

Heather Mae Breau
Edward Cimilluca
Ellen Grebstein
Linda Green
Susan Lovejoy
Timothy Philbrick
Carl Sawyer
Paul Schurman
Richard Youngken

Staff

Joanne Riccitelli,
Land Protection Director
Clarkson Collins,
Land Management Director
Jane Baumann,
Community Relations Director
Michael Bontecou,
Land Operations Coordinator
Anne O'Neill
Development Director

Main Office
227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879
401-789-0962
Field Office (SKLT Barn)
17 Matunuck Beach Road
401-783-4999

Site Lines Designer, Cindy Sabato, Volunteer

A VERY SPECIAL VISIT!

Join us at the Barn on Thursday April 2nd at 5:30 pm for a great program on raptors, with Rachel Holbert of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, located in Middletown, R.I. The one-hour program includes a slide presentation on raptors and a visit with a barred owl (pictured at right), plus plenty of time for Q & A.

Learn about the special adaptations that raptors employ for maximum hunting efficiency. This presentation describes the differences between various groups of raptors, such as hawks and falcons, and highlights local species.

Attendance is limited to 30 people, including children aged six and up, since raptors don't like big crowds, so you must register in advance to be admitted. Email jane.baumann@sklt.org to secure your space.

Photo: Rachel Holbert



✂ ————— ✂ 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! SKLT is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization so your donation is tax-deductible. As always, your generosity is greatly appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP:

I would like to: ☐ Join ☐ Renew

- ☐ Individual\$30
- ☐ Family\$50
- ☐ Protector\$75
- ☐ Steward\$100-\$249
- ☐ Guardian\$250-\$499
- ☐ Conservator\$500-\$999
- ☐ Benefactor.....\$1000+

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

GENERAL DONATION:

I'm already a member, but I would like to make a general donation. Please accept my check in the amount of \$_____.



EVERGREEN:

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

☐ Estate Plans ☐ Trust ☐ Other

- ☐ I am a landowner interested in preserving my land.
- ☐ Please contact me about making a Legacy gift.
- ☐ My employer will match my gift. I've enclosed a matching gift form.

Please make checks payable to:

South Kingstown Land Trust
227 Robinson Street, Wakefield, RI 02879



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST
227 ROBINSON STREET
WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

Non-Profit
Organization
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Permit No. 132

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Site Lines



FAMILY TREASURE HUNT AT WEEDEN FARM - TAKE TWO

Come have some fun in the fields around Weeden Farm and learn a few things too. Poor weather postponed our first attempt to hold this event, but we hope spring will be perfect for running around the fields. SKLT will host a treasure hunt on Sunday, May 17th from 2 to 4 pm – we'll provide helpful clues and hints to lead you and your family to interesting spots around the 100+ acre property. Thanks to Pier Pizza for the prizes!

Meet at the Barn at 17 Matunuck Beach Road at 2 pm and we'll send you off with a map and list of questions. Around 3:30 pm, we'll have a bonfire and the makings for s'mores. Let us know if you'll be coming so we can plan – contact jane.baumann@sklt.org.



Photo: Doug McGovern

OPEN SPACE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE