



Site Lines

FALL 2017

SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST

NEWLY PRESERVED LAND ON YAWGOO POND

In 2001, SKLT protected 12 acres of land on Yawgoo pond that was poised to become a subdivision. We have continued our work there and now preserve about half the pond's shoreline. We are excited to have just protected an additional 33 acres, called the Wells place, owned by the Littlefield family, on the northeast side of the pond. We thank the Littlefields—Abigail, Kim, Ivory, Richard, and Susan—for sticking with this project for more than a decade. Their perseverance demonstrates the Littlefield's ongoing commitment to preservation of the area.

"The Wells property has been loved and cared for by our family since 1908. Our father, Chris Littlefield, was part of the small group that founded the South Kingstown Land Trust in 1983. The preservation of this land in its natural state has long been a hope and a dream for all of us. We are delighted to see that happen, thanks to SKLT, and particularly, Joanne Riccitelli," said Kim.

SKLT plans to expand our popular Yawgoo Pond trail onto about 20 acres of the newly acquired land, which will be accessed from the existing trailhead parking area on Barber's Pond Road. The site boasts excellent forest and wetland habitats, rare plants and plant communities, and typical Rhode Island natural habitat, with a remarkable absence of non-native, invasive plants. Abundant pignut hickory trees provide valuable food source for wildlife. Whippoorwill, pileated woodpecker, bufflehead, hooded merganser and migrant warblers are among the many species of birds that live in the forest and visit the pond.

Yawgoo Pond itself is an undisturbed coastal plain pond shore community, a globally vulnerable natural community type found only in the North Atlantic Coast



Wells Property | Credit: Joanne Riccitelli

region. Fed only by rain or springs, these ponds are characterized by dramatically variable water tables. The unusual plants that survive along their alternately parched and inundated shores are conservation targets. Maintenance of forest in the surrounding uplands of such ponds is critical to water quality.

Located within a sole source aquifer, a groundwater recharge area, and a Groundwater Protection Overlay District, this land preserves groundwater quality as well.

The project was made possible with grants from the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Town of South Kingstown, the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Bafflin Foundation, as well as private donations and a contribution from the family.

SKLT PROTECTS LAND IN MIDDLEBRIDGE

SKLT is happy to have successfully protected another 22 acres in Middlebridge, owned by the Smith family. Thanks to the Smith siblings—Heather Collins, Martha McManamy, Christopher Smith, Bruce Smith and Holly Smith—who worked so hard to make this project a reality, a testament to their family’s commitment to the preservation of this area.

“Our family has long appreciated the extraordinary features and view from this beautiful piece of land located up the hill from Middlebridge,” said Heather Collins, daughter of Jane Campbell Smith and Barton P. Smith. “Entrusting this land to the South Kingstown Land Trust to preserve in perpetuity, the current generation is pleased to fulfill our Campbell family’s wishes,” Collins said.

With a densely developed surrounding village, this property’s undisturbed wooded frontage on Middlebridge and Torrey Roads provides scenic value. Preservation also prevents an increase of surface water runoff into the Narrow River that would have been generated by the development of 10 additional lots. The property contains a dense unfragmented second growth forest, typical habitat for scarlet tanager, turkey, woodcock, various warblers, wood thrush, ovenbirds, and others that rely on intact forested areas. Hawks, owls, and bald eagles are often seen on the river in winter, while the land is home to cottontails, coyotes, foxes, fishers and deer.

Along the Narrow River is a corridor of protected land owned by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, SKLT,



The Smith Property, now preserved in perpetuity | Credit: Joanne Riccitelli

Narrow River Land Trust and Audubon Society of R.I., totaling over 180 acres of riverfront land on the South Kingstown side of the river. Funding for the Smith family project was provided by a Local Open Space grant from the R.I. Department of Environmental Management, a grant from the Bafflin Foundation, a private donation, and a significant price discount from the family.

“The knowledge of the SKLT staff was impressive, and their dedication to the environment will bless many generations to come,” said Holly Smith of Peacedale. “I was impressed by how hard SKLT worked on our behalf to assist us, as a family, to reach our goal of preserving the family land, making this part of Rhode Island a more beautiful environment for us all, now and into the future. Well done!”

CALLING ALL CITIZEN SCIENTISTS!

SKLT members are a loyal bunch, and many of you have been to the same places year after year, noting the flora and birds. If you are a citizen scientist and have been keeping track of your findings on SKLT land, please type them up, with your name, date and location, and email them to clarkson.collins@sklt.org.

LOOKING OUT FOR THE BEES

The world is experiencing a rapid and widespread collapse in the populations of bees and other species that pollinate flowering plants. Colony collapse syndrome has killed many commercial hives and virtually wiped out wild populations of European honey bee. The causes are many and often interconnected, including climate change, use of pesticides and herbicides, and the spread of diseases and parasites. The stakes may be enormous; research estimates that up to 75 to 80 percent of all flowering plants (and 30 percent of the food we eat) depend on pollination by bees.

SKLT is partnering with federal and state governmental agencies and private organizations, such as the Xerces Society, to build up native pollinator populations. Methods include protecting native bee nesting sites, refraining from using pesticides in land management, managing fields to let plants bloom successfully, and planting selected plants that produce large quantities of nectar and pollen. Besides helping the pollinators, such practices also serve broader environmental goals by providing habitat for declining

ground nesting bird populations, small mammals, and diverse other species further up the food chain.

Our efforts began in 2008 with a 3.5-acre clearing at the 92 acre Browning Kenney property, where we tilled and seeded planting areas, built bee nesting boxes, drilled holes in snags and left slash to provide suitable habitat.



In 2015, we established a one-acre pollinator garden in an eight-acre field in Tuckertown and delayed mowing the rest of the fields until August.. SKLT currently has contracts at Weeden Farm to plant a half-acre of farmland with a selected mix of native pollinator plants. Partnering with The South County Garden Club, we have also installed selected plantings

of native pollinator plants with the assistance of Ragged Orchid Nurseries. In all, over 20 acres of grassland have delayed schedules, and another 11 acres old field land are managed for golden rod and other flowering forbs. SKLT also would be open to allow local bee keepers to use appropriate properties for bee-keeping.

You are invited to visit and enjoy these beautiful and productive natural areas—and look out for the bees!

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THANK YOU ANNE O'NEILL!

With deep appreciation for all she has contributed to SKLT, we announce the retirement of our Development Director Anne O'Neill. Anne first served SKLT as a Trustee, devoting her energy and passion for conservation best practices to our stewardship efforts. For the past four years, Anne has been a key member of the staff, lured here after her "retirement" from South County Hospital's development department. Martha Day speaks for all of us when she says: "Anne has been a driving force with the Land Trust for more than 25 years. Her knowledge of and passion for our community will be sorely missed." Anne's shoes will be impossible to fill, but she leaves behind her an organization strengthened and enriched by her hard work. Thank you, Anne!



Join Us For These SKLT EVENTS

d a t e s
to
Remember

- Wednesday, Oct. 11 Pot Luck & Gary Casabona Lecture, SKLT Barn, 6 p.m.
- Thursday, Oct. 12 Denali Night Out, Denali Wakefield, 160 Old Tower Hill Rd., 6 p.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 14 Thewlis Woods—DAR Trail Fall Clean Up Pine Hill Rd./Woodbine Rd., 9 a.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 4 All Ages Rx Hike, Browning Woods Trail, 10 a.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 11 Veterans Day Parade, 9 a.m.
- Saturday, Dec. 2nd All Ages Rx Hike, Browning Woods Trail, 10 a.m.

For all events please register at info@sklt.org
or call (401) 789-0962 ext 202.



Engage with us:
SouthKingstownLandTrust



GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE, GONE!

This year's Great Outdoors Celebration and Auction was a gigantic success! Thanks to the generosity of our guests, we raised over \$69,000 in critical support for our conservation efforts — our largest fundraiser of the year, and our most successful auction ever. Huge thanks to everyone who sponsored, donated, and attended. Spirits were high and a fantastic time was had by all. Anne O'Neil has been the creative genius behind this fabulous event for many years. We are delighted that the 2017 auction was so amazing! Mark your calendars for next year's Great Outdoor Celebration: Sunday, August 5, 2018!



Great Outdoors Celebration and Auction | Photo: Mo Howard

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PUTS OBSERVATION PLATFORM AT PERRYVILLE POND



Cam Neary Eagle Scout Project | Credit: Carol Entin

Cam Neary of Boy Scout Troop 44 Matunuck completed his Eagle Scout project requirement by constructing an observation platform at the Perryville Mill pond. Accessible from the Jonnycake trail at Heather Hollow Road, the platform provides an opportunity for bird watching and photography. The platform is located set back from the pond's edge so as not to adversely impact the

pond's riparian buffer. Although this does prevent a clear visual access to the pond visitors to the platform have already sighted both a Connecticut and a Black Throated Green Warbler, Blue- and Green- Winged Teals, White-Eyed Vireo, American Red Start, Gadwall, and an American Widgeon to name a few.

To facilitate access to the platform Troop members also trimmed the vegetation along the trail and will return in November to trim additional sections of the trail. The footing along the trail is soft and spongy with decades of fallen plant material, and criss-crossed with the roots of the surrounding vegetation. One is immediately taken with the natural beauty of the land entrusted to the Land Trust

by Anthony Esposito in 1996. SKLT appreciates its ability to connect youth to the outdoors and has benefited from many Scout projects over the years.

Any scouts interested in Eagle or Gold Star project opportunities should contact Clarkson. collins@sklt.org.

WISH LIST

SKLT is seeking volunteers and donations of tangible items for office and land stewardship. Our current "Wish List" of items includes:

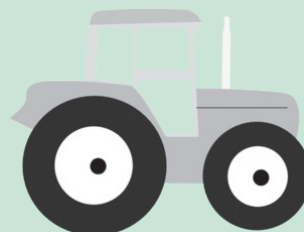
Tangible items:

- F-350 dump truck
- 8' Flail mower attachment, front fork lifts for John Deere Tractor
- Replacement string trimmer for Chestnut operation
- Lawn tractor w/ 48" deck
- 12' x 4' John boat
- Fuel cards for maintenance equipment

If you are able to contribute, please contact Julia Landstreet at Julia.landstreet@sklt.org.

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Year-end mailing list
- Upcoming donor event
- Picking white flint corn
- Title search work





MILESTONES

The summer of 2017 featured every type of weather; lots of rain, plenty of clouds and beautiful hot sunny days. SKLT took advantage and hosted a variety of activities. Yoga at the Barn led by Noreen McGill was a real treat every Saturday morning all summer. There was no set fee, but every participant made a donation and Noreen donated both her time and all the proceeds to the Land Trust – Thank you! Caroline Wilkel planted a “Field of Dreams” sunflower patch and donated the proceeds of the sales to SKLT. In addition, Caroline helped SKLT host our first Health is Wealth event at the Barn, featuring a blood drive, free skin cancer screening, a guided hike, a yoga class, and fresh healthy snacks. It was a beautiful day at the Barn! Special thanks to those who donated blood and to the RI Blood Center, as well as Heather Hughes Robenhymer, Dr. Lou Colavecchio, Jennifer Cobb Johnson, Caroline Wilkel, MD, and Jeanine Colosanto, whose talents made the screening possible.

The Annual Hot Dog Roast was super fun. Michael Bontecou was an excellent fire starter and Grill Master, Whalers donated yummy beer (THANK YOU!), the band was great (despite being a “man down” at the last minute) and a variety of SKLT Board members shared their culinary expertise and prepared an abundance of terrific side dishes. This event is a part of Rhode Island Land Trust Days, www.rilandtrusts.org, held late summer every year and a terrific way to explore and experience other protected properties around the state.

In addition to hosting events, the SKLT team has been hard at work with the land. The Land Stewardship team has been working to keep the trails clean and safe, lots of mowing, clearing up downed trees, rebuilding stone walls, picking up trash, updating trail maps and signage plus the many ongoing stewardship projects throughout SKLT properties.

And last, but certainly not least, this summer SKLT closed on the protection of three more properties totaling 95 acres!!! Farm, field, water and woods. Special thanks to the Littlefield, Smith and Whaley families on behalf of the generations to come for their vision and generosity. Thanks also to the many neighbors and funding partners who contributed financial support to these projects.

And, thanks to all who contribute operating support to SKLT you make our work possible!



Sincerely,

Julia Fry Landstreet

Julia Fry Landstreet, Executive Director

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: Martha Day
Vice President: Susan S. Lovejoy
Secretary: Linda Green
Treasurer: James Farrell

Trustees

Heather Mae Breau
Edward Cimilluca
Ellen Grebstein
Kevin McDonough
Joe Orlando
Timothy Philbrick
Carl Sawyer
Cindy Sabato
Michael Sherry
Sherwood Small
Caroline Wikel
Richard Youngken
Charles Lewis, Trustee Emeritus
Sophie Page Lewis, Trustee Emerita

Staff

Julia Fry Landstreet, *Executive Director*
Joanne Riccitelli, *Land Protection Director*
Clarkson Collins, *Land Management Director*
Michael Bontecou, *Land Operations Coordinator*
Doug McGovern, *Land Operations Coordinator*
Mo Howard, *Outreach Coordinator*

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

Site Lines Design: Cindy Sabato

GET TO KNOW THE ASHERS!

Preserving land in perpetuity carries with it the responsibility of stewarding the land we have worked so hard to protect. EverGreen was established to recognize and honor our special friends who have invested in the South Kingstown Land Trust's future through their planned gifts.

Karen and Ira Asher grew up in New York's metropolitan area where their only outdoor activities were limited. After they both finished school in the tri-state area, they decided to live somewhere less stressful but with a lot to offer. "We fell in love with Rhode Island. It's a great state," Karen said.

While serving on the South Kingstown Town Council years ago, Karen became engaged in land use. Particularly interested in botany and preserving the wild flowers, native shrubs and trees, she serves as the President of Rhode Island Wild Plant Society. Ira finds that the woods are "spiritual, and going for a walk is relaxing, calming and soothes your soul".

When not camping and hiking in New Hampshire or Iceland, the Ashers find themselves most often on the Yawgoo trails, near their Barbers Pond home. "We love the groundcovers that come up in the spring and the huge fern glades," Karen said.

Including SKLT in their estate planning was imperative to the Ashers. "We believe that the land trust does a really good job managing their properties and takes its stewardship responsibilities very seriously. We really think it's a great organization and we believe it's important to put our money where our mouth is," Ira said.

Members of EverGreen provide the foundation for our long-term success. To discuss how your legacy can have an impact please contact Julia Landstreet, at 401-789-0962 or Julia.landstreet@sklt.org.

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 want to: ☐ Join ☐ Renew at the following level:

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family..... | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Steward | \$100-\$249 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian | \$250-\$499 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservationist | \$500-\$999 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor..... | \$1000-\$2,499 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protector | \$2,500-\$4,999 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preservationist..... | \$5,000-\$9,999 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Founders Club | \$10,000+ | | |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

GENERAL DONATION:

I'm already a member, but I would like to make an additional donation 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

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Site Lines



JOIN SKLT FOR THE 2017 VETERANS DAY PARADE!



Join staff, trustees, members, friends and family as we celebrate our nation's veterans! This year, our gator will pull our new SKLT float with trees, hay, veggies and all things SKLT! Wear your walking shoes, smile and your favorite hiking outfit to represent SKLT in the Annual South Kingstown Veteran's Day Parade! Check our website, www.sklt.org, for more info.