



ASPETUCK LAND TRUST'S HASKINS LECTURE SERIES

Black Bears, Bobcats and other large mammals in CT: When, Where, How Many, Why Now?

Special Guest Speaker: Dr. Tracy Rittenhouse, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, UCONN

Black bears have become an unmistakable presence in Connecticut. As their population has grown, these adaptable omnivores have expanded their range to include both rural and suburban areas of the state, bringing them into close proximity with people. Black bears' increasingly conspicuous presence has raised many questions about their population. Bobcats and other large mammals have also been increasingly seen in our state. Dr. Rittenhouse studies where wild animals live and how they travel through habitats. She will talk about her 4-year research project studying Connecticut's black bear population.



*UCONN Professor
Tracy Rittenhouse*

WHEN: NOVEMBER 14, 7:30 PM. DOORS OPEN AT 7 PM

WHERE: UNITARIAN CHURCH, 10 LYONS PLAINS ROAD, WESTPORT

Free to all Aspetuck Land Trust Members. All others \$5 donation. First time members who join at the door at the \$50 level will receive a Aspetuck Land Trust hat. If you are a current member and don't have a hat you can pick one up at the door. Refreshments will be provided.

RSVP to: administration@aspetucklandtrust.org

The Haskins Lecture Series honors noted scientists Caryl and Edna Haskins who bequeathed their Westport estate on Green Acre Lane to Aspetuck Land Trust in 2002 creating a 16-acre nature preserve that bears their name.



THE ANIMALS IN YOUR BACKYARD

by Sherri Daley

In the night, a tiny noise. Rustling paper, maybe, or the plastic rattling of something near your bedroom window. What's out there? A raccoon whose little eyes glow in the moonlight? Or something bigger, with paws the size of Volkswagen hubcaps – with claws. A bear. A 300-pound bear looking for something to eat. In your yard. Where your dog goes out to do his business. Unsettling thought. Who can go back to sleep?

“We don’t need to be afraid of the bears here,” says Dr. Tracy Rittenhouse, associate professor at the University of Connecticut in the Department of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources. “They’re black bears.” Rittenhouse has been studying bear behavior, habits, and interaction with us humans since 2011 when she joined the faculty at UConn. At a local outdoor restaurant recently, she described what crossing paths with a bear on a hiking trail might be like. “Black bears are bluffers.” She smiled at that.

“If they charge you, you stand your ground, and they’re not likely to bite you. Your heart might stop, but they won’t make contact.” She shook her head. “Grizzlies, not so much, but we don’t have grizzlies around here.”

The relationship between wildlife and humans in our shared environment is an important one to understand. It’s a co-existence of need and tolerance. While most of us understand why we need bees and butterflies and garden snakes, the social-ecological necessity of a growing bear population is less obvious. For Rittenhouse, the fact that bears are majestic creatures is enough, but as members of the forest, they are “seed dispersers.” To be clear, says Rittenhouse, “bears primarily eat berries, grasses, roots, and insects, so they carry seeds and leave them in their scat.”

Although neither of her parents is a scientist (Her mom worked in occupational therapy and her dad was a mechanical engineer), the family took road trips to national parks and these experiences stuck with her. Rittenhouse now looks at the natural world with the trained eye of a scientist. “I didn’t want to look at things through a microscope.” So she earned an undergraduate degree in wildlife ecology at the University of Wisconsin, and then



Professor Tracy Rittenhouse with a black bear tranquilized by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and fitted with a GPS collar as part of Professor Rittenhouse's research.

an M.S. and a Ph.D. in biological sciences at the University of Missouri.

As a graduate student, she studied how timber harvests affect amphibian populations. She put radio transmitters on frogs and followed adult frogs migrating through clearcuts. Today, at UConn, she heads up a research program that studies the habitat requirements of many different wildlife species and what causes their populations to increase or decrease. She's interested in how wildlife define "home."



Bobcat photographed on Aspetuck Land Trust Property

She attributes her love of wildlife to watching probably too many hours of the Discovery Channel, and it looks like her 6-year-old son, Leland, is following in her footsteps, able to rattle off his favorite episodes of Wild Kratts, an animated show about two brothers who encounter wild animals in their habitats around the globe. Although she's fascinated by the tanks in Mom's outdoor mesocosm facility, her daughter, Aubrey, at 10, says she likes to bake, and UConn doesn't have classes in baking.

Rittenhouse met her husband, Chadwick Rittenhouse, when they were both undergrads majoring in wildlife ecology at the University of Wisconsin. He also works in the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment at UConn.

"Wildlife ecology is really about interaction," says Rittenhouse. "One animal interacts with another animal. Predators and prey interact. Populations interact with their environment. That's ecology. It's not environmentalism, but once you learn about these interactions, you gain an appreciation. And when you love these interactions, you want your children to experience wild animals in the wild."

Her sights are set on her next animal to study: the bobcat, those beautiful, tawny, elusive cats, rarely seen but increasing in number as Connecticut's forests recover from the agricultural efforts of the late 1800s.

She's worried, though, about turtles.

"You can find turtles in Connecticut, so you think the species is fine," she says, "but turtles live a long time. The turtles we are seeing are all adults. There's not been enough research done on their numbers. We need to know how many juveniles there are to know about their future."

The turtle, the bear, the bobcat: which is deserving of a robust future? We need to address the mechanisms that influence all wildlife – because these affect our planet – and ultimately, they affect us.

MONITORING LOCAL FAUNA

*by Jackson Hemphill
Fairfield Ludlowe High School student*

This summer a series of trail cameras were placed throughout Aspetuck Land Trust's preserves with the goal of monitoring the populations of local animal species. After only a few months of activity, we have already documented 5 major species we suspected to reside within the preserves (white tailed deer, coyote, red fox, raccoon, and turkey). We were also pleased to discover that 3 less common species have made ALT's preserves their home (bobcat, black bear, and American mink). The documentation of these species on the preserves will not only give ALT quantifiable evidence to monitor animal populations on the preserves but will also be essential in managing the preserves to support these species. Thank you to Celia Campbell-Mohn for making these cameras possible and Trout Brook Valley Ranger Jim Wood and Steve and Sharon Canale for their assistance.

A black bear photographed in Aspetuck Land Trust's 1,009-acre Trout Brook Valley Conservation Area





*Aspetuck Land Trust's 1,009-acre Trout Brook Valley Conservation Area and surrounding state lands are part of the Green Corridor.
Photo credit, Brian Russell*

THE GREEN CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

Aspetuck Land Trust is developing a plan to create a 17,000-acre Green Corridor to protect the last large undeveloped open spaces in our towns before they are developed and gone forever.

The Green Corridor will extend through Fairfield, Westport, Weston, Easton, Wilton and Redding and includes lands that have been identified as having high conservation value, important to the ecological health and resiliency of our region. Our initial efforts will focus on two project areas in Weston/Wilton and Fairfield.

The Green Corridor was presented to Aspetuck Land Trust members at the land trust's annual meeting on June 21. Aspetuck Land Trust's Board of Directors formally passed a vision for the Green Corridor on July 10, and formed a Green Corridor Task Force to advance this effort.

Green Corridor Vision:

"To create a healthier community by establishing a Green Corridor that connects and engages our communities and safeguards our land, wildlife and water resources for future generations."

The Green Corridor Initiative will have two major components:

1. Conserving and preserving undeveloped strategically located land parcels in the six town region by either purchasing them or receiving them as donations.
2. Educating and motivating landowners, both large and small, to employ conservation and preservation best practices for improving the ecological health of their properties to extend the overall benefits and beauty of the Green Corridor.

Why is it important to incorporate native plants into your home landscape?

It's important for homeowners to plant native plants like oak and milkweed because they play an important role in our ecosystem's food web. For example, just one oak tree can support between 300 and 350 different types of caterpillars! The corollary to this is that nonnative trees and shrubs, frequently planted as part of "normal" landscaping, support virtually no caterpillars, because native insects don't use nonnative plants as host plants. So, the more nonnatives we have in the landscape the less insects we have. This is important because insects like caterpillars are responsible for transferring most of the primary productivity from plants to the rest of the terrestrial food web. Birds, reptiles, amphibians, spiders, and rodents all rely on caterpillars as a food source. If you don't have plants that support insects, you don't have anything else in the food web either. Biodiversity is our life support system. Everything is connected. At Aspetuck Land Trust, we want homeowners to think of themselves as landowners who can steward their property in ways that support the ecosystem.

Everyone can make a difference, whether it's donating land or taking care of it in a more sustainable way. Visit "What Homeowners Can Do" in the "Caring for Land" section of our website to learn more about how you can make a difference in your own yard.

To learn more, please contact David Brant at 203-331-1906 or dbrant@aspetucklandtrust.org



GREEN CORRIDOR



The following criteria were used to determine the location of the Green Corridor:

1. Maintain and preserve habitats along important riparian corridors, such as the Mill River, Sasco Brook, and Saugatuck River (Mainstem, North Branch, and West Branch).
2. Link existing Aspetuck Land Trust properties and other preserves.
3. Link habitats of known rare flora and fauna and other species of conservation concern.
4. Avoid and mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation.
5. Protect properties with important farmland soils.

Native plants being installed in a residential landscape, in this case, the home of Aspetuck Land Trust's Executive Director, David Brant.

The Haskins Preserve and the Green Corridor Initiative

By Sherri Daley

If Mother Nature had her way, we wouldn't need green corridors. Tigers would roam all of Asia, beavers would swim woodland streams till they found the best place for a home, and tree frogs would hop around to their tiny hearts' content.

But we humans cut down trees and paved over meadows. We criss-crossed savannahs with highways and dammed up rivers and erected fences to stake claim to land we decided was ours. This wreaked havoc on the eco-system, and it took a while before we realized what we'd done.

Now, however, we're trying to make amends. Cities all over the world are creating greenways for wildlife to migrate, nest, and feed -- pathways for bees and butterflies to do their pollinating, for birds and bears and squirrels to disperse seeds. Aspetuck Land Trust has rolled up our collective sleeves to help.

Already 1,800 acres rich in protected open space, Aspetuck Land Trust has a 10-year plan to create a 17,000-acre Green Corridor. The plan was presented to Aspetuck Land Trust members on June 21, and it received enthusiastic support. The plan was officially adopted July 10, 2018, by the board of directors. The plan is two-fold:

- To acquire and preserve strategically located parcels of land in a six-town region
- To educate and motivate landowners to employ sustainable landscaping practices

"Aspetuck Land Trust members want us to move forward with the Green Corridor vision," says Executive Director David Brant. "We must be proactive in protecting the last remaining open spaces in our towns before they are developed and gone forever. And if we can encourage more homeowners to take care of their yards in more sustainable ways by planting native plants or transitioning to organic lawn care, our efforts will add up to a big win for the environment. Everyone can make a positive difference in our environment."

Aspetuck Land Trust encompasses four Fairfield County towns: Weston, Easton, Fairfield, and Westport. Earlier this year, Aspetuck Land Trust initiated collaboration with the Wilton Land Conservation Trust to save 350 acres of unprotected forest within the Green Corridor

that will ensure our surroundings on the Weston/Wilton border will forever be rich with local flora and fauna.

The most recent property acquisition in the Green Corridor effort is the purchase of the 38-acre Belknap property adjoining Aspetuck Land Trust's Honey Hill Preserve in Weston. Ideally, we would join acres and acres of wildlife habitat and open space with our already existing 149 land preserves, but we're talking about populated neighborhoods here, towns with roads and highways, shops, grocery stores, and, most importantly, houses with private yards and gardens.

Aspetuck Land Trust is working to acquire more parcels of land in the original four towns of Westport, Weston, Easton, and Fairfield and will collaborate with other land trusts in Wilton and Redding through which the Green Corridor passes.

We love our shade trees and wildflowers, goldfinches and Monarch butterflies. Nobody wants to see them go away, so the ambition of the Aspetuck Land Trust's Green Corridor Initiative is that homeowners adjoining or close to existing preserves will adopt sustainable landscaping practices and become part of the vision. We need to help them do that, and that is the plan for the Caryl and Edna Haskins Preserve in Westport. It will become a resource



Native plants incorporated into a suburban yard. Courtesy: Jay Petrow, Petrow Gardens Landscape Design, Westport.



*Caryl and Edna Haskins Preserve on Green Acre Lane in Westport.
Photo credit, Elizabeth Gentile*

for homeowners to learn how to make their yards and gardens ecologically sound.

“We want to inspire local homeowners to re-create environmentally friendly landscapes in their own yards,” says Aspetuck Land Trust member and volunteer Eva Grundy. “We can show them how to do that easily and affordably.” Grundy, along with Nancy Saipe and Mary Hogue, is a member of the committee that is organizing activities at the Caryl and Edna Haskins Preserve in Westport to school landowners about sustainable landscaping practices – everything from composting to organic weed-killers to understanding the need for native planting.”

The concept of urban gardens is nothing new. In 1898, in England, Sir Ebenezer Howard designed what he called “garden cities”, towns surrounded by “greenbelts” of trees and agriculture. Decades earlier, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead was charming America with urban parks and railway greenery in, among other places, Louisville, Ky.; Detroit (Belle Isle); Trenton, N.J.; Boston, Niagara Falls, New York City’s Central Park, and the landscape surrounding the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

Olmstead was born in Hartford; he would be excited to see what Aspetuck Land Trust is doing in his home state.

The Haskins Preserve and Learning Garden:

a model of native, sustainable landscaping

By Sherri Daley

Very little remains on the land in Westport where Caryl and Edna Haskins lived, where they entertained, discussed politics and philosophy with their friends, raised flowers, and ate breakfasts. There’s an occasional stone cairn, a semi-circle of a brick wall, and a fine black gate at the entrance on Green Acre Lane. The few paths are shaded by rare ornamental trees, shards of sunlight dance across a shallow pond, and in the spring, wildflowers poke up out of the moss.

For now, the land is almost wild. The house has been torn down, as well as the greenhouse and outbuildings. The Haskinses have been gone for decades. They left their estate to the Aspetuck Land Trust -- and to all of us – to be a nature preserve.

The 16 acres are a magical pocket of almost wilderness hidden in a quiet neighborhood where butterflies and bees can do their pollinating and birds and squirrels carry and plant seeds. That would seem like quite enough, but the Land Trust has big plans for Caryl and Edna’s backyard. It will serve as a gathering place and

a learning center to generate enthusiasm for the importance of open space. There'll be gardens of native plants, watering holes for wildlife and birds, blackberry bushes, and wetland plantings. In the shade of mature ginkgo and American elms, the moss will creep across the roots and rocks and surround bright orange chanterelles.

More than just being beautiful, the plan is for the Haskins Preserve to be the vanguard for generating interest and support for the Land Trust's Green Corridor Initiative. "The poster child, so to speak," said Bill Kraekel, a member of the Aspetuck Land Trust's Board of Directors. In addition to welcoming hikers, mushroom-lovers, and bird-watchers, the Haskins Preserve will offer family activities, informative talks, and demonstrations to help local homeowners become part of the ongoing effort to keep our little part of the world healthy and green. It will be a hub of energy and a valuable resource for homeowners and garden enthusiasts.

"It will be a teaching garden. We have an educational mission here," says Eva Grundy. Grundy, along with Nancy Saipe and Mary Hogue, makes up the Learning Gardens committee. "The purpose is that visitors will walk away with ideas for their own yards, ecologically sustainable landscape practices, organic lawn care, native pollinator plants, moss gardens, composting. We'll have hands-on classes where people can learn how ecological and sustainable landscaping can be easily replicated in their own yards."

Bring the kids. Mother Nature is always family-friendly, and so there will be activities for children of all ages at the Haskins Preserve. There will be workshops where kids can learn about animal habitats, the way plants reseed themselves, butterflies, snakes, spiders, and bugs. Kids will learn what part they themselves play in the cosmic interplay of our environment.

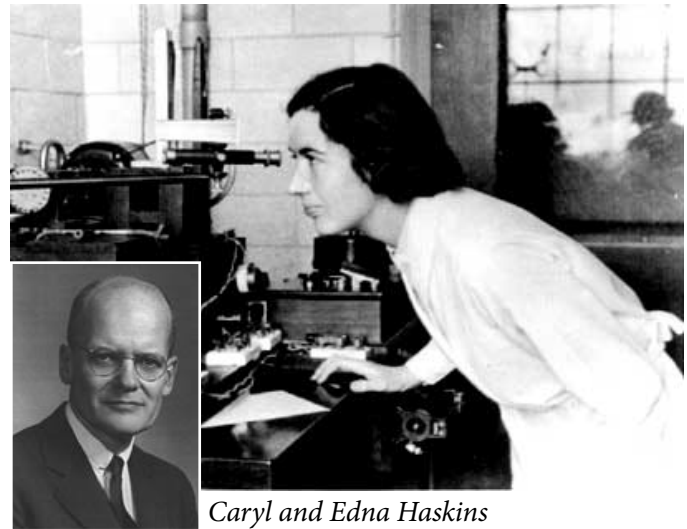
Native plants can be used to create a more natural look. Courtesy: Jay Petrow, Petrow Gardens Landscape Design, Westport.



ALT members are encouraged to get involved in the clearing, planting, and hauling away – as well as the wandering, dreaming, and smelling the flowers.

Caryl and Edna Haskins: the people behind the plan

The Haskinses were not the idle rich of Great Gatsby ilk. They were passionate scientists and war-time consultants, world travelers, government advisors, and lecturers. After decades of symbiotic careers, they gave back, donating their time, knowledge, and money to many organizations: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Audubon Society, the Carnegie Institution



Caryl and Edna Haskins

of Washington, and the National Institute of Deafness. They amassed a remarkable list of achievements while living lives rich in experiences all over the world.

Caryl was born in 1908 in Schenectady, New York. When he was only three, his father died of a mysterious virus. Alone, his mother raised a son who showed an early interest in science. Bugs, particularly. Young Caryl was fascinated by insects, an interest that continued throughout high school and on to Yale, where he completed his undergraduate study. He published his first academic paper when he was only 18, the first in a long career of scientific writing.

After earning his Ph.D. from Harvard, he worked in the research lab at General Electric, but equipped his own garage to study war-time radiation, biophysics, and microbiology. He was joined by Franklin Cooper, a fellow G.E. scientist, and together, they continued their research and studies and experimentation in Caryl's garage -- a scientist's idea of a garage band.

Edna, born and raised in England, came to the United States for a two-year fellowship to study chemistry at Radcliffe. A woman scientist was quite unconventional for that time, and she attracted Caryl's attention at a party in 1935. For the next five years they carried on a long-distance relationship while Edna worked in the research department of London's war efforts and Caryl hunted down ants in Africa and Australia.

Haskins and Cooper bought a small company which developed and marketed a color camera, but their activities were interrupted when the men were recruited to Washington, D.C. to work for the U.S. war effort.

Eventually, Edna left London to join Caryl in Washington, and they were married in nearby Waynesboro, Virginia, on July 12, 1940.

For the following decades, the couple were avid scientists, inventors, advisors, and pioneering entomologists. Their

research included microbiology, nutrition, genetics, speech and deafness, and social behavior. As their work gained prominence, they morphed into enthusiastic lecturers and philanthropists.

The connection between science and nature was never lost on Caryl Haskins, who wrote, "It is the gifted unorthodox individual in the laboratory or the study or the walk by the river at twilight who has always brought to us ... all the basic resources by which we live."

Dr. Caryl Haskins died in 2001 at the age of 93. Dr. Edna Haskins died in 2000 at the age of 88, but that walk by the river is as inspiring as ever. If they were still with us, it would be Caryl and Edna giving talks about pollinating insects, busy ants, and composting.



LEAVE A LEGACY

Protect the places you love by making a gift to the Aspetuck Land Trust in your estate plans. By naming Aspetuck Land Trust as a beneficiary of your will, living trust, or retirement account, you can make a visionary gift that will conserve land for generations to come.

To recognize our legacy supporters, we created the Aspetuck Land Trust **Open Space Legacy Society** to recognize people like you who have made a planned gift to Aspetuck Land Trust.

Individuals who have made a planned gift, and have let us know, will become a member of the **Open Space Legacy Society**. As a member we will plant a blueberry bush in your name and you will be invited to periodic **Open Space Legacy Society** activities. Upon receipt of your bequest to Aspetuck Land Trust we will recognize you by including your name on a permanent "Legacy of Open Space" memorial in the 1,009-acre Trout Brook Valley Preserve orchard overlooking Long Island Sound.

For more information contact David Brant at 203-331-1906, or dbrant@aspetucklandtrust.org or visit ASPETUCKLANDTRUST.ORG > HELP SAVE LAND

ASPETUCK LAND TRUST ANNUAL MEETING

Over 100 Aspetuck Land Trust members attended the Annual Meeting on June 21 at the Fairfield Museum and History Center. Members approved a slate of directors for the Class of 2022 – which consisted of Stephan Grozinger (Weston), Bill Kraekel (At- Large), Jeff Galdenzi (Fairfield), Walter Greene (Westport), and Kirby Brendsel (At-Large). Members enthusiastically

supported the organization's plan to create a 17,000-acre Green Corridor and enjoyed pizza from Skinny Pines Pizza Truck of Easton and local craft beer from Aspetuck Brew Lab.

Thank you to our generous member supporters for attending.



Annual Meeting. Photo credit, Derek Sterling



Aspetuck Land Trust member David Storrs (Southport) with board member Nancy Moon (Fairfield).

From left: Owen Harlacker (age 14, Fairfield Warde), Jackson Hemphill (age 17, Fairfield Ludlowe), Jory Teltser (age 17, Staples), all vital members of Aspetuck Land Trust's Land Management Committee.



From left: Alicia Mozian, Conservation Director-Town of Westport, and Heather Williams (Westport), Aspetuck Land Trust Board of Directors.

Plants from Native, a local native plant nursery in Fairfield were given out to attendees.





From left: Aspetuck Land Trust Executive Director David Brant, with retiring board member Raphael Hodgson and his wife Roberta (Southport), and Don Hyman, Board President (Fairfield). The Hodgson's were honored for their support of local land conservation efforts with a bench which will be placed at the Sasqua Wildflower Preserve on Westway Road in Southport across from the Pequot Library.

A note from retiring board member Raphael Hodgson of Southport:

"Since I joined the land trust 20 or so years ago, the trust has been searching and finding gems of land to preserve and now where possible to link together. I was pleased to be part of this effort and hope to stay involved. I've had wonderful friends to work with, such as Princie Falkenhagen and David Brant, who deserve special mention and have provided leadership and inspiration. Thank you for the garden bench designation opposite the Pequot Library on Westway Road."



From left: Aspetuck Land Trust member Alan Feldman with land trust stewardship manager Lou Bacchiochi.

Aspetuck Land Trust members Paul and Roberta Delano of Westport.





From left: Sean Hackett, Charlie Overton, Griffin Lundquist, Hunter Duffy and Case Videler, from Westport Staples High School, Maggie Dean and Will Neugebauer from Fairfield Ludlowe High School.

IMPROVING THE NEWMAN POSES PRESERVE IN WESTPORT

This summer Aspetuck Land Trust interns built a new stone walkway at the Newman Poses Nature Preserve on Bayberry Lane in Westport. The students, along with local companies like Gault Energy, Oliver's Nursery and Bart's Tree Service, are helping us to improve the property, which is located between #307 and #313 Bayberry Lane.

If you would like to support our efforts to beautify and improve the Newman Poses property by making a tax- deductible donation, visit ASPETUCKLANDTRUST.ORG > **CARING FOR LAND** > **NEWMAN POSES PRESERVE IMPROVEMENTS**

Aspetuck Land Trust Member Pumpkin Picking

Our annual pumpkin picking event for members is cancelled this year due to a lack of pumpkins. The spring rains prevented farmer Bob Haydu from getting in the field to plant on time so the pumpkins are too small to pick. And then there was more rain. Farming is a tough business. We will try again next year.



“WALK THE FOREST BLOCK”

On July 21, over 50 people gathered at the Belknap homestead in Weston to celebrate and hike the 38-acre Belknap property which Aspetuck Land Trust recently purchased for \$370,000. This new property expands the Honey Hill Preserve to 119-acres. The Belknap property is a key acquisition in a large-scale forest preservation effort initiated by Aspetuck Land Trust to protect 350 acres in Weston and Wilton, the ‘last frontier’ of open space in our area.

Aspetuck Land Trust purchased the 38-acre property from Barbara and David Belknap (left), with Aspetuck Land Trust board member Jacquie Littlejohn. Photo credit, Nancy Moon.



LOCAL LEGISLATORS GET OUTSIDE

On July 26, Aspetuck Land Trust hosted an Open Space Summit for lawmakers with the Connecticut Land Conservation Council at the 1,009-acre Trout Brook Valley Conservation Area to discuss the importance of state funding for open space preservation. Trout Brook Valley was purchased in 1999 by Aspetuck Land Trust with help from a \$6 million grant from the State of Connecticut. More recently, Aspetuck Land Trust received a grant of \$165,497 from the State of Connecticut's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition

Program to purchase the 38-acre Belknap property in Weston.

Legislators who attended the event were Senators Tony Hwang, Toni Boucher and George Logan. Representatives attending included Gail Lavielle, Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Adam Dunsby (also First Selectman of Easton), and Terrie Wood. Weston Selectman Stephan Grozinger also attended, as well as representatives from the office of U.S. Senator Chris Murphy and Fairfield First Selectman Mike Tetrau's office.



Community members and state legislators attended Aspetuck Land Trust's first Open Space Summit.

ECO CAMP 2018!

As part of our efforts to get more kids outside and engaged in nature, Aspetuck Land Trust held an Ecology Camp for middle school students this summer at the Caryl and Edna Haskins Preserve on Green Acre Lane in Westport. The camp is part of a continuum of outdoor activities the Land Trust has created for pre-school through college age youth beginning with the Natural Playground and Family Trail at the Leonard Schine Preserve in Westport to the Jr. Ranger Program where you can find explorer backpacks at local libraries, to our high school and college internship program.

For more information, visit **ASPETUCKLANDTRUST.ORG > NEWS > CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

Photo credit, Nancy Moon

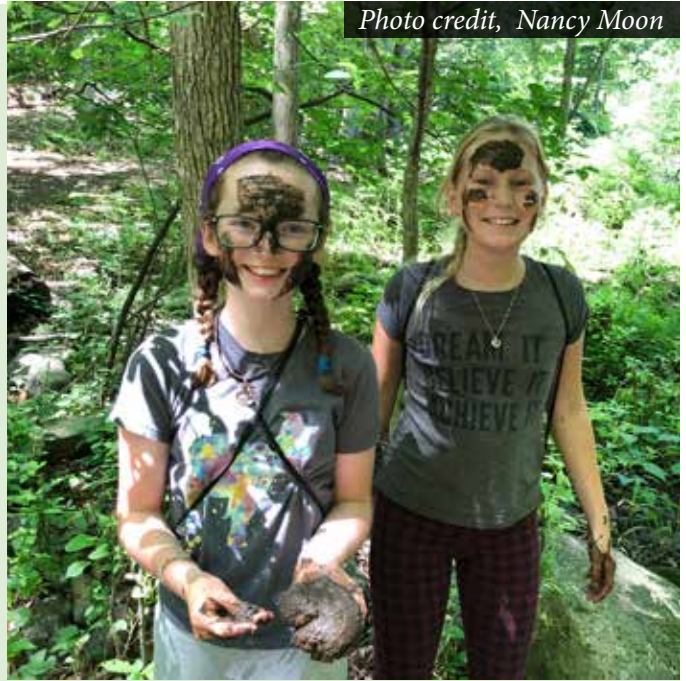


Photo credit, Ross Ogden

When you support Aspetuck Land Trust's efforts to preserve local open space you support healthier watersheds, which means we have cleaner and colder rivers and streams which make our native trout happy. Open space acts like a sponge which filters water coming into the watershed and healthy tree canopies on a river or riparian border provides cooling shade.

EDUCATIONAL HIKES

Our guided educational hikes for adults and children are a great way to get outside and enjoy nature. Learn about bees, hawks, birds, butterflies, geology and natural history, vernal pools, trees, invasive and indigenous plants, salt marshes and much more!

For more information, visit **ASPETUCKLANDTRUST.ORG > NEWS > EVENTS**



Photo credit, Stephen B. White



P.O. Box 444
Westport, CT 06881-0444



*Aspetuck Land Trust board member
Tom Johnson helps a youngster plant
a blueberry bush last fall.*

Become a Land Trust Supporter

Your tax-deductible support makes a difference in our towns. Become a proud member of Aspetuck Land Trust today by sending in your membership donation in the enclosed envelope. Or visit our website to make a donation by credit card on our secure website. You'll receive our trail map and membership decal. Spread the word. Go for a hike. Ride a bike. Support your local farmer. Be kind. Be more green.

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