

Nashoba Conservation Trust Fall 2017 News

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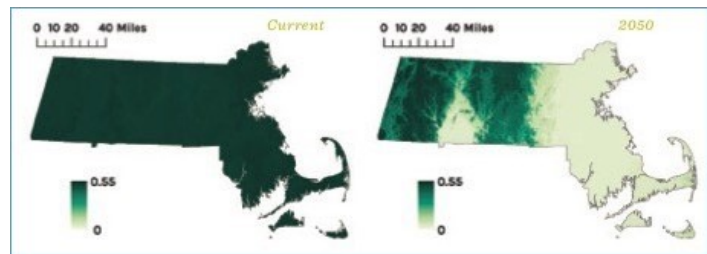


View of pond along “Sue’s Ramble” on Jewett Street

Conservation Corner - Bye Bye Birdie?

Ken Hartlage

“Scores of bird species could disappear due to climate change” declared the Boston Globe on Sept 12. If that headline didn’t grab your attention, the accompanying graphic surely would have (see below). It depicts climate suitability for the Black-capped Chickadee now and in a few decades. If these climate change predictions hold true, it appears that most of eastern MA may not be seeing much of our state bird by 2050.



The Globe’s source for this eye-opening data is the [Mass Audubon 2017 State of the Birds](#) report which predicts similar, if not more alarming consequences for dozens of species across the Commonwealth. The report states: “Our climate change projections estimate that 43% of the breeding species we evaluated are Highly Vulnerable to climate change by the year 2050.”

Of course, it’s not just birds and other wildlife that are at risk: climate change will have economic and health consequences for us as well. The [2014 report Climate Change Impacts in the United States](#) concludes that, for the Northeast, “Heat waves, coastal flooding, and river flooding will pose a growing challenge to the region’s environmental, social, and economic systems.” Although these and other climate change impact studies invariably call for “urgent action” to reduce CO2 levels, the current Administration’s plan to promote the increased use of coal-fired power plants, and to repeal the Clean Power Plan (CPP), could well have the opposite effect. *continued on page 3....*

Accessible Trail Nears Completion at the Library

Paul Peavey

There has been a great deal of progress on the accessible trail behind the Lawrence Library since we last wrote about it in our Spring 2017 edition of the newsletter. This project has been a great example of what can be accomplished when various groups come together in the community for a good cause.

This past May the project got underway when Richard Silveria donated the services of his mini excavator to remove the top soil along the entire ADA pathway.



Peter Shattuck and the Highway Dept. donated and delivered over 100 cubic yards of bituminous concrete material which was used to fill the walkway. Once placed, this material provides a stable travel surface. Dennis Holland, of Watertown, donated 3 days of his time and his Bobcat to help move the material into the pathway. A second Bobcat was rented for a week to insure the task got completed according to schedule. Moving 100 yards of material with Bobcats was a long process, but we got it done.

The Pepperell scout troop then jumped into the fray. Under the leadership of Eagle Scout Shane Yost, the scouts raised funds, ordered the materials, and built 2 beautiful six foot, ADA compliant benches. They are placed at intervals along the pathway and are the perfect additions to the overall project.

We ran into problems trying to re-locate the information kiosk to a more accessible location. Peter Shattuck and his guys came to the rescue. Once they arrived on the site, with a machine set up for the task, it took us only 20 minutes to pull the kiosk from its old location and place it in its new home.

Once all these tasks were done, it was time to start cleaning up the woods and landscaping the area. Upon entering the trail, you will notice a number of brush piles. These 'Habitat piles' provide dense, heavy and secure shelter close to the ground that can attract many animals that may not feel comfortable in the open. The piles are a result of cleaning up many dead and dying trees that were damaged by invasive Bittersweet vines.

The final touches in the project have been the creation of a Native Garden at the entrance area along the walkway. Deb Fountain designed the garden and was ably assisted during the planting by Diane Temple, of Friends of the Library, and others. They have created a unique tribute to conservation. (See next article) This is the only accessible trail in the state connected to a library, and certainly the only one with a native garden.



Conservation Corner - Bye Bye Birdie?

Ken Hartlage

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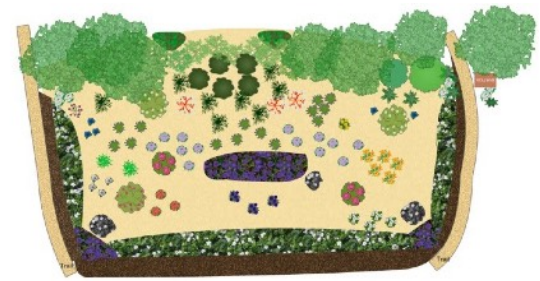
Despite these discouraging developments the opportunity to effect positive change toward a more sustainable world is within our own reach, according to Ellen Moyer, Ph.D. and author of [Our Earth, Our Species, Ourselves](#). But, she says, we must choose: “At this critical decision point in the human story, will we create a sustainable life? Stay the course and flame out? “; or will we “Continue on, but in a half diminished state after a half-hearted attempt?” Dr. Moyer not only invites us to pursue a sustainable life, she instructs us how to achieve it. To hear first-hand from Dr. Moyer how we individually and collectively can work toward sustainability, join us on November 8 at 7:00pm at Lawrence Library, 15 Main St., Pepperell. Registration is requested. Further details at <http://www.lawrencelibrary.org>

Native Garden Created at Lawrence Library

Deb Fountain

This summer, NCT members created Pepperell’s first public, all native plant garden at the entrance to Greens Brook Nature Path behind Lawrence Library. All plants in this garden can be found growing in the wild in New England and the Northeastern U.S.

The garden includes understory trees, shrubs, ferns and perennials to provide color, texture and interest in all seasons. (see graphic below) There is also an example of the latest trend from conservation-minded homeowners in lawn alternatives; a bed of wild strawberries. Along the new, accessible trail, more native plants that are typically found in a Sugar Maple – Oak – Hickory Forest have replaced the invasive, non-native plants that were removed during the trail reconstruction. Some of the 350+ plants were gifted with the remaining purchases funded by NCT, the Lawrence Library and the Friends of the Lawrence Library. Signage, trail maps and specific plant information will soon be available in the trail kiosk.



Trees and shrubs	Spring flowers	Summer-Fall flowers	Ferns & Groundcovers
Redbud tree	Mayapple	Jack-in-the-box	Wild strawberry
Serviceberry/Shadblo tree	Trout lily	Tall white aster	Creeping woodland phlox
Mountain laurel	Eastern bluebell	Wrinkle-leaf goldenrod	Foam flower
Red oak dogwood	Blackfoot	Dowry skullcap	Virginia creeper
Prinlet/bloom azalea	Dutchman's breeches	Wild geranium	Christmas fern
Northern bush honeysuckle		Cardinal flower	Ostrich fern
		American spikenard	

Native plants have adapted to local ecological conditions over the centuries. They rely on nature to provide their own pest control and fertilizer, and they require less water than the exotic plants prevalent in many home landscapes. Native plants also have unique and vital relations with many native pollinators and other wildlife, providing both food and shelter.

Native plants are easy to grow, and a renewable choice for your home garden. Many varieties are now available from local nurseries or by mail order. Why not consider incorporating native plants in your home garden? In addition to a wide variety of beautiful hardy plants, you can provide essential food and shelter for wildlife and help to enhance Pepperell’s unique environment. When we restore native plants to our landscapes, we can increase the biodiversity in our own back yard.

For more information on native plant gardening, visit [New England Wild Flower Society’s website](#) or check out these books from the library.

[Bringing Nature Home](#), by Douglas W. Tallamy

[Garden Revolution](#), Weaner and Christopher

[The Green Garden](#), by Ellen Sousa

[The Living Landscape](#), Darke and Tallamy

Pepperell's Fall Festival

Pat Peavey

Don't you just love watching a child's face as they get tickled with a turkey feather (not attached to bird!) or as they gingerly touch the papery layers and combs of a bald-faced hornet's nest (definitely not active!)? What about watching them guess what a giant, round, gray object might be? (#1 answer-dinosaur egg...until they held it!) This is what could be seen at NCT's booth at the annual Pepperell Fall Festival held on a warm, sunny Saturday in September.

Our mission was to awaken attendees to the idea of getting outside to explore the beautiful properties of Nashoba Conservation Trust. Along with information about the Trust, the booth offered a discovery table where parents and children, equipped with magnifiers, could more closely examine natural items found while walking outside. Member Maegan Carrasquillo also generously donated a hiker's dream basket as a raffle item. It included everything needed to venture out into the woods...binoculars, a first aid kit, bug repellent, etc... and even SNACKS! Patrick Gendron of Pepperell was the lucky winner!

So members...let's all step away from our computers and take advantage of the autumn beauty and see what WE can discover! See you outside!

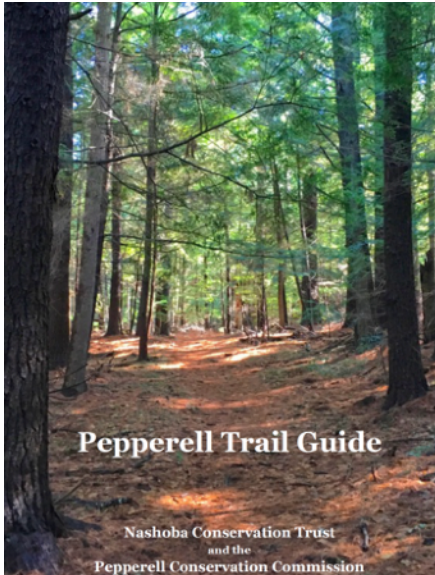


Member Articles

Paul Peavey

As you can see from the article above, we have some excellent writing talent out there in our NCT member base. If you have anything you are interested in or passionate about, from a conservation perspective please use the link below to let us know. 100 – 300 words is about average. We are always looking for volunteers to lend a fresh perspective to our newsletters. Newsletter@nashobatrust.org

Our new 2016 trail guide is available. The guide describes (16) different conservation areas managed by NCT and the Pepperell Conservation Commission. Contained in each section is a description of the parcel, a detailed trail map, and other information to help you enjoy each of these beautiful areas. If you would like a trail guide just visit the NCT website at www.nashobatrust.org



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Your purchases with AmazonSmile will support Nashoba Conservation Trust. I have it set up as one of the 'Favorites' in my browser.

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The NCT offers the following levels of membership:
Individual - \$35
Family - \$50
Sponsor - \$100
Patron - \$250
Benefactor - \$1000
Other amount

All memberships include subscription to the NCT Quarterly Newsletter.

Visit the website at nashobatrust.org to donate or mail your check to:

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