October 23, 2019

Dear Members, Friends and Neighbors,

Welcome to our annual newsletter. We hope the past year has been as busy and productive for you as it has been for us. First, we would like to invite you to two events that are coming up soon:

Please join us Saturday, October 26, at East Granby Farms between 9:30 am and 1:00 pm for our first Free Hot Dog Social and Annual Fall Hike (up to the beautiful view from the ridge). You don't need to be a hiker to enjoy lunch on us; just stop by to say hi and enjoy a hot dog, chips, and a soda. Hot dogs go on the grill starting at 11:30. Hikers come early for the 9:30 hike start.

On Thursday, November 7, at 6:30 pm, EGLT and the East Granby Public Library are co-sponsoring a presentation on Eastern Coyotes in Connecticut followed by the EGLT’s annual meeting. This exciting presentation on the habitat, diet and behavior of these stealthy animals will be given by Paul Colburn of the CT DEEP and will be followed by a brief annual business meeting at which EGLT Board of Director members will be elected.

We would also like to remind you to please renew your membership for 2020 (or join us if you are not a member). Dues payments received from now through January 31, 2020 will cover membership for all of 2020. Please see the attached membership form or visit our website to pay through PayPal (www.eglt.org).

Highlights from 2019

- We received a grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to hire interns to remove invasive plant species from the Ian Clark Preserve on Kimberly Road in anticipation of building a half-mile loop trail through the property. Thanks to the hard work of our interns, we completed over 200 workhours of invasive plant removal and established the location of the trail.

- This past spring Sanford & Hawley, Inc. of Avon made a generous lumber donation to EGLT. The lumber is being used to construct bog bridges over wetlands at the Ian Clark Preserve. We are grateful to William Grabinski and other land trust members who have put in many hours of hard work hauling the boards and assembling the bridges.

- Program Chair Amanda Thompson created and facilitated an engaging weeklong EGLT nature camp this past summer in conjunction with East Granby Parks and Recreation. The students went to a different outdoor location each day and studied a different animal, learned outdoor skills like knot tying, compass use and fire safety, and studied rivers and brooks. More info on the attached pages.

We look forward to 2020. Please renew your membership or consider becoming a member of the East Granby Land Trust. Your support and participation help us keep the open spaces of East Granby healthy and beautiful.

Sincerely,

Catherine Delasco, President
East Granby Land Trust

Please find info on all upcoming activities on our website, www.eglt.org, or on Facebook.
EGLT 2019 Summary

Last December we co-sponsored an encore presentation of The World of Owls by wildlife rehabilitator and artist Julie Anne Collier with the East Granby Public Library. We had to change the venue to the East Granby Senior/Community Center because of all the interest we received at our first presentation at the library November 1st. Ms. Collier and her assistant brought several live owls and explained how owls use their specialized powers of sight, hearing and flight to survive and thrive. Over 140 people attended the December presentation!

On January 26th we held our first winter hike up to the ridge, starting from Eastfield Farms. And on March 30, for those who still felt some cabin fever, we held our second winter hike through the Donald and Barbara Algren Preserve, EGLT’s newest property.

In early April we were grateful to receive a donation of 15 witch hazel shrubs from Monrovia in Granby. These native shrubs are now thriving at four EGLT properties in areas where we removed invasive species.

May was an especially busy month for EGLT. On May 9th we held our third annual Thomas F. Howard Scholarship spaghetti and meatball fundraising dinner at Gio’s Restaurant. This year the $500 scholarship was awarded to East Granby High School student Ambrosia Williams. On May 16 we sponsored Gerry Griswold, “The Bat Lady,” at Newgate Prison. As usual, Gerry gave a very entertaining and inspiring presentation about bats to 34 attendees. On May 19 EGLT board member and Riverside Reptiles owner Brian Kleinman led an amazing warbler walk down the power line right of way, starting from Tunxis Ave. We saw Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo Buntings and Osprey, and heard many more birds along the hike and, of course, Brian found a beautiful Eastern Rat Snake to show us.

Also during May, EGLT board members Amanda Thompson, Brian Kleinman, student intern Ambrosia Williams, and Children’s Librarian Kathleen Paul led 60 kindergarten students and 8 teachers and paraprofessionals on a nature walk through the Allgrove Nature Trail behind the school. Activities included identifying plants by sight and smell and a nature scavenger hunt for the students.

On June 1st we participated in National Trails Day with a hike along the Metacomet Ridge from Sunrise Park in Suffield to the intersection of Newgate Road and Route 20. We had great weather and a great group.
We held our fifth Outdoor Education Event on June 20th for all East Granby 6th grade students (75). This event was planned and executed by our EGLT student interns. Activities included a water conservation relay, a plant scavenger hunt, a demonstration of how our food chain works, and a pond study, during which bugs, frogs and tadpoles were found and identified. The event was facilitated by EGLT Program Manager Amanda Thompson and EGLT board member Brian Kleinman.

Our big thanks to this year’s high school interns: Bianca Prescott, Ambrosia Williams, Julia Fiedziukiewicz, Stephanie Crocker, Allison Strzegowski, Sydney Farley, Amanda Jacius, and Erik Bade. These students attend monthly EG Land Trust Board meetings, assist in running EGLT nature programs and events, co-steward an EGLT property, and pitch in at work parties.

This year Program Chair Amanda Thompson ran the first EGLT Nature Camp the last week of June, from 9 am until noon each day. Seventeen children from grades 1-5 spent each morning outside at different locations in East Granby. They explored ponds and streams and learned about amphibians and reptiles, learned outdoor skills like how to use a compass, identified plants and trees, and hiked up to the top of Peak Mountain on the last day of camp. The program was co-sponsored by East Granby Parks and Rec and was a huge success, thanks to Amanda’s creativity and initiative.

On September 14, we held our second annual Yoga in the Woods in the Pine Bowl on our Great Marsh property off the Greenway. Our thanks to yoga teacher AJ Papillon for leading a great class. That same day EGLT collaborated with the East Granby Commission on Aging to jointly sponsor Greenway Day, encouraging old and young alike to get out in the woods on a short hike through the Pine Bowl. Many of the folks who came to Greenway Day hadn’t walked in the woods in years and were delighted by the EGLT/COA-led hike.

Several members of EGLT participated in the Farmington River Watershed Association’s Farmington River Cleanup Day on September 28th, led by EGLT board member Mike Krammen. We were joined by several Wintonbury Land Trust members, as well. It was a great opportunity to meet other “land trusters” and spend a day cleaning up this beautiful river, which was designated Wild & Scenic and signed into law by President Trump this past May.
Property Stewardship

The East Granby Land Trust now owns 14 properties comprising roughly 280 acres within the town of East Granby. It is our mission to acquire and preserve open space and promote public appreciation of the natural environment of East Granby.

This year, thanks to the grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, we focused the bulk of our efforts on the 13.4-acre Ian Clark Preserve (ICP) on Kimberly Road. Michelle Clifford and Catherine Delasco together donated over 100 hours to the invasives removal project, providing training, supervision and oversight for the interns as well as working alongside them. Removing the invasives improved access to the property and allowed for the creation of a new half mile trail through part of the property. Because much of this property is a designated wetland, raised wooden bog bridges (see picture) have been installed to allow access to the property without disturbing the wetlands.

Monitoring and maintaining these properties in their natural state for your passive enjoyment is the most important work that we do. These volunteer efforts are led by Stewardship Chair Michelle Clifford. Including our grant work at ICP, this year we put in more than 500 hours on our properties, almost 70 percent of them on invasive plant removal. The rest of our efforts went to building bog bridges, mowing our access paths, walking our property boundaries, and planting native species.

This year we also hired Denno Surveying to locate property boundaries on three of our properties in an effort to improve our volunteer monitoring and ensure that our properties are being preserved in their natural state. To that end we have purchased 100% recycled aluminum signs (4"x4", above) to be spaced along our property boundaries so that we and our neighbors can be respectful of each other’s properties.

Additional native plants have been planted at Eastfield Farms, Griffin Marsh, and Pond Meadow. We thank property steward and board member Eszter Pilon for her continued attention to our Eastfield Farms property, where she has re-established the loop trail around the pond and continues to maintain access to the property and plant native plants. Our thanks to Catherine and Herb Delasco for many hours spent mowing and maintaining walking paths at several of our properties, as well, and to Bill Grabinski, our bog bridge builder.

Right now we especially need people to walk our properties once or twice a year to make sure there are no natural or man-made disturbances that we need to address. Do you like to walk around in the woods? The East Granby Land Trust needs you! Please email stewardship@eglt.org if you can help.
2020 Membership Form

The East Granby Land Trust is a registered non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________

Phone: ______________________   Email:_____________________________________________________
  (for EGLT news and updates)

Membership: Individual $30 ______ Family $40 ______ Corporate $200 ______ Lifetime $500 ______
Donation: _______  Donation for Land Purchase or Preservation ___________

Please make check payable to East Granby Land Trust and mail to P.O. Box 39, East Granby, CT 06026 or renew, join, or donate through PayPal at www.eglt.org and click on “Membership.”

Please circle your interests so we can get to know you better:

- Trail Work
- Property Steward
- Marking Boundaries
- Work Parties
- Hikes and Walks
- Mapping
- Fundraising
- Publicity
- Scientific/r Historical Studies
- Eagle Scout Project
- Programs/Events
- Board Membership

Comments or suggestions:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for supporting the East Granby Land Trust!