



THE Spruce

SPRING 2010 NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 2276 ▪ Huntington Station ▪ Shelton, Connecticut 06484



Annual Meeting

**Wed. May 19, 2010
7 PM**

**Plumb Memorial Library
65 Wooster St., Shelton**

The Shelton Land Conservation Trust is excited to announce our guest Speakers for the 2010 Annual Meeting. Fred and Stacia Monahan from Stone Gardens Farm in Shelton will be giving a presentation on their farming operation. Anyone interested in farming, locally grown foods, or who would like to get some tips that may help in their own garden is urged to attend. Stone Gardens Farm is a family operated farm and stand where you can purchase Connecticut farm grown products it is located at 83 Sawmill City Road, Shelton, CT. The stand is open each day from May to Thanksgiving. Stand hours are 10am to 6pm. For more info on all the farm has to offer please visit their website:

<http://www.stonegardensfarm.com/>

SLCT History: One Person's Story of How Conservation Came to Shelton

SLCT Board Member Lise Olsen and her husband moved from Stratford to Shelton's Long Hill section in 1965. Lise recalls the joke back then when giving directions to her Stratford friends, "go up Long Hill Ave and take a left when you see a cow." At that point Lise mentions that her and her family and friends talked about the poor cows and how homes might likely be built on their pastures. While recognizing the concern for farms and cows, Lise herself was busy with a new house and four children. A few years passed but Lise's conservation minded thoughts were still with her.



In 1968, ready to make a difference and try to help preserve the surrounding fields, Lise called City Hall and asked to be connected with the conservation commission. The answer was "We do not have any because Shelton has so much land, and the water company is preserving a lot of land." This did not stop Lise; she knew of Doc Gunther in Stratford, and knew he was very much into land conservation. Lise recalls "Doc, now a senator, still had time for long telephone conversations and was very interested in helping me get the conservation movement started in Shelton."

The wise advice from Doc was to go to a meeting of the Woman's Voters and the PTA, arranging for him to speak at future meetings. Doc's plan was to show slides from the Far Mill River and speak about the importance of conservation. Lise mentioned something that still puts a smile on her face. It was when someone at the Woman's Voters meeting said, "He is not going to come, he is a senator!" But the senator came. And the Long Hill PTA was excited to have him come as well.



Land Trust History con't...

Senator Gunther went to the Woman's Voters meeting in February 1969 and so did about 30 to 40 other people. He showed slides of the Far Mill River in Stratford, his pet program, and made sure that all understood how important conservation was. Some were skeptical Lise recalls. "I do remember Mrs. Niecewicz expressed how worried she was that Shelton would be a sleep town with no industry to support taxes."

The PTA meeting was filled with people interested in what the Senator had to say. Doc gave the same presentation and was assisted by Lise's husband Frits, again making more people aware of the importance of conservation.

Doc received a standing ovation, the community was charged.

"What do we do now?", Lise asked.

"This is the beginning of conservation in Shelton!" Doc said to Lise. "Do you see those three men over there? They are too old to have kids at this school and they were at the other meeting, so they must be interested." He then said to Lise, "I will go over with you to talk to them if you are interested in going further." Lise remembers looking at her husband who had followed what she was doing but did not think much would ever come of her efforts. "Frits said he would take over so I could do what I wanted, which was go home to the four kids."

That night Doc and Frits spoke with the some of the remaining folks who included Frank Kelly, Bill Yolman, and Bob Stockmall which ultimately led to the formation of the City's First Conservation Commission.

The momentum created by this new awareness soon led to the formation of the Shelton Land Conservation Trust which sprang up from the Conservation Commission.

One can only ask where our community would be today if it were not for these folks who realized that the landscape was not going to stay the same forever. They all truly made an impact on our community for all to enjoy. SLCT thanks Lise for sharing her story.



Shelton Wildlife: With the recent sightings on Bobcat in town we would like to present the following info from the CT DEP

Identification: The bobcat is a stout-bodied, medium-sized feline, with a short, "bobbed" tail (six to six-and-a-half inches).

Bobcats are about twice the size of their distant relative, the housecat, and the tracks of a young bobcat can easily be confused with those left by a roaming housecat. Adult housecat prints, however, are much smaller than adult bobcat prints. Bobcat tracks have an overall round appearance with four round toe pads in both front and rear prints.

Range: The bobcat's range has historically extended throughout the lower 48 United States into southern Canada and south to central Mexico. This range has remained largely intact due to the species' adaptability to various habitats and human pressures. Bobcats are also no longer found in those portions of the Midwestern states where intense agriculture has decreased suitable habitat. Currently, limited

populations exist throughout Connecticut, with the heaviest concentrations occurring in the northwestern corner. Territorial and home ranges in the Northeast vary from eight to 20 square miles in size.

Reproduction: Bobcats are polygamous (have more than one mate) and do not form lasting pair bonds. They breed between January and May. Dens are located in caves, rock crevices, hollow logs and trees, or beneath windfall.

Interesting Facts: Bobcats are most active just after dusk and before dawn. They are secretive, solitary and seldom observed, tending to hunt and travel in areas of thick cover.

Management of Nuisances: Compared to many wildlife species, bobcats rarely cause conflicts with human activities. Infrequently, they kill livestock, especially fowl, and attack domestic cats. Problems caused by bobcats are too infrequent to justify efforts to reduce populations. Conflicts should be addressed on an individual basis and can often be remedied by preventative methods such as fencing. Bobcat attacks on people are virtually unknown. They are not a significant vector of disease and rarely contract the mid-Atlantic strain of rabies.



Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources
fw.ky.gov

Shelton Trails Volunteers Hosts Hike on LT Property

One sunny Sunday afternoon last November, more than 30 people and eight or so dogs hiked the Tahmore Loop Trail on the SLCT's property overlooking the Housatonic River. Bill Dyer and Terrance Gallagher of the Shelton Trails Committee organized and prepared the trail for this event. The Liddels are the SLCT monitors for this trail, and live right next door!

The trail is a nice figure 8 so you can do the whole loop, or decide to cut it short on the Red Trail if you only want to do half. The trail is marked with a blue blaze with a yellow dot. After a short while, everyone met up on the Paugussett Trail (blazed solid blue) and walked south to the overlook of the Housatonic River. From this exciting vantage point, you're able to see to downtown Shelton, Indian Well State Park, Osborndale State Park in Derby and The Maples.

Everyone enjoyed the views of the Housatonic River. The view at the overlook would most likely be improved if a few trees were removed, but when the leaves have fallen you can see quite a bit. The hikers then worked their way back onto the Paugussett Trail from the overlook to the Red Trail so they could complete the figure 8. They then looped back to the Tahmore Loop and back toward the trailhead in case anyone had to leave. Thankfully, everyone was having a good time and decided to keep going!

The group crossed a small ravine over a nice bridge built by the Scouts. Next, they reached an old field habitat and looped back along some cow pastures. The kids had fun calling out to the cows. Both young and old alike had a terrific day!



Getting to know our parcels: LT16: The Thiele parcel

In 1994 the Thiele's gave this parcel to the Trust. Located Off Longhill Ave. overlooking Old Coram Rd. this 3.28 acre parcel fronts Long Hill Avenue and is boarded by a couple acres of city open space adding to the green space in this area. The parcel slopes to the east and is comprised of woodlands with some wetlands and unique rock outcroppings as well as the home to various wildlife. Margaret Francesconi is the land monitor for this parcel, and she reports that the parcel is very quiet, because there is no real access to it. It has a stream in the middle, and on each side are big hills.



Nicholdale House Update:

Unfortunately, we were unable to come up with the funds and acquire the Nicholdale house before it was sold. The day we set up a meeting with the Mayor to see if the city could help fund the purchase, we noticed the for sale sign was down. After a few calls we learned that the new owner was closing that week. Well you can't say we did not try. We wish the best to our new neighbors and hope they enjoy being surrounded by Land Trust Property.



Shelton Land Conservation Trust, Inc.

P.O. Box 2276 • Huntington Station • Shelton, Connecticut 06484

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2010 General Meetings:

May 19@7pm Plumb Memorial (Annual)

June 9

August (picnic TBA)

September 8

and November 10

Additional meetings to be announced. All general meetings will take place at the Shelton Community Center @ 7pm.

To be better informed about Land Trust Activities, and local conservation issues, why not join the Trust's Email Alert list. To be added, simply send an email to slctjoew@sbcglobal.net

