



Natural Surroundings

WYNDHAM LAND TRUST, INC. • SINCE 1975

Conserving the Natural Resources of Northeastern Connecticut

Summer 2021

About The Wyndham Land Trust

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc. is engaged in the preservation of natural resources in Windham County, Connecticut. Its emphasis is on wildlife habitat, especially where unique or particularly fragile assemblages of animals and plants exist or may be expected to exist. Its properties are open to the public for the quiet enjoyment of nature. Land may be acquired by donation or purchase. Since WLT enjoys 501 (c) 3 status donations to it are deductible under IRS rules, a feature which sometimes proves attractive! Our work is supported by dues, donations, grants and a very modest endowment income. Members enjoy an annual potluck supper, generally in the fall.

*Inquiries may be directed to the Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.,
PO Box 302
Pomfret Center, CT, 06259
or to info@wyndhamlandtrust.org
Please see our web site
www.wyndhamlandtrust.org
Phone (860) 963-2090.
Your comments, questions and suggestions are most welcome.*

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TWO PROPERTIES PROTECTED

The Wyndham Land Trust recently acquired two properties that add to the 5000 acres of forest and grasslands already protected by the land trust in Connecticut's Quiet Corner. The new 86-acre Cartier Preserve is located north of Quarry Road in Woodstock. The new 65-acre Potrzeba Preserve sits a short distance away to the west of Swedetown Road in the northwest corner of Pomfret.



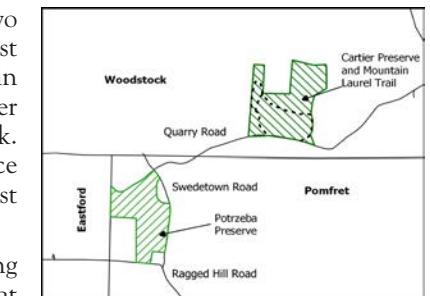
A babbling brook cuts through the Potrzeba Preserve. Protecting critical wetlands is one of the missions of the Wyndham Land Trust.

"There's something about these woods that never fails to help me refocus on what's truly important in this life," says the land trust's treasurer, Penny Foisey. "As the saying goes 'And into the woods I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.' The Cartier and Potrzeba Preserves are great places to enjoy the beauty of nature. I always feel like I've stepped back in time walking these paths that were here long before I."

Both preserves are part of a large undeveloped area of forested habitat covering several thousand acres that is important for storing carbon and fighting climate change. Land manager Andy Rzeznikiewicz is excited about the new acquisitions: "The diversity of birds is very high—an indication of the health and the size of the forest. Species like black-throated blue warblers, hooded warblers, black-throated green warblers, and scarlet tanagers breed here. Bird species that I don't find

in most parts of our area are attracted to the large stands of thick mountain laurel, where they nest and raise their young.

"The land trust is focusing on acquiring large, unbroken blocks of land, and we're hoping for additional donations to protect this valuable habitat in our region. I've long admired the wild feeling of this area, and I'm grateful we have managed to protect some of it."



Quarry Road, in a remote section of Woodstock, forms the southern boundary of the Cartier Preserve

VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

Putnam's Chris Nelson has hiked on many of our preserves and is a big fan of the land trust. After graduating from Southern New Hampshire University, he decided to volunteer some of his time with us. "I really love the organization and wanted to do more than donate money and occasionally pick chestnuts," explained Chris. We asked him to clear the invasive vines that were smothering the barn on the Gellert preserve in Pomfret, and he stepped up big time. Within a few weeks Chris and a friend had cleared up the area. Now it's looking good for another summer of visitors to the preserve and its new trails.



BEETLE MANIA

The hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) has threatened hemlock trees (*Tsuga canadensis*) in Connecticut since the adelgid was first discovered in the state in 1985. The adelgid is a small (1.5 mm) aphid-like insect, and an infected hemlock is easily identified by the white woolly masses formed by the aphids on the underside of branches at the base of the needles. The adelgid originated in Japan and has no known enemies in North America and is kept in check only by long, hard, cold winters. Unfortunately, recent warm winters and summer droughts have allowed it to flourish in the Quiet Corner.

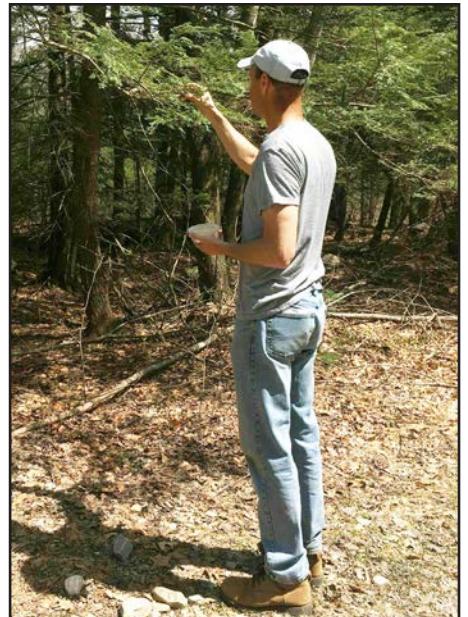
Landowners can apply dormant oil to individual hemlocks to smother the adelgid eggs over the winter, but spraying is not practical or sustainable for the large hemlock stands found on land trust preserves. As an alternative to insecticides, Carole Cheah and other scientists at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in Windsor have been searching since the mid-90s for an insect that eats the adelgids, an approach known as integrated pest management (IPM).

Cheah introduced Japanese lady beetles (*Sasajiscymnus tsugae*) to populations of infested hemlock trees and found it drastically reduced the population of the adelgid. In addition, the beetle dispersed, reproduced, and overwintered, so their effect on the adelgid persisted for many years after the initial introduction. Since 1995, over 185,000 beetles have been released in Connecticut on 37 state and private properties, including Connecticut Audubon in Pomfret.

At the end of April Andy Rzeznikiewicz, Cheah, and a commercial supplier introduced colonies of beetles on WLT preserves where hemlocks are threatened by the woolly adelgid, such as Bull Hill and Robbins in Thompson and the new Nightingale Forest Preserve in Pomfret. We are hopeful the beetles will protect the trees and stem the tide of woolly adelgids. Stay tuned for updates!



Adult lady beetles feeding on hemlock woolly adelgid eggs



Releasing beetles at our Bull Hill preserve in Thompson



Scouts and helpers from BSA Troop 27 at the Cartier Preserve

HELP FROM TROOP 27

At the end of March, volunteers from BSA Troop 27 in Woodstock cleared the main trails on the new Cartier Preserve in Woodstock in preparation for the June 13 Spring Outdoors hike. Special thanks to Victoria Embree, Eagle Advisor for the troop, for organizing the work.

SPRING OUTDOORS WITH WLT!

W yndham Land Trust treasurer, Penny Foisey, is leading a Last Green Valley Spring Outdoors walk on our new Cartier Preserve off Quarry Road in Woodstock on Sunday June 13th at 9 am. Penny's walk is timed to coincide with the spectacular mountain laurel blossoms on the property. The walk is moderate, with some uphill and uneven footing. Leashed dogs are welcome. Enter Quarry Road from New Sweden Road in Pomfret. Parking for the event will be signed across from #161 Quarry Road.

Spring Outdoors programs require registration, call (860) 617 1863 to register. For more details see The Last Green Valley web site at www.tlgv.org.



SUMMER SOLSTICE GATHERING

The land trust is holding its eighth annual Summer Solstice event at the Duck Marsh Preserve in Pomfret on Sunday, June 20. Members, family, and friends are invited to spend the evening with their fellow land trust members and supporters. Watch the sun settle into the western sky from the observation platform while Bobolinks settle into the grassland meadows. What better way to celebrate the longest day of the year!

The event runs from 7 to 9pm. Park along Holmes Road, between Modock Road and Wrights Crossing Road.



Land trust members watch the sun set at the 2017 Summer Solstice event.

KIDS CORNER

By 8-year old Ilsa Reiner of Eastford. (Ilsa loves nature and wildlife as much as her late great aunt, Jo-Ann MacFarlane.)

Humming birds are amazing!
They are a sign that spring
has arrived in New England.
Humming birds beat their wings
80 times per second and can
hover in mid air! They are so
beautiful to admire.



CAROLYN WERGE (1946-2021)

This is an appreciation of the late Carolyn Werge, a long-time member and supporter of the Wyndham Land Trust, who passed away on May 3.

Carolyn was well known and highly regarded in the Quiet Corner. Back in 1992 she became the officer of the Thompson Wetlands and Conservation Commission, and in 2005 she was the editor of the town's Open Space Plan. The State Archeologist, Nick Bellatoni, worked with Carolyn to view and record archeologically sensitive land in Thompson. Native American artifacts are protected by a conservation easement held by the Thompson Historical Society on land owned by Carolyn and her husband, Bob. In addition, she was supportive of efforts to save the Native American underground chambers in Thompson.



Carolyn was the town's GIS expert, and her maps are a treasure. Her support and knowledge of the Long Pond area and collection of ecological data helped the land trust secure a grant to acquire and protect the preserve in 2016. Starting in 2017 she helped the land trust assemble the information necessary to describe and map over a hundred parcels that constitute our Bull Hill Preserve.

It was with her support that the Thompson Conservation Commission endorsed fund raising and grant writing by the land trust to acquire the Robbins Preserve on the Five Mile River in 2012. Most recently Carolyn, along with the conservation commission, recommended that the town donate seven land-locked parcels on Bull Hill to the Wyndham Land Trust. The measure to transfer the 66 acres to the land trust passed at a town meeting on the day that she died.

She was a special lady and a good friend.

Ron Tilden

PUTNAM'S PLUCK-A-DUCK RAFFLE

The land trust is collaborating with the Putnam Business Association to provide tickets for the 2021 PBA Pluck-A-Duck event. Numbered rubber ducks are floated down the Quinebaug River in Putnam on August 22, 2021, and the owners of the first ducks to arrive at the finish line win a prize. Tickets are \$5. Half of the proceeds from each ticket we sell goes to the PBA and half is retained by the land trust.

WLT tickets are available from Marcy Dawley at Chase Graphics at 124 School Street in Putnam or at Steve Adams law office on Main Street in downtown Putnam. Purchase now through early August.

Alternatively, we can mail your duck tickets to you if you send a check (made payable to PBA) to: WLT, PO Box 302, Pomfret Center, CT 06259.



**WYNDHAM
LAND TRUST, INC.**

The Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.
P.O. Box 302
Pomfret Center, CT 06259-0302

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