

East Haddam Land Trust



Celebrating 27 Years of Conservation

Founded in 1979

Official Newsletter

Fall 2006

Miller/Pépin Featured at EHLT Fund-Raiser

Two world-renowned leaders in their fields, Gerry Miller and Jacques Pépin, donated their expertise and many hours of their time to help raise money for the East Haddam Land Trust (EHLT) at a gala event, *Autumn on the Eightmile*, on September 23. The event was held at the farm of Barbara and John Kashanski on Dolbia Hill Road. Thanks to the Kashanskis, Gerry and Jacques, many donors of food, and donations from participants, we cleared about \$11,000.



The purpose of the event was to raise money and awareness of a 115-acre parcel of land in the Eight-mile River Watershed between Devil's Hopyard State Park and The Nature Conservancy's Burnham Brook Preserve. This additional piece of land will help complete an unfragmented green corridor to protect land along the Eightmile, which has been studied for the past four years and will soon be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. The residents of East Haddam also recently voted to allocate \$47,000 from its Open Space Fund to help preserve this piece of land. The Nature Conservancy will aid in its purchase and will be the primary steward of the parcel.

Following a light breakfast in the morning, about 70 participants were divided into four groups for a mushroom foray. Headed by East Haddam's Gerry Miller, plus other mushroom experts, participants gathered whatever fungi could be found. The light rain did not deter their enthusiasm or the results! Gerry and his expert assistants then sorted and

identified the mushrooms, saving the edible ones for cooking. Gerry's assistants included Chef James Wayman, Suzanne O'Sullivan and Alyssa Detmer from The River Tavern in Chester.

Noted French chef, Jacques Pépin, who is an expert on wild mushrooms, and who led one of the mushroom foraging groups, entertained another 70 guests in the afternoon with a cooking demonstration using wild mushrooms. We were amazed at the ease with which he de-boned a whole chicken in about one minute, how he saved a pot of soup from burning

(Continued on Page 3)



Pépin demonstrates the finer points of mushroom cuisine.

EHLT: Preserving Open Space

If there's one thing that everyone in East Haddam agrees on, it's the importance of the town's rural character in our lives. For over 25 years, the East Haddam Land Trust has been working – often behind the scenes – to acquire and protect the meadows, woodlands, streams, wetlands, scenic vistas and rocky hillsides that give East Haddam its special character.



A view along the trail at Sheepskin Hollow

To achieve its goals, the EHLT depends on its members' support. Some members may help by serving on a committee, working on an event, or helping to maintain our preserves - but all should know that every membership is vital to our organization. Every dollar that is donated to the EHLT is essential to our ability to assist East Haddam property owners in preserving their land as open space and maintaining the properties we currently hold.

The Land Trust now holds about 230 acres in 12 preserves. Another 113 acres of land are held in easements. Easements allow the owners to maintain use of the land, while agreeing not to develop it.



View of beaver pond

If you are interested in learning more about options for conserving your land, or if you would like to know how you can help the East Haddam Land Trust, please contact Rob Smith, Anita Ballek, or any of the EHLT Board of Directors. 🌲

Busy as a beaver at Sheepskin Hollow

If you haven't hiked in the Sheepskin Hollow Preserve recently, we suggest you plan a visit there soon. Improvements to the trail network by the EHLT stewardship crew include a foot bridge across one of the streams there and a new loop trail that connects Woodmont Circle to other trails in the preserve.



New trails and bridge

Even more exciting, however, is the recent activity by the preserve's resident beavers. Overlooking the beaver pond from the hillside on the white trail, hikers will be immediately struck by the vast expansion of the original beaver pond. Further down the trail is a whole new area of activity, where the beaver have begun damming and flooding one of the inlet streams, creating a small, separate pond. The white trail passes within feet of this area, making it possible to get a close-up view of their activity.

If you watch quietly from a vantage point just uphill from the pond, you just might be lucky enough to see these enterprising creatures in action. 🌲

Miller/Pépin continued from Page 1.

(with great sense of humor and amusement for the audience) and his improvisations of throwing together “a little of this” and “a little of that” to create such savory results. As he cooked, he auctioned his wild mushroom concoctions to the on-lookers. He also auctioned several knives and other cooking utensils, that carry his name, and he even auctioned his cooking apron! Following the cooking demonstration, he personalized and signed the latest copy of his most recent book, *Fast Food My Way*, and he donated a portion of the proceeds to the Land Trust.

Afternoon guests were served hors d’oeuvres donated by many local businesses including Bistro by Benigno, Fabled Foods, La Vita Gustosa, On the Rocks Restaurant, Sig’s Water Street Café, Simon’s Marketplace, The Cooking Company and Village Pizza. Michele Keller, owner of Restaurant du Village, was there in person to serve his own wild mushroom soup to guests. Paul Truby representing Beltane Farms from Lebanon had goat cheeses, Chamard Vineyards from Clinton provided tasting of their finest wines, and Cato Corner Farm featured many of their artisan cow cheeses. Ashlawn farms of Lyme donated coffee. Scott’s Orchards provided an abundance of freshly picked apples and Grist Mill Market provided numerous food and non-food supplies. Flower arrangements were provided by Ballek’s Garden Center, and Eastern Rental Tent & Party

Supplies donated table linens and chairs. Keyboard and Irish recorder music was provided in the morning by Dan Ringuette, and afternoon guests were entertained by Neil Fitzpatrick on classical guitar. An original water color was donated by Beth Swider Sullivan from Stonington as a door prize.

The Land Trust is very appreciative to all of the contributors and donors. If you had the opportunity to taste the artisan cheeses or any of the wine and wonderful hors d’oeuvres, be sure to extend your compliments at these establishments when you dine or shop there.

...and thank you to all for your donations and making the day a success. 🍄

Pictures of the September fund-raising event were provided courtesy of George Greider

Lost and Found

Several items were left at the EHLT fund-raiser. If you belong to one of these items, please call Martha at 873-9187 to claim.

1. Men’s forest green rain jacket, gray stripe across back, size M, by Columbia,
2. Women’s medium dark blue quilted jacket, paisley lining, snap front
3. Blue, Raines folding umbrella, in case, sales tag attached
4. Peach colored rectangular table cloth
5. Various mushrooming baskets, 4 total 🍄



EHLT President Rob Smith, Gerry Miller, Martha McLaud Tonucci, Jacques Pépin, James Wayman, Suzanne O’Sullivan



Conservation Easements Benefit All

Conservation easements are valuable tools for land conservation. Easements allow property owners to guarantee permanent protection of their land while allowing them to continue private ownership and productive use of the land. These "development rights" can be either sold or donated, with varying tax benefits. This legally binding agreement is drawn up to satisfy the specific wishes of both the easement "seller" and the "holder," or typically a conservation organization that agrees to ensure that the terms of the easement are not violated, in perpetuity.

If you would like more information on conservation easements and other options for conserving your land, please contact EHLT President Rob Smith or another EHLT director. 🌲

New Tax Breaks for Land Conservation

One very important aspect of the East Haddam Land Trust's mission is helping landowners consider options for conserving their land. With this in mind, we would like to share with you some interesting news. Last summer, Congress passed what has been called the most dramatic tax code change for land conservation in 25 years. For the years of 2006 and 2007, the Pension Protection Act of 2006 makes land conservation financially possible for many landowners – especially moderate income farmers, ranchers and foresters – by dramatically enhancing the financial benefit they can receive from the federal tax deduction.

In addition, the Pension Protection Act allows older individuals to make a distribution from an IRA directly to a charity, and exclude that distribution from income. We encourage you to contact one of the East Haddam Land Trust directors for more information on this new law. You may also view the Pension Protection Act of 2006 online at:

<http://www.govtrack.us/data/us/bills.text/109/h/h4.pdf>



Eightmile River Protection Strongly Backed

In January 2006, over 300 citizens at a packed high school auditorium in East Haddam voted overwhelmingly to endorse a proposed management plan to protect the Eightmile River watershed and to seek designation as a national Wild and Scenic River. The vote was the

culmination of an intense effort by the Eightmile River Study Committee, local conservation organizations and concerned citizens to demonstrate public support for proactive watershed management in the three towns that fall within the watershed's borders: East Haddam, Lyme and Salem.

East Haddam resident and Study Committee member Sue Merrow said she was gratified by the level of public support shown for the Eightmile management plan. "It was one of the larger town meetings in recent memory, and when Senator Chris Dodd showed up to vote in support of the plan I knew we'd done a good job of getting the word out!"

The Eightmile project now enters the legislative arena in Washington for Congressional action. The designation resulting from this action would provide financial and personnel resources necessary to implement the river management plan. In the months ahead, citizens will have another opportunity to show their support of Eightmile protection to their representatives in Washington. For additional updates, visit the Eightmile River website (www.eightmileriver.org) or contact Eightmile River Study Coordinator Damon Heame at 860-345-8700. 🌲

EHLT 2007 Calendar Now Available

The EHLT's 2007 calendars have been mailed to current members and are once again available for free, thanks to the following sponsoring businesses: CEA Associates, Dutch Oil Co, Ballek's Garden Center, Bistro by Benigno, Fox Hopyard, Ray of Light Farm, Fox Ledge Tack Shop, Goodspeed Musicals, and the Chestelm Health and Rehab Center.

Our special thanks also go out to the Assante family, Moodus Sportsman's Club, and for all the contributions made to the monthly listings of birthdays and other special dates.

Each calendar is chock-full of interesting nature notes, drawings, maps of Land Trust preserves, and other useful information.

Anyone interested in sponsoring a month in the 2008 calendar, contributing artwork or photos, or assisting in the calendar's production, printing or distribution may contact Martha McLaud Tonucci at 873-9187 or other Land Trust director. 🌲

2006

The Year of the Monarch Butterfly



Photo courtesy Kevin Staehley

You may have noticed that this fall there have been a huge number of monarch butterflies... the highest number in about 10 years. Two years ago, the numbers were dismally low. Data in Connecticut are documented by volunteer researchers who tag monarch butterflies with a small pinky nail-sized “postage stamp” on the underside of the wing. It contains the identification of the tagger, date and place of tagging, a phone number and website to report the insect. Members of the Connecticut Butterfly Association purchased 800 tags this past fall. Richard Chyinski of Salem tagged about 500 of the butterflies himself.

The Monarch Butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*, is easily recognizable to most people. The deep orange wings are crossed with black veins, and white spots dot the wing margins. The females have darker veins on their wings, and the males have a distinctive black spot on each hind wing. Monarchs have nearly circumglobal distribution. There are two sub-populations in the United States, one west of the Rocky Mountains and the other east of the Rockies; it is thought that there may also be a separate Florida sub-population.

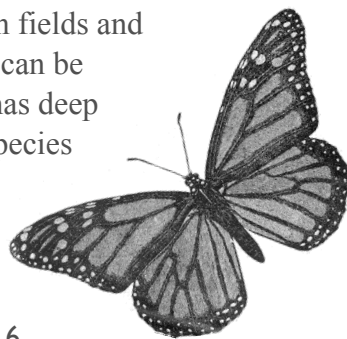
Monarchs are especially well known for their lengthy migrations - the time of their migrational journeys far exceeds the life-span of the adults! Here in Connecticut, migrations are at their peak August through October. The eastern sub-population of adult monarchs, including those from Canada, have routes that converge in Texas, and then to the mountains of El Rosario northwest of

Mexico City. In this area there are ten known roosting sites, each containing about 10 million butterflies. Butterflies roost in indigenous fir trees of Mexico's high altitude forests. Several of Chyinski's Monarchs have been recovered from this area.

Migration back north begins early in spring. They arrive along the Gulf coast in March and April, lay eggs on southern milkweeds and die. The offspring continue the migration north, arriving in Connecticut in June and July. These butterflies repeat the same process, laying eggs on milkweed, then dying. The extremely tiny eggs, mere specks, can be found on milkweed leaves. From the egg, a miniature larva - the caterpillar - becomes an eating machine and grows rapidly. It soon spins itself into a chrysalis (pupa) form, hanging from a sturdy twig until the adult butterfly emerges from the chrysalis. By late summer, migration south begins again. This generation does not reproduce until it leaves the over-wintering location. It is this generation's children and great-grandchildren that return to Connecticut in early summer!

Several factors influence population numbers. Normal fluctuations occur within nearly all species of animals, except exponentially growing human populations, depending on food supply and other environmental factors. Herbicides and pesticides are a major threat to any butterfly population. Other major problems, especially on coastal California, are unregulated logging operations and expanding housing developments. In addition, well-meaning but disastrous human presence by ecotourism poses a major threat.

Butterflies, including monarchs, will be attracted to most brightly colored flowers like zinnia, cosmos, marigolds, and buddleia. They will lay eggs, however, only on milkweed. The common milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*, is found in fields and along roadsides. Although it can be planted in home gardens, it has deep roots that spread widely. A species highly recommended is *A. tuberosa*, the bright orange-flowered butterfly



milkweed. Do NOT try to dig it from the wild! Seeds can be easily propagated, or plants are readily available at garden centers. Another pink/purple-flowered species is *A. incarnata*. It has a white variety called "Ice ballet" that is another good garden choice.

There are two major Monarch tagging weekends in Connecticut. One at Hammonasset is held the 3rd week in September, and one at Lighthouse Point during the 4th week. For more information, contact the Connecticut Butterfly Association, PO Box 9004, New Haven, CT 06532. Dues are \$15 per year, and field trips to study butterflies are held April through September. More information on tagging is available at www.monarchwatch.org. 🌿

-Martha McLaud Tonucci, EHLT Director

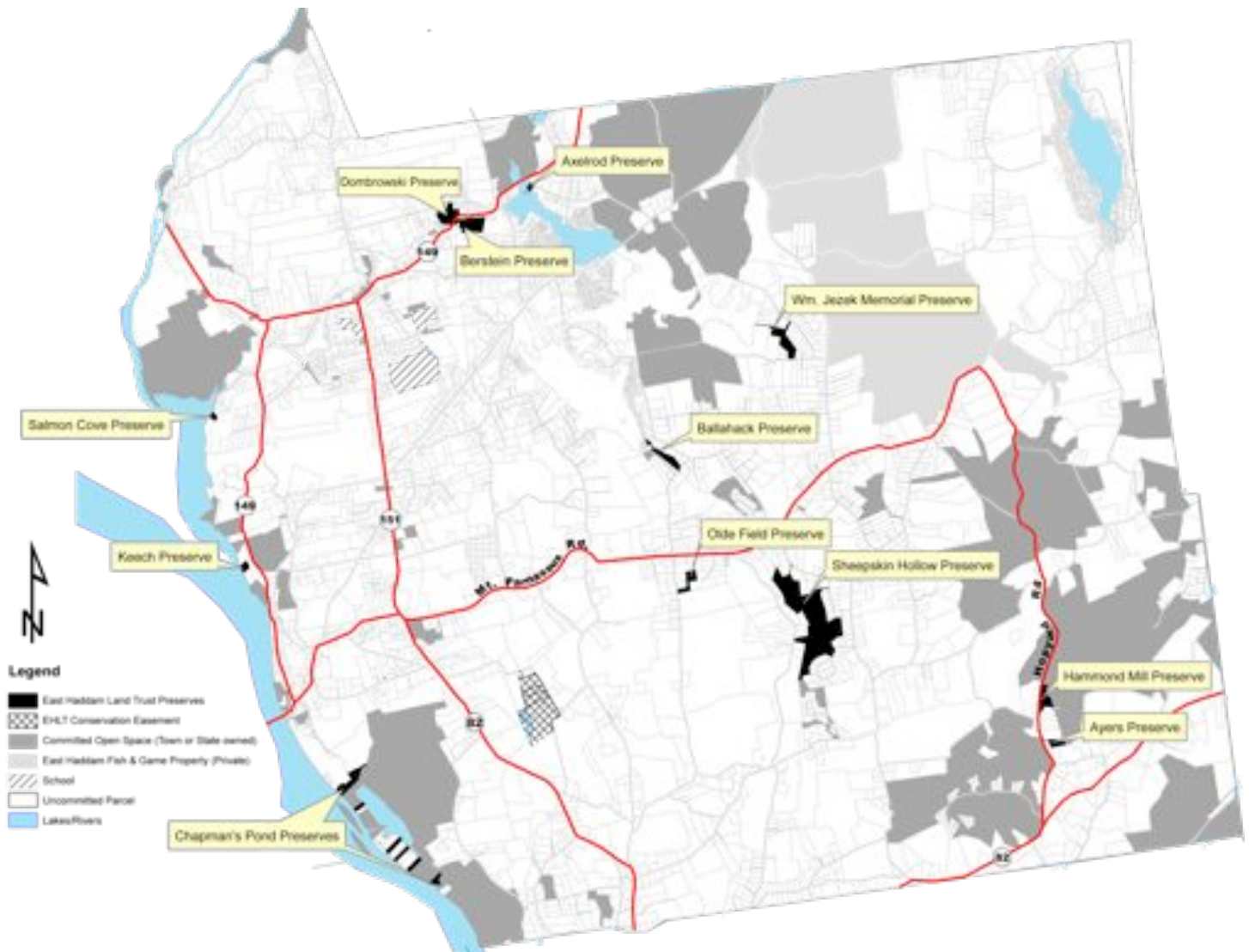
Information for this article provided by Richard Cyninski and Carol Lemmon, CT Butterfly Association

A new look for the EHLT Newsletter

Photographs courtesy of Hale-Ray art class and a new, professional look will enhance upcoming EHLT newsletters. In this issue, the Monarch butterfly photo is the work of Hale-Ray ninth grader, Kevin Staehley. In addition, in future newsletters, you will notice small advertisements from some of the local businesses in the Moodus, East Haddam area. Business endorsements will be like a one-year EHLT membership and will help to underwrite the cost of printing and mailing newsletters and special notices. If you have a business and would like to contribute, please call Martha at 873-9187. 🌿

**YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES
DECEMBER 2006.
PLEASE RENEW TODAY!**

East Haddam Open Space and EHLT Preserves



Upcoming EHLT Events!

EHLT Annual Meeting

Friday, January 19, 2007, at 7PM

Town Grange Hall, Town Street

Join us for the annual meeting of the EHLT membership at the Town Grange Hall. This year's guest speaker will be Mr. Paul Rego, a wildlife biologist with the Department of Environmental Protection. His presentation will be on black bears. The influx of black bears into Connecticut and occasionally East Haddam often makes the news. Mr. Rego specializes in fur bearing mammals with a large percentage of his time being devoted to managing our bear populations, so the talk will be very informative. Come learn with us about black bears in Connecticut. Presentation followed by Q & A.

New Year's Day Walk: Chapman's Pond - 1PM

Start off the year right with a guided hike through the 700-acre Chapman Pond Preserve. Owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy, the State and EHLT, the preserve is home to over-wintering Bald Eagles who roost along the edge of Chapman Pond. Watch for details in the newspaper and on the EHLT website (www.ehlt.org). Call Rob Smith or Barb Bloomberg for more information. 🗺️

EHLT 2006 Board of Directors

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	Don Goss.....	526-0877
	John Rozum.....	873-1439
	Martha McLaud Tonucci.....	873-9187

It's 2007 Membership Renewal Time: Join or Renew Today!

All donations are tax deductible. Membership good for the 2007 calendar year.

Name _____

Street Address _____

Town, State, Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Providing your email address is a cost-effective way of keeping you informed of EHLT events.

- Renewal *Thank you!*
- New membership *Welcome!*

Membership Levels:

- \$10 Student
- \$20 Individual
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Contributing
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$200 Major
- \$300 Lifetime

Additional gift to the Land Acquisition Fund: \$ _____

Please send this form with a check payable to:
 East Haddam Land Trust
 P.O. Box 122
 East Haddam, CT 06423

I would like to help with:

- Stewardship
- Fundraising
- Events
- Membership
- Publicity

East Haddam Land Trust Inc.
 P.O. Box 122
 East Haddam, CT 06423

www.ehlt.org

Bulk Rate
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Don't forget the EHLT Annual Meeting
Friday, January 19, 2007 7PM
Town Grange Hall



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