

Westford Conservation Trust Newsletter

Fall 2012



Stony Brook at Stone Arch Bridge

Join us for the Trust's Annual Meeting, Thursday, November 1st at 7:00pm
Parish Center for the Arts (PCA) - Westford Common

Please join us for the **Trust's Annual Meeting** on November 1st at the PCA, 7pm. **Rich Trubey** will be this year's annual meeting speaker. Rich grew up in Westford and attended Westford schools. He now teaches at UMass/Lowell. Rich will speak about **Forest Conservation in Central America: Green Technology & Biodiversity-Friendly Coffee and Biofuel Production**.

This Lowell non-profit has launched the world's first coffee processing center powered by renewable energy technology. Co-founder of the [Mesoamerican Development Institute](#) (MDI), Rich Trubey, will show how Fair Trade cooperatives are eliminating the destructive use of firewood in drying the coffee harvest through technology manufactured in New England. In addition, new agroforestry systems under development for the production of coffee and biofuels are shown to benefit our migratory birds and incomes for small producers.



MDI student researcher Fabiola Rodriguez with a White-breasted Hawk captured in a forest site near a coffee farm

A brief Trust annual meeting will be held prior to our guest speaker. We will also be awarding our **2012 Conservation Trustee Award**.

We will also have a slide show of 'Westford Wildlife Watch' photos from our many local wildlife reporters. Refreshments and Rich's **fair trade coffee** will be served. Hope to see you there!

Trust votes to pledge \$8,000 in support of O'Brien Farm CR Purchase - Support Article 10 at the Special Town Meeting

Support Article 10 - Proposed O'Brien Farm Conservation Restriction Purchase

The Trust voted at our last meeting to pledge \$8,000 toward the purchase of the **O'Brien Farm CR** by the Town of Westford. Please consider voting for this very important purchase at Monday's **Special Town Meeting, October 15th at 7:30pm, Abbot School**.

The 25-acre O'Brien Farm in Westford is part of an extensive undeveloped network of fields and woodlands, an important and active wildlife corridor. The property hosts a variety of habitats, including open meadows, forested uplands, a wooded swamp, a shallow marsh/meadow/fen, and perennial Pond Brook. With a 19th century barn, classic rock walls, and a streetscape reminiscent of the 1880s, the property is also an historic treasure. Owned by the same family since 1886, it was originally operated as a general farm with animals, vegetables, strawberries, and fruit trees common to the era. It is now actively managed for the benefit of wildlife through a plan with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Services Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, known as WHIP. The farm is noted as a "Land of Conservation Interest" in Westford's Open Space and Recreation Plan due to its significant ecological, historic, scenic, and recreational values. Its 2,220 feet of frontage on Vose Road, a designated "Scenic Road," make it a visible and valued parcel in Westford and beyond. [Click here](#) for more info on this land, along with photos and maps!

read more about the Trust's donation in the [Westford Patch](#)

Invasive Plant Committee Update

The invasive plant control committee wrapped up its 2012 [Mile-a-Minute Vine](#) containment program with a special pulling along the Tadmuck Brook near Grey Fox Lane. 12 pulling events were held during the growing season with 31 volunteers participating. Although we are finding more locations of this highly invasive vine as we increase our survey areas, we feel the effort is making a difference in the overall density of the plants. This is a multi-year program that we are committed to and we welcome anyone who would care to contribute only two hours of their time to help the effort. Please send an email to invasives@westfordconservationtrust.org to get on our mailing list for the 2013 season. A huge thank you to our many volunteers who gave their time and energy to help control this highly invasive plant!

Water Quality Monitoring Update

It has been a busy season as we finish our seventh year of water quality monitoring! A few month's ago, the Conservation Commission purchased meters in support of our efforts to measure water quality in Westford. With support from OARS, we are working on best processes for our standards and measurements using these new meters. We have one more sampling date in November, with special collections in October.

Email us at waterquality@westfordconservationtrust.org for more information on joining or to learn more about us.

Check out our [stream monitoring results](#) for 2011

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