



## Westford Conservation Trust Winter 2013 News

[www.westfordconservationtrust.org](http://www.westfordconservationtrust.org)

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Welcome to our Winter 2013 e-news! The e-news format allows us to share timely updates, while conserving resources. We will continue mailing a paper newsletter once a year.

Your feedback is important to us! If there are topics you'd like to read about, or projects you'd like the Trust to sponsor, please [email us](#) or comment on our [Facebook](#) page. We look forward to meeting you out on the trails and at our community events in the coming months!

Best wishes,

Lisa Groves  
Newsletter Editor

**Welcome Ron Gemma!  
Trust Elects New  
President**



Please join us in welcoming Ron Gemma as the new Trust president. Ron has served on the board of directors for the past 3 years, and has been instrumental in establishing our Invasive Species Management Program.

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### **2012 Annual Meeting Summary**

We had a great turnout for our 2012 annual meeting held in November at the PCA. Retiring Trust president, Bill Morton, received the Conservation Trustee award for his conservation efforts as a park ranger in Lowell, and as Trust board member and president. Congratulations Bill, and thank you for your dedication!

Westford native Rich Trubey, who co-founded the U-Mass/Lowell-based Mesoamerican Development Institute (MDI), was our keynote speaker. Rich presented the institute's work on environmentally-friendly coffee and biofuel production in Central America, and shared some delicious [solar-dried coffee](#). If you missed his inspiring talk, [click here](#) to learn more about Rich and the MDI. The stunning slideshow of Westford wildlife photos taken by residents and featured at the meeting can be viewed on our [website](#). Thanks to all who shared photos, and to all who attended the meeting!

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### **2012 Accomplishments**

Trust members and volunteers pulled on their boots, wielded tools, applied knowledge and skills, and worked together on a variety of conservation projects in Westford in 2012. Some highlights include: maintaining miles of public trails;

in his own words [here](#).

### Discover Westford Trails and More on Guided Walks



If you enjoy the natural world, want to learn about Westford trails, wildlife, and history, could use some company, or just need to get out and stretch your legs, consider joining a guided trail walk sponsored by the Trust. Usually held on the first Saturday of the month from 9:00 - 10:30am, these walks are open to all, free of charge, and fun! Additional information and the schedule can be found on [Facebook](#) and the events/upcoming trips section of the [Roudenbush website](#). You may also contact Bill Harman at 692-3907 or [harmanwh@verizon.net](mailto:harmanwh@verizon.net)

**Updated and Expanded  
Westford Trails Booklet  
Now Available!**

monitoring stream water quality; controlling the highly invasive and destructive plant species, [Mile-a-minute](#); managing conservation land and restrictions; sponsoring youth conservation projects and education; expanding the Westford Trails Booklet; and much more! [Click here](#) for a detailed list and some photos of our 2012 activities.

A special thank you to our members, donors, and volunteers. Without your generous contributions our work would not be possible! We'll be sure to update you about future events and volunteer opportunities through our e-news, [Facebook page](#), and [website](#), local news sources, and other channels. If you wish to join the Trust or make a tax-deductible donation now, [click here](#).



On the Sassafras Trail with Guide Frank Bashore in January

### Crisafulli School Bird Feeder Program

by Marian and Bill Harman

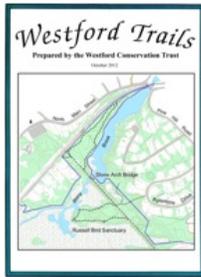
Each year since 2001, the Trust has partnered with the Westford fourth grades to present a bird feeder program. The Trust maintains and fills feeders at Abbot and Crisafulli Schools.

The feeder at Day School had to be taken down, due to a bear sighting in the area, but the others have continued to offer a bounty to our local birds.

At Crisafulli School, librarians Buffie Diercks and Sue Carr invite the Trust to make presentations to each fourth grade class in the fall. This kicks off the season of formal data



Photo Credit:  
Doug Pederson



We're excited to offer an updated and expanded edition of the Westford Trails booklet, which includes several new GPS-based topographic maps with accurate renderings of trails, streams, ponds, marshes, roads, and other landmarks. The booklet is available for \$5.00 at Roudenbush and the Town Clerk's office. The maps can also be found on our [website](#).

### Send Us Your Photos!



We love to receive your photos of flora and fauna from around Westford for our [Facebook photo album](#). Send your photos in an [email](#), and be sure to identify the subject and include location, date, and your name.

Find us on Facebook 

collection by the students. The Trust provided binoculars to each of the three schools, as well as field guides. These binoculars, six pairs to each school, were donated by a generous Trust member. This year, we gave presentations to each of the six fourth grade classes at Crisafulli. Fourth grade is a perfect time to undertake bird study. Many of the children have feeders at home, and have noticed the feeder outside the library at their school. It is such a joy to meet the children who are invariably excited about the project. We remind them that they are true scientists, doing valuable data collection. The children use the binoculars and field guides to observe, count and record the different species of birds that visit the feeder. They have many ideas about how they can use the information they are collecting. They can draw pictures of birds, write essays or poems, keep graphs of birds feeding under different kinds of weather conditions, etc. The librarians help the children mark down the number of each species seen at the feeder at any one time. They send their reports to Marian Harman for inclusion in the Westford Wildlife Watch column printed in the Westford Eagle each month.

When Crisafulli School was first opened, we had difficulty establishing a bird feeder which the birds would accept. It was all too new, and the trees hadn't yet grown up around the building. A feeder hanging from a tiny tree in front of the school wasn't visited at all, so we had to move the feeder up the hill into the forest edge. The birds came immediately, but the feeder was so far away, it was hard to see from the library. A few years later, we were able to move the feeder closer to the building and now it hangs in a tree just outside the library. The tree has grown and the birds are comfortable with the arrangement.

The data collected from the school has certainly been valuable. Sometimes the children are the only ones who have seen a certain species of bird. One year, Crisafulli students observed a flock of evening grosbeaks at their feeder. This is a species which tends to pass through town very quickly, and is not often observed or reported. We wouldn't have known that evening grosbeaks were in Westford at that time without the Crisafulli report. Crisafulli has recently reported 13 species of birds visiting their feeder, including seventeen dark-eyed juncos, and twelve mourning doves.

Over the years, some of the binoculars have been lost or damaged. Crisafulli is looking for a few new pairs. Is there any reader who would like to donate binoculars? To donate binoculars, please [email us](#) or contact Marian Harman at 692-3907.