

Natural Surroundings

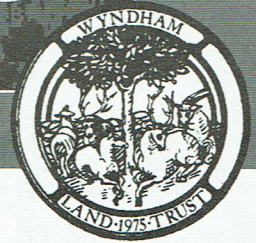
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Conserving the Natural Resources of Northeastern Connecticut



AN ACQUISITION FUND: Anticipating Active Years to Come

By Richard A. Booth, President

In response to a generous donation by two of our most ardent supporters the Board, at its April 8th meeting, established an acquisition fund, a dedicated fund to be applied only to the purchase price in land protection transactions.

Today's realities are such that a land trust cannot depend solely on its own resources for land acquisition. Land acquisition requires contributions from many sources, the trust, its friends and supporters and one or more granting agencies, both public and private. No foundation will provide the entire purchase price in any transaction. Having our own dedicated acquisition fund testifies to seriousness of purpose and provides a running start in transactions yet to come.

In today's world some things are increasing inexorably. Paved surfaces are an example. Other things - farms, fields, forests - are disappearing at an alarming rate. As a consequence we lose the opportunity to enjoy locally produced food, we lose variety of landscape, we lose the tranquility which only undeveloped open space can provide, we lose the joy of seeing our children discover the natural world and experience the sense of

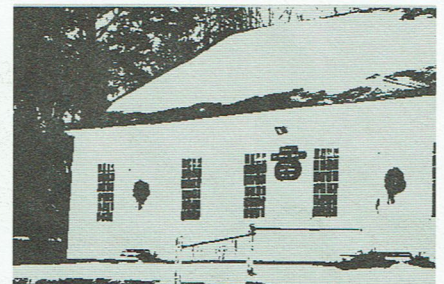
wonder which such discoveries provide. We lose these things for ourselves and for our heirs- in perpetuity.

The Wyndham Land Trust owns 869 acres as protected open space for the benefit of the general public and seeks to protect much more. We cannot do it alone and we cannot do it for nothing. We invite your participation and support.

THEY DID IT AGAIN! OUR LATEST ACQUISITION

For the third time *the Wyndham Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy came together* to protect an Atlantic white cedar swamp, this one in Plainfield. Forty and one half acres were acquired from John and Margery Oates in a bargain sale negotiated through TNC's Pawcatuck Borderlands office. At the same time the Lathrop family donated two acres.

We are grateful to the members of both families for their generosity and to TNC's Kevin Essington for his expertise and hard work. The swamp feeds Sugar Brook which flows northerly, bordering WLT's 34 acre Tillinghast Preserve and passing through the DEP's 232 acre Sugar Brook Wildlife Management and Field Trial Area on its way to the Quinebaug River. These acquisitions raise the total acreage owned by the Trust to 869.



The Wyndham Land Trust will have office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 A.M.-noon at the Old Town House in Pomfret. Our phone number is 963-2090.

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WYNDHAM LAND TRUST

Board Member Profile

Ben Williams, Vice-President

Ben Williams is no stranger to conservation efforts in Connecticut. He serves as the statewide president of the Connecticut Audubon Society Board, as well as vice-president of the Wyndham Land Trust. Now retired, Ben had a long and successful career in education beginning at Pomfret School. He later served as headmaster of both Lawrence Academy (15 years) and Worcester Academy (7 years.) Ben was called into service twice more to lead schools as interim head, once in Istanbul, Turkey.

The natural world was "a major interest" for Ben as a child and has evolved into a "priority as an adult." His life-

long interest in butterflies and moths took him to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as a team member on a "bio-blitz," a 24-hour inventory of species. Ben was the featured photograph in a story about the blitz in the November 2002 issue of *Scientific American*. The story, "A Search for All Species," can be accessed via the magazine's website www.sciam.com.

When asked why he continues to spend so much of his well-deserved retirement on conservation Ben replied, "I want to do what I can to preserve what's left of the natural world, and encourage others to develop a stewardship ethic for the environment. People within the larger community appreciate what we have here and are willing to step up to the plate to protect it. Dick Booth, for example, is worth his weight in gold and his contribution has been extraordinary."



Ben Williams, Wyndham Land Trust V.P. on right, with son Ben.

The Trust has been fortunate to have the strength and support of Ben Williams as a board member for over ten years. We think he, too, is extraordinary, and we look forward to the next ten years.

Thank you, Ben.



Protected Land in Pomfret

A CHANGE IN THE LINE-UP

Bill Toomey, formerly Director of the Quinebaug Highlands Project of The Nature Conservancy's Connecticut Chapter, has left to take up a new position as Director, Westfield River Project for TNC's Massachusetts Chapter. Our understanding is that the Quinebaug Highlands Project remains firmly in place and that plans for its future administration are to be announced. We will miss Bill both as a friend and as a professional colleague from whom we learned much. We wish him, his wife Barbara and their two children the very best and cheer them on their way.

R. A. B.

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William Cooper, c. 1798 - 1864 was born in New York City. As a man of independent means he had the time and resources to indulge his interests in natural history, especially birds and mollusks. He was a founding member of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, later the New York Academy of Sciences. William Cooper's son, Dr. James Graham Cooper was an ornithologist of note who made many contributions to the study of west coast birds. The Cooper Ornithological Society is named in James' honor.

Now, back to Cooper's Hawk, *Accipiter cooperii* (Bonaparte). The man who named a newly recognized kind of hawk in honor of William Cooper was Charles Bonaparte, a nephew of the French Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte. Charles devoted his life to the study of birds and was primarily a systematist, one who describes, names and classifies.

He spent most of the period 1823 - 1828 in the United States, residing not far from Philadelphia where he was well-received in scientific and social circles. While in the U.S he began his monumental *American Ornithology*; or *The Natural History of Birds Inhabiting the United States Not Given by Wilson*. When Bonaparte returned to Europe, his friend William Cooper assumed editorship of the second and third volumes. Hence, in appreciation, Cooper's Hawk.

The Cooper's hawk has been described as "rare to uncommon" both as a migrant and as a breeder in Connecticut and is perhaps most easily seen along the coast during the fall migration. One usually frequents the winter bird feeder at WLT's Lyon Preserve and some excellent views have been had of them there. The nest is bulky, made of sticks and placed high up, 30 feet or more, in a coniferous or deciduous tree.

Bonaparte himself did not go unrecognized by his ornithological friends and colleagues.



Cooper's Hawk

THE NAMES OF BIRDS 1

Who Put The "Cooper" in Cooper's Hawk And Why? R.A.B.

Did you ever wonder about the names of birds? More specifically, did you ever wonder about the people who are commemorated in birds' names? After all, science is a human activity and those engaged in it are very human indeed. Who was the "Cooper" of Cooper's Hawk, the "Wilson" of Wilson's Warbler, and how did "Blackburn" get into Blackburnian Warbler? Who were these people, what did they do and why were they commemorated?

Many Connecticut bird watchers will doubtless be familiar with Bonaparte's Gull *Larus philadelphia* (Ord) which can often be seen along the shore, October to May. George Ord, the describer, was an American naturalist and friend of Bonaparte's during the latter's stay in the United States.

Although the great days of finding, describing, and naming previously undiscovered kinds of birds are largely over, avian systematists continue to delve into the relationships between species and groups of species. Today's great imperative is to ensure that the many species which surround us, both plant and animal - interesting, beautiful, useful, even necessary to our own survival - are not crowded from the earth. The Wyndham Land Trust protects nearly nine hundred acres of wild animal and plant habitat for the benefit of the general public. We seek to protect much more, especially in large tracts, and would like to hear from others who wish to preserve the landscape, its fauna and its flora, both great and small.

Note: Interested readers might enjoy *Biographies for Birdwatchers*, *The Lives of Those Commemorated in Western Palearctic Bird Names*; and *Audubon to Xantus*, *The Lives of Those Commemorated in North American Bird Names*, both by Barbara and Richard Mearns and published by Academic Press in 1988 and 1992 respectively. Accounts vary from one to seven or eight pages. For information on particular species mentioned above see *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut*, Louis R. Bevier, ed. 1994, State Geological and Natural History Survey, Bull. 113 and *Connecticut Birds* by Joseph D. Zeranski and Thomas R. Baptist, University Press of New England, 1990. *Audubon to Xantus* is now available in soft cover.

