



The Preservationist

www.hartlandlandtrust.org P.O. Box 12 East Hartland, CT 06027 Spring 2023
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Sensitive Forest / Wetland is a prime characteristic of land suitable for an ILF award.

Good News!

Hartland Land Trust (HLT) was awarded its third Audubon Connecticut Wetland In Lieu Fee (ILF) program grant. Since 2017, HLT has preserved over 115 acres with over \$300,000 awarded from the ILF program. With this recent award, another 50 acres will be preserved in Hartland. Each project award involves an appraisal and an A-2 survey of the property. A project agreement and a management plan must be approved to insure the long-term protection of the property. HLT's first two grant awards were used to establish the Mill District Nature Preserve. Please find more information about the ILF Program at: <https://ct.audubon.org/conservation/in-lieu-fee-program> where you will also find a "Success Story" of HLT's past awards.



Photo Contest

HARTLAND LAND TRUST IS
LOOKING FOR YOUR PHOTOS!

Submit your photos featuring scenes of Hartland, Hartland history, landscapes or wildlife for a chance to win a prize and be featured on Hartland Land Trust note cards, newsletters, posters and website. Photo credit will be given to the photographer.



For more information, please visit our website
<https://www.hartlandlandtrust.org/photo-contest>
Deadline for submissions is July 31, 2023.

This Year, Hartland is for the Birds (and Trees)!

HLT has an exciting line-up of events this year. We are welcoming spring and our migratory birds back with a **Spring Birding Hike** on HLT's Mill District Nature Preserve at **7:00 am on Saturday, April 29** (rain date Sunday, April 30). Our leader will be Fran Zygmunt, a passionate birder whose "life list" includes over 1000 birds. Among Fran's other noteworthy birding achievements, he, along with his other "Raven" Lunatics" teammates, holds the record for the Connecticut State Big Day, identifying 193 species in 24 hours! Registration will be required for this event – for details on this and other upcoming events, keep an eye on HLT's Facebook page and make sure you're on our e-mail list (e-mail us at hartlandCTlandtrust@gmail.com if you don't get our e-mails). The weekend of **May 20 and 21** will be HLT's citizen scientists will be fanning out in our **Follow the Forest Wildlife Corridor Assessment** blitz. Please see the article on this important initiative elsewhere in this issue of the *Preservationist* for more information and plan to join us to make Hartland safer for our wild neighbors.

This year **June 3** will be our **2023 CT Trails Day** and Steve and Pam Emmons will lead us through the Mill District Nature Preserve's blue and red trails. This hike will include a beaver pond where we will hopefully see some waterfowl and through some beautiful forestland. This year we'll also highlight HLT's new red trail which will take us into the adjoining Bassett-Kell Preserve. Registration will be available on the CT Forest and Park Association's CT Trails Day website. In September HLT will hold its Annual Meeting on **Monday, September 25 at 7:00 pm** which will be followed at **7:30** by a talk by DEEP's Migratory Bird Program Leader Min Huang which will highlight a really cool bird, the American Woodcock – sometimes call the Timberdoodle. These birds rock! Min will tell us about the decline in these iconic birds in CT due to habitat loss and what DEEP and its partners are doing to help restore the population. Finally, forester Connor Hogan, McLean Game Refuge Director, will be speaking to us on **Monday, November 6 at 6:30 pm** on **Fungi in the Forest: Deadly Mushrooms, Miracle Cures and Underground Highways**. There's lots going on underneath our feet as we walk in Hartland's woodlands!

Help Wanted!

HLT's beautiful Beach Nature Preserve on Hi-View Road in West Hartland is in need of a few good people to help us keep our trails in good condition as well as to monitor the property. We are seeking a **Property Monitor** who would walk through the property at least once a year and complete HLT's brief monitoring form. We also are in need of a **Trail Manager** who would walk our trails once a month and alert us to any hazards. **Compensation and Benefits:** Beautiful surroundings, plenty of fresh air and exercise and the reward of knowing you are helping HLT!

For more information, please e-mail us at hartlandctlandtrust@gmail.com

Also needed is a **Hartland alternate** to the **Farmington River Coordinating Committee**, the group that oversees the Upper Farmington Wild and Scenic River. For more information, please contact FRCC's Hartland representative, **Dan Bowler**, at **(860) 559-3535**.



Southerly view from the Beach Preserve

HLT Officers:

- Fred Jones
Co President
 - Susan Pearson
Co President
 - Amanda Lukingbeal
Secretary
 - Jane Jones
Treasurer
- ### HLT Directors:
- Fred Caputo
 - Tom Kean
 - Tom LeClerc
 - Sue Murray
 - Brandon Pizzoferrato

Co-Presidents' Message

It only takes a quick glance at Hartland's Open Space Map (you can find this on our website) to realize how fortunate we are to have such vast areas of precious land. All that green on the map; forests and water; Hartland's location in the foothills of the Berkshires – we have the privilege of being one of the most forested towns in our state. However, Hartland is not insulated from the many threats facing our forests, meadows and wetlands. Urban sprawl is not a given and may or may not be in the cards in the near future -- but we do face other threats here today. What differentiates Hartland's forests over others in the state is our large coniferous population. Of these evergreens, the Eastern Hemlock, a "foundation species", helps to keep the forest floor temperatures cool, resulting in colder and healthier water sources... good for fish, amphibians, birds and us too. Unfortunately, our hemlocks are threatened by climate change, drought and little critters, such as the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) and the Elongate Hemlock Scale. The HWA is that white sack that at first glance appears to be a fungus on the underside of the needles but actually is a tiny bug with a white wooly overcoat that feasts on the hemlock needles, eventually killing the tree. Perhaps you have seen the results on your property. Please read elsewhere in this issue about the exciting work of CT Agricultural Experiment Station's entomologist Dr. Carole Cheah, who is including several HLT properties in her fight to protect hemlocks against the HWA.

HLT volunteers have also worked this year to mitigate the damage to our forests from other invasive species. HLT is committed to doing so without using chemicals. Biologist John Anderson taught us how to attack a patch of phragmites in a fen (wetland) in our Bassett-Kell Preserve. Two phragmites work days in 2022 have paid off. John feels that by continuing this work we may be able to achieve some degree of control over the spread. HLT's volunteers also worked on removing oriental bittersweet from several areas in the Beach Nature Preserve, including the milkweed meadow. This is not easy work! We want to give a huge shout-out to our dedicated work team: Tom Dyer, Amanda Lukingbeal and Kevin Swiniarski who joined yours truly in our work. It is so true that many hands make lighter (if not light) work.

We regard it as a privilege to steward these beautiful forestlands that have been entrusted to HLT. It is our sincere commitment – and that of the HLT Board of Directors -- to do our best to protect the trees, meadows and streams that are under our care.

As always thank you for your continued support of our land trust.

See you outdoors,

Fred and Susan

Follow the Forest Citizen Science Opportunity!

Have you ever thought about the barriers that our animals must overcome when they need to cross a road to move from one place to another? Last fall I watched a young turkey run along one of those metal railings that line our roads, separated from the rest of his family, not realizing that he could duck under it or fly over it. He finally reached the end of it and was able to rejoin his tribe. A happy ending for him, fortunately.

HLT joined the Follow the Forest initiative of the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) last year. In the words of Paul Mailhot-Singer, then working with HVA, Follow the Forest "aims to protect and connect forests and facilitate wildlife passage throughout the Northeast from the Hudson Valley to Canada". Our Hartland forests fall within this amazing strip of green. Paul identified 22 Hartland sites, 11 in East Hartland and 11 in West Hartland, as potential "pinch points" where our wild neighbors might need to cross a road. He and his co-worker, Julia Rogers, came to Hartland to show a group of HLT volunteers how to complete wildlife habitat linkage assessments.

Now HLT is planning a "Follow the Forest" blitz the weekend of May 20 and 21 to complete assessments on these 22 sites and we are calling for help from our citizen scientists!

We are looking for volunteers to help us complete this project.

Volunteers would choose one or two of these sites and visit them to take a few pictures and complete a simple form describing the habitat there, noting any challenges to wildlife trying to cross the road in that location. It would be a fun project for a family or a few neighbors to complete together. Please e-mail us at hartlandctlandtrust@gmail.org if you are interested to obtain more information and to choose a location convenient to you to assess. Also please visit our website at www.hartlandlandtrust.org to view the gorgeous video that explains the Follow the Forest initiative.



Invasive species, what you should know and why you should care.

Invasives are all around us, causing damage to our local habitat and in many instances killing or crowding out our native species. Many invasives were intentionally brought here from abroad as garden and landscape plantings, while others hitched a ride during the import/export shipping processes of international commerce over the past few centuries. Climate change has contributed to the migration of invasives to New England, where some have adapted over time to our colder temperatures. Tree-killing invasive insects have caused irreparable harm, as evidenced with Emerald Ash borers. Woolly Adelgids are attacking our Hemlock trees, eventually consuming all their leaves and leading to certain death. Asian Longhorn Beetles, Spotted Lanternfly, plus many other insects attack and destroy specific tree species. Choking vines such as Oriental Bittersweet can wreak havoc by spreading easily, becoming extremely difficult to remove once established. Tree-killing Nematodes are cause of leaf and bark disease on our Beech trees, ultimately leading to death of host trees over time. As the Nematodes spread entire stands of trees can succumb and die off. Pond-choking species are present in many of our local water bodies. Once established they leave little room for natives to survive. Species such as Autumn Olive change the composition of their surrounding soil and literally poison neighboring plants and trees. There are dozens of invasive species, some are more concerning than others. Left unchecked, they can change the landscape causing long-lasting effects, some of which have measurable economic impact. How do we identify these invaders and what decisions do we need to make, if any? In addition to work on HLT properties to control invasive species, HLT plans to host a future seminar on the subject. Meanwhile, to explore the topic of invasives on your own, there are many resources available to the public from State, Federal, EDU and Non-Government Organizations that can guide you through the identification process, along with potential remedial methods. We are including a list of important links on our website, www.hartlandlandtrust.org, that will take you to these useful resources.



Tom Kean, Director, Hartland Land Trust
Master Woodland Manager (in training)



Hartland School Pollinator Garden Update

Hartland Land Trust volunteers gave the Hartland School Pollinator garden a nice upgrade this past fall with new raised wooden beds, and this Spring, in keeping with our mission to conserve resources, will be installing a rain barrel water collection system for watering the garden! With signs of climate change appearing all around us, and Connecticut experiencing longer, hotter, and drier Summers, this rainwater conservation will help our pollinator plants survive and thrive. Keep your eyes on our website and Facebook page for a work day announcement, and join us in this next endeavor to support our precious ecosystem.

Since Hartland School received its first salmon eggs from the Salmon-in-Schools program in 2012, HLT has partnered with the school in this fun educational endeavor that incorporates nurturing the young salmon into a broader curriculum about the Farmington River watershed and the importance of Hartland's excellent water quality to the greater region. Followers of HLT's Facebook page have enjoyed middle school science teacher Deb Costolnick's posts on the progress of "our" salmon fry. HLT has enthusiastically supported Hartland's Salmon-in-Schools program since it began in 2012 with the purchase of water for the fish tanks. Ms. Costolnick also credits many individuals and organizations for their roles in establishing and growing the program: former HLT President Sue Murray, long-term HLT Board member Alana Bordewieck and her husband Harald, Hartland's Board of Education and its former Chair Dan Bowler, Hartland School PTO, former Superintendent Bob Fish, former Principal Laura Hollingsworth, the Farmington River Coordinating Committee and Emmons Tropical Fish. Of course, Salmon-in-Schools never would have happened at all without Ms. Costolnick's vision and leadership. In the fall of 2022, HLT took its partnership with Salmon-in-Schools one step farther by assisting Hartland School in the preparation of a proposal to the Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee for funding to enhance the Salmon-in-Schools program. The Lower Farmington group awarded \$2,300 to the school to purchase a new chiller unit for the fish tank as well as equipment for the students to test water quality. The grant also covers the cost of bringing biologists from the Farmington River Watershed Association to the school and along on the salmon release day field trip in early May. Ms. Costolnick is excited to introduce her students to professionals working in the field. Who knows – maybe some of our Hartland students will be inspired to follow their own careers in science! Good luck to Ms. Costolnick and her Hartland School students this spring – and to their salmon charges!



Help For Our Hemlocks!

Since 1995, Dr. Carole Cheah of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station has waged a battle against the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) that has devastated Eastern Hemlock trees in our area. She has been releasing "predator ladybeetles" – *Sasajiscymnus tsugae*, to be exact – in CT forests. These hungry beetles only feed on adelgids and they eat A LOT of them – one adult beetle can eat more than 1,200 HWA! In the 28 years that Dr. Cheah has been doing this research she has observed a noticeable recovery of hemlock trees in beetle release areas and has found no "down side" or unanticipated consequences of the releases.

In Hartland, ladybeetle releases have already taken place in parts of the Tunxis State Forest as well as on MDC lands. Earlier this year Dr. Cheah walked the Mill District trails with several HLT Board members and volunteers and identified several promising sites for ladybeetle releases. She is in the process of obtaining funding for the purchase of this year's beetle supply.

But there is more good news: on the night of February 3-4, when temperatures in Hartland dropped below -11 degrees F, Dr. Cheah expects that these frigid temperatures may have killed 80-90% of the HWA in Hartland. As a result, HLT lands may need fewer predator ladybeetles than expected, leaving more beetles to protect our neighboring forests.



Dr. Cheah, left, prepares to visit the Mill District trails with HLT directors and volunteers



Biologist John Anderson leads an HLT crew in "phragmites control" on the Bassett - Kell Preserve

Tribal Acknowledgement

"We are gathered on the traditional lands of the Tunxis, Agawam and Mohican tribes and all other tribal communities who may have once called Hartland their home. Hartland Land Trust asks you to join us in acknowledging these tribal communities that respected and cherished the forests, streams and wildlife that make up this beautiful land we know as Hartland."



Conservation and Stewardship Fund

"We must strive to touch the land gently and care for it as true stewards...for those who follow us... may see that our mark on the land was one of respect and love."

Robert B. Oetting (1934-1990), wildlife researcher

The Fund was first established June 2013 in memory of Gib Anderson, longtime supporter of our organization and former Chairman of the Hartland Conservation Commission. Since inception, the fund has named 49 honorees.

If you would like to help the fund grow, you may give in the following ways:

- outright donation
- in honor of a living supporter of conservation
- in memory of someone who has died

If you choose to recognize someone, please indicate the person's name along with your donation on the enclosed envelope under Conservation and Stewardship Fund or under Join/Donate on our website.

Current contributions (Jan 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022) in the following names:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Gib Anderson | Jo-Ann M. Hazard |
| Mary Clement | Roland D. Hazard, Jr. |
| George R. Crunden, Sr. | Roland D. Hazard, Sr. |
| James Devlin | Fred & Jane Jones |
| Ramona Eddy | Esther Hayes Laubin |
| Jim Hayes | Al & Gert Lilliendahl |
| Russ & Polly Hayes | Carl & Peggy Lutz |
| Carl Hohloch | Dan Mitchell |
| Dale Hazard | Marion & Bill Murray, Sr. |



Deer Carol,

I had to stop feeding the birds because of the bears. I miss seeing my feathered friends. Is there another way I can attract them to my yard without tempting the bears? Heavy Hearted in Hartland



Dear Heavy Hearted in Hartland,

I have an easy, low cost solution to your no bird blues. Clean fresh water. All birds need water and cannot survive without it. A simple bird bath placed near your favorite viewing window will give you hours of avian entertainment as they drink, bathe and splash. Here are some tips to keep your birds happy and healthy. First, the birdbath water should be shallow, no deeper than three inches; most birds prefer two inches of water. Second, the bottom of the water basin should be rough, not smooth and slippery; adding a flat rock can help with both depth and roughness. Third, be sure to refill and clean the bath regularly. A quick swipe daily with a handled scrub brush, when refilling, will keep your bath clean. One trick I use to replenish my birdbath is to hang a gallon water jug over the basin, I prick a small hole in the bottom so a tiny drip, drip, drip keeps the bath full and the noise of the dripping water will draw birds to your bath. To hold the gallon jug over the birdbath, I use a crook neck garden plant holder.

Carol Blouin is a local writer, orchardist and Master Wildlife Conservationist.

Calendar of Events 2023

- ✿ **April 22 Earth Day**
- ✿ **April 29 7 a.m. (rain date Sun. April 30) Birding Hike with Fran Zygmunt.** Meet at the Mill District Nature Preserve trailhead. Pre-registration required. See website for details.
- ✿ **May 20-21 Follow the Forest - Wildlife Corridor Assessment Blitz**
Pre-Registration required. See website for details.
- ✿ **June 3-4 (Sat. Sun.) Connecticut Forest & Park Association CT Trails Day.** Hike on MDNP & BK
- ✿ **June 19-25 National Pollinator Week.** Refrain from chemical pesticide use. Plant native plants to flower from spring through fall.
- ✿ **September 25 HLT Annual Meeting at 7 p.m.** Featured speaker **Min Huang DEEP Migratory Bird Specialist. 7:30 p.m.**
- ✿ **November 6 at 6:30 p.m. Connor Hogan, McClean Game Refuge Director - "Fungi in the Forest"**
- ✿ **December 12 Tenth Annual HLT Fundraiser at Flatbread Pizza,**
Tuesday 5-9 p.m. Canton Shoppes

The Preservationist: Newsletter of Hartland Land Trust Issue #16 Spring 2023



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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
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Hartland Land Trust,
Incorporated Oct. 2006,
is a not-for-profit,
501(c)(3) organization.
All officers and directors
are volunteers.

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P.O. Box 12
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HARTLAND
LAND TRUST



Working for the preservation and
enjoyment of open space
in our community