

Littleton Conservation Trust



Newsletter

Spring 2015

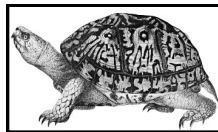
Sarah Doublet's Nashoba Village Hidden Treasure on Saturday, May 16th, 10-4

Littleton's Hidden Treasure event will provide a variety of activities for all age levels including three interpretive walks by LCT guides (11, 1, and 3); Mass Audubon's live animal demonstration with a Great Horned Owl and Box Turtle as well as an educational display of animal pelts (12-1); and a visit by David Tall Tree White, Vice-chair of the Nipmuck Tribal Council of Chaubunagungamaug, a state recognized tribe located in Webster, MA, and a well known Native American Educator (1-3). A variety of day-long displays, demonstrations, and activities will include Native American foods and cooking, basketry, games and scavenger hunt, children's campfire story telling, hand pressing of apples for fresh cider, stone grinding of Indian corn into cornmeal, and the planting of the Three Sisters (the famous companion plot of corn, pole beans, and squash).



Maize, the earlier variety of modern day corn, was a mainstay of the Native American diet and an important substitute staple food for colonists who had no other grains. Hear Nipmuck Legends about the Origin of Corn and the Turtle's Creation of the Earth. Hear about long time native resident Sarah

Doublet (with Algonquin name Wunnuhew) and the stories of Nashoba, Newtown, and other Praying Indian Plantations. Walk the land and explore Sarah Doublet Forest and Nature Reserve, a core part of the Nashoba Indian Plantation and Newtown, to discover its unique features and what made it so special to be selected by Sachem Tahhatawan. Sarah Doublet Forest is on Charter Way off Nashoba Road (near Camp Nashoba).



This community event, is free and open to everyone. Sponsors for this event are LCT, Littleton Historical Society (LHS), Littleton Historical Commission, and Freedom's Way National Heritage Association (FWNHA) with funding from FWNHA's association with the National Park Service and additional grants from the Henry Vincent Couper Foundation, LCT, and LHS.

For more information, directions, and updated schedule, refer to LCT's website at: littletonconservationtrust.org ■

Annual Meeting featuring "New England Wildlife" Tuesday, May 19th, 7-9pm at NEFF



LCT's Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19th at the New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF) Headquarters at 32 Foster Street, with the business meeting starting at 7:00pm followed by a short break and continuing at 7:30pm with Lisa

Vernegaard's presentation on New England Wildlife. NEFF is accessed by parking in the Fay Park public parking lot on Wilderness Road then continuing on foot up Wilderness Road to the large white house on the right just behind the park.

Lisa is Sudbury Valley Trustees's (SVT) Executive Director for the last two years having come from The Trustees of Reservations where she served for over 20 years, in the capacities of Director of Planning and Ecology and Vice President for Sustainability and Strategic Partnership. SVT is a strategic partner of LCT in the acquisition and stewardship of several Littleton conservation land parcels.

Prior to working at The Trustees of Reservations, Lisa worked as a land manager for the Commonwealth, as an educator on Thompson's Island in Boston Harbor, and for the United States Forest Service in Utah.



Pileated Woodpeckers

Where is this Native American Turtle Carving?



Where is this Native American Turtle Carving? The Turtle was a significant image for the Native Americans and was a prominent symbol. Their legend of creation is based on the Turtle. This stone is plainly visible from a public road.

Send your response to info@littletonconservationtrust.org ■



**LCT
Board of Trustees
April 2015**

Sam Bell
508 Great Road 486-9278

Bill Brown
7 Old Orchard Lane 486-3303

Gerard Cavallo
8 Uplands Road 486-9761

Peter Church
9 Elmwood Road 486-0995

Rick Findlay
Vice President
46 Beaver Brook Road 486-4031

Arthur Lazarus
Director of Land Stewardship
19 Shaker Lane 486-0261

Scott Lewis
23 Nashoba Road 800-1638

Donald MacIver
President
43 Foster Street 952-2706

Fran Meyers
Secretary
16 Valley Drive 486-3776

Andrew Sammarco
20 Forest Road 486-0279

Kathy Stevens
Treasurer
46 Shaker Lane 486-8847

Steven Sussman
32 Lake Warren Drive 486-9630

Charles Roth *Trustee Emeritus*

Edith Smith *Trustee Emeritus*

Virginia Sprong *Trustee Emeritus*

Judith Pickett *Counsel*

Newsletter Editor

www.littletonconservationtrust.org
www.facebook.com/Littletonconservationtrust

Clipart via FCIT educational license

The Littleton Conservation Trust (LCT), distinct from the Town's Conservation Commission, is a private land trust formed in 1962 to promote Littleton's rural character; to preserve its water, plant, and wildlife resources and its unique views; and to provide environmental education. The LCT is caretaker of over 300 acres of property (gifted from far-sighted residents) on which we manage a public trails system.

Littleton Conservation News compiled by Don MacIver

- ➡ **Creatures of the Rainforest** at the Reuben Hoar Library, a children's summer program with live animals, will be presented by the ever popular The Creature Teachers animal educators, and is tentatively scheduled for July 7th at 3:00pm. Registration required. See the library's website for any last minute schedule changes: www.littletonlibrary.org/ This event is made possible with the support of Littleton Conservation Trust and the generosity of its members. Find out more about LCT and how you can support their mission and programs at littletonconservationtrust.org Last year the LCT, on library request, sponsored a similar live animal program about animals that dig, also by The Creature Teachers.
- ➡ **Land donations** for conservation purposes may earn tax credits for their donors. Contact info@littletonconservationtrust.org for more information.
- ➡ The **Oak Hill** conservation land's map and narrative description online have been updated. See the updates at: littletonconservationtrust.org/trail-guide/browse-trails/?trailid=14
- ➡ Sightings of a **Bald Eagle** on and about Mill Pond have been made by David Whitcomb and Fran Meyers. Is there a pair there nesting?
- ➡ **Littleton Master Plan.** The town is initiating an update to its official Master Plan. This is the process where the town residents participate and tell the town officials what is their community vision and set guidance, goals and policies to achieve that vision. It will include the areas of land use, housing, economic development, natural and cultural resources, open space and recreation, services and facilities, transportation, and plans for implementation. Watch the town website for more details: littletonma.org

Littleton Conservation Trust Seeks Volunteers

Newsletter Editor - Currently using MS Publisher 2010 Desktop Publishing software. Duties include text editing of submitted articles, gathering appropriate public domain illustrations and images, designing layout, and preparing final document for transfer to professional publisher for final production. Some training available.

Accountant /Assistant Treasurer - Currently using Quickbooks Non-Profit software. Duties include keeping accounts updated, generating quarterly reports, and preparing annual tax return. Prefer experience with Quickbooks, Quicken, or other accounting software package and basic accounting skills. Some training available.

For donations under \$1,000 we also accept credit card payments online <http://littletonconservationtrust.org/donate>

Littleton Conservation Trust Membership Form – 2015

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Date: ____/____/____
(Date determines year of tax deduction)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

*Please provide an email address to receive notification of upcoming walks and conservation-related events.
Checks should be made out to the "Littleton Conservation Trust " or just "LCT".*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual: \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family: \$40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friend: \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter: \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor: \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: \$ _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gift to Permanent Fund: \$ _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me information about how to preserve my own land. | |

Please send form to:

Kathy Stevens, Treasurer
Littleton Conservation Trust
PO Box 594
Littleton, MA 01460



Wildlife Habitat Program Launched by Dustin Neild



We're proud to announce that our Wildlife Habitat program is off to a fast start! We have installed eight Bluebird Nest boxes and one American Kestrel box at Long Lake Park. Bluebirds were confirmed investigating at least four of the eight boxes within 48 hours and, with some luck, we will have eggs in no time. It may take some time

for the Kestrel box to get inhabited, but once it does, the pair will likely return year after year. In addition, a Barred Owl box was installed in Whitetail Woods, several Wood Duck boxes have been installed at Long Lake, and another Kestrel box is slated for Prouty Woods at the Littleton Community Farm site! Several more boxes are targeted for Newtown Hill to complete our year one installations.

All boxes will be actively monitored throughout this long-term project and maintained in accordance with best practices. We kindly ask the public to be respectful of the habitat and not disturb the boxes or the birds. If you'd like to get involved in monitoring, reporting, or supporting this program financially, please contact us through the LCT website contact form. We'd love to have your involvement. ■



LCT Guided Walks—Last Saturday of the Month

Saturday, **May 30**, 10am -12pm, **Newtown Hill**

A Littleton Conservation Trust Land Steward will lead a guided walk at Littleton's Newtown Hill conservation land. Meet at the parking area at 10:00am

Saturday, **June 27**, 10am -12pm, **Long Lake Park**

Andrew Sammarco will lead a guided walk in Littleton's Long Lake Park conservation area. Meet at the Harwood Avenue parking area at 10:00am

Just show up with good hiking shoes, appropriate clothing, and personal water and snacks. No dogs please.

For maps and trail descriptions see Littleton Trails

Overview page on the below website location:

littletonconservationtrust.org/trail-guide/overview-2/ ■

Portfolio of Invasive Alien Newsletter Articles

Rick Findlay's multi-year series of articles on non-native invasive species from the LCT newsletter have been compiled into a single PDF compendium, for convenient review. See: littletonconservationtrust.org/current-projects/invasive-plant-control/

Alternatively, on the Littleton Conservation Trust web homepage, this and more information can be found under the successive tabs *News and Events*, *Projects*, *Invasive Plant Control*. ■

Invasive Aliens-Join the Resistance Part XVIII

by Rick Findlay

As we gear up for another round in the fight against invasive plants 'early detection species' are being identified and becoming the focus of attention. These species are new or soon to arrive in our watershed. Their populations are small enough to make eradication feasible and include, among others: Japanese Stiltgrass, Kudzu, Narrowleaf Bittercress, Rusty Willow, Mile-a-Minute Vine, and Amur Cork Tree. The last two are known to be in Littleton. Identification can be challenging, but online resources can help, and more importantly, provide a way to report sightings. The SuAsCo Cisma website (www.cisma-suasco.org) has information as well as instructions for using EDDMapS, an invasive plant mapping tool. Please get involved if you are inclined.

At the other end of the spectrum are the plants that we have been writing about for many years. Old articles have been organized on the LCT website. These species are clearly out-of-control on a landscape scale, but hopefully still manageable for homeowners and land stewards.



Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*) sometimes referred to as "Winged Euonymus" due to marked winged bark on stems. For more information and images for this plant see: www.cisma-suasco.org/node/75

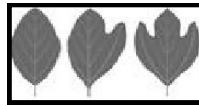
One of these, Burning Bush or *Euonymus alatus*, is pushing the limits in some parts of Littleton, where it covers the forest floor to the exclusion of native species. It is particularly frustrating to stewards because homeowners, businesses and the Department of Transportation continue to nourish landscape specimens. It has been illegal to sell the plants in Massachusetts for many years, so one may assume that they are aware of the threat. We urge everyone to remove their plants and aid in the removal of seedlings on conservation land. Also known as Winged Euonymus, the plant is easily identified by the winged bark, parallel to the stem. Time to get to work. ■

For more information on the sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) consult the New England Wildflower Society's online plant identification guide "Go Botany" for detailed description and more images:

gobotany.newenglandwild.org/species/sassafras/albidum/

Tree Lore: The Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)

by Art Lazarus



I can recall the days when I introduced my three daughters to the beauty and majesty of our neighboring woodlands in Southeastern Massachusetts. Of particular interest was the delightful aroma of the broken stems of the sassafras tree. An added feature was the fun they had learning and repeating the word "sassafras" fast, many times over.

In my many years of trail building and walking within Littleton conservation land trails, I still seek out the uncommon sassafras trees. Littleton is at the northern edge of the range of the sassafras tree. Its leaves are distinctive since they come in three different shapes – oval, mitten with either a left or right smaller "thumb lobe", and "goosefoot" with smaller lobes on both sides of a larger lobe. The tree produces small blue-black berries in the fall. If the stems are broken or the bark is cut, it produces a very pleasant wintergreen odor and taste. Before the Civil War, white settlers and Indians in the South, made tea during the spring. They boiled maple syrup and added sassafras roots for a drink described, "fit for the gods". Dried root bark has been used as a "nibble". In the South, dried and powdered leaves and pith were used as a soup thickener.

As settlers began to arrive in North America, sassafras somehow became famous for its supposed medicinal qualities. It was one of those lures, which led many fortune hunters and colonizing parties from Europe to America. Many shiploads of sassafras went to Europe as a supposed medicine. It became a huge disappointment as for making fortunes. However, it remained popular because of its aromatic odor and flavor as tea. As early as 1608, English explorers were seeking sassafras in New England harbors thinking that the teas would be a cure for syphilis in Europe. Other historical uses include the roots and bark as well as supplied oil of sassafras, which was used to perfume soap and to flavor root beer. The volatile oil of sassafras contains "safrole", known to cause tumors in rats.. The FDA has banned the use of sassafras for flavoring. Studies regarding sassafras toxicity are varied in their conclusions. The conclusions vary from "unsafe for medicine or beverage" to "relatively safe".

The tallest and thickest sassafras tree observed on conservation land is located very near the Long Lake landing at Prouty Woods. The tree has a Tree I.D. plate on it. A second good location to observe sassafras trees is at the Sarah Doublet Forest and Nature Reserve where it occurs as a large thicket shrub. The large patch is located right on the trail between the old house chimney and the AT&T Right of Way. An on-going project is to remove invasives and other tree seedlings from the area to encourage a large grouping of the sassafras seedlings and shrubs. When walking the trails in town and you spot a sassafras tree, be sure to scrape a stem to smell the pleasant wintergreen odor. ■

CSA at Littleton Community Farm from LCF website



Littleton Community Farm will kick off its first growing season in the Spring of 2015! We are planning to plant and harvest approximately one acre near Prouty Woods located just behind Fay Park. In cooperation with New England Forestry, based here in Littleton, we have leased this

land for our first year of the community farm. LCF will be offering 16 week CSA Farm Shares for personal consumption as well as for hunger relief donation, if you would like to be charitable.

A CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is a direct relationship between our farm and you as a customer & community member. CSA members make a commitment to our farm by purchasing a “share” of the harvest in advance of the growing season. This commitment helps provide us with the capital we need early in the year to buy seeds and supplies, and get the growing season underway. In return, members receive a weekly “share” of the farm’s harvest — fresh, in-season, high quality, vegetables grown and harvested right here on our farm. Shares can also be donated to help the food insecure in our area.

For more information see

www.littletoncommunityfarm.com ■

Project BudBurst, SVT, and Citizen Science Monitoring

Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT) is pleased to announce that we have partnered with Project BudBurst, a national citizen science program through which people across the United States make a meaningful contribution to the understanding of changes in our environment. Coordinated by the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) and sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Project BudBurst engages the public in monitoring plants as the seasons change.

Participants carefully observe and record the timing of the leafing, flowering, and fruiting of plants (plant phenophases) and then submit their data to the project coordinators either online at home or through an app on their smartphone. Because the information is collected in a consistent manner across the country, scientists can use the data to learn more about the responsiveness of individual plant species to changes in climate locally, regionally, and nationally.

The Project BudBurst workshop at SVT will take place on June 22, 6:00-7:30pm. During this family-friendly workshop you will learn how to collect data on local plants and upload them to Project BudBurst. Participants will contribute to a better understanding of plants and climate change.

For more information see:

www.svtweb.org/news/svt-partners-project-budburst ■

Ribbit U and Self Test Quiz Time

It's Spring! – Can you identify your frog and toad calls? Learn the calls of our ten most common frogs and toads here and then test yourself:

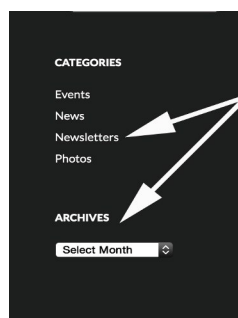
Species list for Massachusetts	
Scientific Name	Common Name
Scaphiopus holbrookii	Eastern Spadefoot
Anaxyrus americanus	American Toad
Anaxyrus fowleri	Fowler's Toad
Hyla versicolor	Gray Treefrog
Pseudacris crucifer	Spring Peeper
Lithobates catesbeianus	American Bullfrog
Lithobates clamitans	Green Frog
Lithobates sylvaticus	Wood Frog
Lithobates pipiens	Northern Leopard Frog
Lithobates palustris	Pickerel Frog

www.pwrc.usgs.gov/Frogquiz/index.cfm ■

Newsletters Archive Available Online by Scott Lewis

Spring brings back green and not all of it is good. Have you found yourself looking at something growing in your yard and had a feeling it might be an invasive? You may recall the excellent “Invasive Aliens – Join the Resistance” series of Littleton Conservation Trust newsletter articles by Rick Findlay but you may not have the old newsletter issues handy. No problem! We’ve combined that series into one PDF file that can be accessed from the Invasives Project page on the LCT website at: littletonconservationtrust.org/current-projects/invasive-plant-control/

You can also access back issues of LCT newsletters on our website. Newsletters can be quickly accessed from the “Newsletters” item on the “News and Events” menu or the “Newsletters” category in the left sidebar (bottom of screen on small screens). Back issues are also available by date from the Archives drop-down in the left sidebar.



FIND PAST NEWSLETTERS

NEWSLETTERS
SPRING

© JUNE 10, 2014 ■

In this issue:

- Eyes on Owls:
- Fourth Grade and Kathy Ste
- Littleton Cons
- To Protect anc
- LCT Website F
- Where is Clov

Alternatively, click the magnifying glass icon in the upper right of the website and search all of our content. In this case, searching for “invasive aliens” will retrieve past newsletters and other posts related to these undesirable plants.

The Littleton Conservation Trust website can be accessed at littletonconservationtrust.org ■

LITTLETON



CONSERVATION
TRUST

P.O. Box 594
Littleton, MA 01460

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Littleton, MA 01460
Permit #6

Postal Patron

Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

*"Preserving Our Rural Landscape"
for over 50 Years*

LCT Annual Meeting featuring "New England Wildlife"

by Lisa Vernegaard, SVT, Executive Director

at NEFF Headquarters

32 Foster Street, Littleton

Tuesday - May 19, 2015 7-9pm



This newsletter is printed on recycled paper (20% post-consumer waste)

The Book Corner

These and other donated books can be found at the Reuben Hoar Public Library

Gaia's Garden A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture (2nd edition) by Toby Hemenway

For many people springtime represents the promises of growing a beautiful garden and yard. This year take it a step further by reading **Gaia's Garden**, a guide to understanding, designing and creating an ecologically sustainable landscape in your yard known as permaculture. Landscape permaculture is basically a system of assembling communities of plants that work cooperatively to build good soil, conserve water, provide habitat for beneficial bugs, birds and animals, and grow a beautiful edible 'forest' that produces an abundance of food. This book teaches the reader about the natural inner workings of, and interconnections between, the soil, plants, wildlife and people, and how to utilize that knowledge to create beautiful and productive low-impact/low maintenance garden landscapes.

Filled with easy to understand explanations, charts, design elements and ideas, and specifics on constructing your landscape, this is a very comprehensive "how-to" guide that can be applied in any size yard, on small farms, in urban environments, and even on rooftops. If you are interested in creating a healthful, diverse, productive landscape that can feed your stomach and your soul, check out **Gaia's Garden** and be inspired. ■ *Book Reviews by Kathy Stevens*

The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds by Robert Gough & Cheryl Moore-Gough

Continuing with the theme of gardening (from another angle), **The Complete Guide to Saving Seeds** tells you everything you need to know about saving seeds, which can improve the health and productivity of your garden, save you money, give you control over your plants' traits, and preserve genetic plant diversity. This is an excellent reference book that will first give you an important understanding of the biology of the plants and seeds themselves, and then guide you through the processes of starting seedlings, growing the plants (including critical pollination options), all aspects of harvesting and saving the seeds you want to keep, and how to start again for a new season.

This book covers 322 varieties of vegetables, herbs, flowers, fruits, trees and shrubs, so it really offers a wide range of plants that you can choose from to create a diverse garden and landscape that is uniquely adapted to your yard and your tastes. Seed saving is a growing trend among people concerned with food independence, people who want to share and swap seeds of known characteristics with others, and help ensure that a safe and varied seed selection is available to future generations. Our own Reuben Hoar Library in Littleton now has a seed lending program from which people can "borrow" seeds, with the understanding that they will save seeds from the plants they grow and return some to the seed bank. With this book you can learn how and join in. ■