



MAR

# Rock ROOT & TRAIL

2022

The newsletter for  
supporters of CFP



Blue-eyed Grass Flower

*Spring into action!*

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WORMS

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NEW TYNAN BRIDGE

2-3  
TRAIL RUNNERS

4  
MONTHLY GIVING

## Surprise! A Wiggling, Wet Earthworm & Laughter Erupts

For many, it was the first time they held a worm. The first time they walked a wooded trail. **You helped them discover what many take for granted.**



**You helped** them get their first chance to catch bugs in a meadow and find frogs in a garden pond. They learned about life in the forest and fun on trails.

Windham Middle School students (about 600 of them) came to visit the James L. Goodwin State Forest in Hampton, CT last fall. Goodwin is only 11 miles away from the school...but unreachable for many of the Windham students. The day was an experience of a lifetime for many of the students, and for their teachers.

READ ABOUT ME INSIDE...!





# Sweat Equity and Your Generosity Built the Bridge

Trail Crew is no easy job.

**The days were hot and sticky**, the project location deep in the woods. The material had to be carried in by hand. The only way to complete the Tynan Park bridge project in Middletown, CT was to cut down a large tree on-site and mill the logs into beams in the backcountry. Despite everything, the Summer Trail Crew, led by CFPA Trail Field Coordinator Alex Bradley, did it.

Bridge projects are critical to the safety and connectivity of your Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails. Bridges need building. Others need replacing.



Hikers cross the precarious old Tynan Park "bridge".



## They Run. You Win.

Trail Runners give it their all to support the trails important to you, too!

Over the last decade, your trails have benefitted from the work and donations of trail runners. Running

groups like the Shenipsit Striders and Trail Mixers generously give time and money to support the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails. They step up, as you do, to help the trails they run, walk, and hike.

Individual runners also contribute. Ben Hall and Jonathan Praisner decided to run the Shenipsit Trail end-to-end in one shot during COVID and asked their friends to donate to support CFPA. That's 50 miles!



Some projects are just too big—they need a trail crew **and you.**



Crew members stand atop the new bridge on the red/blue Tynan Park Connector Trail off the Mattabesett Trail.

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Six years ago, CFPA began running our paid Summer Trail Crew program. The Crew, typically 8 members, performs trail maintenance, repair, and construction projects across the 825-mile Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System. The Crew works on projects large and small to improve trails, the hiker experience, and reduce

the negative impact on natural resources along trail corridors.

Your support—and grants from Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation and Community Foundation of Middlesex County—made this program possible. The next time you cross a bridge on a Blue Trail, feel good about how your generosity helps your trails and the community.

They didn't quite make it all the way, but they will try again next year!

Trails (and forests and parks) survive because people like you, who recognize the value of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails, step up and give to support what they love.



GOOD LUCK NEXT YEAR!

## I'm Alive!

Have you noticed the small pink creatures starting to wiggle out of the earth? For the past few months, ground temperatures have lowered to freezing digits. But what happened to the earthworms?

The answer depends on the species.

Cold-tolerant species burrow deep into the earth below the frost level. Other less tolerant species die off—but not before laying eggs in protective cocoons to hatch in the spring.

**Did you know** that in Connecticut, most earthworms you encounter are non-native? Glacial activity in northern North America eliminated most of the native earthworms. Our ecosystem evolved without much worm activity!

Keep your eye out for the signs of spring on your hikes!

Other flora and fauna, such as spring ephemerals like snowdrops, trilliums, and trout lily, can be found popping up through snow-dusted soil. Frogs and salamanders are waking from their hibernation to journey to vernal pools.

And birds, like the robin, have arrived home from their winter migration, alighting the air with their song and snacking on, well, freshly emerged earthworms.



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The day was an **experience of a lifetime** for many of the students, and for their teachers.

Good news—a new generation discovered the natural world around them.



Students learned valuable lessons and curiosity for the outdoors and the wondrous creatures that live in them.

The Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut (CFECT) and CFPA members (that's you) fund the program, now in its 5th year. Thank you for making their eyes smile and giving hope to the future.

THANKS FOR READING!



**Alan Hurst**  
Board of Directors

## Hey Alan!

Why do you give monthly?

I find that making a monthly donation is an **easy and painless** way to support an organization that I believe strongly in.

I get to multiply my support by twelve which allows me to be a Winslow Society Member.

**Do you use a trail or visit a forest or park once a month?**

If so, please consider giving to CFPA monthly. Support the organization that protects trails, forests, & parks—just for you.

Visit [www.ctwoodlands.org/giving](http://www.ctwoodlands.org/giving)

