



Site Lines

SPRING 2016

SOUTH KINGSTOWN
LAND TRUST

SKLT's ANNUAL MEETING: LEARN ABOUT BOBCATS

On Sunday, April 24th at 3 p.m., after conducting a short business meeting, SKLT will host a presentation about the ongoing study of our local bobcat population. Amy Mayer, head of the University of Rhode Island Wildlife Genetics and Ecology Lab, leads the field work on a five-year project designed to learn about bobcats in Rhode Island. SKLT's Weeden Farm is the location of one of the field traps, and pictured here are bobcat triplets seen at the site.



This collaborative project between the University and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management began in 2014. The main goals of the study are to examine the distribution, relative abundance, home range, movement patterns, and habitat use of bobcats in Rhode Island by live-trapping the animals and fitting them with GPS collars. These collars collect the location of the

animal every two hours for up to one year, providing researchers the data needed to learn more about their movements on the landscape.

We thank Amy for coming to share information on this exciting work. Their lab is also involved in research on the New England cottontail and American black bear. Come to the Barn on Sunday, April 24th to learn more.

WOVEN IN TIME: THE NARRAGANSETT SALT POND PRESERVE

On Thursday, March 31st at the Barn, local storyteller, writer and filmmaker Marc Levitt will host a viewing of his documentary about the only surviving pre-contact (1100-1400) Native American village on the New England coast. Described as a film of extraordinary beauty and poetry, *Woven in Time* is a story of 'place' - how land and spirit are interwoven and how understanding this village could lead to a shared stewardship for this beautiful territory of marshes, ponds, and forests.

Marc spent a year and a half interviewing more than 50 people from the Narragansett, state government officials and political figures, archaeologists, anthropologists,

historians, and local citizens. He has constructed the film in the same 'narrator free' style he employed in his first documentary, *Stories in Stone*. The Salt Pond site offers valuable insights into the way the Narragansett lived hundreds of years ago. Although only a portion of the site has been studied, findings so far include post holes, traces of more than 22 structures, thousands of artifacts and three human burials.

We are so happy to have Marc at SKLT again! Come at 6 p.m. for a potluck supper, followed by the film at 7 p.m. Please let us know if you're coming, by emailing: jane.baumann@sklt.org.



ALL ABOUT WINTER MOTHS

The invasive winter moth has been defoliating more and more of our forests and shade trees since its introduction into Rhode Island in the early 2000s. In early spring, the green inchworms feed on oak, maple, birch, beech and many other trees, as well as apple, pear, and blueberry flowers.

On Wednesday, March 16th, come learn about winter moth life cycle, monitoring, control, and biological control from Heather Faubert, of the University of Rhode Island Plant Sciences and Entomology Department. We'll start with



Photo: Heather Faubert

a potluck dinner at 6 p.m., followed by the program at 7 p.m.

Heather is a Research Assistant who has for 35 years helped Rhode Island farmers combat insect and disease problems. Heather runs the University's Plant Protection Clinic, identifying insect and disease problems for Rhode Island farmers, landscapers and homeowners. She has worked extensively with Rhode Island growers of

blueberry, pear and apple, which are especially threatened by the winter moth.

PARTNERING TO SAVE THE ELUSIVE SPADEFOOT TOAD

SKLT is planning to help conserve one of the rarest and most elusive amphibians in Rhode Island—the Eastern spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus holbrookii*). The spadefoot toad is listed as a State Endangered Species in Rhode Island and is facing population declines and loss of habitat throughout the Northeast U.S.A. Only two spadefoot toad breeding sites are currently known in the Ocean State.

SKLT is collaborating with the University of Rhode Island and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in this conservation effort. The University and NRCS will help us create the very specialized breeding habitat required by spadefoot toads—small shallow pools in sandy

soils that only hold water for several weeks each spring. Several of our properties have been identified as having the right soil conditions for spadefoot toads.

Breeding pools are usually in fields, wet meadows or other open areas adjacent to forests. The tadpoles develop very quickly, undergo metamorphosis, and spend their time as adults in nearby forests. Spadefoot toads probably breed in these small pools that dry up quickly to avoid competition with other amphibians.

We are still in the process of planning this program with the University and NRCS. Stay tuned for more details!



Spadefoot Toad. Photo: Margarete Walden, URI

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR MONITORING DAY 2016

On Sunday, April 10th, we invite you to join us out on the trails, in the back woods and across farms for our annual monitoring day! Our trustees and staff are busy preparing for this annual event, which is one of our most important stewardship responsibilities. It is a big undertaking and we can't do it alone! We need your help.

Each year, we have more properties to be monitored, and therefore, need more of you to get out there on our behalf. Those who have previously monitored know the drill well; those who haven't tried it yet, we encourage you to join us this year. You will enjoy the day, and you will learn all you need to know before you set out to monitor.

Monitoring Day will begin at 2 p.m., and we ask volunteers to plan to meet at 1:45 p.m. at the Barn. If you

have done this in the past and want to monitor a certain property, please let Jane know in advance so the property folder can be waiting for you when you arrive. If you don't have a preference, come and choose the property you would like to monitor. We will have a short tutorial session, do our best to pair the old-timers with the first-timers and send you off. After you have completed your work, return to the Barn for a homemade thank you dinner and bonfire (weather permitting).

This is a good activity for the whole family, so do bring the kids or grandkids along! Monitoring each of our properties is a required activity and we are always thankful for your participation in this event. Please let us know that you can help by emailing: jane.baumann@sklt.org.

BUSY TIME FOR LAND PROTECTION

Land protection activity at SKLT cycles up and down, sometimes tied to changes in the real estate market or tax laws, and sometimes for no discernable reason. Right now is a very busy time for protecting land in South Kingstown, with a few donations closed at the end of 2015 and more than 150 acres in the works. Our perspective is that SKLT will continue to work to protect land whenever the time is right for the landowner.

In addition to the Hale House donation in 2015, SKLT was also given eight acres across three different projects, all of which add strategically to already protected land.

SKLT thanks Brad Brown for donating five acres in Perryville near the DuVal trail, a gift that comes shortly after a donation of 15 acres in 2014 from Brad and members of his family. These 20 acres add more land for



Land donated by Ed Burman; Photo: Joanne Riccitelli

expansion of that trail and provide a larger contiguous natural area for wildlife habitat.

In Kingston, we received donations of two lots from Ed Burman, abutting land already owned by SKLT that was originally protected by the Kingston Improvement Association.

Also in Kingston, SKLT received a gift of land from Susan Pratt Walton – the remainder interest in two acres of land on Little Rest

Road. Thank you so much!

Next up is our continued work to protect the Whaley Farm, as reported in our last issue. Pledges and donations for this project now total \$63,000, just short of our \$75,000 goal. Please consider making a gift to help protect this 40-acre working farm in the middle of a beautiful farmland corridor of more than 100 acres. March 1st is our target date!



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

Thursday, Feb. 18	*Todd McLeish on Rare Species, 6:30 p.m. dessert/fruit potluck, 7 p.m. talk, \$5 donation
Wednesday, Mar. 16	*Heather Faubert on Winter Moths, 6 p.m. potluck, 7 p.m. talk
Thursday, Mar. 31	*Woven in Time, with Marc Levitt, 6 p.m. potluck, 7 p.m. movie
Sunday, Apr. 10	*Monitoring Day, 2 p.m.
Sunday, May 15	Going (and Growing) Nuts family event, 3 p.m. at Chestnut Orchard
Saturday, May 21	*Hike eastern DuVal Trail, 1 p.m.
Saturday, June 11	*Hike Crawley Trail, 1 p.m.
Sunday, July 10	Antique Auto Show, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 14	Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction, 4 to 6:30 p.m.

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.

ANTIQUE AUTO SHOW RETURNS

If you have missed the great Antique Auto Show at the Barn the past year or two, relax! It returns to the Barn this summer, on Sunday, July 10th. If you would like to volunteer to help with the show, please send a note to jane.baumann@sklt.org, and you will be invited to a committee meeting in late February. Start thinking about ways to make this year's show the best ever!

There are many opportunities to help. Among them, we need a secretary to keep the committee on track, media people who like to make sure everyone knows about the event, folks who like to work with sponsors, and those who would be willing to work in different positions on event day.

The antique auto show has been a very popular event in the past, and this year, as it returns to the Barn, we want to make it really special. All proceeds will go toward replenishing our Grist Mill fund after



Photo: Claudia Swain

its use for extensive renovations of the old turbine and the sluiceway from the pond to the mill.

It will be a great time, and we welcome all of you to take part. Watch for the meeting notice and join us if you can.

NEW EVERGREEN MEMBER – MARYANN SCOTT

EverGreen is a group of SKLT supporters who have made an enduring commitment to the organization by naming SKLT in their estate plan or who have made an outright gift of \$10,000 or greater to the EverGreen Fund.

SKLT's newest EverGreen member, MaryAnn Scott, first became involved in the Land Trust when she moved here more than 30 years ago. She volunteers for Monitoring Day and enjoys our many hikes, lectures and movie nights.

When asked what inspired her to make this level of commitment, she responded: "Recently I saw a film of a wide river. It was taken from the air and followed the river for miles. It was flanked by high rise buildings, cheek to jowl, as my Mother would say. The river was punctuated with bridges, those shaped like a lovely rainbow. But it was not lovely. Cars crossed and recrossed like ants on a march. There were no people in sight. Absolutely no grass and no trees! The name 'EverGreen' popped into my head, and I knew even more certainly that I'd made an important choice."

To thank SKLT for all its hard work, MaryAnn has included the Land Trust in her estate plans by naming us the beneficiary of an annuity. Thank you and welcome, MaryAnn!



If the idea of planned giving intrigues you—and it can take many forms—contact Anne O'Neill, Development Director at (401) 789-0962 x3.

GOING (AND GROWING) NUTS!

Come to our first family fun day on May 15th at the Chestnut Orchards on Tuckertown Road. The fun kicks off at 3 p.m. and promises something for everyone to do! The kids will be hunting for treasures, and the adults will learn about the wonderful chestnut project intended to produce a newly hybridized chestnut tree immune to the chestnut blight that felled them all a century ago. Refreshments will be served.



FOR HIS EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT,

Jamie Del Prete, Troop 1 Kingston, and his volunteers constructed an 18 ft. wooden bridge on the Jonnycake Trail which will link Weeden Farm to the Samuel E. Perry Grist Mill pond on Moonstone Beach Road. Thank you for your hard work!

Myles Point, Joe Gallucci, Sam Anderson, Jamie Del Prete (pictured), and Mack Bodziony



MILESTONES

Synergy of Community

Looking back, 2015 was a banner year for SKLT projects, involving many vendors, volunteers, staff and board members. Countless hours of expertise and energy were applied to the reconstruction of the Grist Mill grounds and turbine assembly. The reconstruction of the bypass sluiceway is a work of stone art and functions magnificently. The rebuilt turbine operates smoothly and should last another 100 years. A Boy Scout eagle project constructed a raised planting bed, complete with deer fencing, that will host a three sisters demonstration garden of flint corn, beans and squash this spring. Look for a grand event at the mill this spring.

Many other scouts performed their eagle projects constructing kiosks, bridges, stairs and other amenities for the various trails. Volunteers at the Biscuit City trail and pond cleared the property and planted many native plants. Please visit the trail and enjoy the scenery.

The stone wall rebuilding team continued their activities at the Weeden Farm completing 2.3 miles in the past 10 years. Traveling on Matunuck Beach Road, you can see the results in the scenic fields and walls.

These are only a few of the many projects under way on land trust properties. The land trust is able to accomplish so much only through the combined efforts of the community. With spring approaching, please consider adding your time, talent and treasure to these efforts.

Thank you again for your commitment.

Sincerely,

Mike Sherry, President



South Kingstown Land Trust's nominating committee is seeking members who may be interested in serving on our Board of Trustees. For more information, please contact Linda Green at linda.t.green@gmail.com.



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
Secretary: Linda Green
Treasurer: James Farrell
Assistant Treasurer: Charles Lewis

Trustees

Heather Mae Breau
Edward Cimilluca
Ellen Grebstein
Sophie Page Lewis
Susan Lovejoy
Kevin McDonough
Timothy Philbrick
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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

GRIST MILL – BACK IN ACTION!

The critical repairs to the turbine assembly and sluiceway are now done, and after a few set-backs, the test run of the mill was a success. The Land Trust thanks the following for their generous financial support: The Champlin Foundations, the Roddy-Holden Foundation, Robert T. Blakely, the GFWC Women's Club of South County and Bob and Diane Smith.

SKLT would also like to recognize the individuals who assisted in the assembly and installation of the turbine. We are fortunate to have Rob Lyons, Jeff Burns, Paddy Couzens, Carl Sawyer, Kevin McCloskey, Bob Smith, Stu Sherman and Mike Sherry as dedicated volunteers. We all look forward to celebrating the grand reopening in the spring. Stay tuned for the date!



Photo: Anne O'Neill

✂ — — — — — ✂ — — — — — ✂ 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



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WAKEFIELD, RI 02879

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ENCOUNTERS WITH NEW ENGLAND'S MOST IMPERILED WILDLIFE

On Thursday, February 18th, natural history author Todd McLeish will introduce the remarkable lives of the rarest and most endangered wildlife in New England, from birds and beetles to whales and plants. He will take his audience along on an entertaining first-person journey as he tracks basking sharks, collects biopsy samples from humpback whales, investigates the nesting burrows of elusive seabirds, and observes the metamorphosis of rare dragonflies. His talk is based on two of his books, which will be available for purchase and signing following his presentation.

SKLT is excited to have Todd present for us again – his talks are always really interesting and fun! The program begins with dessert/fruit/cheese potluck at 6:30 p.m. and Todd's talk at 7 p.m.. A \$5 donation is requested.



Northern red-bellied cooters

OPEN SPACE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE