



Site Lines

Fall 2023  Open Space Makes All the Difference



URI Bee Lab Surveys SKLT For New England Pollinator Partnership Project

Left & Right: Research assistant Emma Tondre surveying at Hollis Tucker Farm. Center: Golden northern bumble bee on bee balm.

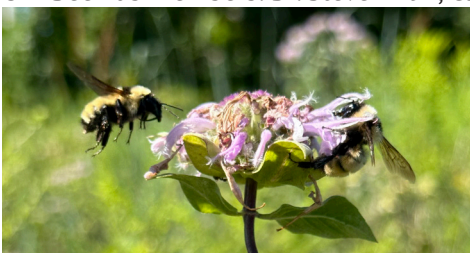
The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is collaborating with the University of Rhode Island (URI) and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) to assess plant and pollinator responses to practices installed through the New England Pollinator Partnership in RI and CT. As part of this three-year project, researchers at the URI Bee Lab have been monitoring the native bee and plant communities at two SKLT pollinator meadows, located off Matunuck Beach Rd and at Hollis Tucker Farm.

Since June 2023, researchers have documented a variety of native bees using these two pollinator meadows, including sweat bees, leafcutter bees, Eastern carpenter bees, and five different species of bumble bees. During the August survey, over a dozen golden northern bumble bees (*Bombus fervidus*) were observed using planted bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa*). The golden northern bumble bee is listed as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List and, according to a recent statewide survey of RI's bumble bees conducted by the URI Bee Lab, is RI's rarest bumble bee species. Other discoveries from SKLT's pollinator meadows include two new species (*Triepeolus remigatus* and *T. lunatus*) not previously documented in RI. Numerous other pollinators were documented during surveys as well, including the endangered monarch butterfly, hummingbird sphinx moths, swallowtail butterflies, wasps, beetles, and flies.

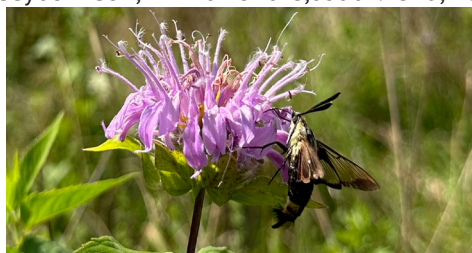
Native wild bees have declined in recent decades due to habitat loss, pesticide exposure, pathogens, and land use intensification. The implementation of pollinator conservation measures, such as planting native plants and limiting pesticide use, support native bees and other beneficial wildlife. The ultimate objective of this research being conducted by URI and CAES is to document the native bee species richness and abundance on Farm Bill conservation program lands, identify the key plant species that support wild native bees, and provide information for developing seed mixes that best meet the needs of RI and CT bees.

By Casey L. Johnson

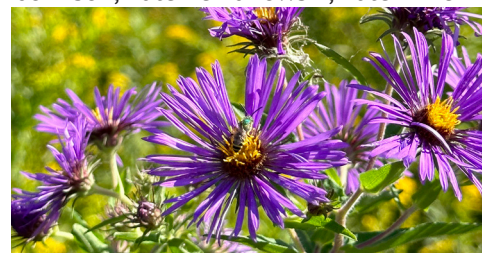
URI Bee Lab members: Dr. Steven Alm, Casey Johnson, Emma Tondre, Julia Vieira, Ren Johnson, Kate Perzanowski, Kate Zmich



Golden northern bumble bees on bee balm.



Hummingbird sphinx moth on bee balm.



Sweat bee on New England aster.

MILESTONES

Last week the sky at Weeden Farm staged a three-part ballet of gnats, dragonflies, and swallows, swooping and swarming to sounds of the cicadas. Fall is a wonderful season, there are late season fruits, flowers, and vegetables at all the farms.

Land Trust Days coordinated by the RI Land Trust Council, rilandtrusts.org, invites us all to explore and experience land trusts throughout the state. SKLT has a full calendar, see enclosed, and we frequently add when opportunities arise. I encourage you to follow us on Facebook and Instagram and let us know if you'd like to be added to our email notifications as well.

Land Management staff Thomas Meyer has just returned from the Land Trust Alliance Rally 2023 in Portland, Oregon filled with great information. This national conference brings to life the many practices SKLT and other Accredited Land Trusts implement on a daily basis. I'm excited to report Rally 2024 will be held in Providence next fall. Visit landtrustalliance.org for more information.

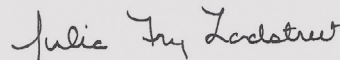
The Great Outdoor Celebration and Auction enjoyed the benefits of perfect weather and fabulous supporters. Thanks to the dozens of folks who worked to pull it all together and the

hundreds who contributed the funds raised, our fundraising goals were met! Special thanks from the land management team for the new John Deere mower – truly nothing “runs like a Deere.” Between the mower, staff and Tuesday volunteers the trails are in fabulous condition.

I hope you've all had a chance to watch the *Our Town: South Kingstown* program assembled/created by the team at RIPBS. The segment they generated about SKLT using the material Matt Eldridge submitted was terrific – so many beautiful images, and great input from Clarkson Collins, involved since 1984. It was great to watch the segments on so many SKLT partners – what a treat.

It was a dynamic summer with three interns and lots of fabulous research projects/partners. Many thanks to our supporters whose financial contributions make our work possible.

In gratitude,



Julia Fry Landstreet
Executive Director



SOUTH KINGSTOWN LAND TRUST

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401-789-0962

Office Hours

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

Website: sklt.org

Email: info@sklt.org

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.



Yawgoo Pond Trail Redirection Project Update

Yawgoo Pond Preserve is a beautiful 100-acre conservation area in West Kingston. It features superb views of Yawgoo Pond, a diversity of upland and wetland habitats, and a two-mile trail system offering a wilderness experience just a short distance from South County Trail.

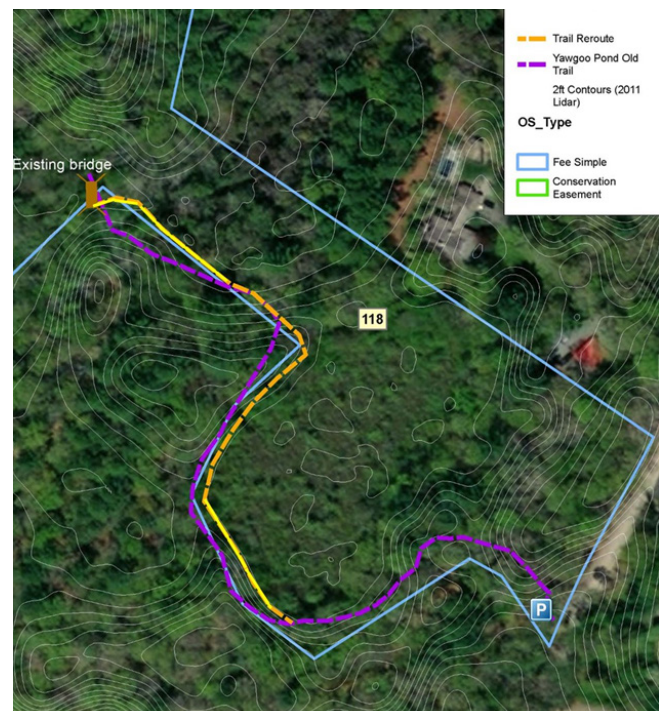
In 2020, South Kingstown Land Trust (SKLT) had to close the trail due to circumstances requiring a redirection of the trail. The redirection involves building elevated boardwalks and a new bridge over wetlands; as well as an opportunity to modestly expand the former two-car parking area.

Luckily, SKLT is no stranger to complicated projects that require patience and resources. The process of generating environmentally sensitive designs for the boardwalk and parking area, wetland permits, and building permits for such a large project has proven to be just as difficult as it sounds.

SKLT has not put this beloved trail on the backburner. In the coming months, we anticipate finalized permits, applications for grants and solicitations for additional community support to make this project a reality.

Providing meaningful access to open space and nature is one of the most important aspects of SKLT's mission, and it is vital that the trail redirection project is completed at the highest possible standard to protect the wetlands and benefit the community and environment for generations to come.

You can donate directly to the project and restore access to this beautiful network of trails at sklt.org/supportsklt/donations





Law School Interns Bring Expertise to SKLT

In June of 2023, SKLT proudly announced hiring local law students due to a partnership with Roger Williams University Law School of Bristol, Rhode Island.

SKLT sought to foster and build connections with local aspiring lawyers in the area to provide foundational skills and conduct hands-on experience. Working alongside mentor attorney Martha Day and our staff, the interns contributed their knowledge to help further our current projects and overall mission.

Joining us as summer interns were Domenic Coppola of Rhode Island, who currently attends Suffolk University Law School, and Benjamin Peters of West Virginia, who currently attends Roger Williams University Law School. Both students are rising second year law students (aka “2Ls”) at their respective universities and were able to find and apply for the summer intern position due to SKLT’s partnership with Roger Williams University Law School.

Domenic and Benjamin are undecided on which area of law they seek to practice post-graduation. Still, both feel that their experience working at SKLT will be a rewarding experience for future endeavors, as they spent time reviewing Conservation Easements, monitoring properties alongside staff, and helping to scan and digitize the vast file cabinet at SKLT.

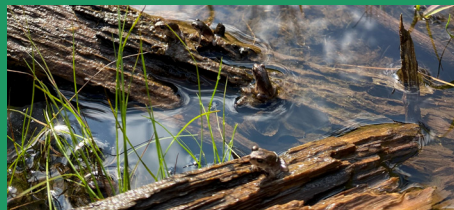
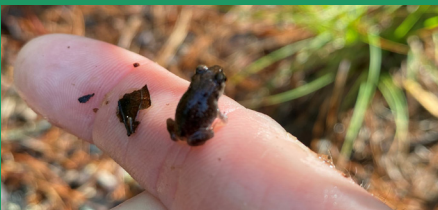
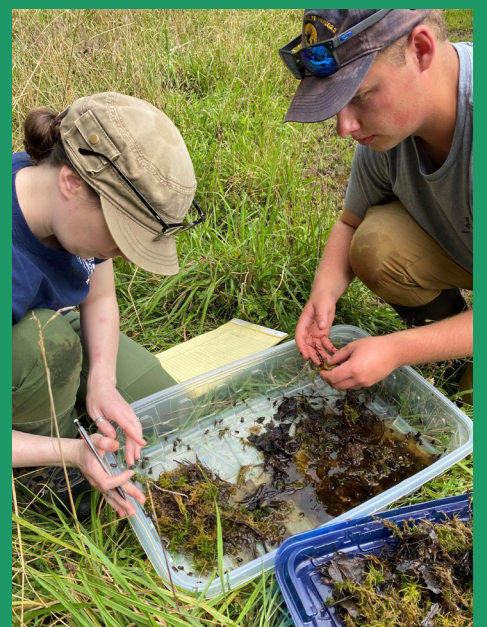
By Domenic Coppola & Benjamin Peters

Endangered Spadefoot Toads Find Home at SKLT

In April 2020, SKLT was honored to join Operation Spadefoot RI, a habitat restoration project aimed to repopulate the endangered Eastern spadefoot toad. Volunteers and team members onsite dug, lined, and seeded two vernal habitat pools on land owned by SKLT.

In 2021 and again this summer, after heavy rains, spadefoots were discovered to have bred at a site in Charlestown and as the pool dried up, 1,100 tadpoles were rescued and then raised under the thoughtful eye of Lou Perrotti of Roger Williams Zoo until they were fully morphed.

In August, the morphed babies were successfully released at the SKLT breeding site as a part of efforts to expand the range of the only endangered amphibian species in Rhode Island!





URI Coastal Fellow Intern Monitors Beech Leaf Disease at SKLT Trails

My name is Abby Gill, and I am currently a junior at the University of Rhode Island studying Biological Sciences and Environmental Science & Management. I have lived in Rhode Island my whole life, and I greatly enjoy exploring different hikes and sights across the state.

Outside of my studies, I enjoy gardening, hiking, and rock climbing. Additionally, I am the president of the URI Club Track team which has led to great friends and an amazing community. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with SKLT. They helped to facilitate and fuel my passion for the outdoors, both academically and personally.

During my time at SKLT, I facilitated research on beech leaf disease (BLD) across two SKLT sites: Browning Woods and Thewlis Woods. With the help of Beth Dickson, Julia Landstreet, and SKLT's lovely volunteers, I was able to monitor and map beech leaf disease in these two heavily affected sites.

Measurements were taken based off of three ranges of tree heights, as well as the presence of the nematode that causes BLD. The tree heights are as follows: less than 3 feet, between 3 and 24 feet, and over 24 feet. The presence of the BLD-causing nematode can be detected by characteristically dark striations in beech leaves, defoliation of beech leaves, and eventual death of the beech tree.

At both sites, we monitored the number of affected beech trees on the trail transect, as well as the beech patches off of the trail. At Browning Woods, there was a 96.5% presence of BLD across the whole property. Thewlis had a 94.0% presence of BLD across the whole property. This shows that there is a high infection rate of BLD once it infiltrates an area, leading to the eventual demise of affected beech trees.

By Abigail Gill



Tree Sale to Benefit SKLT at Greenwood Growers



Weekends of October 14-15 and October 21-22
(10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Fall is the best time to plant trees! Especially with the wet summer we've had. Beautify your yard and support open space by buying trees at Greenwood Growers in benefit of SKLT!

Make sure you mention SKLT and 100% of all proceeds from your sale of the \$10, 18-24" 1-gallon Green Giant Arborvitae will go to help preserve and protect open space.

Check or cash, credit card not accepted.

Learn more at sklt.org/event-tickets/treesale-2023

Upcoming Guided Hikes

Guided Hike at the Browning Woods Trail

Friday, November 3rd (9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.)

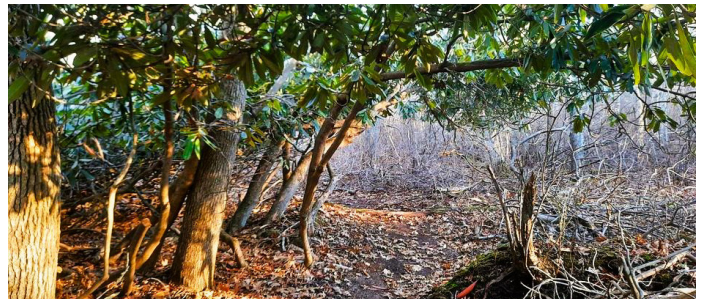
Frolic in the fallen leaves on a 2.5-mile hike that travels through a thriving wetland before ascending to wooded uplands where you can view the historic stone walls and foundations that make up the remains of the Browning Woods Farm homestead.



Guided Hike at Alewife Brook Trail

Friday, December 1st (9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.)

Join a fun guided hike in the crisp December air at the SKLT's newest trail, Alewife Brook! The one-mile trail loops through a 43-acre property acquired from the Rhode Island Boy Scouts, with funding from the Town of South Kingstown, RI Dept. of Environmental Management, and the Nature Conservancy.



Members' Open House

Wednesday, November 8th (5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)

Free, registration encouraged

Come one, come all! New, longstanding, and prospective members are invited to learn about what we do to protect and take care of thousands of acres of local forests, fields, farms, and trails.



Volunteers' Open House

Wednesday, November 29th (5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)

Free, registration encouraged

Learn more about the variety of opportunities to volunteer and make a difference in stewarding open space. You'll find which opportunity is best for you, removing invasive plants, picking up litter, working events, or stamping envelopes.

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

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 maintain their membership through a monthly, automatically recurring gift.

- I want to become a sustaining member at the monthly amount of \$_____
- Please contact me to set up ACH/bank payments.

Or 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.

Thank You for Raising Funds for SKLT's New John Deere Zero Turner Mower!

Thank you to all of the supporters and guests at the *Great Outdoors Celebration & Auction* this August.

Before the auction, the staff decides on a high priority project, initiative, or piece of equipment to feature in a "paddle raise" fundraiser, allowing guests to donate at different amounts. This year, the "Final Item" was a John Deere Zero Turn Mower perfectly suited for trimming Weeden Farm's miles of stonewalls and trails.

Donations for the mower totaled \$6,838 which fully funded the purchase of the mower and was our highest total for an auction Final Item to date! Land Management staff Thomas Meyer has already made great use of the mower as we prepare the grounds for the fall and winter season.

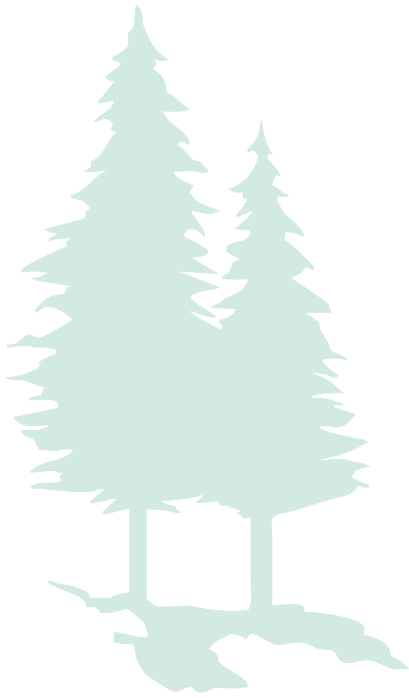
Thank you for your support!





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

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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

Oct. 6	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>DuVal Trail System</i>
Oct. 7	12 - 4 p.m.	Tomaquag Museum's Cranberry Thanksgiving, <i>The Barn</i>
Oct. 11	6 - 8 p.m.	South Kingstown Safari: Trail Camera Videos Potluck Lecture, <i>The Barn</i>
Oct. 14-15	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Tree Sale to Benefit SKLT, <i>Greenwood Growers</i>
Oct. 21-22	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Tree Sale to Benefit SKLT, <i>Greenwood Growers</i>
Nov. 3	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Browning Woods Trail</i>
Nov. 8	5 - 7 p.m.	Members' Open House, <i>The Barn</i>
Nov. 29	5 - 7 p.m.	Volunteers' Open House, <i>The Barn</i>
Dec. 1	9 - 11 a.m.	Guided Hike, <i>Alewife Brook Trail</i>

REMINDER: PLEASE WEAR BLAZE ORANGE WHEN HIKING

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 Contact us at info@sklt.org