

Please join us in congratulating the first recipient of Littleton Conservation Trust's Lifetime Achievement Award **Rick Findlay**

Back in 1976, in the early years of the Littleton Conservation Trust (LCT), a young landscape architect named Rick Findlay volunteered to join the board of trustees. The following year Roger and Isobel Conant donated a seven acre pine grove off of White Street which was named Conant Park. Rick soon took a special interest in the property, picturing it as an arboretum-like landscaped park. He helped with the development of plans and installation of plantings over the years, and has continued to care for and about it since.

Now, 44 years later, Rick continues to be a valued member of the LCT board. He has been our vice president for many years, working diligently in countless ways to further our mission of land conservation, education, and stewardship. He has been a driving force for the eradication of invasive plant species, and has worked tirelessly to create, maintain, and connect trails throughout town. He has done it all as a volunteer-- with a cheerful disposition and with great humility.



We believe his contribution to our organization and Littleton is an achievement worthy of recognition, so on December 1, 2022, we honored Rick with the first ever Littleton Conservation Trust Lifetime Achievement Award. To further recognise his work and dedication, we have named the trail through Conant Park the Rick Findlay Trail. The trail will begin at the park's White St. entrance and continue to the intersection with the boardwalk to the Russell Street school complex and the Two Brothers Trail that turns toward the town library and office complex (and then to Prouty Woods). A new sign will be installed this spring at the entrance on White St. We hope everyone will go to Conant Park and enjoy the newly dedicated trail and its lovely surroundings.



LCT Board of Trustees Spring 2023

Kathy Stevens

President

46 Shaker Lane 978-486-8847

Rick Findlay

Vice President

46 Beaver Brook Rd. 978-486-4031

Christine Nordhaus

Treasurer

43 Starr Hill Rd. 978-621-1779

Dustin Neild

Secretary

17 Lake Shore Dr. 978-902-4417

Dan Boudillion

19 Woodridge Rd. 978-501-9308

JoAnn Dery

211 Harwood Ave. 978-501-5907

Melinda Hobausz

167 Hartwell Ave. 978-257-0142

Erin Jade

104 Foster St. 978-944-1359

Andrew McNaught

5 Long Lake Rd. 508-294-3928

Alyssa Russell

32 Dogwood Rd. 978-844-0376

Maggie Werneburg

264 King St. 518-860-8923

Volunteers

Scott Lewis	Webmaster
Karen O'Neil	Facebook Administrator
Jim O'Neil	Trail Crew Coordinator
Natalia Slattery	Design and Production

Online

Website:

LittletonConservationTrust.org

Trail Maps:

LittletonConservationTrust.org/trail-guide

Facebook:

facebook.com/LittletonConservationTrust

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
- ➔ **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
- ➔ **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/

UPCOMING

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

Date	Time	Event Description
5/13/2023	Sunrise, or 7 AM	Big Day bird walk. Location TBD. Please check in at Littleton Conservation Trust website for more information as May 13 nears. (O)
5/20/2023	1 PM–3 PM	Trail blaze installation at Hartwell Family Memorial Preserve. Volunteers needed and welcome! Look for more information at the Littleton Conservation Trust website as the date nears. (O)
6/24/2023	Sunrise, or 7 AM	Kayaking on Spectacle Pond. Bring your own kayak, paddles, flotation device, snack, and water. Sign up at the Littleton Conservation Trust website as the date nears. If you have binoculars, bring those as well to observe birds and other wildlife during our paddle. (O)
7/22/2023	1 PM–3 PM	Trail blaze installation at George and Lucy Yapp Conservation Land. Volunteers needed and welcome! Look for more information at the Littleton Conservation Trust website as the date nears. (O)
9/10/2023	4 PM	Save the date. Trustee Erin Jade will do a native plant tour at her home garden. Look for more information at the Littleton Conservation Trust website as the date nears. (O)
10/14/2023	1 PM–3 PM	Trail blaze installation at Williams Land. Volunteers needed and welcome! Look for more information at the Littleton Trust website as the date nears. (O)

Look for more information about these events at LittletonConservationTrust.org

Can You Guess Where These Photos Were Taken?

(Look for the answer at the bottom of page 4.)



Littleton Conservation Trust Membership and Donation Form — Spring 2023

☐ 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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <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



Do you believe that preserving open space is important?

Are you looking for a way to make a difference?

Join the Littleton Conservation Trust Board of Trustees!

If you would like to help out in your community, and appreciate the work we at the LCT do in Littleton to preserve land, maintain trails, and educate the public about the environment, please consider joining our board of trustees to help us continue our important work.

Please contact us at Littletonconservationtrust.org to learn more.

We look forward to hearing from you!

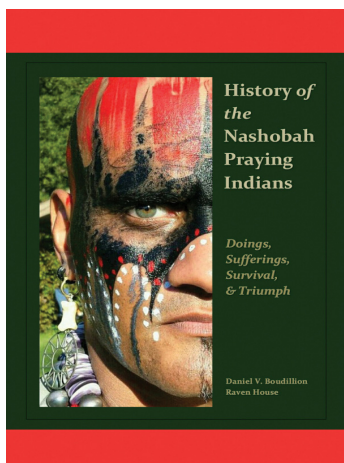
History of the Nashobah Praying Indians: Doings, Sufferings, Survival, and Triumph **Book by Littleton Historian (and LCT Trustee) Daniel V. Boudillion**

Littleton was originally the Praying Indian Plantation of Nashobah, established in 1654 under Chief Tahattawan, a Massachusett Sagamore.

The Indian village was located between Fort Pond and Nagog Pond, in what we now call the Sarah Doublet Forest. Thanks to the Littleton Conservation Trust, this area and its historical significance has been preserved.

The newly published history of the Nashobah Praying Indians adds a rich new understating of the land and its original inhabitants for everyone who has walked the Sarah Doublet Forest, allowing us all to follow in the footsteps the Nashobah.

For the first time ever, the history of the Nashobah Praying Indians is told in full, from 1654 to 1736. It is a story of suffering and loss, of a people who kept both their faith and heritage in the face of encroachment, war, and disease.



The History of the Nashobah Praying Indians begins at the roots of the Praying Indian experiment, and follows the doings and sufferings through King Philip's war and Deer Island and the long decline afterwards as the Plantation was sold off bit by bit, eventually to become the town of Littleton.

It has been more than 280 years since Wunnuhew (Sarah Doublet), the last of the Nashobah Praying Indians that lived in Nashobah, passed away, and the Plantation was lost. Hear her story, and the story of all the Nashobah Praying Indians told in full in *History of the Nashobah Praying Indians: Doings, Sufferings, Survival, and Triumph*.

The Nashobah Praying Indians are alive and well in the world, and are still Praying Indians more than 350 years later. You may even meet one on your next walk at the Sarah Doublet Forest.

History of the Nashobah Praying Indians is available on amazon.com.

Conservation Restrictions: What Are They and Why Are They Important?

by Kathy Stevens

We all enjoy having beautiful outdoor spaces to look at and to use for recreation and as an opportunity to “escape” into nature. One of the main tools we have to help save these open spaces is the use of conservation restrictions. So what is a conservation restriction, and how does it help us preserve these places to enjoy forever?

A conservation restriction* (“CR”) is a type of legally binding agreement that landowners can use to restrict certain rights or uses on a piece of land, such as taking away the development rights, but retaining their ownership rights. This agreement stays with the property in perpetuity (stays attached to the deed forever), including when passed on through a will. The purpose is to keep land or water areas predominantly in their natural, scenic, or open condition. (Other types of land restrictions exist, including, but not limited to, agricultural, farming, and forest use).

A landowner who wants all or part of their property preserved for the future can grant a restriction on it while continuing to live on the property, or they can sell the land and the CR will continue to protect it. They can allow public access or keep it private. Some owners do that for their lifetime and then allow public access when they pass away. Placing a CR on property can also provide various financial benefits to the owner. In certain circumstances it can qualify them for a tax credit, a tax deductible contribution that lowers income taxes, or lower their estate taxes.

CR’s must be held and monitored by a “qualified organization” such as a city or town’s conservation commission or a land trust such as the Littleton Conservation Trust (LCT). CR’s cannot be held by the owner of the land. One example here in Littleton is the Joyce Williams conservation property. Joyce wanted to preserve a portion of her land in its natural state, and the town voted to purchase the property in 2017 for that purpose. The town asked the LCT to hold the CR for the property, and we agreed. Our responsibility going forward will be to monitor the Williams land, which means inspecting the property boundaries conditions annually, maintaining the trails, keeping it free of debris and trash, and doing our best to keep it in its natural condition. (We get tremendous help from many volunteers who work hard to perform this stewardship with us.) The CR also places the responsibility on LCT to defend the property (legally if necessary) from violations of the CR’s terms, such as prohibited structures being built, trash and yard debris being dumped, or unauthorized logging, hunting, etc., on the property.



View of Doleful Pond on the Williams Land.

Lands that are set aside for conservation purposes add numerous benefits to towns and cities, including the non-human species that live all around us. For instance, houses near conservation lands and green spaces generally have higher real estate values, making the town or city a desirable place to live. Conserved land doesn’t require public services like police, fire, schools, and road plowing like developed properties, helping save taxpayer money. In this way, even though conservation areas are not assessed real estate taxes, they don’t have a negative effect on the town’s financial resources.

Conservation properties help protect our public drinking water supplies, give us shade to cool the air, provide clean air, provide safe habitat for many animals and beneficial insects to live and thrive, and help mitigate the growing effects of climate change. When properties are connected over a large area, they can create corridors and trails that allow animals and people to move safely without having to be on roads with cars, which are especially dangerous for animals.

In all these ways, CR’s are an important part of helping us live healthier and happier lives. They are an essential tool for a future where people can live and thrive along with nature. We need to save and preserve as much open space as possible to make this a reality going forward as we face continuing development pressures. As environmentalist Rachel Carson said, “We live in the house of life, and all the rooms connect.” We need our connection with nature, and CR’s are one of the ways we can accomplish that.

Answer to page 2 photo location: Robert and Emily Cobb Memorial Forest

Invasive Task Force

by Erin Jade

These days it's hard not to have encountered and even battled invasive plants (and insects/animals) somewhere out in the world. If you're anything like me, you miss the good old days of ignorant bliss when you didn't know much about them or when there just weren't as many in both type and amount. It's not the plant's fault or intention to take over: their existence is due to human globalization and transport/introduction of plants and seeds, intentional or not. The Division of Fish and Wildlife defines them as

"non-native species that have spread into native or minimally managed plant systems . . . and dominate and/or disrupt native ecosystems. They have left behind the herbivores and diseases that typically control their populations in native habitats and they have reproductive mechanisms that allow them to rapidly grow, mature, and spread . . . certain species can alter hydrology, soil chemistry (and more . . .). Most introduced plants do not threaten our native plant and animal communities but some spread rapidly, thrive in a variety of habitats, and are difficult to remove or control."

During my childhood I remember an early 1980's gypsy moth (now called spongy moth) caterpillar outbreak defoliating trees that were webbed and writhing with larva. I remember the colorful caterpillars in my yard and our family painting oak tree trunks with creosote bands to prevent their upward travel to the canopy. *Lymantria dispar* was accidentally introduced in 1869 and was widespread across the northeast by 1902. A fungus from Japan capable of killing the caterpillars arrived here in 1910 but didn't take a toll on the population until the late 1980s. Along with the help of certain parasitic insects and some species of birds, the outbreak dwindled, but they are still here, along with many other out-of-place critters. These days we are valiantly trying to keep our ash tree alive by cutting dead wood off every year, as this is the entry point for Emerald Ash Borers. We know it's only a matter of time before we lose this primary shade tree. I am painfully aware of a generous handful of introduced species and am trying to get more folks on board to identify and mitigate them: many hands make light work.

The problem of invasive species increases as humans proliferate and further parcel the land. In addition, our impact is exacerbated by climate effects. Many of the invasive plants produce large quantities of seed and spread by rhizomes or root systems, thriving on disturbed soil. Their seeds are often distributed by birds, wind, and unknowing humans. Some are still for sale at nurseries! Some were brought here to use as natural fencing for livestock (Multiflora Rose). Others arrived on our shores because of their ornamental value, Autumn Olive, Burning Bush, Japanese Barberry, and Privet are some examples. Some invasives have aggressive root systems that spread long distances

from a single plant such as Japanese Knotweed. These often grow so densely that they smother the roots of surrounding vegetation. European Garlic Mustard produces chemicals in its leaves and roots that inhibit the growth of other plants around it. It can grow in sun, shade, dry, or wet and threatens to take over forest understories. It is easy to pull, but the pulling must be done before it goes to seed in early summer. Unfortunately, the patches must be returned to for additional pulling every year to to make an actual difference.

Invasive species have contributed to the decline of 42% of U.S. endangered and threatened species. In addition, for 18% of U.S. endangered or threatened species, invasives are the main cause of their decline. Invasives compete directly for moisture, sunlight, nutrients, and space. They cause a decline in overall plant diversity and their presence degrades wildlife habitat, agricultural land, and water and soil quality.

If some of these species are in your yard, and you've scratched the dickens out of yourself battling their thorns, or cringe at those bright orange bittersweet roots reappearing year after year, you're in good company. You probably want to help, but it's daunting and you wonder if this is the new normal. Full eradication is not just nearly impossible, it's complicated: it takes planning, consistency, and restoration.



Illustration of Garlic Mustard by Otis Mountain

However, we need to choose our battles--and keep our work focused so that we have the greatest impact. For example, we can concentrate on places where invasives haven't gotten a foothold yet and prevent the spread of invasives into conservation land. We can also remove bittersweet vines from trees so that it doesn't kill native trees. The plants and animals that have evolved to live in our environment, those indigenous species we value so highly for the health of our ecosystem are increasingly threatened by displaced species poised to vigorously outnumber them. Perhaps we could redirect the energy we put into maintaining lawns into better ways to sustain biodiversity. We can tackle invasives in our own yards, as this is often how they spread to open spaces. By removing them and

and planting native plant species in their place, we can make a monumental difference.

I am starting a new invasive task force to meet monthly on conservation land to learn about and remove common invasives. On Earth Day, April 22, we hosted our second annual Garlic Mustard pull contest at Fay Park. This annual event is a great way to get outside with the whole family, do something great for the environment and get a chance to win prizes donated by local businesses such as Littleton Pizza, Kimballs, and Metrorock. Littleton Conservation Trust is always looking for more members and is a great organization to be a part of if you value our conservation land.

For more info email erinjade@littletonconservationtrust.org and follow Littleton Trails FB page

Spring 2023

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

TOWN MEETING
May 1, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Littleton Middle School

Make the time to get involved with your town government.
Find out what is going on related to our community and lands.
Lend your voice and your vote!



This newsletter is printed on recycled
post-consumer waste.

Media Corner

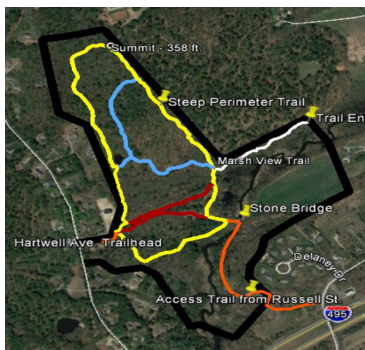
LCT donated books can be found at the Reuben Hoar Library.

Book—Legends of the Common Stream

by John Hanson Mitchell

Author John Hanson Mitchell is a long-time resident of Littleton, Massachusetts. His books include *Ceremonial Time: Fifteen Thousand Years on One Square Mile*, *Trespassing: An Inquiry Into the Private Ownership of Land*, and *Walking Towards Walden: A Pilgrimage in Search of Place*. *Legends of the Common Stream* was published in 2021. The common stream in this book is the one that many of us cross over or walk beside every day--Beaver Brook. Mitchell takes his readers on a literary journey that tells of the importance of this relatively small brook to the people who have lived nearby and used it as a resource, and as he pulls readers into the natural history, he uses myths, legends, and traditions from around the world to show people how important it is to maintain a connection to the natural world.

If you would like to take a closer look at Beaver Brook, make the time to take a walk in the Hartwell Family Memorial Preserve. There is a parking area off of Hartwell Avenue near utility pole #71. The conservation area features trails along Beaver Brook and an Old Stone Slab Bridge on an old carriage road that once led to Ayer.



Podcast—Jane Goodall's Hopecast

Those of us who have been lucky enough to hear Jane Goodall speak in person know how appropriate the title of this podcast is. She is someone who weaves wonderful stories of her work and her vision of the world we live in. Even the most pessimistic of us find morsels of hope and renewed energy for doing our part to create a healthier future for our planet. The Hopecast is being produced by the Jane Goodall Institute in conjunction with Dr. Goodall. These episodes focus on interviews, and work to help people overcome obstacles that impede individual action. Some of the 20-40 minute episodes include, "Adam McKay: Hope Is Found in Climate Action and the Community Created by Laughter," "Paul Polman: Hope is Putting the Heart Back in Companies for Net Positive Change," and "Emma Lewisham: Hope Is the Beauty of Circular & Carbon Positive."

Podcast—Think Sustainability

This podcast, with 180 episodes (so far), presents information related to creating a sustainable future. Listen to episodes such as "Algae and the Human Right to Clean Air," "Watch Out Seasons Are Shifting," and "How Vibrations Change Living Things." The episodes range far and wide, but all contribute to your understanding of how consumption affects many aspects of our lives.

