

# Littleton Conservation Trust

Newsletter

Spring 2022

## 60th Anniversary Message

Sixty years ago, as the I-495 highway was being completed, the Littleton Conservation Trust was founded by a group of Littleton residents who recognized the need to set aside land to help prevent urban sprawl. The Trust created a way for landowners to help provide the town with woods and fields to buffer development, as well as providing them with tax advantages for their generosity. Over the past 60 years, we have been given 40 parcels of land from which 20 conservation properties have been created—a total of 323 acres valued at over \$4.4 million. We also hold conservation restrictions on 171 acres on 8 properties that we care for in perpetuity. The real value of these conserved lands is measured by the habitat they provide for animals, birds, and plants, and in open spaces where everyone can walk trails, watch birds, and enjoy fresh air. We can all appreciate these natural spaces that absorb carbon and soak up rain water to support our water supply.

As part of our mission, the Trust has worked to provide a variety of programs to educate the public about the environment and the importance of nature. For example, we have hosted canoe trips on Beaver Brook, conducted forest field trips for elementary school students, donated books to the local library, sponsored summer animal programs, and helped Eagle Scout candidates earn their highest honors. We've also guided walks on town properties to teach about their history and geology, helped with trash pickup along the roads, and educated people about the importance of invasive species control. It has been, and continues to be, a rewarding effort!

Some of our most visible and important work has been in creating and maintaining trails and boardwalks on conservation lands—both town-owned properties and our own. We have worked cooperatively with the town's Conservation Commission and many volunteers to provide access to open spaces. In addition, we are getting close to achieving our long-term goal of connecting the town center with the commuter rail station via a system of trails.

Persistence and grit are key elements of fulfilling the the Trust's mission. Looking back at some paraphrased thoughts from our newsletter in 1988, it is readily apparent that the challenges that faced our town then are similar to the ones that face our town now: *This is a small town—a growing one, yes, but still small enough to pass the word as neighbors do. So tell your friends that the town is in danger from development that will take the natural scenic beauty away if we don't pay attention and act. We are running out of land in its native and wild state as it was and never will be again. Ask your neighbor why they came to town. Was it for space and trees and to be able to hear nature's sounds? Looking around town, we see signs for concern, yet also hope for positive action. The Littleton Conservation Trust supports our town with the goal of space and natural beauty and places of retreat. We are working for all of us who are interested in the preservation of wetlands and wildlife areas and for the general essential well-being of our townspeople.*

Thank you to all of the people who have helped support our mission over the past 60 years. We know that many in town appreciate the available conservation lands. We hope you will join us now and in the future in our goal to save as much local beauty as possible. Whether you can donate land, money, or time as a volunteer, we look to this community for support so we can continue our mission for another 60 years.

Kathy Stevens, President

## LCT 60th ANNIVERSARY PICNIC

**Saturday, May 14, 12:00–3:00 p.m. at Sarah Doublet Forest, Charter Way, Littleton**

- Bring a picnic lunch or buy a slice from The Rolling Pizza Kitchen food truck
- Pick up a special commemorative T-shirt
- Have cake!
- History Walk through Sarah Doublet Forest with Nashobah Praying Indian Strong Bear Medicine and historian Dan Boudillion
- Birding Global Big Day
- Cornhole & other activities for kids of all ages

**For more details and to register, visit [www.littletonconservationtrust.org/events](http://www.littletonconservationtrust.org/events)**



## LCT Board of Trustees Spring 2022

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Karen O'Neil Facebook Administrator

Jim O'Neil Trail Crew Coordinator

Natalia Slattery Design and Production

### Online

#### Website:

[LittletonConservationTrust.org](http://LittletonConservationTrust.org)

#### Trail Maps:

[LittletonConservationTrust.org/trail-guide](http://LittletonConservationTrust.org/trail-guide)

#### Facebook:

[facebook.com/LittletonConservationTrust](https://facebook.com/LittletonConservationTrust)

### Can You Guess Where This Photo Was Taken?

(Look for the answer at the bottom of page 5.)



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

## Littleton Conservation Trust Contacts

- ➔ **Jim O'Neil, Trail Crew Coordinator**, maintains a trail worker email distribution list. When work projects are planned, notifications and updates are distributed to its member list. Email [JFOneil63@verizon.net](mailto:JFOneil63@verizon.net)
- ➔ **Littleton Trails**, a Facebook group, is an interactive site to share stories, photos, and observations of Littleton's conservation lands and area wildlife. See [facebook.com/groups/639049749490984](https://facebook.com/groups/639049749490984)
- ➔ **LCT Walks** will be announced and updated on the Littleton Conservation Trust website, listed in the Littleton Conservation Trust events calendar, and automatically sent to the Littleton Conservation Trust email list. Sign up at [LittletonConservationTrust.org/contact-us/subscribe/](http://LittletonConservationTrust.org/contact-us/subscribe/)

### UPCOMING

#### Activities (A), Walks (W), Outdoor Events (O)

Date	Time	Event Description
From early April	Dawn to dusk	Keep an eye out for the installation of the Labyrinth at Castle in the Trees. (O)
5/14	12–3 p.m.	60th Anniversary Picnic at Sarah Doublet (O)
6/25–7/2	Dawn to dusk	Storywalk with <i>Be a Tree</i> by Maria Gianferrari. Many thanks to Diann Ouellette-Haduch from the Reuben Hoar Library for working with us to create the book-walk. Yapp Conservation Land (O)
7/23	1–4 p.m.	Kayaking at Spectacle Pond (O)

Look for information about these events and more at [LittletonConservationTrust.org](http://LittletonConservationTrust.org)



## 60th Anniversary Photo Contest

**Theme:** Littleton wildlife, landscapes, plants, or landmarks worth conserving

### Contest Rules:

- Original work of hobby or amateur photographers only.
- All entries must be taken in 2022 within Littleton, MA.
- Electronic submissions only—jpeg or pdf format.
- All entries must be accompanied by the photographer's name, address, telephone number, email, and age, as well as a description of where and when the photograph was taken.
- Contest participants agree to grant the Littleton Conservation Trust publishing rights (non-exclusive) and promotional rights (with appropriate credit) to the photographs submitted.
- Winners will be announced at LCT's 2022 Fall Annual Meeting, where the winning photographs will be displayed physically or virtually.
- First and second prizes will be awarded in these categories: Child (ages 5–12), Teenager (ages 13–18), Adult.
- First prize: \$75; Second prize: \$50—in a combination of cash and gift cards
- Entries (and any questions) should be emailed to: [mhobausz@littletonconservationtrust.org](mailto:mhobausz@littletonconservationtrust.org) by **September 15, 2022.**

# Littleton Conservation Trust Membership and Donation Form — Spring 2022

☐ New    ☐ Renewal    ☐ Gift Membership    ☐ Donation

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Your date designates tax deduction year.)

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."

For donations under \$1,000, we also accept credit card payments online at: [littletonconservationtrust.org/donate](http://littletonconservationtrust.org/donate)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <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 on preserving my own land. |  |

Please send form to:

Christine Nordhaus, Treasurer  
Littleton Conservation Trust  
P.O. Box 594  
Littleton, MA 01460



## Wunnuhhew and the Sarah Doublet Forest

by Daniel V. Boudillion & Strong Bear Medicine

The Sarah Doublet Forest is named after Wunnuhhew ("Sarah Doublet"), a Native American woman of royal lineage from Wamesit (Chelmsford/Lowell), daughter of Sagamore-John. She



married John Tahattawan, son of Massachusetts Nation Sagamore Old Tahattawan, both of whom were successively Chiefs of the Praying Indian village of Nashobah Plantation (now Littleton).

Sadly, John died young, and both Wunnuhhew and her young son were wounded in King Philip's War in 1675, her son dying of his injuries shortly afterward. She then married John Owannamug, the Sachem of the Praying Indian village of Okommakamesit (Marlborough), who later died. Wunnuhhew lastly became the wife of Nepanet (Thomas Doublet) of Nashobah Plantation, who lived just north of the Great Road bridge on Beaver Brook.

Wunnuhhew outlived Nepanet. When Littleton was incorporated in 1714 as the town of Nashoba (name changed to Littleton in 1715), the Great and General Court ordered that 500 acres called the Indian New Town be set aside for "the descendants of the Indian proprietors of the said plantation," including "a portion thereof to be for Sarah Dublet alias Sarah Indian [Wunnuhhew]."

In her old age, Wunnuhhew was taken in by Elnathan and Ephraim Jones of Jones Tavern in South Acton, and she deeded the 500 acres to them to cover her care. It is a puzzling transaction, as she does not appear to be the sole surviving descendant. She died sometime after 1736, at approximately 91 years of age. It is not known where Wunnuhhew is buried.

The Indian New Town was in the easterly corner of Littleton, encompassing parts of Nagog and Fort ponds. The original village was at Speen's Field on Fort Pond, so named for the Indian fort that had once stood there as protection against Mohawk

raiders. Speen's Field is the approximate site of Camp Nashoba, extending between Charter Way and Nashoba Road.

Edith Jenkins and Fanny Knapp willed 95 acres on the hill between Nagog Pond and Fort Pond to the Littleton Conservation Trust in stages. Since 1988, the Trust has held the entire property. This constitutes the largest open tract of land of the old Praying Indian village that remains undeveloped.

Here can be found traces of Wunnuhhew—a cave associated with her name—and various stone constructions deemed to have Native ceremonial significance by tribal authorities. These include a great turtle, a great snake, and a midwinter sunrise alignment. Also visible are a number of what are thought to be corn mounds. These are in regular rows, notably aligned with the midsummer sunrise.

It is thought that this Ceremonial Stone Landscape (CSL) was of particular significance due to the fact that loud booming sounds emanated from Nashoba Hill (or Nagog Pond, *sources vary*) that were thought at that time to be the voice of Hobomock. Shamans are believed to have gathered here to listen for his voice and discern auguries in it. The booming can still be heard today, but it is associated with earthquakes.

The original Nashobah Plantation was incorporated in 1654 by Sagamore Tahattawan under the tutelage of John Eliot, Apostle to the Indians, from Tahattawan's wider lands of Nashope ("Nash-o-pee"). This was part of a Christianization effort by the English, and the Massachusetts—weakened by plagues and wars—saw it as an opportunity to come under English protection from the Mohawk. It is thought that Tahattawan chose the location of Nashobah Plantation to preserve an important center of shamanic activity.

Remarkably, the Nashobah Praying Indians are alive and well today, having mostly removed to the Natick Praying Village after King Philip's War in 1676. They are still Praying Indians and meet monthly in the Eliot Church in South Natick for services under their chief, Chief Caring Hands. In 2019, the chief's brother and daughter, Strong Bear Medicine and Quiet Storm, led a Walk & Talk at the Sarah Doublet Forest, which concluded with about 80 local folks joining them in dancing the Friendship Dance.



# It's a Matter of Self Help

*excerpted and updated from an early publication of the LCT*

## *What* **YOU** *can do . . .*

*To help preserve your town's most valuable assets,*

you can give money

to the Littleton Conservation Trust

you can give land

to the Littleton Conservation Trust

you can talk conservation

you can help fight blight

you can plant pollinator gardens

you can landscape with native plants

you can eliminate invasive plant species

you can encourage sound conservation practices

you can participate in outdoor activities

you can help in conservation work projects

you can help your children become conservation-minded

*You are giving to yourself when you participate!*

## *What* **WE** *can do together . . .*

*We can preserve*

open lands and forested areas

wilderness and wildlife areas

wetlands, marshes, and water resources

areas of natural beauty and historical value

*We can develop*

recreation areas for outdoor activities

walking and riding trails

parks

nature study areas

community projects for the enjoyment of our own open spaces

*We are giving to ourselves when we cooperate!*

## Conservation without effort is just conversation!

**Join!**

**Volunteer!**

**Give!**

## Think Back and Look Forward

*To honor the work put into newsletters over the past 60 years, we looked through old newsletters to gather topics to cover in this eclectic section. As expected, many topics written about in past newsletters are still current today, and even though there are new ideas and practices, the intent stays the same—to support the conservation and enjoyment of our natural habitats and open spaces.*

### Yard Bird Maintenance

It brings so much joy to see different varieties of birds enjoying your yard. Who doesn't love a warm summer morning, relaxing in the garden area with a cup of coffee watching and listening to the birds sing? Here are a few tips for yard bird maintenance. During the winter, or throughout the year if you choose, remember to clean bird feeders with a diluted bleach solution (1 part bleach, 9 parts water) every 2 weeks (more cleaning is needed in hotter weather).



The feeders can be soaked in the solution outside in a bucket. Rinse feeders off and make sure they are fully dry before adding seed to the feeder again. This will help reduce the spread of diseases among wild birds. Birds do not need seed-feeders to survive during the summer. There are plenty of bugs and berries around for the birds to eat. Be cautious if you live in a wooded area with local bears. To avoid attracting bears to your yard, it's best to remove the feeders from spring through fall. Another way you can attract birds is by planting native plants. Hummingbird feeders should be cleaned, and the nectar changed, twice a week in hot weather or once a week during cooler weather. Hummingbird feeders can be cleaned with hot water or a weak vinegar solution. Again, dry fully before refilling and hanging. Nest boxes are also great for attracting birds. There are different sized boxes with different sized holes to accommodate various species. Make sure to clean out the boxes in the fall after birds have flown from the nests and will no longer return for additional broods. Leave them up over the winter, though! You may be surprised to see a woodpecker or other local winter bird take shelter in a box during cold evenings.

### Leave the Leaves!

When fall returns to your yard this year, it may be tempting to rake up all the leaves, put them into bags, and toss them away. Keep in mind when we do this, important pollinators (like butterflies) can lose their overwintering areas and may not survive. The leaves provide protection for butterflies, moths, bees, and fireflies in the winter months! Fireflies actually spend the first two years of their lives as larvae either underground or in the leaves. If leaves are left for multiple years in one location, the fireflies have a better chance of survival—and we have a better chance of seeing the beautiful beetles light up our yards. If you must remove the leaves from certain portions of your yard, try to find corners of the yard where the leaves can stay. In the spring, wait until daytime temperatures are over 50 degrees for at least a week before cleaning up leaves and plants left over the winter. This will save the lives of many pollinators that overwinter in the dead plant material. Give these beneficial insects a chance!

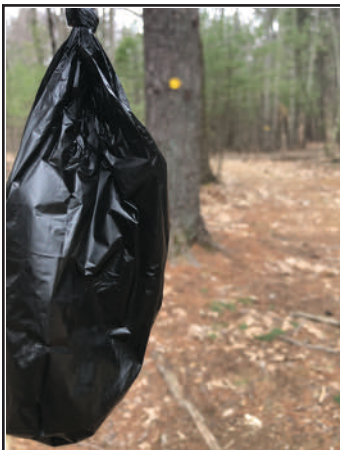
### Plant Native Plants!

If you are interested in attracting more birds, butterflies, and bees to your yard, try locating and planting native plants. The National Wildlife Federation has a website ([www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/plants](http://www.nwf.org/nativeplantfinder/plants)) where you can type in your zip code and view pages of local native plants. When you click on a plant option, the website will tell you which species are attracted to the plant. However, do your research. Some varieties of native plants spread and can quickly take over a garden area. According to Mass Audubon, examples of plants native to Massachusetts include: wild indigo, low bush blueberry, bearberry, and milkweed (this plant is very important for the monarch butterfly population!).



### The Peepers Are Here!

We know spring has arrived when the sound of spring peepers fills the air after dusk, echoing into our nights. Spring peepers are found all over the eastern portion of the U.S. and Canada. They are a brown or tan colored amphibian with a dark "X" across their backs. They have large toes for climbing trees and mostly live within forests that are close to wetlands. Their little eggs and tadpoles need bodies of water to survive. Spring peepers are nocturnal creatures. They feed on small bugs such as ants, spiders, and flies during the overnight hours. Spring peepers are one of the first frogs to vocalize in the spring!



### PUP! (Pick Up Poop)

As a dog owner, I get it—picking up poop isn't my favorite activity either. But, if we are walking in conservation properties, we should be carrying and using poop bags. "Why?" you ask. "There are many animals in the woods and THEY all poop." Well—there are several good reasons: **1.** According to Town of Littleton, Article III Leash Law, Section D: *All persons in care, custody and control of a dog(s) are required to use a poop bag to pick up dog waste. Poop bag(s) must be properly disposed of in an off-site waste receptacle.*

**2.** Dog waste has been identified as a significant source of pollution by the EPA. It contains harmful bacteria, such as *Giardia* and *E.coli*, that can get into streams and other water sources. Both people and animals can get diseases and parasites from polluted water.

**3.** Dog waste carries nutrients that are different from the ecosystems found in the woods. These nutrients can have adverse effects on the ecosystems found in our conservation properties. Read more about this issue at: [www.aaha.org/publications/newstat/articles/2018-05/does-a-bear-poop-in-the-woods-yes-but-your-dog-shouldnt/](http://www.aaha.org/publications/newstat/articles/2018-05/does-a-bear-poop-in-the-woods-yes-but-your-dog-shouldnt/)

**Please be considerate and PUP!**

Answer to page 2 photo location: Smith Conservation Land



Spring 2022

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

Littleton  
Conservation  
Trust



P.O. Box 594  
Littleton, MA 01460

*"Preserving Our Rural Landscape"  
for 60 Years*

## Postal Patron

Littleton, Massachusetts 01460

### LCT Birding "Big Day" (pre-picnic)

**Saturday - 5/14/2022**

**PLACE:** Long Lake Park (up in the field, at the bench)

**TIME:** 7–11:45 a.m.

Join Dustin and other local birders in LCT's contribution to the Global Big Day.

For more details and to register,  
visit [www.littletonconservationtrust.org/events](http://www.littletonconservationtrust.org/events)



This newsletter is printed on recycled  
post-consumer waste.

## Make a Difference—Consider Ways to Conserve Your Land

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of open space. Having access to forests and meadows can offer respite in the midst of developed areas. Every saved piece of land means less carbon in the air, healthier soil for crops and livestock, cleaner water, forests and meadows to hike, and more habitat for plants and wildlife. These lands also help keep taxes down because conserved lands do not require safety services, street lights, or roads. Conservation lands benefit everyone!

The most common land conservation options include:

- **Conservation Restrictions (CRs)** (also known as conservation easements) that permanently protect the land while keeping use and ownership and can provide income tax deductions, reduce property and estate taxes, and be sold or passed to heirs.
- **Land Donations** (there are various types) can result in substantial income tax reduction. A land donation can be structured so that you continue to live on the land and donate it through your will while restrictions placed on the land continue.
- **Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)** for those with certain farmlands who want to prevent or limit future development on the property and permanently preserve the farming rights.



If you are a landowner in Littleton who might be interested in exploring these options for some or all of your property, we would be happy to talk with you. We encourage you to access the resources below, as well as consult with your legal and financial advisors to learn more about the process of protecting and/or creating open space. We also invite builders who understand the value of preserving portions of development properties to consider these conservation options.

By permanently preserving enough open space, we will help create a healthy and beautiful future for Littleton.

### Resources:

- *Preserving Family Lands* (3 editions available) by Stephen J. Small. This book can be ordered at: [stevesmall.com](http://stevesmall.com), which also has relevant articles.
- *Land Conservation Options: A Guide for Massachusetts Landowners*. LCT has copies available.
- Sudbury Valley Trustees—[svtweb.org](http://svtweb.org), click on *Landowner Resources* menu tab.
- Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition—[massland.org/resources/resources-for-landowners](http://massland.org/resources/resources-for-landowners)
- UMass Amherst MassWoods—[masswoods.org/future-my-land/land-conservation-options](http://masswoods.org/future-my-land/land-conservation-options)