

Spring 2007



www.westfordconservationtrust.org



Acker Land Trail

Editor
Diane Duane

Town Meeting - Saturday, May 5th

The Trust urges you to attend Town Meeting on **Saturday, May 5th at 10 am** at the **Abbot School**. There are several articles on conservation issues of interest on the warrant. The town will be considering the following very critical issues:

- ◇ Community Preservation Committee CPC will be presenting recommendations regarding CPA (Community Preservation Act) expenditures.
- ◇ Pesticide Policy Committee will be presenting their pesticide policy on town owned lands. This policy has been approved by the Board of Selectman and the Board of Health.
- ◇ East Boston Camps Master Plan will be presenting their plan for citizen review and approval. Please note that there are now two more forums to present the EBC Master Plan to people before Town Meeting. These will be **Thursday, April 12th at 7pm** at the Stony Brook School and **Tuesday, April 17th, 7 p.m.** at the Millennium School.



Spring fiddleheads



Skunk Cabbage along the Acker Tail

Breeding Bird Atlas 2 by Marian Harman

Much has changed in the state since 1979. We have less farmland in the state, more mature forest, and many more subdivisions. In fact, Mass Audubon reports that since 1985, we have been losing 40 acres/day to visible development. These landscape changes mean changes in the types of birds, which can breed here. The **Mass Breeding Bird Atlas**, published in 2003 states that "bird's broad distribution and varied ecology make them excellent indicators of environmental change". In the past thirty years, we have seen declines in grassland breeding birds, such as Bobolink and Meadowlark, as well as declines in early successional habitat birds such as Brown Thrasher and Eastern Towhee. We have seen increases in birds, which favor mature woodlands, such as Pileated Woodpecker and Cooper's Hawk. We have also seen increases in formerly southern birds perhaps due to climate change. Mass. Audubon could like to document just what those changes are. This is where citizen science comes in. For Atlas 2, the state has been divided up into 970 blocks, each about 10 miles square. Westford has four blocks, and four volunteers so far. If you have in interest in volunteering for a block here or elsewhere, please call Marian Harman at 978-692-3907. This project will most likely last for about 3 years. You can find out more at <http://massaudubon.org/birdatlas/bba2>. If you can't commit to being a primary surveyor, you can still submit sightings of breeding birds, by completing a form on the same website.



Step It Up Day - April 14th on the Town Common

Step It Up Westford

April 14, 2007 1:00PM to 2:00PM

Westford is stepping it up together!

Bring you family, friends and neighbors to the Common at 1:00pm sharp - we'll take a huge group photo to send to Congress to show that Westford cares about climate change and global warming. Then stay to sign the petition, learn about local conservation efforts & hear fabulous Master Storyteller Leeny Del Seamonds entertain us with a story. Bring your children to see chickens and learn how to build a chicken coop! Find out about the Farmers Market that will be a weekly event in Westford soon. The first participants to arrive by foot or bike get a free video rental coupon from the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library. Interested in helping? Contact us at stokes4marcia@verizon.net

You can also check out **www.stepitup07.org** for more info!



Did you know?

You can do many things to address global warming right here in Westford! Here are some suggestions from several Trust members....

- ⇒ Replace your incandescent lightbulbs with eco friendly bulbs
- ⇒ Encourage carpooling (to soccer, after school activities, for example)
- ⇒ Consider buying or leasing a hybrid vehicle
- ⇒ Try walking or biking to a friends house or to the store instead of driving.
- ⇒ Continue to encourage Open Space in Westford
- ⇒ Encourage people to reduce lawns—saves water, fertilizer, chemicals etc
- ⇒ Support sidewalks, bike paths and climate smart growth!

DONATE TO THE WILD THINGS!

Since 1983, Massachusetts tax filers have had the option of donating to **MassWildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Fund** while filing their state income tax form (Line 32). When you contribute to the fund, you help to protect and restore rare and endangered animals, plants, and their habitats. Past donations have helped conserve and restore in the Commonwealth populations of the Bald Eagle, Hessel's Hairstreak butterfly, the Redbelly Cooter, and the beautiful Eastern Silvery Aster. Donations to the Fund may also be made year round by sending a check made out to: Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Fund and sent to: MassWildlife Field HQ, NHESP, 1 Rabbit Hill Rd Westborough MA 01581 Check the Natural Heritage area of MassWildlife's website to learn more.

Kid's Adventure Walk - East Boston Camps

When? Monday, April 16th, 10:00-11:00am

A one-hour vacation week walk in conjunction with Earth Day. Hike through a wooded area of East Boston Camps, led by Westford resident and park ranger, Bill Morton. Bill will also be joined by Trust member Peter Severance. We'll see if we can discover signs of spring in this beautiful natural area. Walk is suitable for children grades 1-5. A parent or guardian must accompany children. Please no pets. Dress for changeable April weather. Meet at Depot St. entrance to East Boston Camps, right across from Stony Brook farm stand. NO preregistration required. For questions call Marian Harman at 978-692-3907.

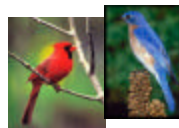


Spring Walks



Bird Walk (RCC-E3354)

Saturday, May 12, 7:00-9:00 AM



Join Trust members Dot Mooney, Lenny Palmer and Marian Harman as they lead a walk on the beautiful and diverse Emmet conservation land. Area is somewhat hilly and rocky, please wear sturdy footgear, bring binoculars if possible. NO dogs please. Meet at the end of Trailside Way (off Powers Rd.) at the parking lot off the cul-de-sac. FREE but please register with Roudenbush Community Center (RCC).

Wildflower Walk (RCC-E3356)

Sunday, May 20, 1:00 pm-2:30 pm



Join Westford's wildflower expert, Elana Schreiber, for a wildflower walk on the lovely Acker land along Stony Brook. Walk is flat and about 1 mile. Dogs on leash are welcome, but may be frustrated by the slow pace. Meet at East Boston Camps, sign on Depot St., across from Stony Brook Acres farm stand. We will cross Depot St. to access the Acker land trail. FREE - but please Call Roudenbush to register.

"Stream Critters" Walk * (RCC-E3358)

Saturday, June 2, 9:00-11:00 AM



Wetlands biologist, Peter Severance, will lead an investigation of the critters which live in a stream. This popular walk is fun for all ages. Be prepared to wade right into the stream to catch the 'critters'. You can wear old boots or sneakers. NO dogs please. Meet on Trailside Way (off Powers Rd.) at the bridge over the stream. FREE - Call Roudenbush to register.

Ponding * (RCC- E2428)

Sunday, June 3, 9:00-11:00 AM



In the pond, wetlands biologist Peter Severance will help us to find different "critters" from those we found in the stream. Families love splashing in the pond, and trying to net something fascinating. Wear waterproof footwear or old sneakers. Do one or both of these wetlands programs. No dogs please. Park on Concord Rd., at the field across from 224 Concord Rd. We will cross the field to find the pond.

** The last two walks are part of the 2007 Biodiversity Days week. Please send all your wildlife observations for that weekend to Marian Harman at fieldreport@westfordconservationtrust.org*

All walks are FREE. Please Call Roudenbush to register at 978-692-5511.

Richard Emmet Retires as Director of Trust

Dick Emmet, Director and Vice President of the Westford Conservation Trust announced in March that he must, regretfully, retire from the Board. Dick was one of the original founders of the Trust. He has been a Director since the Trust's founding in 1984. He has brought to this position, valuable legal experience and advice, based on his many years at the Conservation Law Foundation, the boards of the Maine and Mass. Audubon Societies, and his service to the town of Westford on the Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen. Dick has donated land to the Trust, and has facilitated donations of land from others. For most of his twenty-three years on the Board, he led the Trust bird walk every May. Dick will remain a Trust member and an advisor to the Board. We will miss him at our meetings very much, but will continue to rely on his calm good sense and vast experience.



Join the Trust

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (optional)/Email _____

___ Check here if interested in volunteering for trail maintenance

___ Check here if interested in volunteering for educational efforts

Please make tax deductible check payable to : **Westford Conservation Trust**

Please mail to : **Westford Conservation Trust P.O. Box 255**

Westford, Ma. 01886

Or join online at www.westfordconservationtrust.org

___ \$15 Individual
___ \$35 Family
___ \$100 Friend
___ \$250 Patron
___ \$500+ Supporter
___ Other



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Westford, Ma

Westford Conservation Trust
P.O. Box 255
Westford, Massachusetts 01886



Go to our website to listen to the
songs of one of our returning
spring birds.....