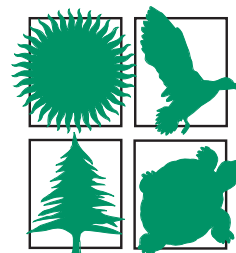


Westborough Community Land Trust

P.O. Box 838 • Westborough, MA 01581

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Land Trust News

Westborough Community Land Trust Newsletter

June 2004

A Letter from the President

As we finish up our sixth year as the Westborough Community Land Trust, I take great pride in WCLT's accomplishments, particularly those in this last year:

WCLT continues to blaze and steward trails along the Charm Bracelet, which at its completion will be close to, if not more than, 28 miles long. WCLT educators train community members as "Trail Teachers" and helped to launch the Outdoor Classroom program at Mill Pond School, giving the students an opportunity to explore a natural, open-air classroom. The new "Nature Notes" — a biweekly series in the Westborough News — highlights the wonders of nature to be discovered in our own backyard. The WCLT website, www.westboroughlandtrust.org was created in 2004 to provide updated information on the Land Trust, a calendar of events, plus maps and information on the Charm Bracelet. In all, six easements were secured in critical areas providing vital links for the Charm Bracelet Trail throughout the Town.

WCLT has preserved more than 100 acres of land and acts as stewards for close to 300 acres in Westborough. In addition, this year WCLT gained ownership of several parcels of open space: A 20-acre parcel off Nipmuck Drive in the Oak Bluffs subdivision; two parcels of land of 21 acres and 13 acres off Ruggles Street, Gilmore Farm Road, and Isaac Miller Road; a two and one-half acre parcel off Adams

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WESTBOROUGH COMMUNITY LAND TRUST ON-LINE www.westboroughlandtrust.org



The Westborough Community Land Trust web site is up and running. Visit www.westboroughlandtrust.org to learn more about WCLT.

Some of the WCLT website features are:
Programs: visit programs to learn more about Land Protection, Stewardship and Education.

Information: Here you will find a calendar of events, a list of WCLT properties, a list of important reports that contain information on open space and natural resources in Westborough, a list of Partner Organizations with the WCLT and an easy way to contact us.

Additionally, look for the link to the Westborough Charm Bracelet for information about this important open space and recreational effort featuring trail maps of what is becoming over 28 miles of continuous trails throughout Westborough.

Special thanks to all the hard work of Don Burn, Kris Allen, Leslie Leslie, Gary Kessler and Anne Reid for constructing and maintaining our new website. 🌲



History of Wildlife in Massachusetts

The WCLT Family Program on April 12, 2004 gave a glimpse into the history of the Massachusetts wilderness and (it's wildlife.) how the wildlife that has adapted to its changes. Marion E. Larson, Information and Education Biologist from the MassWildlife Field Headquarters on Rabbit Hill Rd (off North Drive) in Westborough, presented the slide program. She traced the changes in the wildlife habitat over the centuries, from the days of the Native Americans through 21st-century suburban sprawl. Most interesting was her description of the animals that have recently adapted to life on the fringe of development.

Continued on page 3

 *Clip and return to* WESTBOROUGH COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, PO Box 838, Westborough, MA 01581



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EMAIL IT TO THIS ADDRESS**

Please join WCLT! *I'd like to help Westborough Open Space by joining WCLT!*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ \$35 Member

☐ \$50 Family

☐ \$75 Friend

☐ \$100* Sustainer

☐ \$250* Benefactor

☐ * Please send me a 100% cotton WCLT t-shirt (*free with contributions of \$100 or more*) ☐ L ☐ XL ☐ XXL

☐ _____ Other

If your employer has a matching gift program, please include the form.

Company name: _____

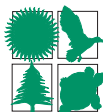
Thank you! Your contributions are tax-deductible.



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Westborough Community Land Trust

Westborough Community Land Trust is a non-profit organization working to preserve open space and protect natural resources in Westborough.

Join WCLT today by visiting our website at www.westboroughlandtrust.org (select "contact WCLT"), by writing us at Westborough Community Land Trust, P. O. Box 838, Westborough, MA 01581, or by calling Maureen Johnson at 508-366-6326.

Land Trust News

Contributors: Kris Allen, Chuck Anastas, Ellen Bishop O'Brien, Tim Buckalew, Don Burn, Gary Kessler, Marion Larson, Leslie Leslie and Anne Reid.

Contributors of news articles, items for calendar of events and, photos for the *Land Trust News* and the WCLT website are welcome. Please phone Chuck Anastas at 508-898-2565 or email at chuck.durand-anastas@comcast.net

WCLT is a member of:
The Land Trust Alliance
The Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition

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Blossoming of Nature Notes

By Anne Reid

Garry [Kessler] and I feel lucky, as a couple, to share a hobby (what we call "wildflowering") that has given us a chance to work together on projects to share our enthusiasm for the natural world with others. This spring, on behalf of the Westborough Community Land Trust, we've started doing a biweekly "Nature Notes" column in the Westborough News. (I do the writing, and Garry does the photos.) Before that, we had fun creating our own website showcasing wildflowers in the Bowman Street Conservation Area.

The idea behind "Nature Notes" is to point out and show pictures of things in nature that residents can see in Westborough. That way, readers can become familiar with and enjoy them regularly. Topics have included wood frogs and vernal pools, our nesting great blue herons, pink lady's-slippers, Westborough's five swamps and jack-in-the-pulpit plants, and wild iris and its tiny relative called blue-eyed grass. The "Nature Notes" column can be usually accessed online at www.westboroughnews.com or www.townonline.com by clicking on "Opinion" to get to a list of columns.

"Nature Notes" and our wildflower website bring together my enjoyment of writing and Garry's enjoyment of photography. As an amateur photographer, Garry has been taking close-up photos of wildflowers for years. When we started working on our website, we realized that people enjoy a format that combines written text and photos. Our website "Wildflowers of the Westborough Reservoir" features more than 80



wildflowers that we've seen there and another 20 or so from other locations. The website can be found by searching on "Westborough wildflowers" or by going to <http://hometown.aol.com/ag2web>. We found out about WCLT a few years ago through the first publicized walks. Before long we were coming out for Don Burn's work parties on the Charm Bracelet trail system. Now we're members of WCLT, and Garry is active on the stewardship committee. Last year he worked on mapping all the trails in town using the town GPS system. This data is both in the town database and has been used to produce trail maps available at the town clerk's office, the planning office, and the library. I helped out on Don Burn's project of creating and updating the WCLT/Charm Bracelet web site. Working on the Charm Bracelet was—and still is—a great way for us to get outside, get to know people who share our interest in outdoor activities, and discover lovely places in Westborough. 🌲



Letter from the President
Continued from page 1

Street and adjacent to Town-owned land (gifts from two generous donors); a 15-acre parcel off East Main Street; and finally, two parcels of land of 13 acres and 16 acres on Long Drive and Sleigh Lane.

We have many things to look forward to in the future — blazing new trails along the Charm Bracelet linking us to Hopkinton, Northborough, and Southborough; exciting educational programs in the Westborough schools, giving our kids the opportunity to learn about the great outdoors; and increased community involvement with our

Westborough Walks and events around town.

In the next few years WCLT will achieve many more exciting accomplishments. I look forward to seeing the Land Trust grow and develop to take on new projects. I hope you will all enjoy participating in its growth as much as I will. 🌲

Ellen Bishop O'Brien
President



EARTH DAY 2004

Focuses on Environmental Education

The Westborough Community Land Trust has spearheaded Earth Day festivities in Westborough for many years. This spring WCLT members led cleanups throughout the town on the weekend of April 17. Christine Molloy and her Junior Girl Scouts, who were working on a Westborough Beautification Project, were among those who pitched in; they picked up litter along Rogers Road and its playing field.



For several years, the Land Trust has sponsored a poster contest for school children with an environmental theme. Winners received WCLT bumper stickers and gift certificates, and their artwork was displayed at the Westborough Public Library. This year, the contest was expanded and called "4P's for the Environment." Students could enter a poem, poster, photo essay or project made from recycled materials. The results were amazing and were exhibited to an admiring public.

Mill Pond School particularly took the environmental message of Earth Day seriously this year. Curriculum Coordinator Chris Rogers led his student "Green Team" in planning a month-long educational program culminating in an Earth Festival. All students

were asked to sign a pledge to protect their environment and try to "reduce, reuse and recycle." The students even weighed their lunch trash for a week to see how much they throw away. On Thursday, April 29, more than 900 children and teachers celebrated Earth Day 2004 by taking part in workshops, trail hikes, tree plantings, nature programs, and a wetland reclamation project.

Westborough Community Land Trust volunteers were among those who led educational programs, such as recreating an oil spill over and over again. If you would like to help out with Earth Day next year, please give Education Coordinator Leslie Leslie a call at 508-616-4408 🌲

CALENDAR OF
EVENTS

July 17 10:00 AM
SVT – Batting for Butterflies
Come out to the SVT Cedar Hill Reservation to see and learn about butterflies. There is a fee for non-members of the SVT. Registration is required for this event. Visit www.sudburyvalleytrustees.org for more details.

July 18 1:30 PM
Westborough Walk
To be announced. Visit www.westboroughlandtrust.org Calendar of Events.

August 15 1:30 PM
Westborough Walk
Come out to the Bowman Conservation Area for an exploration of Wildflowers of the Westborough Reservoir with local naturalists Gary Kessler and Anne Reid.

September 18 9:00 AM
OAR – Assabet River Cleanup
Come out and help clean up the Assabet River. Volunteers from Westborough to Concord will come together and get a little wet and dirty helping to clean up our river: you get pizza when you're done. Meet at the Gibbons School.

September 19 1:30 PM
Westborough Walk
A walk through the meadows of the Westborough Wildlife Management Area. Meet at the top of Rabbit Hill.

October 9 9:00 AM
Charm Bracelet Celebratory Walk
Come out and celebrate new sections of the Charm Bracelet. Check www.Westboroughlandtrust.org for more details

October 10 1:30 PM
Charm Bracelet Celebratory Walk
More walking as we take the second day of the weekend to celebrate new trails. Additional details to come at www.westboroughlandtrust.org

EARTH DAY AT MILL POND SCHOOL

Mill Pond School took the environmental message of Earth Day seriously this year. Curriculum Coordinator, Chris Rogers led his student “Green Team” in planning a month long educational program culminating in an Earth Festival. All students were asked to sign a pledge to protect their environment and try to “reduce, reuse and recycle”. The students even weighed their lunch trash for a week to see how much they throw away. On Thursday, April 29th, over 900 children and teachers celebrated Earth Day 2004 by taking part in work shops, trail hikes, tree plantings, nature programs and a wetland reclamation project. It

was a wonderful day to be outside learning about and enjoying the land - even the sun cooperated. The Land Trust has spearheaded



Earth Day festivities in the Town of Westborough for many years. For the past few years, the Land Trust has sponsored a poster contest for school children with an environmental theme. Winners

received WCLT bumper stickers and gift certificates and their artwork was displayed at the Westborough Public Library. This year, the contest was expanded and called “4P’s for the Environment”. Students could enter a poem, poster, photo essay or project made from recycled materials. The results were amazing.

Thanks to our many volunteers - some who stood in the sun all day and others who recreated an oil spill over and over again. If you would like to help out with Earth Day next year, please give me a call – Leslie Leslie at 508-616-4408. 🌲



History of Wildlife in Massachusetts

Continued from page 1

The first inhabitants of Massachusetts fished and hunted in season, and in the Westborough area, the Nipmuck Indians had only seasonal settlements in Cedar Swamp and along the headwaters of the Assabet River. When the first English settlers appeared, they discovered a forested land teeming with wildlife. Plentiful fish gave Cape Cod its name, and the presence of ample game made survival possible for the earliest settlers. It was not long before farms dotted the landscape; settlements expanded into towns, and the forests were cut down for fuel, buildings and pasturage.

By 1840, most of Massachusetts landscape had been cleared for agriculture; few laws governed hunting; and many of the woodland-dependent wildlife, such as turkeys, beaver, and bear, vanished. However, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution and industrialization after the Civil War, farmers increasingly left their land for work in the factories.

The forest regenerated on the abandoned farms, and some animals returned as more and more of the agricultural lands reverted to forests. The passage of conservation laws and scientific wildlife management came in the 1930s, aided in studies and efforts by MassWildlife, sportsmen and women, birders, and other conservationists to restore many of the species we take for granted today.

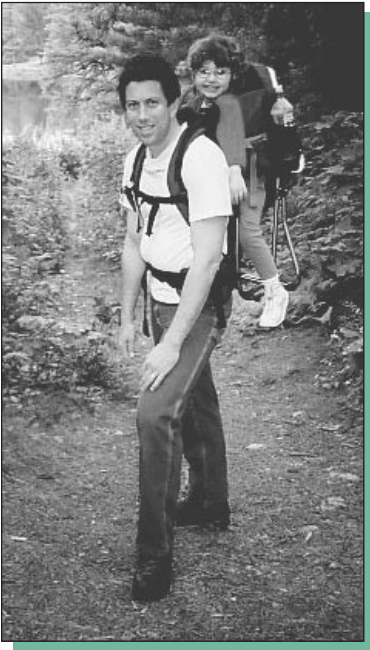
Today, we are witnessing the return of many wildlife

species that had disappeared from our landscapes in the 19th century. Deer are so common that in some places they are a nuisance, dining on an abundance of suburban landscaping. Coyotes appeared only 50 years ago and adapted well to living on the edges of forests and in residential areas. There have been sightings of moose, fishers, and black bear, even in the city of Worcester. Beavers, rare until the 1960s, are plentiful and have caused major flooding in some areas. Red foxes are often sighted. Wild turkeys were reintroduced in the 1970s by MassWildlife and now are known to stop traffic on our small-town roads.

These animals, added to the familiar raccoons, woodchucks, rabbits, squirrels, and chipmunks, have transformed many areas of Massachusetts once again into places with abundant wildlife. Six million citizens share five million acres with wildlife in Massachusetts. Now more than ever, humans must learn to share the land with wildlife in a way that enhances the quality of life for all living things. The educational programs and the expert advice from MassWildlife help us understand how to strike that essential balance.

Subscribe to MassWildlife News, a free electronic monthly newsletter updating you on research, events, new laws and other agency activities. All you need to do is send an email to: Join-Masswildlife.news@listserve.state.ma.us. 🌲

WESTBOROUGH CHARM BRACELET TRAIL SYSTEM NEWS



On June 6th a hearty band of 16 hikers braved the rain in what is the longest hike yet on the Charm Bracelet: 10 plus miles. The hike began at Minuteman Park on Upton Road across the south end of town finishing at the MBTA station. Proof positive that the Charm Bracelet is moving from a dream to a reality: 28 miles of connected trails!

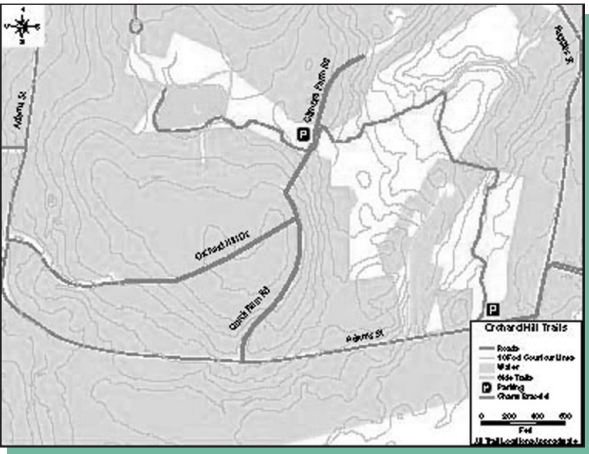
In April a work party met at the Mill Pond boat ramp to build a new section of trail to eliminate an unsafe road walk and to relocate an unsafe portion of Country Club trail. Additionally, workers performed a spring trail cleanup of the trails around Mill Pond, and those leading to Fisher Street, Gibbons School and the Country Club.

If you want to help with work on the Charm Bracelet please email Don Burn at burn@acm.org and be sure to visit the Charm Bracelet website at www.westboroughcharm.org 🌲

TRAIL MAPS ON-LINE

There are now 14 trail maps available online. Print out your own trail map just like the Orchard Hill trail map seen here by visiting www.westboroughlandtrust.org and selecting **Charm Bracelet and Local Trails**. Once you’re at the Charm Bracelet web site select **A Guide to the Walking Trails in Westborough**. Print a map for any of the following trails:

- Assabet North
- Bowman West
- Country Club
- Crane Swamp
- Headwaters Conservation Area
- Libbey Wile
- Newton Hill
- North Cedar Swamp
- Orchard Swamp
- Orchard Hill
- Sandra Pond
- South Cedar Swamp
- SUASCO
- Westboro Wildlife Management Area



(You may also access these maps by going directly to www.westboroughcharm.org and selecting **A Guide to Walking Trails in Westborough**.)