

CONNECTICUT **Woodlands**



SPECIAL FEATURE:
CFPA'S
LEGISLATIVE
AGENDA
for **2013**

SOJOURN THROUGH THE STATE PARKS

169-MILE JOURNEY CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

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DIANE FRIEND EDWARDS

A glacial erratic—rock that differs from the area's bedrock, dropped there by a glacier—sits at the edge of the Miller Trail in Kettletown State Park. See page 25.

Connecting People to the Land

Our mission: The Connecticut Forest & Park Association protects forests, parks, walking trails and open spaces for future generations by connecting people to the land. CFPA directly involves individuals and families, educators, community leaders and volunteers to enhance and defend Connecticut's rich natural heritage. CFPA is a private, non-profit organization that relies on members and supporters to carry out its mission.

Our vision: We envision Connecticut as a place of scenic beauty whose cities, suburbs, and villages are linked by a network of parks, forests, and trails easily accessible for all people to challenge the body and refresh the spirit. We picture a state where clean water, timber, farm fresh foods, and other products of the land make a significant contribution to our economic and cultural well-being.

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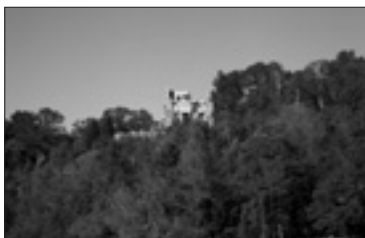
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Gillette Castle State Park, seen from the Connecticut River between Chester and Lyme..

PHOTO BY CAROL M. HIGHSMITH/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.



With foreboding, consider California's park funding troubles



BY ERIC LUKINGBEAL

Our name is the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, so it is obvious that we have two big concerns: forests and parks. We worry about threats, and try to lessen their effects. The threats to forests are both natural (invasive insect pests such as the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorned beetle, invasive plants, climate change) and human-made (development, unregulated logging). The threats to parks, on the other hand, are all human-made.

People began creating parks a very long time ago. In Europe, deer parks were set aside for the aristocracy to use for hunting. These eventually became parks centered around mansions. Landscape designers or architects such as Capability Brown played a role in making these parks places where aesthetics was important. During the Industrial Revolution, parks took on a new role as a place of refuge from smog and smoke generated in large cities.

Most countries have parks of some sort. These range from small, urban parks or "pocket parks" to parks the size of states, or even nations. The world's largest park, Northeast Greenland National Park, is 75 times the size of the entire state of Connecticut. Our parks number 107. If you're like me, you've taken our state parks for granted. But to the extent our parks are publicly funded, the threat is very real. Defunding

PEOPLE BEGAN CREATING PARKS A VERY LONG TIME AGO. IN EUROPE, DEER PARKS WERE SET ASIDE FOR THE ARISTOCRACY TO USE FOR HUNTING. THESE EVENTUALLY BECAME PARKS CENTERED AROUND MANSIONS. LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS OR ARCHITECTS SUCH AS CAPABILITY BROWN PLAYED A ROLE IN MAKING THESE PARKS PLACES WHERE AESTHETICS WAS IMPORTANT. DURING THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, PARKS TOOK ON A NEW ROLE AS A PLACE OF REFUGE FROM SMOG AND SMOKE GENERATED IN LARGE CITIES.

parks results in an almost immediate decline in the quality of the park as a place where people will want to go. Trash is not picked up, grass is not mowed, and the lack of staff can result in a feeling that parks are not safe. Theft and vandalism take their toll. If park paths and trails are not maintained, the reversion to forest begins. Recovery from even a few years of neglect is hard. For parks, deferred maintenance is a very bad policy, as it always costs more than is saved to catch up once funding is restored.

Someone said if you want to know what the future will be like, just look at California. I did that. Here's what I found out. There is a 130,000-member nonprofit organization called the California State Park Foundation. It says that California's parks used to be world-class but are now deteriorating. In 2011, California proposed 70 parks for closure because of lack of funding. Last summer, the California Attorney General's office released a report. The thrust of the report was that state park officials were so fearful of budget cuts that they managed to hide

a budget surplus of more than \$29 million, over the course of a decade. This may seem like a noble motive (or at least understandable), but the money couldn't be spent on anything because there was no legislative appropriation. So none of the money could be used. Most of the proposed park closures did not happen because of the heroic efforts of nonprofits across the state. The report noted that one factor in the 10-year coverup was the fear of embarrassment if the coverup came to light. It eventually did, of course, when a new administrative services manager saw it as his duty to report the matter up the chain of command.

I'd like to think something like this couldn't happen here. But it does show what can happen when funding dries up.

Eric Lukingbeal is an environmental trial lawyer for Robinson and Cole in Hartford. He lives in Granby with his wife, Sally King. He is the father of two grown daughters, serves on his town's Planning and Zoning Commission, and likes to hike, bike, and grow daylilies.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Walking on the old road, pondering life's work

To see the most, go both ways. So when we turn back along the Old Woods Road on our return journey we always wonder what new object will catch our eye, what fresh adventure, small and large, will await us.

—Edwin Way Teale,

A Naturalist Buys an Old Farm

On weekday mornings when my time is

short, I walk on an old country road that doubles as a school bus route and, in recent years, has become a commuters' shortcut. The drivers look so frenzied. But this is Chester, Connecticut, after all, and these rush hours remain very short, so usually, I time my rambles properly, and Straits Road takes me back to a time when it was surely a

woods road. And its subtle, intense natural world reminds me to mold my life toward a larger purpose.

Half the year, giant oak and ash trees shade the surface of Straits Road for most of the day. I have seen them bending powerfully under the wind's mean lash. In early spring, the sun finds the narrow, flat road. Across from the woods in two adjacent marshy ponds, frogs and peepers call out frantically. This is the amazing landscape of

How much are your parks worth to you?



BY ERIC HAMMERLING

Are you willing to spend \$5 this year to have a well-maintained system of 107 state parks? How about \$10 this year to

allow the state parks to actually expand their considerable cultural, recreational, and educational offerings?

For most of us, this is a relatively easy decision to make, especially in light of the many exceptional values that our state parks provide to us. After all, \$5 or \$10 is less than you would spend for just one movie ticket or one appetizer at a decent restaurant.

What are some of these essential values that our state parks provide? Here are just a few:

State parks bring economic value. A study by the University of Connecticut in 2011 documented an annual contribution of more than \$1 billion and 9,000 private sector jobs to Connecticut from the state parks. The study highlighted that every \$1 spent on the state parks returns \$38 to Connecticut's coffers. The study also emphasized that if investments are not made to maintain the parks, these economic values will erode and eventually be lost.

State parks promote public health and educational goals. Providing affordable venues for outdoor activities is fundamental for healthy lifestyles and reducing such vexing problems as child obesity.

Countless educators use parks as outdoor extensions of their classrooms. Direct early in-

teraction with nature helps the young to both appreciate and pursue careers in the sciences and technology.

State parks attract visitors and commerce. About 3.5 million people live in Connecticut. About 8 million people visit the state parks each year. As perhaps the most dominant element in Connecticut's tourism network, the parks facilities are tremendously important to surrounding businesses. If properly staffed and maintained, parks are vibrant hubs of activity and consistently elevate levels of regional prosperity.

State parks provide affordable civic venues. Municipalities, school systems, businesses, and a host of nonprofit entities depend on the parks to provide sites for large community events. Regional sporting conferences, concerts, festivals, car shows, scouting jamborees, reenactments, and innumerable charity walks and marathons would not be feasible for many groups without parks' ample economical space and their skilled personnel. Parks' open spaces and trained staff have also been invaluable in times of civic emergency. Hammonasset Beach State Park and Sherwood Island State Park, for example, served as critical staging locations during Hurricane Sandy and the 9/11 catastrophe.

State parks offer vistas that give homes value. The value of properties adjacent to or overlooking state parks is an average of 13 percent higher than properties that do not (similar to the benefit by homes on the Sound). Parks' iconic landscapes and landmark historic buildings are treasured by our citizens, and proximity to park property is coveted by those

relocating from other states.

State parks embody core values. All citizens, no matter what their economic status, have open, easy access to our state's most beautiful lands, which were specifically preserved to be enjoyed by all.

So, here we are on the cusp of the state parks centennial, which is being celebrated in 2013–2014. One would think it is time for a wholehearted celebration of a system that contributes so substantially to Connecticut's economy and quality of life. Instead, we and our partners who love the parks, such as the Friends of Connecticut State Parks, are concerned that the foresighted, diligent, and selfless work of generations of citizens will be imprudently compromised by budget cuts and attrition. We know that parks today have become much more essential to our lives than was ever envisioned 100 years ago. The parks deserve reasonable care and not shortsighted neglect.

And so, I return to my original premise. If each of Connecticut's 3.5 million residents dedicated just \$5 this year to the parks, this would generate more than \$15 million to keep the parks open and available to everyone. Indeed, this mythical budget of \$15 million would actually represent an increase over the actual 2012 pre-rescission budget for the parks, which was \$12.2 million (an average of only \$3.50 per resident).

Can we find another \$1.50 per Connecticut resident this year to invest in our state parks? I think you know the answer. Come on, Connecticut. We can do this, and we must.

Eric Hammerling lives in West Hartford.

Connecticut, the one that grabbed hold of me some years ago, when I started editing this magazine as a temporary assignment. (And eleven years later, here we are.)

Edwin Way Teale's contribution (among many others) was that he said, "slow down" to the accelerating peoples of the post-World War II generation. I have fantasized about buying an old farm, as Edwin Way and Nellie Teale did in Hampton, Connecticut, and then living out my life knowing the com-

ings and goings of hundreds of species on that land. And maybe I will write that best-seller someday. But I don't have to buy an old farm to become a land steward. Mollie Beattie, Charles Thompson, and Lynn Levin wrote in *Working with Your Woodland* that the true land steward "understands the ecological meaninglessness of legal boundaries and the short span of a human life relative to that of a forest." Without owning land, I can point my life to caring for land—land whose

owners I don't know on a tiny road that follows a streambed one mile from my little house. These old roads teach me to look at all of the land around me. It isn't only about what one owns.

Christine Woodside lives in Deep River with her husband, Nat, in a little house built in 1880 next to a forested ledge.

A BIG, YEARLONG STATE PARKS PARTY

A full year's events begin with the "Sojourn"—walkers, runners, bicyclists, and boaters will cover 169 miles

BY CHRISTINE WOODSIDE



A man excavating rock for a state building in Rocky Hill shut down his excavator when he thought the rocks he was scooping looked odd. It was 1966, and he was supposed to be digging the foundation for a veterans' building.

The worker told his boss that the rocks looked unusual. The boss agreed and called *his* boss. They realized that the worker had uncovered a set of dinosaur tracks. The state halted plans for the veterans' building and built a dome over those dinosaur tracks, calling it Dinosaur State Park.

The state parks are here because of 107 such stories—stories of people salvaging or buying or willing amazing bits of land because they wanted all people, not just those who could afford to own land, to have fun. This is not the Wild West: Here, all of the parks started out in private ownership and had to move into

the public trust. One by one, the park lands started this transition in 1913.

Starting in mid-August, it's time to celebrate the centennial. The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the State Park Centennial Committee invite you to join a 10-day "Sojourn," a trip from the northeast to the southwest corners of the state. The trip will start in Quaddick State Park and end at Sherwood Island State Park. The trip will follow 169 miles on foot, on bicycle, or by boat. The route, still in the planning stage, will include sections of the multiuse Air Line State Park Trail (formerly a rail bed), waterways at Mansfield Hollow State Park, and more. The 169 miles symbolize the state's 169 cities and towns. Those who do the Sojourn will travel through parks they never heard of and many they've always dreamed of visiting.



DAY 1

THURSDAY, AUGUST 15

ROUTE: Quaddick State Park, Thompson Air Line Trail, Putnam River Trail

CAMP SITE: Mashamoquet Brook State Park, Pomfret

MILES: 22.5

THEME: Why the SoJourn?



DAY 2

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16

ROUTE: Mashamoquet Brook State Park, Pomfret, Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton

CAMP SITE: Mansfield Hollow State Park, Mansfield

MILES: 17.3

THEME: Astronomy



DAY 3

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17

ROUTE: Mansfield Hollow to Gay City

CAMP SITE: Gay City State Park, Hebron

MILES: 17.78

Photos, left to right: Quaddick State Park in 1948, Aerial view of Mansfield Lake, 1964 Hartford Times item on Mansfield Hollow dam.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

**ALL OF THE PARKS STARTED OUT IN
PRIVATE OWNERSHIP AND HAD TO
MOVE INTO THE PUBLIC TRUST.
ONE BY ONE, THE PARK LANDS
STARTED THIS TRANSITION IN 1913.**

The Sojourn will start in mid-August (details to be announced at ct.gov/deep) with a reception at Quaddick State Park and a campout, with the start the next morning. “We are going to be hiking, biking, paddling, and camping from the northeast corner of the state, going down the Airline Trail, and hitting many parks along the way,” said Diane Joy, assistant director of Connecticut State Parks.

“It was a crazy idea a few years ago,” Ms. Joy said, “and now we are making sure it’s going to happen.”

Pam Adams, DEEP’s retired parks director and centennial committee chair, said volunteers hold important roles in the year’s events. “Our volunteers are doing a tremendous amount of the work for this. They are becoming more and more excited about celebrating 100 years.” Mrs. Adams, who also is vice-chair of the volunteer organization Friends of Connecticut State Parks, said that all 22 of the individual park friends’ organizations are planning events at their parks.

“The public is going to have a tremendous opportunity to attend events all over the state,” Mrs. Adams said. “It will be 365 days, summer, fall, winter, and spring.” The centennial will culminate in August 2014



CONNECTICUT DEEP
Brainard Homestead from the air in 1934.

with “The Sky’s the Limit,” which includes stargazing, bird watching, and even small flying craft.

Parks You Never Heard Of

I asked Joseph Leary, who wrote the

2004 history of Connecticut state parks *A Shared Landscape* (Friends of Connecticut State Parks), how to encourage visits to the dozens of free, unknown state parks. He stumped me. He asked me if I ever had visited Brainard Homestead State Park. Well, I had never heard of Brainard Homestead State Park—which is only 7.3 miles from my house.

“It’s the old Brainard mansion,” Mr. Leary said, patiently. “It is the kind of place I would never go to from Fairfield County. It’s not a ‘destination park.’” It’s the kind of place to go when you have a few hours. Take a picnic, throw around a Frisbee with the family. “Everyone knows that the crown jewel of the state park system is Hammonasset,” Mr. Leary said. “Everyone wants to waddle into the surf and camp at the campground. But there is a small state park very close to your house, and it’s probably unmarked, and it’s probably undeveloped.”

He called his book *A Shared Landscape* because the state is, literally, a shared landscape. “It does belong to us and it is our resource.” State parks preserve history in so many ways. They preserve dinosaur tracks

continued on page 8



ROUTE: Haddam Meadows to Gillette
CAMP SITE: Gillette Castle, East Haddam
MILES: 8.52
THEME: It’s All a Mystery

DAY 4

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18

ROUTE: Gay City to Dinosaur State Park

CAMP SITE: Dinosaur State Park, Rocky Hill

MILES: 17.17

THEME: Sleep with the Dinosaurs

Clockwise from upper left: Dinosaur State Park in 1969, Haddam Meadows State Park, Gillette Castle.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DAY 5

MONDAY, AUGUST 19

ROUTE: Dinosaur State Park to Haddam Meadows State Park

CAMP SITE: Haddam Meadows State Park, Haddam

MILES: 18

THEME: Connecticut-Grown Foods

DAY 6

TUESDAY, AUGUST 20



STATE PARK PARTY

continued from page 7

(thanks to our observant excavator in Rocky Hill). Parks preserve tidal marshes at the beach parks. They give citizens access to hundred-mile views at Talcott Mountain State Park in Simsbury. Parks preserve battle sites (Fort Griswold, Fort Trumbull state parks in Groton and New London). State parks preserve farms (Osbornedale State Park in Derby). “We preserve our heritage in so many ways,” Mr. Leary said, “the very land on which we walk, and the things about it that we hold dear. Up at Natchaug [State Forest in Eastford] we have the grave of General Lyon, the first Civil War general who was killed in combat. At some time or another, someone said, “This is very special.””

Long Time Coming

The organized state of Connecticut is old, 378 years old. The parks are relative newcomers carved out of a settled landscape. In September 1913, the park movement began with a bureaucratic step. Officials formed a commission to acquire park land. The commission bought its first piece soon after: Sherwood Island in Westport. A man who lived near the island publicly fought the Sherwood Island State Park proposal for 23 years—throwing nothing short of tantrums

Essex Freight Station, built in 1915 as part of the Connecticut Valley Railroad.

ROY KLOTZ M.D. / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



DAY 7

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21

ROUTE: CT Valley Railroad State Park, Essex to Chatfield Hollow State Park, Killingworth
Chatfield Hollow to Hammonasset

CAMP SITE: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

MILES: 20.43

THEME: Ride the Rails

Soar with the Birds

Shoreline Greenway Ribbon Cutting

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SCOTT LIVINGSTON

A serene view from the Air Line State Park Trail.

by letter and at meetings until, finally, in 1937, the state finished its long job of ignoring him and opened the 234-acre park, one of only two state parks in Fairfield County.

During all those years, the state established many other parks, such as Hammonasset Beach State Park (in Madison) and Rocky

Neck State Park (in East Lyme). That was just the start of the work, parcel by parcel, of acquiring all of the state parks.

It would be hard to overstate the role of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association in the state parks’ births—even here, in the magazine CFPA publishes. CFPA began ad-

Below: Meigs Point, Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison.

CHRISTINE WOODSIDE

ROUTE: Hammonasset to Farm River, via Shoreline Greenway

CAMP SITE: Farm River State Park, East Haven

MILES: 18.98

ROUTE: Farm River to Silver Sands State Park

CAMP SITE: Silver Sands State Park, Milford

MILES: 17.33

THEME: Long Island Sound

DAY 8

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

DAY 9

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23



**THE ORGANIZED STATE OF CONNECTICUT IS OLD, 378 YEARS OLD.
THE PARKS ARE RELATIVE NEWCOMERS CARVED OUT OF A SETTLED LANDSCAPE.**

vocating for the establishment of Sherwood Island State Park in 1924. The same year, CFPA helped organize an association that bought the quarrying lease on the future Sleeping Giant State Park in North Haven. Ten anonymous CFPA directors bought the future Rocky Neck State Park in 1929 so that it would not be lost; the state acquired it from them two years later. In 1943, CFPA led fundraising for the purchase of Gillette Castle State Park from the estate of the eccentric actor William Gillette. The same year, CFPA Vice President Curtis H. Veeder, a Hartford industrialist, donated his house and 787 acres to become Penwood State Park. All this work for parks became central to CFPA, which had originally organized as the Connecticut Forestry Association in 1895 to save forests. In 1928, the Association changed its name to Connecticut Forest & Park Association.

CFPA joined with other advocates of public recreation in natural areas. They nudged and sometimes pushed the state of Connecticut to buy the land that became 107 state parks. In almost every transaction, land passed from private, wealthy landowners to

public ownership over months or years.

Future Parks?

Because of the timing of the state park movement, most of the historic sites honor white men, Mr. Leary noted. He hopes that the new generations will find those places that honor women, people of different races, and members of other minority groups. Parks reflect the times in which they are established, just as they reflect the history of their land. "I went crazy trying to find stories that would resonate with the new generation," Mr. Leary said of his research for *A Shared Landscape*. As the new generations come of age and make their marks here, he said he hopes that their stories will guide the new parks. The stories of people's engagement on the land guide the love of parks. "Those are the things we're going to preserve. Those are the things we're going to cherish," Mr. Leary said. "The next state park will probably have a woman's name on it."

Christine Woodside is the editor of this magazine and has covered environmental issues in Connecticut since the mid-1990s.



ROUTE: Beardsley to Sherwood
CAMP SITE: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport
MILES: 11.55
THEME: CT State Parks Celebration

DAY 10

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24

ROUTE: Silver Sands to Beardsley Zoo
CAMP SITE: Beardsley Zoo, Bridgeport
MILES: 23.1
THEME: Go WILD

DAY 11

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25

Below: Illegal campers on Sherwood Island in Westport in 1923, 14 years before the state land finally became a state park. STATE OF CONNECTICUT

PARK CENTENNIAL EVENTS

- ▶ **THE SOJOURN**, a 169-mile-long trip by bicycle, foot, and watercraft, starting August 15 in Quaddick State Park right after the centennial year officially starts, will wind its way southeast to Sherwood Island State Park in Westport.
- ▶ **FOUR SIMULTANEOUS STATE PARKS BIRTHDAY PARTIES** on a date to be announced, in 2014. Plans include cookies in the shape of the state (the notch up north could be a challenge), short work parties for a "give-back" day at the parks, and a sand castle contest at the beach parks.
- ▶ **A FINALE CELEBRATION IN SUMMER 2014.** Details to be announced.
- ▶ **THE 6,000 MEMBERS OF THE 22 VOLUNTEER STATE PARK "FRIENDS" ORGANIZATIONS PLAN DOZENS OF PUBLIC EVENTS AND PROGRAMS.** VISIT THE FRIENDS OF CONNECTICUT STATE PARKS WEB SITE AT FRIENDSCTSTATEPARKS.ORG.
- ▶ **TO KEEP ALL THIS STRAIGHT,** The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is creating a state parks centennial website that will be live this spring. Navigate there via ct.gov/deep.





PARTY POOPER

The governor's proposed budget hits the parks further

It's hard to get in the mood for a party when you look at the money the governor has recommended next year for the bureau that runs state parks.

The officers working overtime to chase down a lost person in the woods or a missing boater may number fewer next year. Some state campgrounds might have to open later in the season. The 11 guarded swimming areas might go without the lifeguards on certain days. These are the sorts of changes state park managers are considering as a result of Governor Dannel P. Malloy's proposed budget for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, which manages parks, environmental conservation police (EnCon police), and boating.

At \$23.6 million, the bureau will lose 1.6 percent compared with the current year. But the current year's budget, which took a hit from the statewide rescissions before the holidays, looks as if it will close out this fiscal year on June 30 at 8.4 percent below fiscal 2012.

Despite that gloomy situation, the proposal for the fiscal year that starts July 1 appears to be more money than some feared. Mr. Malloy's proposal keeps the outdoor recreation bureau at the same (lowered) level it is now but eliminates inflation adjustments. Mr. Malloy also proposes to reduce overtime pay for the already overworked crew of 48 EnCon police by almost \$209,000. (EnCon police often work odd hours to deal with the sort of emergencies that come in the backcountry and on the water.) He proposes a similar cut in EnCon police overtime for fiscal 2015.

"We appreciate the level of support the governor proposed for state parks given the fiscal challenges facing the state," said DEEP spokesman Dennis Schain. "His proposal would require us, however, to make some changes in the state park system in order to reduce operating costs."

Every branch of state government is suffering under current economic conditions, but, as we reported in Connecticut Woodlands last year ("The Elephant in the Room," Spring 2012), a study by economist Fred Carstensen at the University of Connecticut found that for every \$1 the state puts into its parks and forests, people spend \$38 in the state. The study found that these lands are worth \$1 billion, at least, and are responsible for 9,000 jobs in the state economy. Entry fees generate \$3 million (and rising) a year to the state's general fund. Those same visitors pay about \$94 million on services and goods in Connecticut. Fishing licenses bring in \$8 million. Property owners whose land value is based on proximity to state forests and parks pay \$4.2 million in added taxes for that privilege.

But the parks do not run as a separate entity. Their funding comes from a vote of the General Assembly sometime later this spring. (Budget hearings were starting in late February, as we went to press.)

Parks have suffered with lowering costs for some years now. For example, the state used to place lifeguards at more of its 22 swimming areas than the 11 currently covered. Even in good times, the budget cycle runs at cross-purposes with planning for a warm-weather season. Susan Whalen, deputy commissioner for environmental conservation, said the bureau must hire the seasonal employees, who make up the backbone of parks services, several weeks before funding totals become final, and they begin work weeks before the fiscal year starts.

"We are looking at a number of different scenarios," Ms. Whalen said. She said those include opening fewer weeks in the summer at some parks, reducing operations at parks or museums, closing or reducing services at some campgrounds, and possibly even closing some parks. Closing would mean locking gates: "If we're not there to pick up the trash and clean up the bathrooms, it's a tough situation," she said.

DEEP Commissioner Dan Esty has been looking at creative ways to do business for some time now. For instance, he recently met with the National Audubon Society, which the department hopes will want to do scientific research that DEEP may no longer have funding to pursue.

"We will have to look at partnerships," Mr. Esty told Connecticut Woodlands. That might be with nongovernment organizations, land trusts, or private companies. He also said that land trusts, cities, and towns might have to put more into deals for buying open space.

"The state budget had grown too big for the level of taxation the people are willing to bear," Mr. Esty said. "It's a challenging year no matter how you cut it, but we are excited about celebrating the centennial. We are preparing a very special agenda of very special programs without huge budget impacts."

—Christine Woodside

IT'S A STATE PARK! IT'S A TRAIL! IT'S A STATE PARK TRAIL!

BY LESLIE LEWIS

When we think of state parks, we usually picture the shoreline expanses of Hammonasset Beach, the hills of Sleeping Giant, or the quirky buildings and stunning views at Gillette Castle. These places certainly attract hoards of visitors, particularly in the warmer months. Other state parks may serve more people, per acre, than most of the others. Many miles long and only a few yards wide, these are Connecticut's linear state park trails.

The Air Line, Hop River, Moosup Valley, and Larkin state park trails encompass almost 100 miles of pathways. Originally railroad lines, their relatively flat topographies lend themselves to all manner of uses. Walking, biking, and horseback riding are popular pastimes, along with snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in snow season, and crushed stone provides a comfortable and attractive trail surface. Most of the sections that are completed are accessible by the mobility-impaired.

The Air Line State Park Trail is the longest at almost 50 miles and travels through state forests, Wildlife Management Areas, and river valleys as well as such urban centers as Willimantic and Putnam. The name *Air Line* has nothing to do with aviation. It refers to an imaginary line drawn between New York and Boston when the train was the fastest way from point A to point B. Today, you can hop on the trail in East Hampton and travel all the way to Thompson with a few "work arounds" in between. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection continues to cooperate with the towns through which the trail passes to close these last gaps.

Running from Vernon to Willimantic, the Hop River State Park Trail features a recently completed covered bridge in Andover and connects to the Air Line State Park Trail to the east and the Charter Oak Greenway to the west. Eventually, these combined pathways will go all the way to Hartford. The shortest of the state park trails is the Moosup Valley in Plainfield and Sterling. A planned link from the Air Line State Park Trail in Putnam along the Quinebaug River Recreational Trail will connect to

THE WALKCT DIRECTOR EXPLAINS



SCOTT LIVINGSTON

Deborah Livingston rides on the former railbed that is now the Air Line State Park Trail.

the Moosup Trail, which will continue from there into Rhode Island along the Trestle Trail. All of these are part of the Connecticut segment of the East Coast Greenway, which will eventually run from Key West, Florida, to Calais, Maine.

In the western part of the state, the Larkin State Park Trail (aka the Larkin Bridle Trail), has been a favorite route for equestrians for many years. Running through Middlebury, Naugatuck, Oxford, and Southbury, this long and narrow state park trail combines enough remarkable history, geography, and aesthetics to rate its 110 acres as one of the biggest and prettiest parks in Connecticut's system.

Like all state parks, these trails are open sunrise to sunset. Dogs must be kept on leash, which is a good idea when there are also kids, bikes, and horses in the mix. Trail maps are available on the DEEP website (ct.gov/deep).

All season, multiple uses, the state park trails really do offer something for everyone. Full of history and natural and human-made wonders, and easy to use for all ages and abilities—think about these wonderful pathways the next time you are looking for a pleasant outing.

Leslie Lewis of Lyme directs the Connecticut Forest & Park Association's WalkCT program, promoting walking on trails, pathways, and sidewalks. She formerly worked for the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for 29 years. She worked on the state's bottle bill, municipal recycling, and trails and greenways.



MINNIE ISLAND

Big adventure at the smallest state park

BY DAVID K. LEFF

Imagine having an entire state park to yourself on one of the busiest warm-weather holiday weekends. Such was my good fortune on Memorial Day a few years ago, a date when the season seems to pivot and we begin living outdoors in earnest. When the weather cooperates with heat and abundant sunshine, as it did that year, it seems everyone is hiking, boating, fishing, picnicking, playing ball, gardening, or simply enjoying the summer-soft air and newly leafed-out greenery. State parks are at their apex of bustle. In some places, it's hard to find a free picnic table, to enjoy a lonely stretch of shoreline, or to hike through the woods alone. But even on such a day, the intrepid visitor will likely find Minnie Island State Park deserted.

On a humid and hazy Monday with July-like weather, my companion and I launched our canoe from the shore of 529-acre Gardner Lake, which straddles the eastern Connecticut towns of Bozrah, Salem, and Montville. Our destination was this small, wooded dumpling of an island in the lake's southeast corner, just a 15-minute paddle from the state boat access. A slight headwind rippled the water, which shimmered with light that reflected on our glossy wet paddles. The breeze was refreshing, hindering our progress less than the rollers left by the wake of speedboats towing skiers and tubers.

The thickly forested island rises abruptly from the water with gray ledge outcrops. We canoed about halfway around

the island before finding a protected opening along the shore where we could tie up our boat. A steep, narrow trail led through mountain laurel thickets and other underbrush to a small clearing set among large red oaks at the island's crest. A quick reconnaissance revealed that we were the sole visitors to this paradise shy of an acre comprising Connecticut's smallest state park.

Only a few crushed beverage cans, some glass shards, and a patch of blackened ground where a campfire once burned testified to previous occupation. Minnie Island is seldom visited, and it was long a legal no-man's-land as well. Its tenure as a state park began serendipitously when squatters laid claim to the island in 1925, only to find that it didn't exist in the legal records of either Salem or Montville, both of which asserted jurisdiction for the purpose of assessing property taxes. The matter found its way to the General Assembly, which rejected legislation sought by the squatters and instead passed a bill creating a state park.

Minnie Island remains a minimalist park with not so much as a picnic table. Nevertheless, you can try so much here—boating, swimming, and fishing. Although camping is no longer permitted, a 1936 report to Governor Wilbur Cross notes “evidence of some camping.” Picnicking appears to have been the most common use of the place since the 19th century, and our visit continued that tradition with our meal of chicken salad, sliced vegetables, a bag of pretzels, and some bottled water as we stretched out on ledges at the top of the island.

Privacy on Minnie Island is somewhat of a paradox. Although

Minnie Island as it looked in 1925.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**SMALL, OBSCURE, AND SURROUNDED BY A PROTECTIVE MOAT OF WATER, THIS LITTLE GEM,
UNKNOWN TO MOST, MUST BE DELIBERATELY SOUGHT OUT.**

thick vegetation shields visitors from casual observation, on a warm day the lake around the island teems with motorboats and Jet Skis. The whine and rumble of their engines echoing over the water at times makes you feel as if you're sitting in the infield at a stock car race.

Nevertheless, so captivating is the island's rugged beauty that you easily forget the sounds of vessels on the water. Its high hump catches the slightest breeze, putting in motion sun dappled shadows that play on bracken fern, sassafras, hemlock, and birch growing below the tall oaks. Through the greenery, the flickering silvery plain of the lake seems vast and bright. Such natural attractions likely drew the

attention of Orramel Whittelsey, who in 1835 founded Music Vale Seminary nearby in Salem, the nation's first degree-conferring music school. In the mid-1800s, Mr. Whittelsey named the island after his niece Minnie, perhaps because she liked to picnic here. The girl was immortalized, and her name was perfect for this Lilliputian island.

Small, obscure, and surrounded by a protective moat of water, this little gem, unknown to most, must be deliberately sought out.

With no sign, even many of those landing a boat on its shore probably don't know where they are.

Minnie Island may be undistinguished

and inconspicuous, but in these days when the whole world seems crazed with superlatives—the biggest, tallest, highest, or fastest—it's refreshing to take refuge in a zone free from such striving and struggle. More than we realize, we need places where nothing happens.

David K. Leff is a writer from Collinsville. He was the state's deputy environmental commissioner for many years and today serves on the Connecticut Forest & Park Association Board of Directors. Visit him at davidkleff.com.



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CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

Regenerating oak stands using irregular shelterwood harvests

BY EDWARD MCGUIRE AND ALEX BARRETT

Is Connecticut losing its oaks? Forester Steve Broderick asked that question in the winter 2001 issue of this magazine. Foresters for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Division of Forestry and from Yale University are working to answer Steve's question with a resounding "no"—for the land they manage.

As we stated in the last issue ("Oak: Venerable and Vulnerable," Connecticut Woodlands Winter 2013), the majestic oaks of Connecticut are culturally, economically, historically, and ecologically central to the forests in our state. The key to helping Connecticut keep its oaks is the successful regeneration of oak in our state's forests. As foresters know, it can be particularly difficult to regenerate oak. In this article, we examine one way that we are having success on this quest: the use of a tree harvesting technique known as the *irregular shelterwood* harvest, which we will explain.

The state forest system includes 32 forests with 170,000-plus acres, and the Yale Myers Forest in Ashford, Eastford, Union, and Woodstock has 7,840 acres. Regenerating oak is one of the main goals of the foresters who tend these forests.

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Yellow birch, shagbark hickory and white pine (poles and sawtimber) were left after an irregular shelterwood harvest in Nipmuck State Forest in Stafford.

They practice silviculture, the art and science of growing and tending trees in a forest. Silviculture is the heart of forestry; harvesting to regenerate forest stands with natural reproduction of desirable native tree species with good stem quality is the heart of silviculture. A *forest stand* is an area of trees similar in species composition and age classes, where soils and topography make it logical and practical to treat the area as a management unit (Smith et al., 1997). In Connecticut, our stands generally range in size from about 1 acre to around 200 acres. The stands typically are diverse and irregularly shaped. They reflect the intricacies of our landscape and the history of how we have managed it.

Irregular Shelterwood Harvests Explained

Irregular shelterwood harvests could be called harvests of *creative destruction*, to borrow a term coined by the famous Connecticut forester Joseph Schumpeter. Actually, Mr. Schumpeter was a Harvard economist, a contemporary of John Maynard Keynes, and not a forester, but he did greatly enjoy walking in the Connecticut woods. (To learn more about Schumpeter, the economic "perennial gale of creative destruction" and his connection to Connecticut and Yale, see *Prophet of Innovation* by Thomas K. McCraw, Belknap Harvard Press, 2007.) The "creative destruction" of silviculture can mean both the fact that, when done properly, a regenera-

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2013 CONSERVATION AGENDA FOR THE PEOPLE & LAND OF CONNECTICUT

The Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA) has been offering recommendations on conservation priorities to the Connecticut General Assembly since 1897. These annual recommendations stay relevant because the context for making them changes every year.

Three issues define the context for the 2013 Conservation Agenda:

- 1) Destructive storms -- Tropical Storm Irene and the October Nor'easter in 2011, and Superstorm Sandy in 2012 -- have reminded us about the fragility of our state's infrastructure and the need for better management of natural resources to achieve environmental benefits and improved public safety;
- 2) The State Budget deficit challenges the notion that additional investments are critical to maintain the economic values that our State Forests, Parks, and other protected lands provide to Connecticut; and
- 3) Environmental spending as a percentage of the State Budget continues to be less than one-half of one percent (< 0.5 %). "The environment" is being viewed as a side issue rather than as a fundamental part of the bedrock which sustains economic benefits and public health for Connecticut's people. This must change if we are to make progress.

The structure of the Conservation Agenda is a little different this year. Rather than covering the broad range of conservation programs that CFPA supports at both the State and Federal levels, we are providing more in-depth recommendations on our top two State legislative priorities this year -- Roadside Forest Management and the State Parks. We include a list of all of the other CFPA priorities on the last page.

If you would like to become part of CFPA's Public Policy Conservation Team or sign-up for Advocacy Alerts, please visit our website (www.ctwoodlands.org) and/or contact our Executive Director, Eric Hammerling, via 860/346-TREE or ehammerling@ctwoodlands.org.

Sincerely,

David K. Leff, Chair
Public Policy Committee

Eric Lukingbeal, President
CFPA Board

Public Policy Committee Members:

Russ Brenneman, The Hon. Astrid Hanzalek, John Hibbard, David K. Leff, Eric Lukingbeal, Lauren McGregor, Eric Hammerling (CFPA Staff), and John Larkin (Contract Lobbyist)

Reducing Economic Losses and Enhancing Public Safety in Future Storms

The two major storms of 2011 - Tropical Storm Irene and the October Nor'easter - were responsible for more than \$3 billion in economic losses in Connecticut alone. To learn the lessons from these damaging storms, Governor Malloy established the Two Storms Panel which further recommended the need for a State Vegetation Management Task Force (established in April, 2012) to guide local and statewide efforts to better manage the roadside forests which were implicated in an estimated 9 out of 10 power outages. This Task Force recommended that investments in roadside forest management at the State and Municipal levels are required for Connecticut to reduce economic losses, enhance public safety, and have healthier trees along 21,000+ miles of state and municipal roads. Task Force recommendations requiring action by the General Assembly follow:

- Require that Municipal Tree Wardens meet State Certification standards. Every town is responsible for appointing a Municipal Tree Warden, but at this time, there are no requirements that these front-line tree managers have expertise in trees. State Certification is currently required for arborists, foresters, and forest harvesters and has been critical to raise expertise and knowledge in the field; and
- Provide State Funding to Municipalities (recommended amount of \$100,000/town in both 2013 and 2014) to both develop a 5-year Roadside Forest Management Plan and conduct necessary roadside forest management (pruning, removals, and re-planting using "Right Tree/Right Place").

Realizing Economic and Public Health Benefits of Keeping State Parks Open

In 2013, the State Park System celebrates its 100-year Anniversary and will highlight a century of amazing achievements at many of the 107 State Parks. Ironically, budget rescissions and other cuts have already put the opening of several State Parks in jeopardy. [see feature on State Parks on next page]

We ask the General Assembly to consider the following proposals to support the Parks:

- Dedicate an additional \$3.5 million to bring Park field staff up to 100, add 4 En Con Officers, and restore cuts to Park seasonals; and
- Re-establish Enterprise Account as a Subaccount of Maintenance, Repair & Improvement Account to utilize new revenues from cabins, boats, bicycles, firewood, and camping necessities, and for concessions not chosen by BESB (Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind).

These general fund investments would be substantially offset by the following revenue generators:

- Increase user fees for Weddings, Special Events, and Pavilion Rentals in State Parks;
- Move Charter Oak pass to 50% of Annual Pass (rather than free) starting Dec 31, 2013; and
- Direct DEEP to establish admissions gates at up to 5 State Parks where it would be cost effective.

STATE PARKS AT 100: WILL CONNECTICUT INVEST OR DIVEST?

2013 is the Centennial of Connecticut's State Parks. 107 State Parks - public treasures such as Hammonasset and Rocky Neck State Beaches; Gillette Castle, Harkness Memorial, Sherwood Island, Sleeping Giant, West Rock Ridge, and so many others - are the special places that many think of when envisioning "Connecticut."

The State Parks provide immense value to the State. A 2011 study by UConn documented an annual economic benefit from State Parks of over \$1 billion and 9,000 private sector jobs. The Study also highlighted that every \$1 spent on the State Parks, returns \$38 to Connecticut's coffers. These economic benefits alone should make the case to invest in our State Parks.

Sadly, on this Centennial Anniversary we must question whether the State is willing to make the commitment to keep its State Parks open. Already, the expenditures on CT State Parks are amongst the worst in the nation on a per-capita basis. Unless the General Assembly acts now to invest, several State Parks will be closed or left unmaintained in 2013 and their outstanding value for Connecticut's residents will be lost.

Ten years ago (when there were only 101 State Parks), Clough Harbour & Associates LLP was commissioned to assess the infrastructure needs of the State Park System. Clough found that:

- "The total, system-wide costs of operations and maintenance labor, maintenance equipment and materials, and contracted services ... as determined by the model are approximately \$27 million per year." [In FY 2012 (pre-rescission), the State Parks budget was \$12.2 million]
- "The total, system-wide operations and maintenance staffing levels ... as determined by the model is 1,943 seasonal staff and 204 full-time staff." [In FY 2012 (pre-rescission), there are 550 part-time seasonal staff and 74 full-time field staff]
- "It is apparent from this differential between the estimated optimal annual operations and maintenance costs and staffing and the current spending and staffing levels, that the State needs to allocate additional funding for the operations and maintenance of its parks in order to avoid future problems ... and deliver the basic level of service to provide for their comfort, security and safety."

At present, only 74 full-time field staff (16 Park Supervisors and 58 Maintainers) are available to manage and maintain 107 State Parks, and 15 of these overstretched staff are eligible for retirement in 2013. In fact, on July 4th weekend this year, part-time seasonals accounted for 97% of all staff available to maintain the Parks.

There are other reasons why the State Parks must be kept open. Many of the State Parks resulted from gifts from donors who were assured the land would be cared for on behalf of all people, regardless of their economic status. In tough times, State Parks are needed more than ever to promote physical health and the psychological well-being of over 8 million visitors annually. Parks are available at a reasonable cost, and are often a free alternative for those who cannot afford private clubs or the high cost of other venues.

CFPA FULL PRIORITY LIST FOR STATE & FEDERAL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS IN 2013

New Priorities

State Legislative

1. Special Centennial Anniversary Request for CT DEEP State Parks System (2013):
 - Re-establish Enterprise Account as Subaccount of Maintenance, Repair and Improvement for cabins, boats, bicycles, firewood, and camping necessities, and for concessions not chosen by BESB (Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind).
 - \$3.5 million special request for operational support to address chronic underfunding of State Parks.
 - Increase user fees for Weddings, Special Events, and Pavilion Rentals in State Parks.
 - Move Charter Oak pass to 50% of Annual Pass (rather than free) starting Dec 31, 2013.
 - Direct DEEP to establish admissions gates at up to 5 State Parks where it would be cost effective.
2. Implement State Vegetation Management Task Force Recommendations, including:
 - Require Certification of Municipal Tree Wardens.
 - \$100,000/town for 2 years to implement better roadside forest management and develop a 5-year Roadside Forest Management Plan.
3. Secure State protection for New England Trail similar to protections for Appalachian Trail.

State Policy

1. Support efforts to ensure state lands dedicated for conservation/recreation are “protected.”
2. Support expanding coalition for Connecticut Reinvestment and Conservation Act (CRCA).

Ongoing Priorities

State Level

1. Support base funding and staff for the following critical State conservation programs: CT DEEP (Forestry, Parks, Wildlife & Environmental Conservation Officers), UConn Extension, CT Department of Agriculture Farmland Protection program, and CT Agricultural Experiment Station Forest Research efforts.
2. Support maximum funding for Community Investment Act as well as Open Space, Recreation, and Farmland Preservation Bonding.

Federal Level

1. Support Appropriations for National Park Service/National Scenic Trails program.
2. Support Appropriations for Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).
3. Support Appropriations for Recreational Trails Program in Dept of Transportation.
4. Support USDA Farm Bill Conservation Title Programs.
5. Support USDA Forest Service Programs, e.g., Forest Legacy, State/Private and Urban Forestry.
6. Support restoration of cuts to APHIS for the agency’s efforts on Emerald Ash Borer.
7. Support passage of No Child Left Inside Act.
8. Support tax credit as landowner incentive for conservation easements on National Scenic Trails.



Connecticut Forest & Park Association
16 Meriden Road
Rockfall, CT 06481

(860) 346-TREE
www.ctwoodlands.org

CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

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DEEP FORESTRY

Twelve years after an irregular shelterwood harvest in Shenipsit State Forest in Stafford, this red oak sapling grows in front of clump of dead chestnut saplings.

tion harvest creates a new generation of desirable trees and that irregular shelterwood harvests allow silviculturists to exercise their skills creating and perpetuating complex forest stands with a variety of tree species, ages, heights, and diameters. Irregular shelterwoods can also contain a matrix of standing dead or dying trees, cavity trees, and large woody debris, all with their attendant ecological benefits. The creativity lies in the fact that the silviculturist must mix art and science as he or she picks the trees that will stay through the harvest and spaces them in an irregular, yet advantageous way. The destruction comes as the “take” trees are removed and the regeneration clock reset—ideally with a nice mixture of species where each has a place in the future forest. To borrow an expression from Aldo Leopold (with a paint gun and some help from a logger),

A sugar maple and pruned white pine overlook an open area for oak saplings after an irregular shelterwood in Shenipsit State Forest.

DEEP FORESTRY

a forester writes his or her signature upon the land. Regeneration of oak is a signature of success when it comes to the hardwood forests of Connecticut.

No prescription can serve all types of hardwood silviculture, even in a state as small as Connecticut. Juxtaposed to the irregular shelterwood is the regular shelterwood harvest that predictably involves the regular spacing of trees, regularly timed entries into the stand, and a final harvest where, voila, a new group of young, vigorous saplings of the desired species dominates the stand. The final shelterwood harvest of these regular systems—in the rare instance where there are abundant oak seedlings and saplings present in a stand before the canopy trees are removed, and the deer population is low to moderate—can result in a new oak-dominated stand. This type of harvest is often done only following years of well-planned preparatory thinning and creates an “even-aged” stand, where all the trees are approximately the same age and height. Final shelterwoods are a legitimate and important silvicultural practice and should be done in some locations. Survival in Connecticut of some mammals such as the New England cottontail rabbit and bird species such as the ruffed grouse and blue-winged warbler, which require the early successional woody habitat of regenerating forests, may largely depend on such harvests. But in other locations, irregular shelterwood harvests can be employed to

create a mostly open stand to allow in the sunlight needed to regenerate oak, hickory, and other moderately shade-intolerant species. At the same time, leaving an irregular array of some large (sawtimber) and medium-size (pole) trees to create a more complex stand structure along with the desired regeneration can result in two age classes on the site and in the diversity of other forest structures and features that make the forest an irregular and interesting place.

Having a variety of harvest types present on the landscape, as well as no-harvest areas, fits well with the concept of using natural forests and their processes as models for silvicultural prescriptions. Some natural events such as powerful hurricanes destroy entire forest stands or large parts of stands over very large areas, but others, such as ice storms or windstorms and insect outbreaks, result in episodic partial stand mortality. Foresters can try to mimic these disturbance events and at the same time use creative destruction to maximize the values that forests provide. As forest ecologist David R. Foster, director of the Harvard University Forest, stated in the Hartford Courant, “Getting blown down, getting ripped apart, getting affected by outbreaks of insects is all part and parcel of being a forest.” As we have seen over the past few years, this is particularly true in southern New England.

The irregular shelterwood concept allows for flexibility in adapting a regeneration

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CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

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harvest to the nuances and complexities of a particular stand. It fits well within the ecosystem management concept, and irregular shelterwood harvests are considered by many people to be more aesthetically pleasing than final shelterwoods because they leave more variety in the stand (Raymond et al., 2009). Many oak-dominated stands in Connecticut are quite variable because of topography, soils, land use history, and other factors. Nature is hardly ever uniform, and to keep the irregular characteristics of these oak stands, forest managers need to be irregular in their management. Oak stands may have patches of sugar maple, white ash, and yellow birch in moist areas where these species thrive. A substantial softwood component of white pine or hemlock in the stand adds to the complexity and to the aesthetics. A typical forest stand in Connecticut may be properly viewed as a mosaic of micro-stands. With the rise of geographic information systems (GIS) and more advanced mapping techniques, foresters can better keep track of these small variations. However, a forester's most valuable GIS often remains the mental map and the history of the stand that is passed from one manager to the next.

First Phase: Remove Half the Stand

When regenerating a mature oak stand, it is almost always necessary to begin with a "first phase shelterwood" harvest to encourage the establishment of oak seedlings. This harvest typically removes 50 percent or more of the trees in the stand, leaving good-quality sawtimber oaks, hickories, and other desired species as seed sources. Species with light seed, such as the birches, have no problem colonizing newly opened forest space. Their seed production is prolific, and the light seeds can move great distances. Heavy-seeded species, such as oak and hickory, however, are a different story. Although birds and mammals do indeed help move acorns, acorns can't compete with thousands of birch seeds (in numbers and ability to travel) blowing across a hard snowpack. Harvesting right after a bountiful acorn crop is helpful, and in locations where regenerating oak is especially difficult, it may be essential for success. The more open forest stand provides the conditions for acorns and hickory nuts to germinate and grow in partial sunlight. When an irregular shelterwood, rather than a final shelterwood, is planned as



DEEP FORESTRY

This white oak originally grew in a field. It was left to grow after an irregular shelterwood harvest in Nipmuck State Forest, Stafford.

THE TIME TO IMPLEMENT THE IRREGULAR SHELTERWOOD HARVEST IS WHEN THE OAK SEEDLINGS AND SAPLINGS (WHICH GOT THEIR START DURING THE FIRST PHASE SHELTERWOOD) REACH ADEQUATE SIZE, USUALLY IN 8 TO 12 YEARS.

the follow-up harvest, the first phase shelterwood should be done in an irregular fashion as well. This leaves trees in groups and patches, rather than the classic even-spacing shelterwood method. If invasive plant species are present in the stand or in adjacent stands, it is best to eradicate them before the harvest. Otherwise, you will certainly regenerate invasives and end up with a far greater problem—on this we speak from hard experience.

The time to implement the irregular shelterwood harvest is when the oak seedlings and saplings (which got their start during the first phase shelterwood) reach adequate size, usually in 8 to 12 years. The larger this "ad-

vance oak reproduction" is, the better is the chance of ultimate success. An average height of 5 feet is good, and 6 to 8 feet is even better (Sander, 1972). The irregular shelterwood harvest should result in most of the advance reproduction oak and hickory stems being cut or broken—this is good because many will initially be crooked or flat-topped from growing in only partial sunlight, and their large root systems will propel the rapid growth of new sprouts growing straight in full or almost full sunlight. Shortly after the loggers are done, foresters may fine-tune the harvest by cutting oak and hickory saplings of poor stem quality that survived the harvest so they may resprout. At the same time, cutting black birch saplings around oaks may give the oaks the slight competitive advantage that they need to succeed (Frey, 2012). Often, white pine saplings or poles of good quality are found in oak stands and retained in the harvest, so a stand with three age-classes and a good deciduous/coniferous mix can result.

Within a year or two after the harvest, ideally an intense competition develops between thousands or tens of thousands of stems per acre, as they surge upward in a struggle for light and space. In some parts of the state, many of these stems will be the once-mighty American chestnut, which often seem to magically appear post-harvest. The stems usually don't survive the chestnut blight fungus for more than a few years, but they provide yeoman's service for the oaks and hickories by training them upward and then yielding their growing space.

Oak regeneration needs more light than the small gaps often created by "selective" logging provide. Recent studies by Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies have shown that in mid-slope positions, red oak struggles to compete with black birch even in relatively light-abundant conditions (Frey, 2012). Larger advance oak regeneration will help oak compete successfully with black birch, but another round of light saw work four to six years post-harvest may be necessary. This will be mostly a "cleaning" of black birch and red maple, where only birch and maple stems that appear likely to outcompete oak and hickory are broken by hand or cut with a small hand or power saw. All other stems should be left intact to train and prune the oaks, hickories, and other desired species such as sugar maple, yellow birch, paper birch, black cherry, tulip poplar, and white pine. The oaks just need to be given a fighting chance. Not until about age

30 do red oaks zoom past the competition to reach the canopy and the light conditions that will allow them to dominate the stand (Oliver, 1978).

Veteran DEEP forester Emery Gluck began prescribing and implementing “deferment” or irregular shelterwood harvests in state forests in 1992, and others have followed his lead. Mr. Gluck left mostly scattered, irregularly spaced, single overstory trees. Since then, in state forest irregular shelterwoods, the residual trees have been left largely in groups (3 to 12 trees or so) or patches (a quarter acre to several acres) and sometimes as single trees. Forest trees naturally grow together in groups for the most part, so trees left in groups tend to fare better over time. The residual trees can be a variety of sizes and quality. White oak and hickories are long-lived species and often make good choices for trees to leave. When largely freed from competition, good-quality trees can be expected to rapidly grow consid-

erably larger and continue to provide large amounts of mast. As an example, a group of four white oaks left in a 1999 irregular shelterwood in Shenipsit State Forest in Stafford had diameters between 10.6 and 11.7 inches when they were released from other competition. By the end of the 2012 growing season, they had grown to between 13.9 and 15.7 inches.

Good Bird Watching

Along with the good quality trees that will make silviculturists happy, less sound trees can be left to deteriorate and become den trees and snags. This wildlife habitat scattered irregularly in, among, and next to the sawtimber trees increases the values that the forest provides. Bird watching in irregular shelterwoods is particularly good. Species that like edges, shrubby areas, and clearings all in close proximity thrive. And though many silviculturists wince at the thought, irregular shelterwoods create a buffet of saplings that deer love to browse.

Irregular shelterwood harvests are an important silvicultural method used to perpetuate oak in Connecticut. David William Smith, emeritus professor of forestry at Virginia Tech University, concisely states the case for sus-

taining oak ecosystems: “We have no choice but to work toward sustaining our oak forests. We human beings have mediated global ecological changes and we have by no means grasped the magnitude of the unintended consequences of our actions. We are a significant part of the problem, so we must diligently and deliberately be part of the solution. We should continue our efforts to sustain our oak forests and greatly expand our efforts to achieve that goal” (Smith, 2005). Oaks need our help to regenerate, and it is our duty to rise to the challenge.

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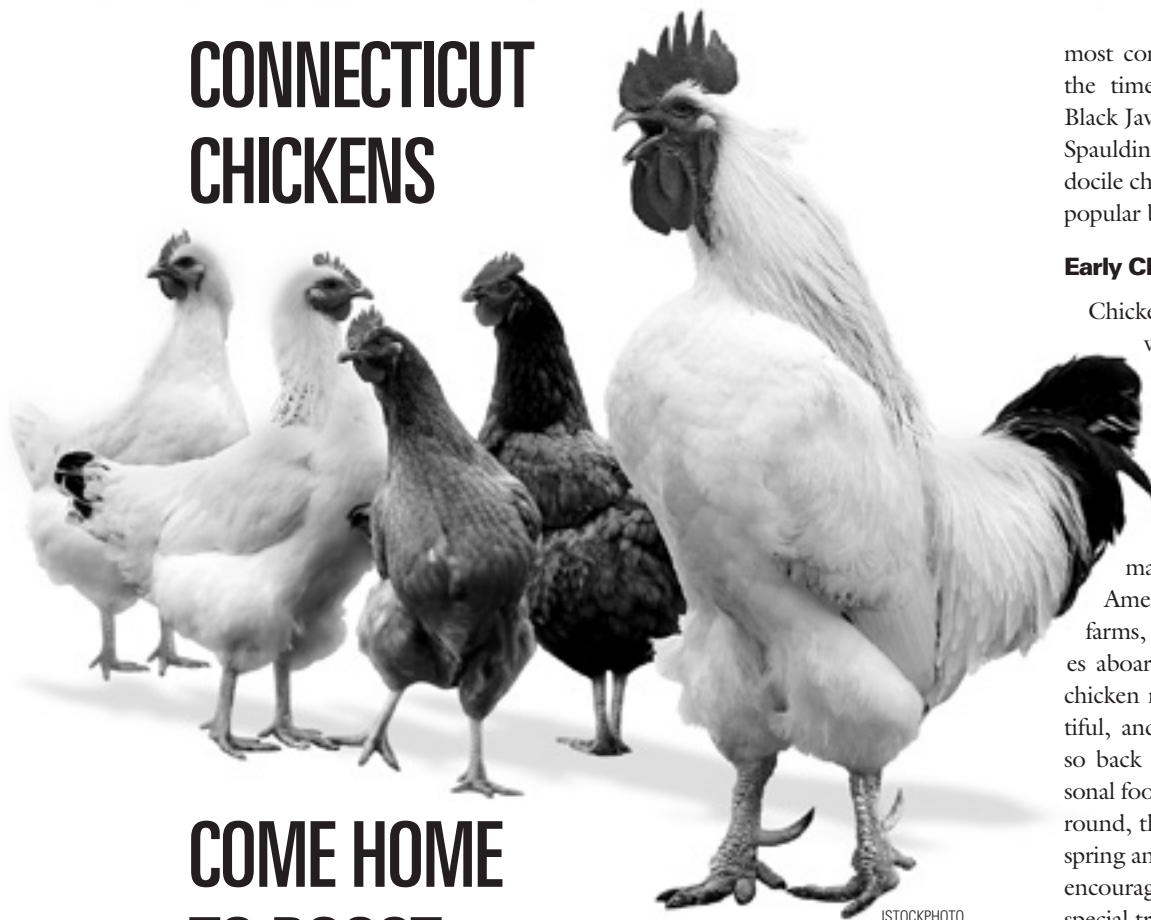
Below: In this stand in Nipmuck State Forest, two white pines and a white oak, left after the harvest, grow in the background. In the foreground are oak sprouts.

DEEP FORESTRY

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CONNECTICUT CHICKENS



ISTOCKPHOTO

COME HOME TO ROOST

BY JEAN CRUM JONES

In 1853, the Yankee clipper ship *B.F. Hoxie* returned home to Mystic. Among the cargo was a small flock of Leghorn chickens from Livorno, a port in Tuscany, Italy. The hens were distributed among the friends of Captain Gates and Mr. Morgan, first officer of the vessel. This breed of birds spread rapidly throughout New England. The Red (later Brown) Leghorn breed became a favorite among poultry men because they were hardy, prolific layers of white eggs and ate little. One hundred sixty years later, the Leghorn breed's genetics dominates white egg production in America.

In the mid-1800s, gentrified American farmers (successful businessmen, newly enriched by America's economic boom), became infected by a chicken collecting and breeding mania, colloquially called "Hen Fever." In 1843, a British naval general gave Queen Victoria seven Cochin chickens he had obtained during a trip around the world. She was delighted with the unusual

birds that came from what is now Vietnam, then China. She exhibited them at a Royal Show in Dublin, and afterward, it seemed everyone in Britain and America wanted to collect fancy poultry.

According to historian Glenn E. Bugos, "Traveling merchants, naval officers, and diplomats—under instruction from the U.S. Treasury Department—combed the seaport markets of Europe and Asia for chickens to ship back to fanciers in America: chicken with rainbow tails, feathered feet, freakish shapes, or long curved necks." Connecticut's own P. T. Barnum, who considered farming his hobby, caught Hen Fever and founded the National Poultry Society. He held a National Poultry Show in January 1854, at his American Museum in New York City.

Initially, poultry fanciers bred exotic birds, but as poultry became a more favored part of the American diet, high-utility breeding became very important. D. A. Upham, a merchant from Wilsonville in northern Windham County, created the Plymouth Rock chicken by crossing a Black Cochin hen with a Dominique cock, which was the

most common farm chicken in America at the time. After some crossbreeding with Black Java birds, Upham and partner Joseph Spaulding of Putnam produced a hardy and docile chicken. By 1882, it became the most popular breed in America.

Early Chickens in North America

Chickens came early to the New World with the very first settlers. To Connecticut, the English families brought their familiar fowl from the homeland that was a mix of different breeds (like mutts—the Saxons had brought chickens to Britain as did the Romans). During the Colonial period in America, chickens were everywhere—on farms, in the streets of towns, and in cages aboard ships at sea. We assume today's chicken meat and eggs will be cheap, plentiful, and available year round. It was not so back then. Chicken and eggs were seasonal foods. Although hens can lay eggs year round, they are most productive during the spring and summer, when increased daylight encourages laying. A "spring chicken" was a special treat. Stewed chicken (boiled when a hen finished laying) was served in potpie or fricassee style. Young chickens when available were "broiled" in a frying pan over the hearth. Eggs were cooked as we do today—scrambled and fried. Eggs were also desired for baking, but the eggs were much smaller than what we use today. (Beware if you are using a Colonial bakery recipe.)

In the old days, chickens ate garden and kitchen waste as well as the insects and undigested grain seeds found in the manure piles. They also loved mice. Often, these common everyday chickens were referred to as "dung hill" fowl. Women and children tended the chickens, which lived in rough sheds close to the houses to protect them from predators, a significant problem.

Research Begins

By the 19th century, poultry husbandry began to be taken seriously as a specialized farm business. Publicly sponsored research in poultry science began. The Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station began conducting pioneering work in the development of high-energy rations for poultry and the discovery and control of specific poultry dis-

eases. It also and began some work in poultry genetics. The Connecticut Agricultural College (later the University of Connecticut) established a department of poultry science in 1896, one of the first in the nation. Researchers devised better chicken houses with more ventilation. The famous Storrs Egg Laying Contest began in 1911 to encourage better breeding, production, and record keeping.

Industrialization

Meanwhile, industrial towns and commercial cities had grown very rapidly. The state's urban growth was startling. There had been large successive waves of immigration from many European countries to power the new mills and industries. In the countryside, sons of the old Yankee families were leaving the family farms in search of better farmland out West, or city life and employment. The Connecticut Agricultural College was founded in 1880 with the radical intent of educating the sons of farmers about new technologies and farming techniques to revitalize the state's farms. The constant youth out-migration from Connecticut farms, which had begun in the early 1800s, finally made the old Yankee farmers amenable to selling their failing farms, which they perceived as marginal and worn-out. (It was in this depressing period that the Connecticut Forestry Association, now the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, began.)

But then newly arrived Europeans were eager to buy farmland and make a new start, helping diversify the state's agriculture. It's risky to generalize, but it seems that the Eastern Europeans and Russians gravitated to the egg and dairy farms. So did the Finns, who arrived after World War II and settled in Windham County. Between 1900 and 1950, the state's poultry industry grew from a few hundred to almost 4,000 farms producing poultry, meat, or eggs. The farms were relatively small, with 50 to a few thousand birds living on a barn floor or ranging outside during the day.

In the 1930s, my husband's uncle, Newell Jones, tended a flock of 200 Rhode Island Red chickens on our family farm. Newell carried on this part-time business while attending night school. The Rhode Island Red, developed in the 1880s, became a favored breed in Connecticut. People consumed more poultry during this era as supermarkets and the newfangled restaurants sprang up. People took cold cooked chicken in picnics to the new state parks.

Breeders Change

After World War II, poultry operations grew bigger as consumer demand for chicken and eggs grew. Americans became delighted with the low prices and the consistent quality. Soon, chickens were being reared by the "confinement method" in battery cages. In the late 1950s, it became evident that Connecticut could not compete with the Southeastern region of the country in broiler production. In the South, land, labor, and feed costs were much lower. As well, the concept of vertical integration took hold in which a single company was involved in every stage of production, processing, and marketing.

Almost overnight, the chicken broiler industry in Connecticut disappeared. The loss was softened by the rise of a breeding farm, Henry Saglio's Arbor Acres in Glastonbury, which grew quickly. (For more on Henry Saglio, see the sidebar.) Breeder flocks moved into the eastern Connecticut chicken houses abandoned by the broiler industry. At its peak, Arbor Acres provided genetic stock for two thirds of the broiler industry in America and one third for the rest of the world. However, Arbor Acres experienced a deep

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CONNECTICUT POULTRY INGENUITY

One Connecticut poultry breeder dramatically changed the course of poultry farming in Connecticut and in the United States. He was Henry Saglio, a child of Italian immigrants, who grew up on his parents' fruit and vegetable farm in Glastonbury. Cauliflower was their specialty. Never one to enjoy working outside for long hours tending vegetables, Henry developed an interest in poultry breeding when a friend said he wished for a white-feathered meat chicken. The traditional meat birds of the day were red and retained dark blemishes on the meat after the pinfeathers were plucked. Henry bred a flock of completely white-feathered chickens that had extra meat, reached maturity quickly, and laid more eggs. He entered his new hybrid cross in the 1948 "A&P Chicken of Tomorrow" contest and won second place, but his chickens gained national attention. As a result of this success, Henry and his brother went on to transform their family's farm, Arbor Acres, into a headquarters for poultry genetics for the next four decades. A quiet explosion was set off that dramatically increased chicken's popularity and made it one of the least expensive meats available to Americans.

Another Connecticut chicken innovator is Therese (Te) Makowsky, who became the accidental inventor of the Rock Cornish hen. She and her Russian-born husband, Jacques Makowsky, a world-renowned printer working in France, fled from the Nazis in 1940 to New York City. After Jacques retired from the printing business six years later, they wanted a farm because Mrs. Makowsky yearned for the pastoral life she had known growing up on a farm in France. They moved out to Connecticut, where they settled on a 200-acre farm in Pomfret, which they named Idle-Wild. The Makowskys decided to raise and sell African guinea hens to the highbrow French restaurants in New York City. In October 1949, their flock was lost when a fire roared through all their poultry houses. Trying to figure out a very quick growing bird, they crossed Cornish game chickens, a small bird with short legs and a plump, round breast (a breed that Te discovered in a book) with a White Plymouth Rock (bred by Henry Saglio). The subsequent Rock Cornish game hens were meant to be a temporary substitute, but they became so popular that orders for the guinea hens faded away. Diners and chefs loved the succulent little bird with all white meat, just large enough for one serving. Jacques declared the delicious flavor was a result of the bird's high protein diet that included native Connecticut produce as well as berries, acorns, and other nuts. By the mid-1950s, Idle-Wild Farm was selling 3,000 Rock Cornish game hens a day.

FROM THE LAND

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decline in market share in the 1990s and folded into Aviagen, a business headquartered in Alabama.

So lucrative was the poultry business in the early 1950s that Victor Borge, the famous piano comedian, bought a 435-acre farm in Southbury. He produced plentiful supplies of Cornish game hens as well as pheasant and geese. Because of his promotion and his popularity, Cornish game hens found their way into many home kitchens. He sold the farm in the early 1960s, and it was developed into the well-known Heritage Village. As the poultry industry was extinguished in Fairfield County in the late 1950s, subdivisions often grew up in their place, which is certainly true in my town of Shelton. Not a trace remains of the old chicken farms except for an occasional street sign that echoes the old farm's name.

Though the chicken meat business is gone from Connecticut, the egg business continues in the eastern part of our state. Kofkoff Egg Farms operate a large concern that has almost five million chickens that produce about two million dozen eggs each year—enough to supply 90 percent of the state's eggs.

The Chicken of Yesteryear

Chicken meat consumption has skyrocketed in this country since the specialization and commercialization of the poultry industry began. Around the beginning of the 20th century, we ate about 10 pounds of chicken per person each year. In the early 1960s, Americans consumed 28 pounds per person; in 2012, the amount jumped to 80 pounds per capita. Today's industry has become highly consolidated—four companies process 60 percent of all meat chickens in gigantic factories. The average poultry farm handles 600,000 chickens per year. Whereas roaming chickens were once ubiquitous in this country, today's average child does not see a living chicken pecking for food or cooling off in a dust bath. Fortunately, this state of affairs is gradually changing.

Some people began to look for local chicken because they worried about large amounts of antibiotics used to keep industrial flocks

healthy, and about the environmental consequences of concentrated poultry operations. Some folks just yearn to eat a tasty chicken. According to Steven Reviczky, Connecticut state commissioner of agriculture, "Consumers are demanding more and more locally grown chicken, and farmers want to meet that demand." The Connecticut General Assembly unanimously passed Public Act 10-103 in June 2010. This law provides a system to set food safety standards and to license and inspect poultry slaughtering facilities. Farmers can sell the meat at farmers' markets, through community supported agriculture shares (CSAs) and at farms. Mr. Reviczky hopes this legislation will enable the robust farming of chicken once again in Connecticut. Indeed, many beginning farmers are already pursuing this new opportunity.

Backyard chicken raising is back. It was quite common through the 1940s into the early 1950s, when most families kept a few chickens for eggs, but the ease and cheapness of the supermarket egg as well as the restrictions of suburban zoning enabled the disappearance of home hens. In the 1990s, as many watched Martha Stewart gush over her Westport, Connecticut, backyard flock of Araucana chickens and their beautiful pale blue and green eggs, they became interested again in owning a few birds for fresh eggs. This desire has been aided by online retailers that supply all things chicken, from coops to chicks. One of the most successful is mypetchicken.com located in Monroe, Connecticut. Paralleling this interest, the Connecticut 4-H program reports increased enrollment in poultry projects and poultry fairs. Backyard chicken husbandry is also supporting the preservation of "heritage" breeds. More than half of the 70 breeds of chicken found in the United States are in danger of disappearing since the current commercial industry relies on only a few specialized breeds. Modern-day poultry fanciers are emerging to protect their beloved breeds.

It seems Hen Fever is back.

Jean Crum Jones is a registered dietician, is a member of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association Board of Directors, and helps run the Jones Family Farms with her husband, Terry, in Shelton. She is always on a quest to find chicken as delicious as it was during her childhood in Delaware.

Prize-Winning Chicken

Jean Crum Jones won second place in the junior division of the National Chicken Cooking Contest in 1963, sponsored by the National Broiler Council. **Here is her recipe.**

1 broiler chicken, cut up

1 ½ cups Panko crumbs

1 ½ cups grated Parmesan cheese

¼ cup chopped parsley

¼ cup finely chopped onion

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon pepper

Olive oil

Sesame or celery seeds

Rinse chicken, pat dry. Combine bread crumbs, cheese, parsley, onion, salt, and pepper. Brush chicken pieces with olive oil, covering thoroughly, then coat thickly with crumb mixture. Place pieces skin side up in a baking pan. Spray lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with desired seeds. Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees F. Serves 4.

(Note: My original recipe called for finely crushed unsalted soda crackers, rather than Panko crumbs, and butter, rather than olive oil. Also, in those olden days of 1963, chicken was not sold cut up and I remember my father teaching me how to cut apart a chicken. I still prefer to buy whole chickens and break them down myself. I also try to purchase a local chicken for this recipe because they are less fatty than the cheap supermarket varieties.)

KETTLETOWN STATE PARK

Rockin' Around the Miller Trail

BY DIANE FRIEND EDWARDS

A jumble of rocks scattered helter-skelter off one side of the trail was our first clue. A few minutes later, we discovered a second: a large, lumpy boulder that looked nothing like the smaller, sharp-edged rocks nearby. Both clues told us a glacier had been here, leaving its evidence in plain sight.

Eager to see what other discoveries we would make on this hike, my husband and I continued along the William F. Miller Trail in Kettletown State Park. After a housebound morning, the balmy-for-January weather had lured us outdoors. Surprisingly, we nearly had the place to ourselves, meeting only a few dog walkers as we entered the park and again when we left it. In season (mid-May through the end of September), you're likely to see other folks also enjoying the park's attractions—hiking trails, a picnic area, a campground, a youth group camping area, and a beach on Lake Zoar, a dammed up section of the Housatonic River.

Kettletown State Park was so named because white settlers in the late 1600s gave a brass kettle to the local Pootatuck Indians in exchange for the land. The park comprises 605 acres in Southbury and Oxford. There are several well-marked, Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails. We chose the Miller Trail simply because we had never hiked it before. The many appealing landmarks made us glad we'd picked that one.

Rocks abounded, some set in stone walls, most lying where they fell when the glacier plucked them from nearby bedrock or when the freezing and thawing of water caused them to crack away from outcroppings. Lichens and mosses added colors to the rocks' various shades of gray. Occasional erratics—boulders transported from far-away areas by glaciers—left us feeling a bit awed by nature's power. So, too, did the many downed trees we saw, which we assumed fell during the severe storms of the past two years. Trail maintainers, though, had done a good job: Any trees that had fallen across the trail had been cut and cleared away. The sawn logs themselves were



PAUL EDWARDS

Diane Edwards crosses a bog bridge on the Morris Trail.

fascinating to look at, providing a view of the trees' inner structures: the growth rings, the heartwood, the spots where branches grew out from the trunk. After the hike, I learned that garnets are embedded in some of Kettletown's rock ledges and outcroppings. Now I can't wait to go back there to look for them!

The Hike

The Blue-Blazed Miller Trail is a 1.75-mile loop in the northwestern end of the park. (A bypass trail allows you to shorten that distance.) Two very short vista trails—both worth doing—bring the hike's total distance to 2.2 miles. The Miller Trail starts and ends near the access road leading to the youth group

camping area. A sign marks the path from the access road to the start of the loop. We decided to hike the loop counterclockwise.

Except for the last half-mile or so, which descends steeply on rocky terrain, the Miller Trail offers easy walking through a forest of hardwoods with some stands of hemlock and pine. The trail starts out on a fairly wide and flat woods road. After passing the first erratic, just to the left, the trail heads gently uphill. About a half-mile from the start of the hike, watch for the blue blazes because the trail now leaves the woods road. You will soon notice the blue/red-blazed bypass trail on your left. Continue on the main trail; keep an eye out for the blue blazes and occasional trail signs because the trail makes several turns that you otherwise might miss. A little more than a mile from the start of the hike, you will pass a stream, then the other end of the bypass trail. Next, you will come to a sign marking the site of a charcoal hearth. This is also the junction with the blue/orange-blazed vista trails, which offer views of hills and Lake Zoar. Return to the main trail and head left from the junction, going downhill to the starting point.

Directions

The entrance to Kettletown State Park is on Georges Hill Road in Southbury. From I-84 exit 15, travel south on Kettletown Road for about 3.5 miles. At the Oxford town line, the road name changes to Maple Tree Hill Road. Just past the town line, turn right onto Georges Hill Road and continue to the park entrance, on your left.

Diane Friend Edwards is a freelance writer, nature photographer, and lifelong lover of the outdoors. She lives in Harwinton with her husband, Paul.



DIANE FRIEND EDWARDS

A view opens up on the Miller Trail.

PEELING AWAY THE VENEER OF FAMILIARITY

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: A DEEP TRAVELER EXPLORES CONNECTICUT

by DAVID K. LEFF. Middletown, Connecticut:
Wesleyan University Press, 2012. 260 page

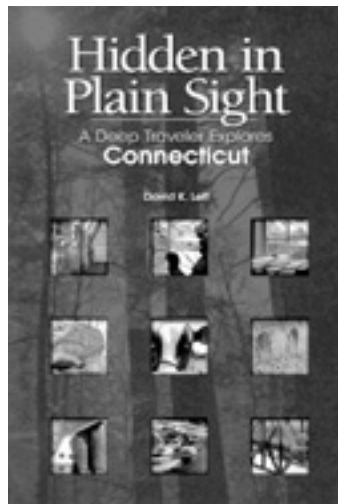
BY JANE ROY BROWN

David K. Leff is an omnivorous explorer of place: Little in the natural world, or in the realm of the built environment, for that matter, fails to fascinate him. This lecturer, poet, and essayist might also add anthropologist, detective, cultural geographer, and landscape historian to his identifiers because, as he demonstrates anew in his latest book, *Hidden in Plain Sight: A Deep Traveler Explores Connecticut*, he applies the honed observation skills common to all these disciplines. Yet after hiking past a stone observation tower or a driving by a repurposed Quonset hut, Leff displays an equally keen ability to narrow and sharpen his focus—to “drill deep,” as he puts it, into the origins, materials, and use of these structures. Diners, graveyards, cider mills, Nike missile sites, abandoned roads, and millponds are among the many other cultural artifacts he investigates in this trove of a book. And through his eyes, we, the readers, learn to peel away the veneer of familiarity to see each one anew—or, perhaps, for the first time.

Leff defined the concept at the heart of *Hidden in Plain Sight* in an earlier book, *Deep Travel: In Thoreau’s Wake on the Concord and Merrimack* (University of Iowa Press, 2009): “At its simplest, deep travel is about mindful looking, about journeys that drill deep into a place rather than demanding distance to be interesting. It’s about experience heightened by connecting diverse natural and cultural phenomena often hidden in plain sight, about seeing in four dimensions, in time as well as space.”

Readers will find an embellished definition in this new work: “Deep travel,” he writes, “is purposeful ‘power looking’ at our surroundings. It is about seeing in time as well as space, enabling us to weave fragments of the past into coherent stories that help explain the present or anticipate the future. As writer Tony Hiss observes, deep travel ‘has the feeling of waking up further while already fully awake.’”

Hiss, the author of more than a dozen books including *The Experience of Place* (Vintage Books, 1991) and *In Motion: The Experience of Travel* (Knopf, 2010), may have coined the term deep travel (a cursory Internet search did not yield the definitive answer), but the pursuit both writers share has long roots. Naturalists, geographers, and other scientists, especially the Victorians of Charles Darwin’s and Henry David Thoreau’s generation, have traditionally brought



a similar exuberance to discovering and documenting the phenomenal world, from the alpine plants of China to the fossils of the Connecticut River Valley to the tombs of Egypt.

More recently, Leff finds a kindred spirit in the American cultural geographer John Brinckerhoff Jackson (1909–1996), better known as J. B. Jackson. The dimension of time—ancient, geologic time—is the distinguishing aspect of deep travel, and Jackson was an adept time traveler as well as a prolific writer: His last book was called *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time* (Yale University Press, 1994). By sympathy, intention, or both, the title of Leff’s new book echoes *Landscape in Sight, an anthology of Jackson’s work* (Yale University Press, 1997).

Acknowledging that other writer-explorers have trodden a similar path is not meant to suggest that Leff’s observations are derivative. The delight of reading any of these fine observers is that their discipline is a subjective and highly individual one, their perceptions as rooted in personality and particular experience as in any historical or scientific record. Like both Hiss and Jackson, Leff is also a meticulous writer whose craft does not intrude on the journey that unfolds within the pages of *Hidden in Plain Sight*. His tone marries a sense of the pilgrim’s wonder with the ease of everyday conversation: “The countryside bubbles with intriguing stories and is dotted with veiled, sometimes gossipy clues about people, places, and phenomena that reveal themselves in everyday sights such as roadside rock cuts, swayback barns, and octagon houses.”

Leff’s quest, in the end, is to find meaning in the juicy nexus of people and place, and he invites those who ramble only on forest trails to venture into urban neighborhoods, “where there is so much to see”: “Looking holistically, we would do best to pierce traditional distinctions between interest in the built and natural environments, because one affects the other as surely as a reservoir built to slake city thirsts creates an accidental wilderness in an outlying area.”

J. B. Jackson could not have agreed more. “The older I grow and the longer I look at landscapes and seek to understand them,” he wrote, “the more convinced I am that their beauty is not simply an aspect but their very essence and that that beauty derives from the human presence.”

Jane Roy Brown is a travel writer and landscape historian in Conway, Massachusetts.

CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

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Edward McGuire of Enfield is a state land management forester with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. Alex Barrett is the manager of Yale University's teaching forest, the Yale Myers Forest.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF CONNECTICUT WOODLANDS

THE COLOR BLUE

*Exploring the Historic Ties Between
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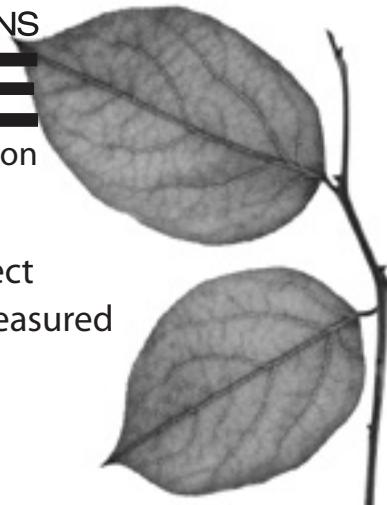
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WALKING THOUGHTS

A POEM

BY KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY


Scholars say
the boulders
along my Saturday trail
arrived from Vermont and New Hampshire
on mile-high ice
ten thousand years ago and more.
Mineral megaliths
destined as grains of humble soil
in quiet Killingworth,
in some unknowable future.
So scholars say.

Poets might imagine it another way—
these boulders as
the thundering drummers in a
visual symphony
of surpassing genius
by an unknowable composer.
So works the poetic imagination.

The rocks
say nothing.
Ferns just nod and giggle,
sprouting like comic green coifs
from the boulder's sculltops,
which they share with red cedars
that preen for a bit of sunlight
from soilless cracks
at unlikely angles,
while lichen and moss touch slow
paint brushes to
the mica-flecked surfaces
of what scholars say
the glaciers left behind.

Scholars, poets, rocks.
Walkers.

Kathleen Groll Connolly is a landscape designer (Speaking of Landscapes) in Old Saybrook, where she has long served on the town Tree Committee. She also is a business writer and organic gardener. Her poems have been published here, in the Long River Run anthology, the journal Pisgah, and elsewhere.



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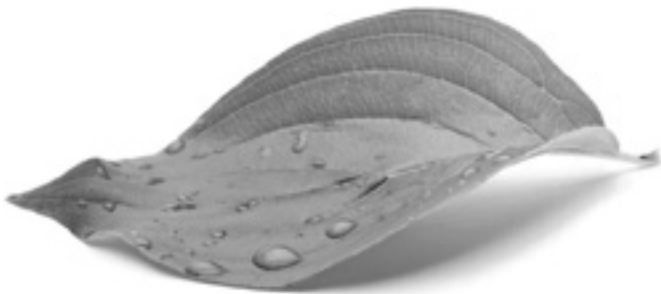
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THE FOURTH FOREST

A P O E M

BY KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY

Its hills and valleys
faced the sun, stumped, stubbled,
three times since that century
when someone of British descent
traveled south from Massachusetts.
Clear-cut, then cut and cut again,
by that insistent immigrant,
by those insistent people.

But insistence is not reserved for
settlers.

Maples, beech and birch
know the word. Sassafras and mountain laurel
have their own lexicon.

Even the bare rocks
of collapsing stone foundations
recall they were rocks
before they were foundations.

Gravity and weather never forgot how
to undo the work
of oxen, stoneboat and crowbar.

Forest kilns and logsplitters
decay, silent,
while oaks arch
over slate headstones in tiny cemeteries,
where the names of the interred
melt like fingerprints in sand.



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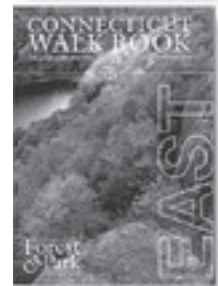
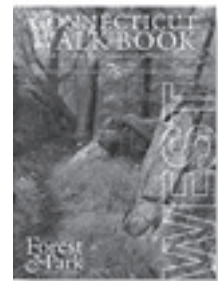
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