

## Nashoba Conservation Trust Summer 2020 News

### Conservation Corner

Ken Hartlage

While out enjoying Pepperell's conservation land this summer, you may have noticed cameras set up along the trails. Normally, we use these to monitor wildlife, such as deer, bobcat and black bear, but currently we are tracking something else entirely – ATVs and dirt bikes. This summer there has been an explosion of these Off-Highway Vehicle (OHVs), as they are referred to in MA statutes, on Pepperell's conservation lands – and they do

not belong here. In

Massachusetts, OHVs are permitted only on specifically designated trails, none of which are anywhere near Pepperell, or on private land with the owner's permission.

OHVs cause damage by compressing soil and removing vegetative cover, which increases runoff of nutrients and pollutants into our very sensitive streams and rivers, putting local plant and wildlife at risk. OHVs crossing

streams erode the banks and destroy the local habitat. But this is about more than protecting wildlife, it is also a public safety issue. Our trails are typically very narrow and not designed to handle these machines and people together, whether walking cycling or on horseback.

Please help us manage this serious issue. If you see an ATV or dirt bike on our conservation land, report it to the MA environmental police at 800-632-8075.



Motorized vehicles are  
**NOT** permitted  
on Nashoba Conservation  
Trust, Town or State-owned  
conservation land in  
Pepperell.

Help us protect wildlife and  
our natural resources.

Please call the MA  
Environmental Police at  
800-632-8075  
if you see an ATV, dirt bike  
or any other motorized  
vehicle on these protected  
parcels.

## Pollinator Meadow Update

Michael Veit

We are pleased to announce the recent completion of a loop trail through our Seminatore Meadow property. You can now complete a “lollipop” hike beginning and finishing your walk at the marked trailhead on Pond Circle.

Starting from the trailhead, you will pass under a quiet, cool canopy of tall pines and mixed hardwood trees and along a magical fern lined wetland before reaching the open sunlit expanse of the meadow. If you approach quietly, you may be lucky enough to see white-tailed deer leaping away, their heads barely cresting the top of the tall flower stalks. Here you can follow the mowed path through the meadow. Listen to the crickets chirping and bees buzzing as barn swallows fly

low over the meadow feeding on airborne insects; watch as hordes of grasshoppers leap off the trail ahead of you and keep your eyes open for beautiful orange-winged Halloween Pennant dragonflies perching on flower stems along the trail and Silver-spotted Skipper butterflies flitting between flower heads. Plans are to put a bench under the big pine tree you pass as after you first enter the meadow so you can sit and enjoy the shade, sounds, and sights at your own pace. After finishing the loop, you’ll exit as you entered and return via the same forest trail. You should easily be able to complete the entire hike in an hour or less depending upon how long you decide to dawdle along the way. There is ample parking along the Pond Circle cul-de-sac (off of Village Road) where the signage is obvious. Please note: the NCT-owned trail access from the street is a 25-foot-wide grass strip that abuts privately owned land on both sides. Please be respectful of the neighbors and stay within the entrance path. Pets should be leashed until inside the wooded area of the trail.





## **NCT Members Come Through!**

Michael Veit

We (and the birds) are grateful to our members for their generous response to our request for bluebird/tree swallow nest boxes. In total, over twenty boxes were donated! The boxes were erected with the help of several NCT board members shortly after we received them on four Pepperell conservation lands: Seminatore Meadow, Marion Stoddart Conservation Area, Heald Orchard, and Keyes-Parker Conservation Area. We are happy to report that most of the boxes were occupied within a week of being placed!



## **Gulf Brook Restoration**

Ken Hartlage and Paula Terrasi

Visitors to NCT's Day Woods parcel will notice trail widening from the entrance off Lawrence Street for several hundred yards, leading up to a cleared area overlooking the dam on Gulf Brook. This work is being done in collaboration with the Town of Pepperell to remove woody debris from the dam area to improve stream flow and water quality.

Gulf Brook is home to native Brook Trout and other species that require clean, cold water and a consistent cycling of nutrients to survive. The dam, in combination with the woody debris, significantly restricts Gulf Brook's ability to provide these conditions, thus putting cold water species at risk. The current work to remove the debris is the first step toward removing the concrete dam in its entirety – a project we hope to undertake next year.

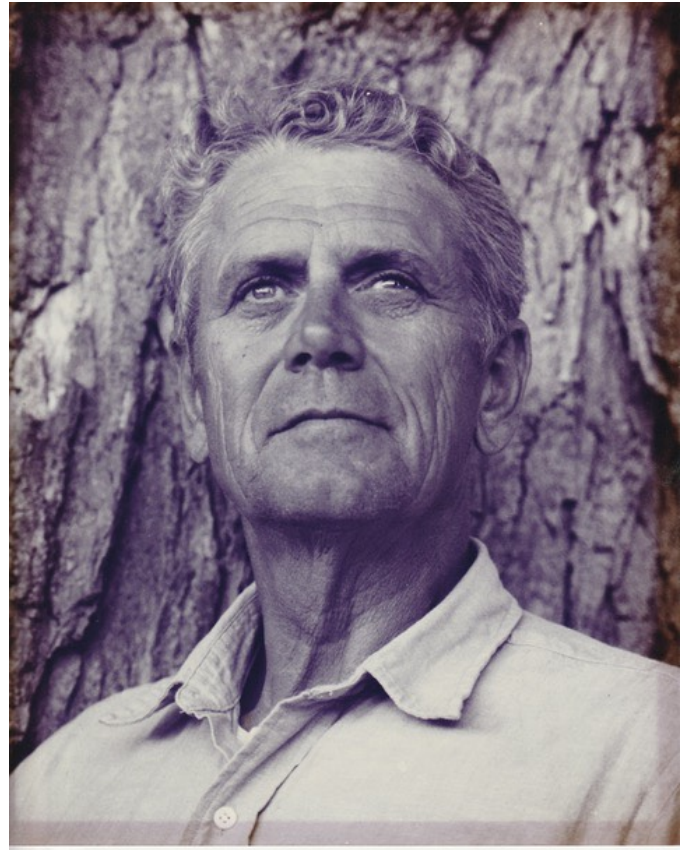




## Remembering Win Duke

Linn Clark

With regret I report the recent passing of former NCT board member, Winslow Duke on July 19th. Win had a keen interest in the environment and farming. He gave his time generously to the Town of Pepperell, serving on the Board of Appeals and various non-profits. Win is one of the last of the old timers, having served in the early years of the Trust with his good friend and founding member Erik Stromsted. Along with Erik, Dick Burnham, Roger Goscombe and me, the Friends of the Land was formed to promote more sensible development and open space. Through our collective effort, 30 acres off Friend's Way was created with a beautiful path through the woods connecting to miles of trail along the old county road. May Win rest in peace, and let his spirit for life and conservation continue on through the generations!



## Free Backyard Bird Photography Workshop!

Linn Clark

Join wildlife photographer Sue Bleiweiss for a free live online photography workshop on the art of photographing birds in your backyard and in easily accessible locations. Learn strategies and techniques for setting up your camera and which shooting and focusing modes to use for tack sharp images, and composition. Even learn how to set up a bird “photo studio” in your own backyard so you can practice your bird photography all year round.



When: Tuesday August 25, 2020 7:00 p.m. EST

This live online workshop is free but you must pre-register to reserve your spot. Please [click here](#) to register.

## Support NCT with your donations

The NCT offers the following levels of membership:

Individual - \$35

Family - \$50

Sponsor - \$100

Patron - \$250

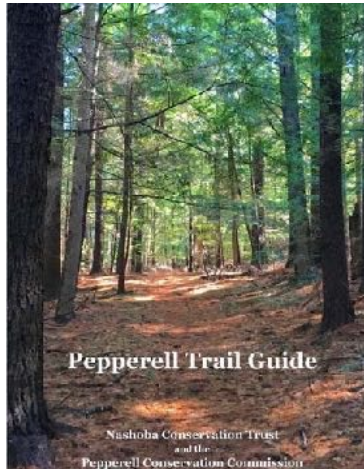
Benefactor - \$1000

All memberships include subscription to the NCT Quarterly Newsletter. Visit the website at [nashobatrust.org](http://nashobatrust.org) to donate or mail your check to:

Nashoba Conservation Trust  
PO Box 188  
Pepperell, MA 01463

## Pepperell Trail Guide

The Pepperell Trail Guide describes sixteen conservation area and almost 20 miles of trails, some of which pass through or alongside some of Pepperell's most stunning natural areas, including the Nashua and Nissitissit Rivers, Heald Pond and Gulf Brook Ravine. Visit the NCT website at [www.nashobatrust.org](http://www.nashobatrust.org) to download a copy.



### Directors

April Babbit  
Sue Bleiweiss  
Linn Clark  
Mark Camp  
Rob Rand  
Russ Schott  
Siri Stromsted  
Michael Veit

### NCT Board of Directors

President: Ken Hartlage  
Vice President: Paula Terrasi  
Secretary: Cindy Kuhn  
Treasurer: Patty Franklin

## Upcoming Events

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, planned NCT events are on hold until further notice

## Volunteers

Volunteers are always needed and welcomed for all the activities that NCT participates in. If you would like to become involved, please contact Pat Peavey 508-320-2492.



## NCT Gear

Our new website makes it easier than ever to order NCT tshirts and window decals. Visit the NCT website at [nashobatrust.org](http://nashobatrust.org) and get an NCT tshirt or window decal delivered right to your mailbox!

