

CONNECTICUT Woodlands



FOUR TREES CAN THE FOREST ADAPT TO NEW PROBLEMS?

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KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY

A painted turtle (Chrysemys picta picta) suns itself above the warm August waters of Selden Creek.
 See page 20.

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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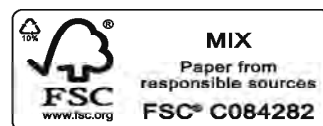
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CONTENTS



On the Cover:

"Charter Oak," by Charles DeWolf Brownell.

WADSWORTH ATHENEUM

This issue's theme, "Four Trees," is inspired by Paul Greenberg's book, *Four Fish*, in which he analyzes the state of four fish humans have relied on for centuries. The book won the James Beard award and a Grantham Prize Award of Special Merit.



FEATURES

- 6 I. OAK.**
Venerable and vulnerable.
By Edward McGuire and Alex Barrett.
- 10 II. SUGAR MAPLE.**
The old favorite faces stress.
By Thomas Worthley.
- 12 III. ASH.**
A common tree begins battle with an invasive insect.
By Gail Braccidiferro MacDonald.
- 15 IV. BLACK LOCUST.**
Good for fencing, bad for power lines.
By Christine Woodside.
- 20 IMAGINING SELDEN ISLAND.**
From quarry to wildlife haven.
By Kathleen Groll Connolly.
- 23 A CENTURY SINCE THE FIRST CONNECTICUT STATE PARK.**
It's almost time to celebrate.
By Christine Woodside.

DEPARTMENTS

- 4 LETTER.**
Father of the Everglades.
- 4 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.**
How much do we really know about trees?
By Eric Lukingbeal.
- 5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE.**
Going beyond conflict to solutions.
By Eric Hammerling.
- 5 EDITOR'S NOTE.**
After the storm.
By Christine Woodside.
- 24 FROM THE LAND.**
Why was it called Hartford Election Cake?
By Jean Crum Jones.
- 26 ESSENTIAL FACTS OF LIFE.**
Meet an exceptional teacher: The outdoor-oriented Lynn Kochiss.
By Lori Paradis Brant.
- 28 WalkCT**
Obesity rates to rise: Parks could help reverse.
By Leslie Lewis.
- 29 OBITUARIES**
Charles Foster. Martha Daniells Austin.

Father of the Everglades

I am the historian for the New Haven Bird Club. In 2007, we celebrated our centennial. In the years leading up to that, I did a lot of research on our history. We have a couple of lists of our charter members from 1907 and Ernest and Anna [Coe] (*see Connecticut Woodlands, Fall 2012*) appear on them. In my initial search for information on the charter members, I didn't find out much more than the fact that he owned the Elm City Nursery.



They dropped off our membership roll in 1923. Note: we did not have a yearbook during 1924–1925 when they moved to Florida.

Many of the men who were members back then had gone to Yale. I searched Yale's archives and couldn't find any evidence of him graduating from there. However, I did see that he took some classes. Since he had such a limited association with Yale, there was nothing to find in a yearbook at Sterling Library, and I gave up searching for him shortly thereafter.

Some time later, I was looking for other information at the Whitney Library of the New Haven Museum and came across a photo of him in a Rotary Club directory from 1924. That sparked my interest again. So I wandered over to the card catalog file and looked up his name. There was a reference to a 1951 obituary with his name in one of the manuscript collections. I looked it up and started reading:

"Mr. Ernest F. Coe, 84, father of the movement which established Florida's Everglades National Park. . . ."

"What!?" I said to myself. That's about how old my Ernest Coe would have been, but maybe this is someone else because I've never heard of this after reading 100 years of New Haven Bird Club minutes and other archives. Reading on through the next two paragraphs just made me shake my head more and more. Then getting to the paragraph about his birth, Yale (which I knew was in error or at least a misrepresentation), and moving to Florida right when he dropped off our roll, I knew this was the same guy. Incredible!

So, thanks for adding to my knowledge base about him. The two things I was most impressed with your article were that (1) you caught that he didn't graduate from Yale. I found that in error in other places than just the obituary . . . and (2) you were as surprised as me that once he left Connecticut, it doesn't seem that he ever looked back. As I mentioned, after looking through a century of materials in our archives, I never saw any reference to him after he and Anna moved south. This fact is the reason why it was such a shock to learn of his involvement in Everglades National Park. We had plenty of other folks who moved away, but they sent letters, came back for a lecture, or just maintained their membership from afar. Nothing like that from him and Anna.

John Triana, New Haven

How much do we really know about trees?

BY ERIC LUKINGBEAL



This issue of *Connecticut Woodlands* takes a close look at four trees—oak, sugar maple, ash, and black locust. All are now common here, but one—ash—may be far less common in only a decade or so, as the emerald ash borer beetles get a foothold. Another—sugar maple—may be less common as it creeps north as the climate keeps on warming. Many consider black locust an exotic invasive, though I find them quite attractive, especially when viewed as a tree line from a distance. Everyone knows our sturdy oaks, of course. As I wrote the preceding sentence, though, I wondered how well we as a modern people know our tree species.

In the 1950s, I attended a summer YMCA camp. One of the counselors drilled us on the identities of most of the large species along the camp's deep woods trails. He used the leaf size and shape, and sometimes bark color and texture. His teaching method was giving repeated oral quizzes. We learned to identify 40 species. I still know them and have used what I learned to identify others. My efforts to get better at this have been helped by buying David Allen Sibley's *The Sibley Guide to Trees* (Knopf, 2009). The first 35 or so pages introduce the reader to tree taxonomy, names, and identification. I've reread this section several times; it's the best short primer on learning tree species.

Mr. Sibley makes the point that our brains are good at recognizing patterns, and that is the starting point for learning tree species. The next point he makes is to get field experience. Arboreta, where trees are often labeled, are ideal. We here in Connecticut are lucky to have Connecticut College (in New London), Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens (in Stamford), and several Hartford parks. I have to say it's too bad that Bushnell Park in Hartford has not been able to keep up with its labeling. Only a small percentage of its trees are labeled, and the number of trees has declined from its peak. But the trees themselves are often spectacular, mature examples of individual species.

My personal favorites are the bald cypress, turkey oak, and sweet gum. Connecticut Forest & Park Association's longtime board member, Ed Richardson, still leads the tree walks at Bushnell Park and in Hartford's old cemeteries such as Cedar Hill. A walk with Ed is a great way to learn more about trees.

I am gratified to learn that, like my YMCA camp of long ago, CFPA's education programs use tree identification as a teaching tool. The Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center offers a multi-part course in tree identification for those who are serious about improving their skills.

I asked Steve Broderick, forest and program director at Goodwin, for his thoughts. Here's what he said:

I believe that a basic ability to identify some of the most common trees and shrubs, coupled with some basic understanding of plant succession and shade tolerance, can open up a whole new world of understanding for forest owners and users. Tree farmers can begin to understand the hows and whys of management, and recreationalists can begin to understand how a forest got to look like it does, and how it is likely

EDITOR'S NOTE

After the storm

If we ever needed a reminder of how very vulnerable 21st-century American civilization remains, tropical storm Sandy on October 29–30 was it. In Connecticut, violent post-tropical cyclone winds worked on trees and water. More than 620,000 electric customers lost service (about a third of the state)—most of them for at least six days, according to federal energy statistics the Associated Press compiled.

The storm crippled the Northeast's economy, travel, and simple communication. Well pumps lay idle, houses broke apart and flooded, and the coast's topography shifted. At least 7,270 property owners applied for help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

High winds whipped around my small riverfront town for 5 or 6 hours. I had felt all day as if we were just waiting. After 4 p.m. I got antsy and went for a run with the dog. The rain and wind decided to pick up as I was out there. A giant pine branch broke off and thwumped onto a neighbor's car. I realized how stupid I was, venturing out in that mayhem, and sprinted home as the giant trees of Straits Road waved like warning monsters. Lesson learned. Nature is violent. We are not in control. Respect this.

By 9:15 p.m. on October 29, the rain and wind stopped for a period. My husband and I drove a mile to the flooded public landing in Deep River, on the lower Connecticut River. The full-moon tide mixed with storm surge covered most of the parking lot and reached onto the grass. The air felt warm. Crickets were going crazy in our back yard. The full moon provided our only outside light, showing piles of branches and sticks.

We were lucky. Sandy attacked Connecticut lightly compared with our neighbors in New York and New Jersey. The Jersey shore will never look the same. The latest death toll is 97 within a 65-mile radius of New York City, including 3 in Connecticut. Many of us have family and friends who endured weeks of no power or water in New York and New Jersey. Let's learn from this latest disaster. Make plans for emergencies. Advocate back-up plans for escaping, staying warm, and eating. Think of how precariously civilization teeters on its infrastructure. Understand that our survival depends on dealing with violent storms.

Christine Woodside, Editor

to change in the future if left alone. Only with this understanding can folks begin to see how various disturbances, be they from weather or people with chainsaws, will impact forest composition and wildlife habitat. So I see a course like this as a gateway to a whole variety of educational directions one can take.

Should we be able to identify trees? Should our kids be taught how to identify different species? Is there utility in learning to identify trees? My answer to all of these questions is "yes."

Eric Lukingbeal is a lawyer who lives in Granby.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Going beyond conflict to solutions

BY ERIC HAMMERLING



During the 2012 presidential and vice-presidential debates, I watched with great hopes that one of the candidates would say something inspirational about the environment, climate change, the need for land stewardship, or perhaps even announce a new jobs program dedicated to the nation's 700 million acres of national parks, forests, or other public lands (it is the 80-year anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps in 2013, after all). Instead, the candidates competed for who would drill more on public lands,

who could reduce the price of gasoline more, and who would mention coal in the most positive light to best appeal to potential voters in Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and elsewhere.

I was disappointed in the candidates and equally disappointed that the debate moderators didn't ask about environmental issues to push the candidates deeper than espousing platitudes about achieving "energy independence."

About one week after the third presidential debate, Hurricane Sandy struck the eastern seaboard, and all of a sudden, everyone was talking about climate change. One political pundit noted that Hurricane Sandy formed because "the weather was angry that it had been ignored in the debates." Scientists admitted that although it would be difficult to draw a straight line between any single storm and climate change, the carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases building in the atmosphere certainly did "load the dice" such that our odds are now greater that we will experience more future storms like Hurricane Sandy and worse.

Most mainstream media focused on the conflict, "Is Hurricane Sandy a result of climate change or isn't it?" and missed another opportunity to talk about solutions. Now that the elections are over, and before the next round of campaigning begins, can we finally get serious about focusing on solutions, and will we actually do something about climate change in the United States?

You have probably done many things, small and large, to live lighter on the planet. At the state level, one critical thing we can do is a better job managing our forests. Connecticut is blessed with forests that, according to a 2012 U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service study, cover 72.6 percent of our land area. In addition, Connecticut has the distinction of leading the nation in the percentage of forest canopy that covers our urban areas (67.4 percent).

Sustainably managed forests provide climate change mitigation benefits over time, especially when managed to produce wood products. This is true because wood harvested for wood products decays more slowly than when it decomposes or burns in unmanaged forests. Harvested wood products that have long life cycles after production can store carbon for decades into the future. For managed forests, the recognition that harvested wood products increase sequestered carbon pools is critical in establishing the full range of additional carbon that is stored during the life cycle of long-lived forest products.

A classic example of managing forests to sequester carbon, create value, *and* support jobs is the furniture created from fallen trees by our friends at City Bench. Connecticut Forest & Park Association owns a beautiful conference table, bench, and coffee table created by City Bench. The carbon in those pieces will likely be sequestered for generations rather than being released through decomposition into the atmosphere and soil.

While we wait for policies to catch up, do something as an individual about climate change. Appreciate the multiple values of wood products. Encourage sustainably managed forests. Conflict may snatch the headlines, but solutions must be a higher priority for all of us.

Eric Hammerling lives in West Hartford.



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF FORESTRY

A descendent of the Charter Oak grows in Bushnell Park.

I. OAK

Venerable and vulnerable

BY EDWARD MCGUIRE AND ALEX BARRETT

The famous Charter Oak in Hartford, centuries old in 1687, was a white oak. According to legend, in that year Captain Joseph Wadsworth secreted away the charter of the colony of Connecticut inside this venerable oak to prevent its seizure by the king's agent, Sir Edmund Andros. Legend has it that generations of natives had held their councils under the tree, where a delegation prevailed upon Samuel Wyllys, who owned the land starting in 1614, to spare the tree as he was clearing his homestead. By 1850, the Charter Oak measured more than 10 feet in diameter. Its hollow was so large that 24 firemen from New Haven once stood together inside it. On August 21, 1856, winds from a strong storm toppled the tree; it broke off about 6 feet above the ground. Many came to view the fallen giant as the Samuel Colt Armory band played a dirge. The Hartford Courant's headline declared, "The Charter Oak Is Prostrate!" Acorns were gathered to produce new

oaks descended from the Charter Oak. A scion planted in 1871 by the First Company Governor's Foot Guard stands in Bushnell Park in Hartford, and there are

others throughout the state. The Charter Oak Chair in the General Assembly's Senate Chamber in the State Capitol was carved from wood salvaged from the great tree. A monument erected in 1905 stands at the corner of Charter Oak Avenue and Charter Oak Place in Hartford, near where the tree stood.

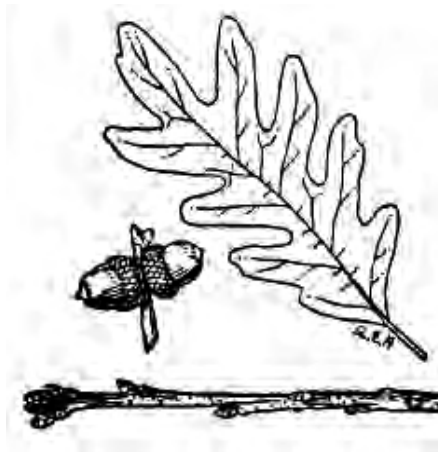
The Charter Oak story makes clear: Oaks have dominated the upland deciduous forests of the eastern half of the United States for millennia, and they have been a central component in the political, cultural, and economic fabric of Connecticut. In this article and in the one that follows in the spring issue, we will explain why oaks are so important, and what some foresters are doing to encourage these important species.

The oak-hickory forest dominates southern New England, and oaks typically outnumber hickories by a wide margin. The importance of oak in Connecticut's history and ecology cannot be overstated. Native Americans used fire to make and maintain an open upland forest of oak, hickory, and chestnut, with blueberry and huckleberry underneath. These forests supplied food for the Native Americans and their game birds and animals and made for more favorable hunting conditions.

More Stories of Oaks in History

Connecticut held a constitutional convention in Hartford in 1902 to consider revisions to the state constitution. Each of the 168 delegates was given a pin oak (*Quercus palustris*) seedling supplied by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Senator Joseph R. Hawley to commemorate the event. Delegates took their seedlings back to their hometowns to plant them to commemorate the convention. In 2002, Glenn Dreyer of Connecticut College and Ed Richardson located and documented 74 surviving Constitution Pin Oaks. The largest survivor is in Avon and boasts a diameter of about 4 feet.

Oaks also appear in the imagery and symbology of many institutions throughout Connecticut. Witness the shield of the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and the seal of the University of Connecticut, each bearing oak leaves and acorns. When the Land Grant Act of 1862 provided federal funds to states to "provide colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts," the Storrs Agricultural School, later to become the University of Connecticut, was not yet in existence. In 1863, the state contracted with Yale to send Connecticut's land grant funds to the university, and the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale was designated Connecticut's land grant college. William H. Brewer was the first chairman of agriculture at Sheffield and a professor there from 1864 to 1903. Austin F. Hawes, Connecticut state forester from 1904 to 1908 and 1921 to 1944, considered Mr. Brewer the father of forestry in Connecticut. In the 1885 State Board of Agriculture Report, Mr. Brewer stated, "The manufacture of wooden things laid the



CONNECTICUT FOREST & PARK ASSOCIATION

The white oak, which grows to a majestic size, has rounded leaves and large acorns.

foundation of Connecticut's greatness, for after all, this state is a manufacturing state." After the Storrs Agricultural School was established in 1881, it replaced the Sheffield School as the state's Land Grant college. The Yale School of Forestry was established in 1900 with an endowment from Gifford Pinchot and his parents, James and Mary Pinchot. Gifford Pinchot, born in Simsbury in 1865, was the first chief of the USDA Forest Service and was later twice elected governor of Pennsylvania.

UConn's motto is the Latin word *robur*, which means both oak and strength, as the university explains in the history of its seal: "The University of Connecticut's visual symbol is the ancient and mighty oak. Beautiful and sacred, the venerable oak is synonymous with wisdom, longevity, endurance and hospitality." The university's history goes on to



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

Left, University of Connecticut Seal

U.S. MINT

Right, the Charter Oak without leaves covers the back of the Connecticut quarter, released in 1999.

say that *robur* "symbolizes moral as well as physical strength":

For Connecticut and the University, the oak's significance is compelling. . . . The [white] oak is now the official state tree and an international symbol of freedom. . . . In 1884, the commencement exercises of the second graduating class of the Storrs Agricultural School were held in an oak grove on Mr. Storrs's land. This grove was a favorite gathering place for open-air meetings throughout the early days of the school.

Strong, Beautiful, Valuable

The scientific name for the oak genus, *Quercus*, is believed to be derived from the Celtic for "fine tree." The major oak species of Connecticut are northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), white oak (*Q. alba*), black oak (*Q. velutina*), scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*), and chestnut oak (*Q. prinus*). Swamp white oak (*Q. bicolor*) and pin oak (*Q. palustris*) are found in or near some forested wetland or lowland sites, with pin oak limited mostly to the Connecticut River Valley and shoreline. The same qualities that make the pin oak well suited to these tough environs have made it a favored street tree for landscape architects throughout the state.

Also native to Connecticut are two species found in isolated pockets: the post oak (*Q. stellata*) and scrub (or bear) oak (*Q. ilicifolia*), a fire-dependent shrub species. Oak fall foliage is not as vibrant as is that of the maples and birches, but oak leaves turn color later and some *Q. coccinea* trees provide a late-season burst of deep scarlet.

Oaks possess a rare combination of attributes that make them particularly valuable to people for forest products and to wildlife for food and habitat. Oak forests are one of the world's best all-around renewable resources. Oak wood is strong and durable. Oak products include architectural wood beams, flooring, paneling, furniture, cabinets, veneer, bridges, railroad ties, mine timbers, and fuelwood. Red oak wood has an attractive color and dramatic grain patterns. Kroon Hall, completed in 2009 as the new home of the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale in New Haven, has

continued on page 8

THE CHARTER OAK STORY MAKES CLEAR: OAKS HAVE DOMINATED THE UPLAND DECIDUOUS FORESTS OF THE EASTERN HALF OF THE UNITED STATES FOR MILLENNIA, AND THEY HAVE BEEN A CENTRAL COMPONENT IN THE POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC FABRIC OF CONNECTICUT.



OAK

continued from page 7

extensive interior red oak paneling, more than half of which was harvested from the Yale-Myers Forest in northeastern Connecticut. White oak's natural decay resistance and imperviousness to liquids make it ideal for wine and bourbon barrels as well as for shipbuilding, especially for keels and ribs. White oak from Connecticut and other locations is being used in the restoration of the historic whaling ship *Charles W. Morgan* at Mystic Seaport. Oak logs and lumber are in demand for export to other countries, helping boost our nation's exports.

Acorns are an important fall and winter food source for numerous species of wildlife, including deer, turkey, bear, gray squirrel, eastern chipmunk, porcupine, muskrat, white-footed mouse, pileated woodpecker, ruffed grouse, wood duck, blue jay, and many songbirds. A diet rich in acorns has been found to increase the percentage of fat in the milk of nursing black bears. Blue jays have been credited with transporting and burying prodigious amounts of acorns for later consumption. Luckily for the oaks, these jays are often forgetful, and many acorns are left in the ground to germinate.

Oak seedlings are a favorite food of deer. Extremely dense deer populations throughout the state and their subsequent browsing of young oaks makes the regeneration of oak all the more challenging. In addition to providing acorns and forage, oaks' large size, long life, and overall sturdiness make them particularly good den and cavity trees. Their rough bark, with its ridges and valleys, also benefits insect-foraging birds that find prey in this intricate landscape.

A study in Pennsylvania provides evidence that a reduction of oak in favor of red maple may reduce forest bird species' richness and abundance, particularly long-distance migrants, residents, and bark-gleaning species (Rodewald and Abrams, 2002).

Survey Markers

The same sturdiness that makes oaks long-lived forest denizens makes them particularly well suited for surveyors looking to mark humans' claim to land. A study by the Harvard University Forest of the records of witness trees from land surveys right before European settlement of New England towns showed the composition of the forests in eastern and central Connecticut to be 60 to 80 percent oak, with oak slightly less dominant in much of western Connecticut. Chestnut abundance was 1 to 20 percent, black birch about 3 percent (Cogbill et al., 2002). By 1998, the U.S. Forest Service inventory of Connecticut's forests showed black birch abundance at 20 to more than 50 percent throughout much of the state, with oak generally between 5 and 49 percent. The reasons for the dramatic increase in black birch, at the expense of oak, were well stated by forester Steve Broderick in Connecticut Woodlands (winter 2001):

Today, the very word *clear-cutting* is anathema to most landowners. Even when the existing timber stand is mature, partial harvests rule the day. Some are designed to promote the growth of other, more shade-tolerant species like sugar maple or beech. Some are designed to minimize the aesthetic impact while realizing some

income for the owner. Others are designed to remove all valuable timber without bothering to take anything else. None of them have a chance of resulting in a new oak forest, barring fire or hurricane.

These partial harvests Broderick explains have regenerated black birch but not oak. To regenerate, oak needs large openings in the canopy. This regeneration ecology will be discussed in detail in the second installment of this series.

Oak's germination and characteristics make it a beneficiary of fire compared with black birch and other competitors. The modern-day rarity of landscape fire in the eastern United States has hindered oak regeneration and competitiveness. Major destructive hurricanes, such as those of 1938, 1815, and 1635, occur approximately only every 150 years in southern New England. Oak is declining in Connecticut and throughout its traditional range in the East. Scientists are monitoring and studying this change with much concern. Red oak, which used to be the most common tree in Pennsylvania, has been supplanted by red maple. In a recent issue of *The Forestry Source*, Pennsylvania State University professor James C. Finley, who also directs the Center for Private Forests there, said that landowners might care about red maples' takeover "if they like squirrels and turkeys and those kinds of things, but for the most part, the majority of people don't pay attention to it. Red maple took over in Pennsylvania back in the 1970s and has been replacing red oak and other oak species, primarily because of mortality and harvesting practices."

Wildlife biologist William J. McShea and colleagues wrote in 2007 in the *Journal of Wildlife Management*,

There is an impending crisis in the decline of important tree species and the accompanying loss of wildlife habitat and ecosystem function in hardwood forests of North America. Specifically, we are concerned about the declining abundance of oaks, because acorns are arguably the most important food resource for birds and mammals during the dormant season in hardwood ecosystems. . . . A significant reduction in the abundance of oak will have profound effects on wildlife communities and a solution to this problem will take decades to bear fruit.

Oaks produce bumper crops of acorns every several years, sometimes in two consecutive years. Acorns in the white oak group mature in one growing season. Red/black oak group acorns take two years to mature. Many acorns are destroyed by insects, principally acorn weevils, moth larvae, and gall wasps. Acorns have hypogeal germination, meaning that the cotyledons remain below ground so the root collar with its latent buds remains under the soil surface. After germination, oak seedlings grow very slowly above ground and instead devote most of their energy to growing a large and strong root system with a deep taproot. Black birch and red maple seedlings do just the opposite, with epigeal (cotyledons emerging above ground, so the root collar is above ground) germination and growing quickly above ground at the expense of root growth. Oak seedlings are moderately “shade tolerant,” meaning they can grow in some amount of shade, but they are not as tolerant of shade as maples and black birch are.

Barring drought conditions, which oaks tolerate much better than other species do, black birch and red maple seedlings will initially outgrow and shade out oak seedlings. But a typical spring surface fire turns the tables in favor of oak. Fire “topkills” seedling and sapling stems, but the root system remains protected underground. Oak



WADSWORTH ATHENEUM

Charles DeWolf Brownell's painting of the Charter Oak depicts the grace of the tree believed to be hundreds of years old when Hartford residents hid their charter in it. King James II was trying to consolidate colonies and restrict trade.

seedlings and saplings re-sprout from the buds on their root collars, but birches and maples are much less likely to sprout following fire. The oaks' strong root systems then provide a competitive advantage, particularly in full sunlight, where oak “seedling sprouts” grow fast and straight. Jeff Ward and George Stephens of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, studying a stand 45 years after an intense surface fire, found three times more oak in the burned area than the unburned area (Ward and Stephens, 1989).

This article is the first of two. The second, “Creative Destruction,” will appear in the spring issue of Connecticut Woodlands. It will discuss how oak stands are regenerated through “irregular shelterwood” harvests in Connecticut's state forests and Yale University's forests.

Ed 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.

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Your Trees



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Tapping sugar maples in late winter has been part of American life as long as their sap has flowed.

Hardly a late winter goes by without writers paying homage to the sugar maple for its role as New England nurturer, providing warmth during cold evenings when we burn its logs in the wood stoves or in evaporator fires used to boil its sap. Summer arrives and we wax eloquent again on maple-lined avenues or the banks of fishing streams or woodland edges where we might while away our summers picking berries for the pancakes on which we'll pour the maple syrup. Autumn comes, and writers again extol the sugar maple, this time for its colorful contributions to the countryside.

I would like to discuss the myriad ways in which the sugar maple is useful and valuable for everything from bowling pins to figured guitar parts. But I have to admit it has likely been done already. Small would be any contribution I might make here to the body of text that reminds us how the sugar maples are integral to the daily activities, community character, and seasonal rhythms in our lives as New Englanders.

A Multi-Talented Tree, Threatened

Here in lower-altitude Connecticut, even in perfect conditions, the sugar maple is growing at the edge of its range. You'll find it more abundant to the north, and where it thrives to the south, it tends to do best at higher altitudes with cooler temperatures. In the last several decades, as the climate alters in response to global patterns, new threats to sugar maples have

II. SUGAR MAPLE

The old favorite faces stress

BY THOMAS WORTHLEY

arrived. Suffice it to say I fervently hope that the sugar maple remains a component of the Connecticut landscape and that it can adapt to changing climate patterns and the threats of insects and disease I'll outline here.

Tolerant of shade, able to live a long time (while producing prolific numbers of highly viable seeds), and fiercely competitive on good, fertile sites, the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* Marshall) might just possess the characteristics it needs to continue as a key species in our for-

est ecosystems. That said, just like any other organism, the sugar maple faces a wide variety and number of potential threats, both old and new, that can affect its health, life, and very presence in our woodlands. Insects, fungal diseases, and pollutants lead the list of concerns for sugar maples.

The current headline threat to sugar maples in Connecticut is the Asian longhorned beetle, or ALB, an insect currently causing damage to maples in Massachusetts. Many who work with trees are looking for the ALB, a nonnative, invasive pest that causes damage by boring through the woody portions of a tree. It is a large black and white insect with long antennae. In the adult stage, these insects can cause serious structural damage to trees, and although they spread slowly, they can remain undetected for years. A quarantine exists in the Worcester, Massachusetts, area while state and federal agencies try to eradicate the ALB population in that area. Partially because of the presence of this pest, wood from Massachusetts is regulated and can enter Connecticut only after being inspected and a permit issued. Detailed information about ALB can be found at www.ct.gov/dep/alb or nracs.usda.gov.

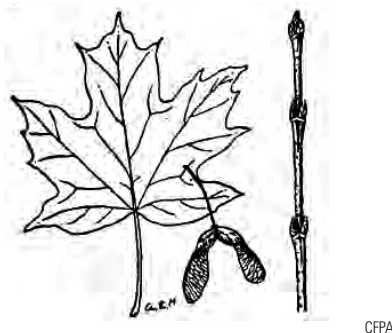
Native Pests Can Hurt, Too

Insect pests native to New England and co-evolving with the sugar maple are not usually a serious problem because the tree has developed defensive adaptations. But during times when conditions allow for population outbreaks, insects such as saddled prominent caterpillar, forest tent caterpillar, maple trumpet skeletonizer, and maple leaf cutter can affect growth and tree health. Most insect pests affect the foliage of sugar maples, and in turn can be preyed upon by birds and other creatures. ALB is the exception, being hidden in the tree and boring through the woody portions.

Various disease organisms can also affect sugar maples. Some organisms can take advantage of stressed or weakened trees, and some become problematic under certain environmental or weather conditions. Foliar fungi are always present in the environment, but excessively moist conditions (lots of rain or high humidity) during the growing season can give them an advantage. Anthracnose fungus (*Gloeosporium apocryptum*) can cause dead brown (necrotic) areas on leaves, and tar spot (*Rhytisma acerinum*) is a leaf disease that starts as small black dots that expand and combine to form large, black thickened areas. Stem diseases such as those caused by *Nectria* or *Eutypella* fungi are generally manifested as cankers (depressed or sunken areas with callus tissue around the edges) or galls (raised bumps or outgrowths on the bark). These problems affect the appearance, structural strength, and value of trees but are not usually fatal.

More serious are various vascular diseases that can enter the tree through wounds to the bark, branches, or roots that allow entry of fungal spores. These can affect the conductive tissue and woody portions of the tree and can result in trunk rots, stains, and hollow places. Otherwise healthy trees might internally seal off or “compartmentalize” minor wounds, but the damaged portion stays with the tree for the remainder of its life. A common killer of shade trees is verticillium wilt (*Verticillium albo-atrum*), a fungal disease that gains entry to the tree by means of damaged roots.

Perhaps it is apparent that the relative resistance or susceptibility of maples to disease and insect threats can be related to other stresses to which a tree is exposed, such as wounds, soil compaction, flooding, or over-



The sugar maple's seed and leaf both are narrower than those of the nonnative Norway maple.

crowding. The sugar maple competes well on a good site and, within that narrow range of conditions, can out-compete or outlast just about any other tree in the woods. But the sugar maple is also sensitive to slight changes in that ideal balance of site conditions, and certain changes can cause it to rapidly lose its competitive ability. A heretofore healthy shade tree subjected to soil chemistry changes from road salt, fertilizers and pesticides, soil compaction, over-mulching, or the like can become susceptible to other disease problems and suddenly appear stressed. Air pollution, digging in the vicinity of the root system, livestock grazing, acid rain, and chemical spills are all examples of environmental factors that can result in stress conditions for sugar maples in both urban and woodland settings. The implications of gradual warming due to climate change are the subject of current research and speculation. Subtle changes in temperature regime can in turn affect such things as moisture regime, precipitation volumes, growing season length, timing of bud break, and perhaps the activity of insects and fungal diseases. Which of these factors will affect sugar maples in a negative way or a positive way remains to be seen. The concern is that the ideal natural range of the sugar maple might shift to the north.

Sometimes maples appear to decline and there doesn't seem to be a single identifiable reason. It is not unusual that several of the factors mentioned can be operating in combination, causing incremental stresses and resulting in trees or stands exhibiting reduced twig and foliage growth, early fall coloring, crown dieback, and other symptoms of a condition called “maple decline.” For example, a serious drought or an insect defoliation can cause a tree to use up nourishing compounds stored in reserve, lead-

ing to internal chemical imbalances and increased disease susceptibility. A broad-scale stress factor such as air pollution, acid rain, or severe drought can result in landscape-scale maple decline, and such declines have been seen in the past. Warming climate in our area might also be a contributing factor to any sugar maple decline currently being observed.

Stress Management Techniques

So, what can we do? The answer to that question is more about things we should not do. Beginning with an understanding that our favorite trees can be subject to numerous threats and stresses, it is helpful to know that they have internal defenses that work to protect the tree most of the time. We can help by NOT adding to the stress load. Avoid activities that can result in changes to soil structure and chemical balance (be careful with de-icing salt and chemical fertilizers). Avoid soil compaction and root and stem wounding by logging, farm, and lawn equipment. Graze livestock elsewhere and don't over-tap. Burying root systems under too much mulch, retaining walls, and pavement can facilitate the entry of injurious diseases and insects. Be aware that sugar maples can be quite robust but are sensitive to changes. In woodland areas where sugar maples are principle components of the stand, remember that trees thrive best when they have light and space to grow. Your forester can help guide you regarding the ideal stocking levels for the sugar maple—that is, the number of trees, density, and spatial arrangement for optimum health and productivity, based on the age of the stand and the site conditions. In some cases, a thinning might keep our sugar maples thriving. If we control those potential stresses that are within our ability to control, perhaps our sugar maples can take care of the rest, and be there for us for many seasons.

Tom Worthley is assistant extension professor at the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension in Haddam.

Thanks to the USFS Silvics of Forest Trees, USDA Plants Database, and Cornell University Fact Sheets for information used to prepare this article.



Tracking the half-inch-long beetle that is destroying six-story-tall ash trees brought Terri Cain of Guilford eye to eye with wasps on sticky June days in 2011. She couldn't have been happier with the task.

"The pretty cool part is you can look up close at the wasp," she said of her volunteer stint as a WaspWatcher. "You can look at their faces. It's pretty interesting."

Cain was one of a cadre of 55 volunteers throughout the state who united in the effort to identify the extent of the local emerald ash borer infestation and help contain the spread of the tiny invasive beetle that has devastated huge populations of ash trees in more than a dozen states. "I'm very interested in invasive insects," Ms. Cain said. "I want to be part of the solution."

Ms. Cain is a Connecticut Master Gardener, a group that made

III. ASH

*A common tree begins battle with an
invasive insect*

BY GAIL BRACCIDIFERRO MACDONALD

the WaspWatcher program an official outreach activity, said Claire Rutledge, assistant agricultural scientist for the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station. The WaspWatcher program, which began in Maine and is now popular throughout New England, the mid-Atlantic states, and parts of the Midwest and Canada,

capitalizes on the natural work of the smoky winged beetle bandit. This native, non-stinging wasp captures jewel beetles, the emerald ash borer among these, from the tops of the 50- to 70-foot-tall trees. The wasps take the beetles down to underground nests and feed them to their larvae. Each WaspWatcher volunteer stays at ground level to monitor several wasp colonies over a three-day period. Because the wasps prefer to make their nests in sandy soil, the volunteers often find themselves on baseball diamonds netting the wasps, bagging and labeling the beetles they are carrying, and submitting these samples to scientists.

"Because of their work, we can say tentatively that there are a lot of areas of the state that are not infested," Ms. Rutledge said. That's

Above, can the mighty ash—source of shade and valuable products like baseball bats— fend off the green beetle that tunnels behind its bark?

ROGER SANDERSON / FLICKR

the good news. Unfortunately, however, the pest has been found in five New Haven County towns. Because it spreads quite easily, despite a quarantine that prohibits ash lumber and nursery stock from leaving New Haven County, the threat remains for the rest of the state's ash.

"The odds are extremely high it will spread," Ms. Rutledge said. The tree's most prized qualities make it so vulnerable to this voracious predator.

From Medicine to Furniture

The ash (genus *Fraxinus*) has a long and noble history in mythology, and its wood carries significant commercial value. Yggdrasil, the world tree in Viking mythology, was an ash whose boughs extended over all the earth's countries and whose roots bore down to the underworld. According to Trees for Life, a group dedicated to restoring the Caledonian forest in the Scottish Highlands, in British folklore the ash was sought for its curative qualities. A teaspoon of ash sap was given to strengthen newborn infants, and children who were suffering from weak limbs might be cured by passing naked through a cleft in the ash.

In America, Passamaquoddy legend held that the first tribal members originated from the bark of the ash. Tribal baskets were woven from the brown ash, native to the wetlands and stream banks in the areas of what is now Maine where the tribe lives.

Ash was also the wood of choice for American Indians who used it to craft their arrows and arrow shafts. Since many hundreds of years ago, the wood of the white ash that predominates in Connecticut's forests has been prized commercially for its tough and

continued on page 14



Top, Emerald ash borers bore holes into the bark.

Right, stripped bark shows the elaborate tunnels the beetles make.

CENTER FOR INVASIVE SPECIES AND
ECOSYSTEM HEALTH/EMERALDASHBORER.INFO

ASH

continued from page 13

elastic qualities. It is the go-to wood for sporting equipment ranging from tennis rackets and polo mallets to hockey sticks and, most predominantly, baseball bats. The tough and resilient wood can take an enormous amount of strain, meaning ash wood baseball bats are not likely to shatter nor cause injuries to the batter, said Graeme P. Berlyn, professor of forest management and the physiology of trees at the Yale University School of Forestry. “It is a very nice tree. It has a long history of human use,” Dr. Berlyn said. “It has great properties of resilience.”

About half of the most famous Major League bats of all—Louisville Sluggers—are produced from native white ash. This translates to some 20,000 trees annually, according to facts posted on the Louisville Slugger website.

Giant Ashes Are Famous

This resilience has been a factor in making the ash a top choice for shade trees and street trees. Several individual white ash trees are listed among Connecticut’s Notable Trees, a volunteer effort of the Connecticut Botanical Society, the Connecticut College Arboretum, and the Connecticut Urban Forest Council. Among these is a 110-foot-tall, 316-point white ash located in Fairfield. The mammoth specimen of *Fraxinus americana* has a circumference of 186 inches and an average spread of 78 feet.

Although the height and girth of the Fairfield ash make it a standout for its species, Christopher Martin, director of forestry for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, said many ash trees in the state stand tall and wide and could be as old as 200 years. They were saplings during the presidency of James Madison and the War of 1812.

Damage Arrived in a Firewood Load

But it is the trees’ wide range—the white ash ranges from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, south to Florida and the green ash from

ABOUT HALF OF THE MOST FAMOUS

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the Canadian Maritimes west to Alberta and south to Texas—and its commercial appeal as a firewood that has put it most at risk. Mr. Martin said one widely held theory is that the emerald ash borer was brought perilously close to Connecticut by folks who hauled a load of their favorite campfire wood with them when they traveled from Pennsylvania to Saugerties, New York. This Hudson River town is located about 100 miles from several of the Connecticut towns where the emerald ash borer has been detected. The ash tree composes between 10 percent and 15 percent of the entire forest canopy in the state, but is most prevalent in the western and north-western regions.

The tiny beetle is native to Asia and is believed to have been transported to the United States in wood packing pallets. It was first discovered in the United States in Detroit in 2002, and both the ubiquitous nature of the ash tree and the easy portability of both firewood and the beetle meant the pest was ravaging forests in 15 states within a short time. With no known biological control, the insect decimated the ash populations and cost literally millions of dollars in midwestern states.

One study published in 2010 in the journal *Ecological Economics* estimated that between 2009 and 2019, the emerald ash borer may necessitate the treatment, removal, and replacement of more than 17 million trees

across 25 states at a cost of \$10.7 billion. An October 30 report by the U.S. National Arboretum said the beetle already has killed more than 25 million trees in the country and continues to spread. It can infect a large, healthy tree and kill it within 1 to 3 years. The report also said one small Michigan city spent more than \$2 million to remove 2,000-plus dead or dying ash trees.

In New Haven County, some ash trees already were suffering from a fungus called ash yellows when the presence of the pest was detected. Mr. Martin said the dead and dying trees pose an economic threat to towns that must work to remove them, as well as a public safety threat because they are more apt to topple in their weakened states.

“We are strongly encouraging towns to do inventories of their trees,” Mr. Martin said. However, few municipal budgets allow towns to be very proactive in their approach to the problem, and there is no state or federal money yet available to help. “In the Midwest, where it is the worst, a few towns have filed bankruptcy over this,” Mr. Martin said.

Besides the economic impact, the weakening or loss of any species affects an entire ecosystem, Mr. Martin said. One solution to at least containing the spread of the pest in the state is simple: Don’t transport firewood. “The resiliency of any system is its diversity,” Mr. Martin said. “We’ve already lost the chestnut, the elm, and red pine. This would be just one more tree that we take for granted until it’s gone. This is worth fighting for.”

Ms. Cain agrees. That is why next summer, she will again add WaspWatching to her other pursuits as a yoga teacher and overseeing a local community garden. The activity is just one more way to work to contain the threat to the ash tree and to spread the word about its existence and the importance of containing the beetle.

“The more we can get the word out, the better,” she said.

Gail Braccidiferro MacDonald has been a reporter for many years. She teaches journalism at the University of Connecticut.



USDA

Beekeepers say black locust blooms make sweet honey, but many experts consider the tree an invasive.

IV. BLACK LOCUST

Good for fencing, bad for power lines

BY CHRISTINE WOODSIDE

One lowly black locust tree sent Greenwich into darkness last August 6. It happened during an ordinary summer thunderstorm that roared through Connecticut's westernmost town in the late afternoon. The spiny, tall, and almost spindly locust cracked and fell onto the power lines between a couple's backyard and the railroad tracks. Sparks arced. The couple dialed 911. Soon half the people in town lost electricity.

Call this bad luck. Foresters and landscapers don't like the black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), but not because of this incident. This particular tree stood and fell over in the wrong place at the wrong time. Any tree could have. But you could argue that this black locust knocked over the wires in this precise spot because it had sprouted by accident and grown up, forgotten, on one of those in-between strips of land, ownership not entirely certain. The reason the black locust found itself growing by the tracks was that it does very well in places no other living thing wants. And because it does so well in surprising places, foresters debate whether what tree expert Michael Dirr called "an alley-cat tree" is good for Connecticut's land.

An Invasive Resident Forever

The black locust has grown in the eastern United States for a long time—at least several hundred years. Many experts consider its persistent pushiness in Connecticut landscapes the proof that it invaded southern New England from its original range of the southern Appalachians and into Ohio. But that spread north happened a very long time ago. Connecticut historian of the pre-industrial countryside Eric Sloane wrote that farmers on Long Island learned how to use black locusts as hedge rows from the British, who had imported the trees from the southern Appalachians to Britain before proclaiming them no good because they tended to harbor borers and other harmful insects.

It's a thorny tree that never looks old even when it is old. Double spines stick out on the light-gray bark of the trunk, which, even at maturity, measures only as much as a foot and a half in diameter. Most trees will put up with substandard soils. The black

continued on page 19

CONNECTICUT FOREST & PARK ASSOCIATION HISTORIC MILESTONES

- 1895 Connecticut Forestry Association founded in the Weatogue section of Simsbury, Connecticut on December 30, 1895 at the residence of Reverend Horace Winslow.
- 1901 Facilitated establishment of the first state forester in the nation.
- 1901 Initiated a state forest acquisition policy, making Connecticut the first state in the nation able to acquire land for state forests.
- 1903 Encouraged the acquisition of the Portland (now Meshomasic) State Forest, the first state forest in New England.
- 1905 Secured enactment of the Connecticut Forest Fire Law, the first such law in New England.
- 1913 Secured enactment of the 10-Mill Law, the first reducing taxation on land committed to forestry.
- 1920 Envisioned, acquired, and donated Peoples State Forest to the state of Connecticut.
- 1921 Secured enactment of a bill authorizing state purchase of the first 100,000 acres of forest.
- 1923 Secured enactment of a bill requiring spark arrestors on railroad locomotives.
- 1928 Became incorporated as Connecticut Forest & Park Association.
- 1929 Established the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System. The Quinnipiac Trail was the first.
- 1930 Established the prototype for the Civilian Conservation Corps at Peoples State Forest.
- 1936 Published the first issue of Connecticut Woodlands magazine.
- 1937 Published the first volume of the *Connecticut Walk Book*.
- 1963 Secured enactment of Public Act 490, the first law in the nation to allow forests, farms, and open space to be taxed based upon use rather than development value.
- 1971 Secured enactment of the Landowner Liability Law to protect landowners hosting trails.
- 1986 Established the James L. Goodwin Forest & Park Center in Middlefield.
- 1986 Coordinated Project Learning Tree in Connecticut.
- 1991 Secured enactment of the Connecticut Forest Practices Act.
- 1993 Began as Connecticut coordinator of National Trails Day, the American Hiking Society's initiative. Connecticut Trails Day features more hikes than any other state.
- 2002 Secured enactment of the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2002, directing the National Park Service to study the feasibility of making these trails a National Scenic Trail.
- 2009 The federal government designated the 220-mile-long MMM Trail in Connecticut and Massachusetts as a National Scenic Trail, called the New England Trail.
- 2011 Led efforts to amend the state Landowner Liability Law to restore liability protection to municipalities on recreational lands.

CFPA

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Conservation Advocacy

Every year since 1897, CFPA has provided legislators with an Agenda for Connecticut's Land and People. CFPA's advocacy priorities have included securing adequate resources for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to manage state parks and forests; support the preservation of working forests and agricultural lands; and lead efforts to secure national scenic trail designation and ongoing support for the New England Trail.

Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails

The Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, established in 1929, is one of CFPA's most visible and lasting contributions to recreation. The Blue Trails total more than 825 miles in 88 towns. The infrastructure for managing this massive area consists of CFPA's trail stewardship director, the CFPA Trails Committee, and 100 volunteer trail managers who through work parties and ongoing maintenance activities donate more than 15,000 hours of volunteer time each year.

Environmental Education

Three elements make up CFPA's Environmental Education program: **1)** CFPA co-sponsors the nationally acclaimed Project Learning Tree (PLT) Program and offers hands-on professional development workshops for teachers and non-formal educators on forests and related natural resources topics; **2)** The James L. Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center in Hampton features native plant wildlife gardens, an 80-acre demonstration forest, a museum, hiking trails, and a classroom to provide forestry, wildlife, and general conservation education programs for youth and adults; and **3)** CFPA has long been known for its conservation-themed publications such as Connecticut Woodlands (published since 1936), the Connecticut Walk Books (published since 1937), and Forest Trees of Connecticut (recently republished in 2012).

Land Conservation

Over the past 100 years, CFPA has been instrumental in the acquisition of more than 100 state parks and forests for public use and enjoyment. CFPA owns properties or holds conservation restrictions on approximately 2,000 acres. The conservation priorities for the program are in lands associated with working forests and/or hiking trails.

WalkCT

Describing 130 walks and growing, CFPA's WalkCT.org website provides information on places to walk within 15 minutes of any residence of Connecticut. CFPA sponsors WalkCT Family Rambles. Leaders are trained to connect families to the outdoors with fun, engaging, family-friendly walks the last weekend of the month.

Visit ctwoodlands.org for more information on CFPA programs and activities.

MEET THE CFPA BOARD MEMBERS

The CFPA Board of Directors has 22 members and 12 honorary members. All volunteer because they are personally invested in the “care and feeding” of CFPA as an organization. Board members meet quarterly and serve on committees that address issues of advancement (development, membership, communications, and marketing), affiliate partnerships, education, finance, forest and trail conservation, public policy, trails, and WalkCT.

Starr Sayres and **Geoff Meissner** are the Co-Chairs of CFPA’s Advancement Committee. Both serve as Vice Presidents on the Board. We thank them both for their outstanding work on behalf of CFPA. If

you have met either Geoff or Starr, you likely know a bit about the generous, kind, and dedicated board leaders who, with your support, help steer CFPA’s ongoing work.

Geoff Meissner joined CFPA’s board of directors in 2007. He is currently serving on the Advancement and Executive committees. Geoff has been hiking Connecticut’s Blue Trails since 1992, when he moved to Connecticut from New York. Within a few years he, and his son Tad, had hiked, and loved, every Blue-Blazed hiking trail in the state. Geoff and Tad take every opportunity to camp with their hiking dog, in all seasons.

Geoff builds wooden canoes and kayaks and can be seen paddling and camping on offshore islands. He lives with Tina, the love of his life, in Plantsville.

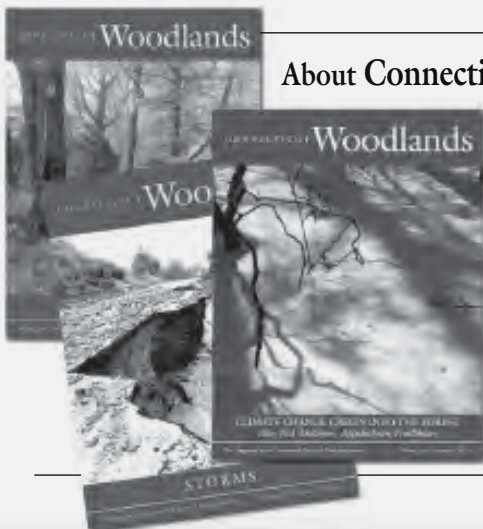
Starr Sayres worked as CFPA’s development coordinator from 2002 to 2008. She joined CFPA’s Board of Directors in 2008. Starr formerly held positions of administrative assistant for North American Aviation in Geneva, Switzerland and London; office supervisor in London for Metropolitan Life Insurance; and assistant director of the National Theater Institute in Waterford. She served 11 years on the Board of Trustees of the Country School in Madison, where she chaired the Long Range Planning, Development and Architectural Design committees. She also served for several years on the Board of the Rathbun Library in East Haddam. Starr holds a degree from Columbia University and lives with her husband, Phil, in East Haddam.



STARR SAYRES



GEOFF MEISSNER



About Connecticut Forest & Park Association and Connecticut Woodlands Magazine

Connecticut Woodlands is a quarterly magazine published since 1936 by CFPA, the private, non-profit organization dedicated to conserving the land, trails, and natural resources of Connecticut.

Members of CFPA receive the magazine in the mail in January, April, July, and October. CFPA also publishes a newsletter several times a year.

For more information about CFPA, to join or donate online, visit our website, www.ctwoodlands.org, or call 860-346-TREE.

Give the gift of membership in CFPA. Contact Marty Gosselin at 860-346-TREE.

ADVERTISING RATES

Half page:
\$180 per issue / \$600 yearly
(four issues)

Quarter page:
\$90 per issue / \$300 yearly

Eighth page:
\$60 per issue / \$200 yearly

Design services available for a fee.

MEET THE CFPA VOLUNTEERS

Over the past year, a vigorous group of volunteers generously dedicated more than 21,000 hours to supporting CFPA's conservation mission. **Wayne Fogg** and **Paul Mei** were the top two donors of time to CFPA and both are also extraordinary people.



WAYNE FOGG

Wayne Fogg grew up in Bethany on the same road where the blue-blazed Naugatuck Trail once crossed. Despite the proximity of the trail to his home, Wayne wasn't aware of it in his youth. In fact, he didn't learn about the Naugatuck Trail until he was attending Lehigh University as an accounting major at the age of 20,

when he read a feature on the trail in the New Haven Register that happened to include a picture of Wayne's parents' mailbox with a brass squirrel (custom-made by his grandfather, a Pittsburgh steel worker) adorning it. He later caught the passion for trails atop Mount Higby during a walk on the Mattabesett Trail, and he hasn't looked back since.

After an 18-year career as a computer programmer, Wayne has become a well-known Appalachian Mountain Club hike leader. In some years he leads 30 hikes for AMC. He also backpacks with the trail name of Parrot. Parrot has hiked Vermont's Long Trail (2002, 2008, and 2011), the Metacomet-Monadnock-Mattabesett Trail (now part of the New England Trail, in 2002), the Wonderland Trail (2004), the Cohos Trail (2007), the John Muir Trail (2009), and the Tahoe Rim Trail (2009).

This past year, Wayne dedicated 1,745 hours to CFPA, through helping staff with his computer programming expertise in addition to serving as the trail manager of a section of the Housatonic Range, Mattabesett and Tunxis Trails; trail representative for sections of the Mattabesett, Falls Brook, Quinnipiac, Regicides, Sleeping Giant, Tunxis, and Housatonic Range Trails; the leader of the GPS/GIS Committee; and member of the Trail Designation Committee. Wayne often works on projects at CFPA headquarters; CFPA considers him an honorary staff member.

In the aftermath of storm Sandy, Wayne said he'd spent extra time with his

fellow trail managers out clearing debris. "After spending so much time with them, I am becoming aware that we have a

number of extraordinary people, with fantastic stories, working on our trails."

Wayne also serves as the New England Trail Stewardship Council representative for the town of Wallingford.

Paul Mei's gregarious personality is famous for keeping spirits high at CFPA, and perhaps it is a natural extension of the 41 years he worked as a district sales manager in the wine and spirits business. After



PAUL MEI

retirement, Paul put his people skills to work both as a stalwart volunteer for CFPA and as a community enthusiast in the town of Guilford. In Guilford, Paul serves on the Inland Wetlands Commission, the Land Acquisition Commission, the Advisory Board for Designated Scenic Highways, the Subcommittee for the 375th Anniversary of Guilford (coming up in 2014), the Land Stewardship Committee of the town's Conservation Commission, the Committee for the Promotion of National Historic Tourism in Guilford, and a special subcommittee of the Planning & Zoning Commission dedicated to making its language more transparent and accessible. In addition, Paul has taken on several roles for the Guilford Land Conservation Trust, for which he has volunteered as a land steward and trail manager.

Paul is a proud grandfather of six who are "all number one separately in Poppy's heart." The importance of trails to young families is deeply meaningful to him. He recently told us about cleaning up the trails at Bluff Head after Superstorm Sandy when a young family with a 4-year-old child stopped to chat. It touched Paul's heart when the child said, "my job is to look for the blue blazes so we won't get lost." The fact that people are using the trails and rely on the trail work that Paul does (including his painstakingly perfect blazes), gives him a great feeling. Paul donated 718 hours of his time this past year as the trail manager of a section of the Menunkatuck Trail, trail representative for sections of the Mattabesett and Menunkatuck trails, a member of the National Trails Day Committee, and as the New England Trail Stewardship council representative for Guilford.



ABOVE LEFT, PAUL MEI IN THE FIELD WITH A PAIR OF LOPPERS AND A FEW GOOD STORIES.

LEFT, CLARE CAIN, CFPA TRAIL STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR, HAS SAID THAT COMMITTED TRAIL VOLUNTEERS LIKE WAYNE FOGG (LEFT) AND PAUL MEI (RIGHT) MAKE HER JOB MORE MEANINGFUL.

Your Trees

BLACK LOCUST

continued from page 15

locust likes them. It grows well on previously cut or developed land, rocky outcrops, and forest edges.

Beekeepers like its flowers, five-petaled drooping white blooms, for the sweet honey bees make from them. The black locust also fixes nitrogen in the soil, which can be helpful in soil that was depleted, but the Natural Resources Conservation Service labels the black locust invasive and informs the public: "Its rootsprout colonies choke out native vegetation in dry areas as well as along streams. In barren areas, its ability to add nitrogen to the soil can promote the survival of non-native plants."

What's Good About It

Many builders throughout the Northeast would agree: Black locust wood is so dense and resilient that you can't drive a nail into it. It seems that it won't rot. Black locusts were the tree of choice for making fences in pre-industrial times. "It's a very useful tree," notes Christopher Donnelly, urban forester for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. "Until 1900, it was a very important timber tree because of its great decay resistance." Mr. Sloane wrote in *A Reverence for Wood*



CFPA

Black locust leaves and seed pod.



PAUL WRAY, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY, BUGWOOD.ORG

Black locust leaves. Federal government foresters say the tree does well in barren areas.

**THE LOCUSTS THAT ARE GROWING
HERE MIGHT JUST BE REFUGEES FROM
THIS DISTANT PAST, BUT THEY ARE
NOT GOING ANYWHERE SOON. THE
WOOD HAS A HIGH BRITISH THERMAL
UNIT RATING AND SO IS GREAT FOR
HEATING IN A WOODSTOVE.**

(Dover, 1965) that after 1865, the locust was first on the list of slow-rotting wood (ahead of cedar, chestnut, and walnut).

The locusts that are growing here might just be refugees from this distant past, but they are not going anywhere soon. The wood has a high British thermal unit rating and so is great for heating in a woodstove. The flowers, Mr. Donnelly says, make good spring honey.

The black locust also "is a very good early successional," Mr. Donnelly said. "It sprouts easily and is prolific in its seeding. It turns into natural barbed wire at the edge of a field." Taking that lesson from the British, those with fields to protect might plant them at the field's edges.

What's Bad About It

Black locusts, like any invasives, can crowd out other species, said Peter Piccone, a wildlife biologist for the state DEEP at its Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area in Burlington. "Here at Sessions Woods I coordinated the removal of over 600 invasive non-native black locust trees," he said. Two entities, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the state DEEP's Forestry Cordwood Cutting Program, funded the removal and treatment of the cut stems with herbicide.

At beaches, black locusts clone themselves and grow in patches, covering vital nesting habitat for piping plovers and least terns, two shore birds that struggle.

"Black locust crowds out native vegetation," he said. "It is an aggressive colonizer once it gets a foothold." These trees can reproduce by putting out runners. And so, returning to the scene of the downed locust on the Greenwich power line, it's easy to see why no one mourned that fallen black locust.

Christine Woodside is the editor of Connecticut Woodlands.

BY KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY

IMAGINING SELDEN ISLAND

From quarry to wildlife haven

PHOTOS BY
KATHLEEN GROLL CONNOLLY

Quarrymen blasted pink gneiss from Selden Neck, an island in the Connecticut River, 125 years ago. And as you read this, the gouges created in the earth are likely filled with snow and ice. It's unlikely that any humans are about, but the wildlife carries on. Deer graze the forest that grew up around the quarry's still very visible remains. Eagles scan the river for prey. Turtles burrow along the sandy shoals. Beavers cozy up in lodges on the southeast side; they won't come out until early spring. Muskrats, otters, and mink venture out for an occasional meal even though it's the middle of winter. And who knows, but some say both a bear and a large cat walk the island. State wildlife officials can't confirm either of those.

Selden is a sweet memory in the middle of winter because it brings summer boat rides to mind—and not just any boat ride, but a ride to someplace with more than a bit of beauty and intrigue.

Imagine drifting in your kayak through quiet Selden Creek, only 4 feet deep at low tide. Heron, egrets, and kingfishers stand sentinel on this summer morning. Hawks soar. On the west, you can see the ledges of the Nature Conservancy's Selden Creek Preserve located off Joshua-town Road in Lyme. As you paddle north, acres of wild rice grow in the shallow aquatic environment.

And when you pull your boat up to the campgrounds, you find about 3 miles of trails (in various states of upkeep) for exploration. You find the quarry remains and evidence of old farms. The island is completely forested. Native plants such as northern sea oats (*Chasmanthium latifolia*), summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*), and sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) are abundant. Though recent hurricanes have toppled trees, beech saplings

Sweeping views of Eustacia Island and the Deep River waterfront are possible from the high point on the western side of Selden Island.



dominate the tree regeneration layer. The sunny edges are thick with native bayberries (*Morella pensylvanica*) in places, though the inevitable Japanese barberry and autumn olive preen for sunlight and try to crowd the bayberries out.

You can only get there by boat—but that was not always the case. The first official coast surveys, completed around 1840, show Selden connected at its northern edge to the mainland, hence the name “Selden Neck.” In May 1854, snowmelt from the north initiated a “freshet” that tore away an entire boat depot in Middletown, an ice house, a bridge, and many other structures and trees.

Thus, Selden attained the rank of island—a landform famous for firing the imaginations of storytellers. On a September day in 2009, I had the good fortune to hear one such storyteller, Selden Island historian Paul Robertson, share his passion for the place. (Unfortunately, Mr. Robertson passed away in 2010.)

“Turn back the clock to 1891 and imagine an island where 600 immigrants were blasting stone from the hillsides,” he said, according to my notes that day. “The quarry laborers are young; they speak little or no English. Above them in the pecking order are stonemasons from Italy who turn the rough material into blocks. The workers live in tents and makeshift housing. There are no representatives of the



Worse things can happen than to be stranded on Selden Island on a warm summer day. But don't count on state park personnel to pull your boat off the beach, says park supervisor Bill Mattioli. "We can't respond to those kinds of calls," he says. "You'll just have to plan on waiting for the tide to rise."

law on the island. The workers have been banned from the town of Deep River for disorderly behavior.”

The island's economic prize was high-quality granitic pink gneiss. According to a Deep River New Era report in 1891, the stone was destined to endure the traffic of Surf Avenue at Coney Island.¹ The stone was also destined for a gatehouse on the Croton aqueduct at Croton Lake in New York State. The quarry's capacity in 1891 was 3,500

blocks per day.

“This place was hell,” said Mr. Robertson, who became known for island investigations, trail maintenance, and his colorful tales of the island's unvarnished quarry days. He used to visit the island routinely to survey the artifacts of mining and agriculture, attempting to reconstruct the lives of the quarrymen who labored there from 1890 to 1905. “They had four steam drills and stonecutters and used black powder for blasting,” he said. “The place was noisy, dirty, and dangerous. And the labor standards of the day—well, let's just say they weren't what we're used to.”

During Robertson's narrative, I noticed the island's stone remnants are extremely handsome, the kind of rock that would be very pricey at any stone yard today. I can't help but hope the blocks didn't simply disappear beneath 10 layers of Brooklyn asphalt, but they probably have. That's not only an injustice to the material, but a sorry reward for the hard and dangerous labor that made it available.

Mr. Robertson's work was inspired in part by the earlier work of David Wordell, the first Selden Neck historian, who now lives in Salem and operates the Olde Ransom Farm Sleigh and Carriage Museum. Mr. Wordell spent boyhood summers boating and fishing on the river, but it was a request by his own



Stonecutter's holes, shown here in cross section, made way for feathering wedges.

continued on page 22

SELDEN

continued from page 21

young son that motivated their first actual visit to the island in 1975. That visit led to 7 years of research, during which father and son also established the first island trails.

Mr. Wordell's investigations culminated in a multimedia presentation, "The Quarries of Selden Neck," which won the Connecticut League of Historical Societies Award of Merit in 1985.

The presentation has been shown since 1982 throughout Connecticut. Mr. Wordell's presentation details the days of quarries and schooners bound for New York City, as well as the island's other facts and folklore—the silent hermit, the appearance of a mysterious Egyptian lily, the possible murder of an Italian cook for his hidden treasure, occupancy by nine generations of the Selden family, and Native American artifacts and camp sites that were dated by a University of Connecticut team to between 500 BCE and 145 CE.

"I estimate the number of people who have seen the presentation to be over 10,000 from 99 presentations," said Mr. Wordell. And although he has sold many DVDs, he still prefers to present it in person. (He is available for presentations and can be contacted at 860-859-5336.)

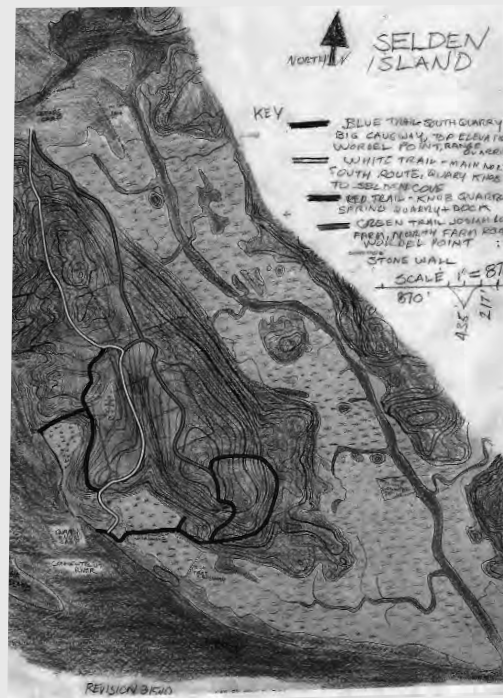
Those attendance numbers are impressive, but the attraction is no mystery to me. The island called Selden Neck holds a permanent spot in my own memory and imagination. There were Boy Scout camping trips, canoe and kayak rides from the launch at Gillette Castle State Park, the putter of a skiff engine as we trolled the shallow creek, and swims in the gentle eddies along the campground. There's the sweeping view of Eustacia Island and the town of Deep River from the western peak. And there was the time when low tide came sooner than expected and we were marooned for an extra 3 hours. Worse things have happened than to be forced to dally on an island on a warm August evening while the moon rises over the Connecticut River.

Kathleen Groll Connolly is a landscape designer and writer who lives in Old Saybrook.

1 "Quarries of Lord's Island (Selden Island)," Deep River New Era, Whole No. 825, Page 1, August 28, 1891.

GETTING TO AND STAYING ON SELDEN ISLAND

Selden Neck State Park is the state's only island park, located 12 miles north of Long Island Sound in the Connecticut River, west of Lyme and Hadlyme and east of Deep River. At 607 acres, Selden is the largest island in Connecticut and the largest among more than 25 islands washed by the river's 400-mile flow. Selden has four popular campsites, available by application through the island park's headquarters at Gillette Castle State Park. Bill Milliotti, park manager, estimates some 1,200 campers come each year. He says the competition for one-night camping permits gets "pretty intense." (To apply early, see instructions that follow.) Mr. Milliotti also reminds us that a small portion of the island, less than 25 acres, is still privately owned and visitors should remain aware of property boundaries.



This hand-drawn trail map by Paul Robertson reflects trail work done by him and David Wordell. There is no official Selden trail map.

Getting There

You can't walk to Selden Neck State Park unless you can walk on water. That leaves most of us with a little less than a 1-mile boat ride from the River Street trailer launch at Deep River (coordinates: 41°23'43.18" N, 72°25'35.39" W) or a little more than a 1-mile paddle from the cartop-carrier launch below the Gillette Castle, next to the Chester-Hadlyme Ferry (coordinates: 41°25'13.79" N, 72°25'42.4" W).

To enter Selden Creek from the north, use coordinates 41°24'29.22" N and 72°25'13.04" W. To enter Selden Creek from the south, use coordinates 41°23'23.02" N and 72°23'39.50" W.

If you want to let someone else do the driving, take the RiverQuest, a river touring boat that makes a few scheduled trips to Selden each year, usually in May and August. Visit ctriverquest.com/ or call 860-662-0577.

Or you might join a private tour with Connecticut Audubon EcoTravel in Essex. Tour leader Andrew Griswold says they include three or four specialists on their tours who lead interpretive talks on birds, botany, history, and geology. Visit ctaclubon.org/ecotravel-team or call 860-767-0660.

Staying There

Submit your one-night camping applications for Selden campsites after January 14, 2013, for stays between May 1st and September 30th. Mail your written request to: Supervisor, Gillette Castle State Park, 7 River Road, East Haddam, CT 06423

Your application letter must include camp area, camping date, name and address of adult leader, names of campers in group, type of boat, and payment in full of \$5 per camper by check or money order to "Treasurer, State of Connecticut." Include a day-time phone number. Visit ct.gov/dep/ and search the DEEP site for "Selden Neck State Park" or call 860-526-2336 for more information.

In September 1913, a state commission organized to acquire coastal land for beach parks. One of its first projects was buying an unwanted stretch of about 2 miles of coastline in Madison. That land became Hammonasset Beach State Park. Another project occurred when the state bought the first 5 acres of what became Sherwood Island State Park in Westport in 1914. Many years later, in 1937, Sherwood Island finally opened to an enthusiastic public (146,000 visitors), ending years of local protests, but Sherwood Island's genesis lay in the earliest years of the state park movement.

These parks and 105 more, one by one, became part of Connecticut state parks because of the persistence of parks advocates both in government and outside of it. The board members of Connecticut Forest & Park Association (which publishes this magazine) raised and donated money for parks when they were just ideas, and CFPA urged the General Assembly, year after year, to remember the value of parks. CFPA, originally called the Connecticut Forestry Association, actually changed its name to include the word Park in 1928.

Celebrations Planned in 2013

Watch the next issue of Connecticut Woodlands for a list of centennial events in the state parks. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, along with the Friends of Connecticut State Parks and individual friends, are planning the events now. DEEP welcomes ideas for events. Contact them at 860-424-3200 or deep.stateparks@ct.gov.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

CFPA: There from the Start

CFPA took an active role in promoting and fundraising for some of the most cherished state parks. Here are a few of the park formation stories.

Sleeping Giant State Park

In 1924, this North Haven traprock range that resembles a reclining giant with a large nose was in danger of falling to a quarry

operation. Residents of the area asked CFPA for help. One of the neighborhood leaders was Edgar L. Heermance, a minister, philosopher, and outdoorsman who later led the creation of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails and served as CFPA secretary. CFPA helped the locals form the Sleeping Giant Association and worked with them raising money to buy the quarrying lease and, bit by bit, the land.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Gillette Castle State Park

This stone castle high above the Connecticut River was built by William Gillette, a retired actor famous for playing Sherlock Holmes on the stage. In his will, Mr. Gillette said he did not want the property to be left to "some blithering saphead." His estate offered it to the state when he died, but the General Assembly did not act. CFPA stepped in, raising \$10,000 toward the purchase price if the governor would promise to buy the land.

Rocky Neck

In a legendary act of philanthropy, just months before the stock market crash that launched the Great Depression, 10 members of CFPA's board anonymously wrote checks to buy this half-mile stretch of



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

beach in East Lyme that lay on the other side of the main railroad line on the Connecticut coast. They held it until the state approved funds to buy it in 1931. The park today includes a large landward tract with camping and walking space. The beach attracts crowds in the summer and walkers and bird watchers in the winter.

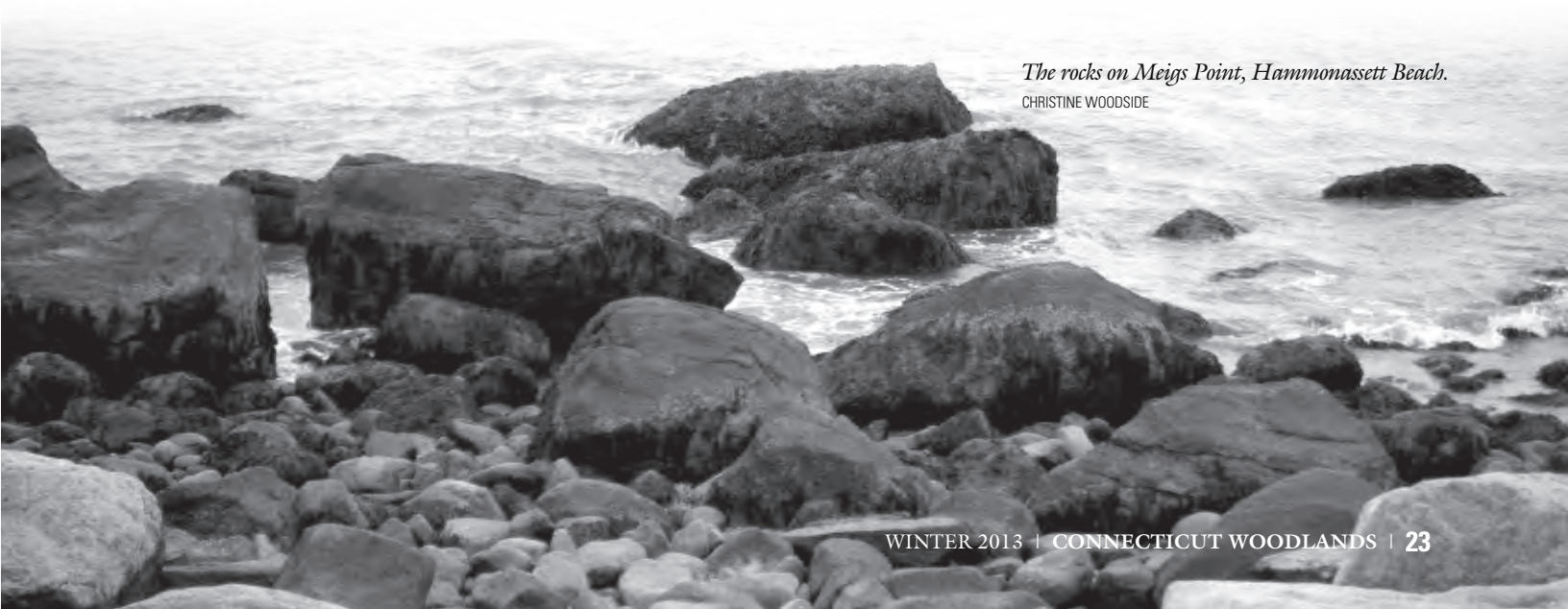
—Christine Woodside

Stories come from the CFPA history, *Connecticut Woodlands* (CFPA, 1995), by the Rev. George Milne.

A CENTURY SINCE THE FIRST CONNECTICUT STATE PARK

It's almost time to celebrate

The rocks on Meigs Point, Hammonasset Beach.
CHRISTINE WOODSIDE





ISTOCKPHOTO

WHY WAS IT CALLED HARTFORD ELECTION CAKE?

One of Connecticut's contributions to American culinary lore is Hartford election cake, barely known or served anymore. I was curious to uncover its story for a cooking class I was teaching on Connecticut heritage foods in early November, close to the 2012 elections. My research led to the evolution of bread into cakes, the range of special European holiday breads, the Connecticut Colony Fundamental Orders of 1639, the use and production of potash and pearl ash in Connecticut, the East Anglican food ways of our early Puritan settlers, and the publication of cookbooks in early America.

I begin with the establishment of the Connecticut Colony by dissatisfied Massachusetts Puritans in 1636. They created a "constitution" (The Fundamental Orders) that organized a method of local self-government. This called for the election of a governor, magistrates, and the General Court. The right to elect the governor was later proclaimed in a Royal Charter granted by King Charles II in 1662. John Winthrop Jr. was instrumental in obtaining this charter, and the people of Connecticut knew how extraordinary it was to manage their own governance. Only Connecticut and Rhode Island had this privilege in Colonial America. Early Connecticut voters took great pride in their self-determination, which is why Election Day—the second Thursday in May, when the ballots cast a few weeks earlier were formally counted—became an important holiday. Hundreds would go to Hartford to watch a parade and to enjoy the festivities and, a few days in, a ball. In the 1700s, other events coincided. These includ-

And nothing was more highly anticipated or regarded than the "great cake" that was traditionally served. Recipes for these can be found in cookbooks from the 1600s and 1700s. The cakes were gigantic yeast loaves, lightly spiced, lightly sweetened, and fruited. They weighed at least 50 pounds. They are similar to cinnamon raisin bread, Italian panettone, British hot cross buns, and other similar sweetened breads.

Ella Shannon Bowles and Dorothy S. Towle wrote in *Secrets of New England Cooking* (Barrows, 1947) that on Election Day tables were "groaning under the weight of meats and pastries, and punch and eggnogs by the gallon. But no matter how many rich viands were served, Election Day was not complete without its time-honored raised

cake, stuffed full of raisins and thin slices of citron, and topped with a sticky coating of treacle."

Pearl ash, wine, and brandy

In the 18th century, Hartford was powerful and wealthy and a seat of fashion. The city also was famous for its baking and good quality cakes. A cake recipe including Hartford in its title implied the recipe was of the highest quality. After the Revolutionary War, citizens renamed many of the English recipes for things like George Washington Cake, Independence Cake, and Federal Pancake.

There is another possible explanation. In 1796, Amelia Simmons published the first American cookbook in Hartford. It was a pamphlet, really, called *American Cookery*. She employed distinctively American ingredients, such as cornmeal, pumpkin, squash, cranberries, maple syrup, and turkey. She was the first cookbook writer to use pearl ash (a refined form of potash, potassium bicarbonate, which was produced in Connecticut because of its abundant forest resources) for leavening.

In Amelia Simmons's second edition of *American Cookery*, she included a recipe for "Election Cake." It called for 30 quarts flour, 10 pounds butter, 14 pounds sugar, 12 pounds raisins, 3 dozen eggs, 1 pint wine, 1 quart brandy, 4 ounces cinnamon, 3 ounces allspice, plus milk, yeast, and dried fruit. Perhaps the association of this cook with Hartford led to the naming of Hartford election cake.

After 1900, the basic election cake recipe succumbed to the new rage in cake fashions such as baking soda and baking powder, which eased the home production of a light

layer cake. But let's go back in time a bit and try this slightly adapted recipe for Hartford election cake, which comes from the Bowles and Towle cookbook. Enjoy!

Jean Crum Jones is a registered dietician and a member of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association Board of Directors. She works with her family running the Jones Family Farms and Jones Winery in Shelton.

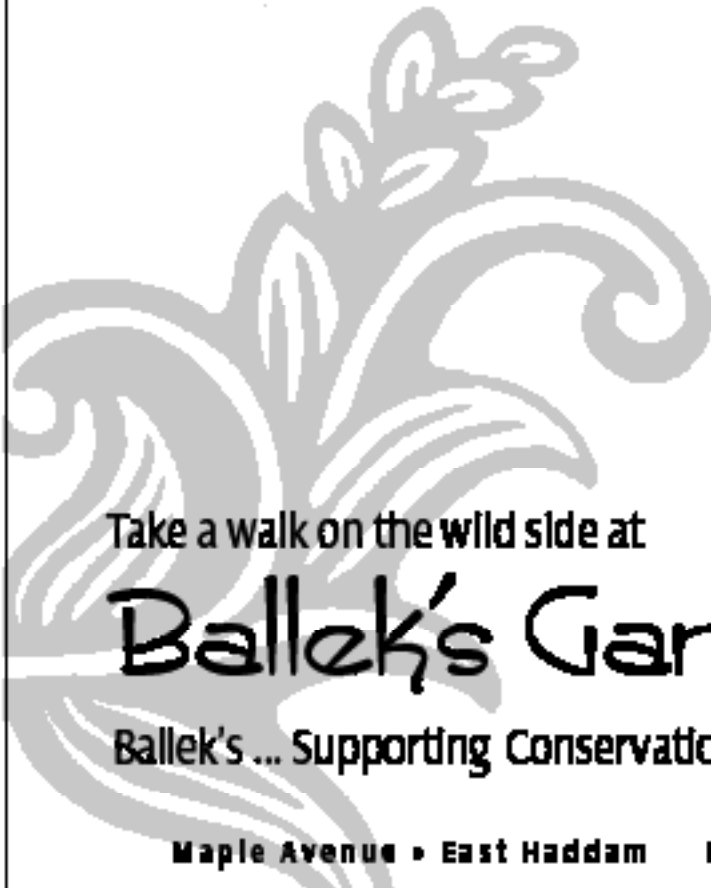
Hartford Election Cake

This recipe has been simplified by measuring the ingredients by cups instead of pounds, but the method of making the cake remains the same as it was when our great-grandmothers drew the round, sweet-smelling loaves from their brick ovens.

1 pint milk
1 teaspoon salt
1 yeast cake
½ cup lukewarm water
5-6 cups flour
1 cup butter
2 cups brown sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon nutmeg
4 eggs, well beaten
2 cups raisins
½ cup sliced citron
Molasses

The night before you plan to make the cake, prepare a soft dough as follows: Scald the milk and, when lukewarm, add the salt and the yeast cake dissolved in the lukewarm water. Add flour to make a soft dough. Let rise overnight. In the morning, cream the butter and sugar. Add the spices and well-beaten eggs. Combine with the first mixture. Flour the raisins and citron, and add. Let the dough rise until light. Then cut the dough down and put it in two large round tins, filling them about two-thirds full. Let the loaves rise for about half an hour, or until light. Bake one hour in a moderate oven, 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Glaze with molasses and return to the oven for 5 minutes to set the glaze. (I substitute dried yeast instead of a yeast cake and substitute dried fruit for the citron.)



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MEET AN EXCEPTIONAL TEACHER: THE OUTDOOR- ORIENTED LYNN KOCHISS

Lynn Kochiss, left, and a student take compass readings before heading out onto the trail.

COURTESY OF LYNN KOCHISS

BY LORI PARADIS BRANT

As a teacher, Lynn Kochiss understands the challenges that face children and families today. She bounds over those hurdles with some of the training she receives from the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, but more important, she relies on the spirit she exhibits about our land and the connectivity found in nature.

After participating in one of CFPA's summer professional development programs, Lynn was excited to share her knowledge about Connecticut's role in the forest products industry. She invited her Earth Club students to a field trip to the Hull Forest Products Open House so they could see sustainable forestry firsthand.

Lynn and her students may be exploring rotting logs after reading stories such as "The Forest of S. T. Shrew." Jackie, the fictional child, gets shrunk to shrew size and explores the world of fallen logs and soil, meeting all kinds of critters as part of an underground ecosystem. With magnifying lenses in hand, Lynn's students explore the new micro-world of Jackie, searching for fungus, millipedes, pill bugs, and more. Learning about the various habitats forests support



LYNN KOCHISS

Third-graders present their Lorax sequels to CFPA Education Director Lori Paradis Brant.

and experiencing these habitats in person, alongside a caring teacher, helps Lynn's students gain a better awareness and understanding of the life around them.

As one of CFPA's WalkCT Family Guides, Lynn has been known to explore a mere quarter-mile of trail for 2 hours with families, looking for mushrooms. The families shared the guidebooks Lynn brought along with her, and they worked together to identify the various fungal species they discovered.

Lynn also leads Rambles for families with children of special needs along so that they, too, may feel rejuvenated by the magic of the outdoors. Although these children are in wheelchairs or have developmental challenges that may hinder their large-group experiences, they are entitled to

experience the wonder of smelling flowers, being in the shadow of the trees, hearing the bullfrogs croaking, and feeling the fuzz on the undersides of leaves.

When *The Lorax* came out as a motion picture this past year, Lynn was not one to hesitate to connect the content of *The Lorax* to a reading project with her students. After celebrating Read Across America

Day and the anniversary of Dr. Seuss's birthday, Lynn's students created a book of their sequels to *The Lorax* and presented it to CFPA. The students' work is published on CFPA's education Web page (ctwoodlands.org/PLT).

Next Steps for Lynn

CFPA, with its Project Learning Tree Connecticut (PLT CT) partner, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, is nominating Lynn for the National PLT Outstanding Educator Award. This is a choice group of educators across the country; traditionally only five are selected to be honored each year. This is the very first time that Connecticut will have a nominee in the national awards program; as one can imagine, this is a very exciting first for the PLT CT program.

At her school in Cromwell, Lynn is awaiting approval to convene a Green Leaf Committee that, she says, will "investigate existing initiatives and promote the increase of initiatives which match Green Leaf School Goals." Those goals include integrating effective environmental education into the curriculum, improving the health and wellness of students and staff, and reducing environmental impact. Lynn's principal has shared that he likes the idea, and of course, Lynn already has several colleagues who have voiced interest in joining her in her efforts to make her school more environmentally friendly.

At the time of this writing, Lynn is teaching about energy-efficient lighting while raising funds for her school's outdoor learning spaces through the sale of compact fluorescent light bulbs. During this time, Lynn applied for a grant through the New England Environmental Education Association to fund PLT professional development workshops in her school. Some of the grant's goals are to use environmental education to advance the school's education goals. We are keeping our fingers crossed that Lynn receives her grant, allowing the critical-thinking activities of PLT to be brought to more teachers, thus affecting more students' understanding of our local environment.

As one can see, Lynn clearly exhibits a strong commitment to the mission of CFPA to connect others to the land as well as PLT's philosophy of teaching students how to think about the environment. She challenges her students to follow their interest in making a difference in the natural and built world around them and inspires her colleagues to learn more about using the forest as a window into the world.

Lori Paradis Brant is the education director of CFPA.

LYNN KOCHISS'S RECOGNITION TIMELINE

- 2012–2013 Awarded PLT CT Outstanding Educator of the Year
- 2011–2012 Awarded Woodside Intermediate School's Teacher of the Year
- July 2011 Spotligted as a volunteer Family Guide on WalkCT's Web site
- 2011 Awarded CFPA Outstanding Advancement Volunteer
- 2010 Awarded the Connecticut Outdoor & Environmental Education Association's Environmental Educator of the Year
- 2009 Earned CFPA recognition for commitment as a WalkCT Family Guide



LYNN KOCHISS

A WalkCT Family Ramble on Mother's Day.

ESSENTIAL FACTS OF LIFE RESOURCE LIST FROM FALL ISSUE

Lori Brant acknowledges the following resources on which she drew for her fall article, "Discovering the Great Outdoors: The Importance of Environmental Education in the Life of the Young Child":

The works of:

—David Sobel

—Stephen Kellert

—E. O. Wilson, *Biophilia* (Harvard University Press, 1984)

—Project Learning Tree, an educational program adopted in many school districts around the United States.

—Piaget, 1952

Atherton, J. S. 2011. Learning and Teaching: Piaget's Developmental Theory. Retrieved from learningandteaching.info/learning/piaget.htm.

Boeree, Dr. C. George. "Jean Piaget: 1896–1980," biographical article.

Bredenkamp, Sue, and Carol Copple. 1997. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Project Learning Tree's Environmental Experiences for the Young Child; American Forest Foundation, 2010. See plt.org/content14893.

OBESITY RATES TO RISE: PARKS COULD HELP REVERSE

BY LESLIE LEWIS

Two new studies raise both fear and hope for the future health of Connecticut citizens. The first, the annual “F as in Fat” report, by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Trust for America’s Health, projects the national obesity rate to skyrocket by 2030. The percentage of obese Connecticut residents could double in the next 18 years, according to the report, but even if it did, the state still would have one of the lowest obesity rates in the country.

For the first time, the report includes analysis that forecasts adult obesity rates in each state and the likely resulting rise in obesity-related disease rates and health care costs. According to the report, the percentage of obese people in the state is expected to rise from 24.5 percent in 2011 to 46.5 percent by 2030.



Even with an obesity rate of 46.5 percent, Connecticut would be doing well compared with many other states, with the fifth-lowest obesity rate. In fact, by 2030, 13 states could have adult obesity rates above 60 percent, 39 states could have rates above 50 percent, and all 50 states could have rates above 44 percent.

The report also shows that states could prevent obesity-related diseases and save on health costs if the average body mass index of residents was reduced by just 5 percent by 2030. Connecticut, for instance, could save about \$7.3 billion by 2030 if BMIs take a 5 percent dip. The number of people developing diseases such as hypertension and type 2 diabetes would also lessen if the state slimmed down a bit.

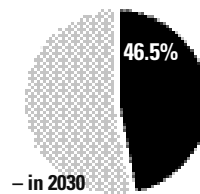
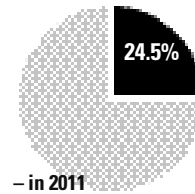
The good news? “Parks are a part of our health care system,” said Dr. Daphne Miller, a professor of family and community medicine, University of California, San Francisco, at a New York City conference, the Greater & Greener: Reimagining Parks for 21st Century Cities. She said these green spaces are crucial to solving hypertension, anxiety, depression, and diabetes—“the diseases of indoor living.” Study after study has shown that exercise in the outdoors provides physical and mental well-being.

A report from the National Institutes of Health adds to this growing body of evidence. Parks do indeed contribute to an uptick in community fitness levels. This is especially true when funds were spent for maintenance and programming at the parks to attract users and to make them feel comfortable while they were there. The bottom line was that money put into parks pays dividends in more ways than just receiving entrance fees.

We all know that there are a tremendous number of worthwhile programs competing for a shrinking pot of dollars at the local, state, and federal levels. With the costs of lifestyle-related diseases projected to skyrocket over the coming years, doesn’t it make sense to spend a bit more on health promotion? When you look at parks and open spaces in this context, their value to society becomes even more apparent. Here is one health care plan that everyone should be able to support.

Leslie Lewis is the WalkCT director for the Connecticut Forest & Park Association. Learn more about WalkCT’s many guided events and resources at walkct.org.

Connecticut residents who are obese



Source: *F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future 2012*, a report released by Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

Healthcare savings if people in Connecticut reduce body mass index by 5%: \$7.4 million



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OBITUARIES

FORMER YALE FORESTRY SCHOOL DEAN HANK FOSTER

Charles H. W. Foster, for decades one of the nation's leading environmental policy experts and a former dean of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, died October 20 in Needham, Massachusetts, where he was born and had lived for many years. He was 85 and had been in treatment for cancer.

Dr. Foster, who was known as Hank, devoted more than 15 years of his career to government, serving seven Massachusetts governors in such posts as water resources specialist, commissioner of natural resources and, in 1971, as the commonwealth's first cabinet-level secretary of environmental affairs.

Educated at Harvard, the University of Michigan, and Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Foster served as dean of the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies from 1976 to 1981. Among his many articles and publications are four books in a new series, *Experiments in Bioregionalism*, which reflect his special interests in the management of natural resources and environment across jurisdictional boundaries. He also edited *Stepping Back to Look Forward* (Harvard University Forest, 1998), a book that examines the history of forestry in Massachusetts.

He leaves his wife, Barbara Duchaine Foster, whom he married in 1953, three children, and six grandchildren.

—Source: Death notices, Harvard University

MARTHA DANIELLS AUSTIN, FOUNDER OF SIMSBURY LAND TRUST

Martha Daniells Austin, 91, of Bloomfield, but formerly of Simsbury, died on March 1, 2012. She was born September 24, 1920, to John and Mary McLean Daniells. A graduate of Radcliffe College in 1942, Martha was the wife of Colby Merrill Austin. She had three children and was an accomplished artist and maker of silver jewelry. Mrs. Austin volunteered for the Simsbury Visiting Nurses' Association, was a member of the League of Women Voters, and was an outspoken advocate for numerous peace initiatives. A dedicated environmentalist, Mrs. Austin was a founding member of the Simsbury Land Trust, for which she served as trustee and secretary for more than 21 years. She belonged to the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of Farmington. Her survivors include two sisters, her son Bill Austin of Simsbury, her daughter Molly Austin of Manchester, and eight grandchildren. She was predeceased by her son Thomas Austin. Send memorial gifts to the Farmington Valley VNA, 8 Old Mill Lane, Simsbury, CT 06070; the Simsbury Land Conservation Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 634, Simsbury, CT 06070 (simsburylandtrust.org), or to the charity of your choice.

—Source: Death notices

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