



THE WESTERLY LAND TRUST
2015 Membership Dues and Annual Fund
 PO Box 601, Westerly, RI 02891-0601

Please make your check payable to **The Westerly Land Trust** and return with this slip. **THANK YOU!**

I am/We are interested in volunteering for:

- Outdoor work Office work
 Committee work

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please initiate / renew my / our membership at the following level:

- Individual \$30 Family \$50
 Business \$100

I/We want to become a major supporter; we enclose \$ _____.

- Conservationist \$100-\$249
 Protector \$250-\$499
 Preservationist \$500-\$999
 President's Circle \$1000 and over
 (Complimentary membership included.)

THE BEST GIFT: ONE THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

The Westerly Land Trust protects and cares for precious, increasingly scarce conservation land. We also protect farmland and critical wildlife habitats as well as our town's sole drinking water supply. It is generous donors like you who make this important work possible.

There are many ways to support the Land Trust, but perhaps the most valuable gift is one of consistency. Joining our Sustainer Program is an ideal way to ensure the Land Trust has a reliable source of revenue. The Sustainer Program is a donation program for regularly recurring gifts made throughout the year in the amount of your choice, beginning at \$10. Frequency of donations may be weekly, monthly, quarterly or any other option that suits your preference.

Benefits to the Land Trust

Recurring sustainer gifts help provide a predictable, year-round funding source that allows the Land Trust to plan events and projects, steward protected lands responsibly, and offer educational programs that connect people with nature. Additionally, sustainers require fewer mailings, allowing the Land Trust to conserve resources while saving on postage, stationery and print costs.

Benefits to Sustainers

Sustainers will benefit from reduced mailings and the convenience of automatic, recurring contributions—freeing up time to take a hike through one of our preserves! Above all, sustainers will enjoy the peace of mind that comes from knowing your contribution will preserve and enhance Westerly's unique sense of place now and long into the future.

To join the Land Trust's Sustainer Program, visit our secure website at www.westerlylandtrust.org and click on the Support tab.

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 and Deborah Stewart
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A Sense of Place

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERLY LAND TRUST

CAMPERS AND CRITTERS AND STREAMS, OH MY!

The Westerly Land Trust partnered with Tower Street Community Center for its summer program and spent many hours connecting the children with nature. It was truly inspirational to watch the campers' curiosity and passion about the outdoors grow with each visit to Wahaneeta Preserve. Campers participated in sensory awareness hikes, nature sculpture creation, wildlife habitat exploration, wildlife observation and the creation of a wildlife habitat by tossing wildflower "seed bombs" in the meadow. These youngsters are the future stewards of our environment. We strive to nurture their appreciation for it and to teach them that they can take action to protect it.



Above: Armed with nets and critter cages, campers explore the diversity of the preserve's habitats.



Right: Excited campers take turns holding a toad with the assistance of camp counselor Jen Ritter.



Left: Naturalist Keith Cowley leads campers on a sensory awareness hike, encouraging them to listen and then look, touch, smell and taste specific items along the trail.



Left: Campers build toad houses to sharpen their engineering skills while learning about wildlife habitats and the basic needs of animals.



Right: Proud campers pose with the nature sculpture they created.



Right: A contemplative camper finds inspiration in a princess pine and a moss-covered rock for nature journaling.

MILESTONES

Remembering Charlie

It didn't matter how many times you walked the trails with Charlie Hickox, or how many times you were coaxed to imagine "herds of caribou and the great mastodon roaming the coastal plain that you see below you" at the Glacier Park overlook. It was special every single time.

Why? Because Charlie led each hike and dissertation with an enthusiasm and



excitement that drew you in and made you suddenly love geology. He opened your eyes to the amazing landscape around you and taught you to understand how it came to

be. He was passionate about his beloved geologic facts, the outdoors and spending time with his hiking and paddling colleagues. We are all the richer for it.

On August 30 we lost this dear friend after he lived a full life of 95 years. Charlie was a renowned geologist who taught at Colby College and was an avid hiker, kayaker and a long-time supporter of the Westerly Land Trust. In the early 2000's he took part in the initial site visits to what is now Dr. John Champlin Glacier Park Preserve and encouraged the Land Trust to save that special place. He worked with fellow hiker and paddler Sally Hanson to begin the Thursday hikes and paddles program in 2008, and it is going strong to this day. He led hikes for us even after his 90th birthday. Always smiling, always ready to hit the trails and entertain with his quick wit.

All are invited to join in celebrating the life of Dr. Charles Hickox II on October 18 at 10 a.m. when we will gather at Charlie's Overlook in Glacier Park Preserve. Following the memorial, we will walk the trails that Charlie laid out, helped cut and walked with us so many times.



Field Notes

'SNOWBIRDS' GETTING READY TO HEAD SOUTH

Ever so slightly, days are getting shorter and darker. The garden yields its last crops of the season. Going back to school takes center stage, and we wonder how summer can be gone so soon.

Take heart. The autumn does provide us with a consolation prize: fall bird migration.

Add more color to your fall by heading out to our preserves during the next few weeks to capture the incredible yearly phenomenon in which birds large and small travel vast distances, many using Rhode Island as a stopover. Fall migration lasts longer than spring migration and the pace is more relaxed since the birds are not under the same pressure to arrive quickly to nest, breed and reproduce.

Birds intuitively know how to prepare for amassing the energy to fly such long distances. When the days begin to shorten, a chemical in their brains causes them to eat more—sometimes four times as much. In addition, as the time of their flight draws near, birds become restless. They are getting ready.

Once the birds have taken flight, they stop at intervals to refuel and rest until they have reached their winter destination.

Species you may observe as they pass through Westerly this fall: raptors including hawks, falcons, ospreys and eagles; songbirds such as swallows, finches and warblers; hummingbirds and several waterfowl species. Shorebirds like sandpipers and plovers are there for viewing as well.

So get your camera and head over to one of our preserves. It will be a colorful fall!

2015 Farm Dinner

This year's event was held for the first time at scenic Winnapaug Preserve, where 172 diners began the evening with passed hors d'oeuvres with Prosecco and Grey Sail brews. Our talented chefs prepared a four-course dinner, paired with wines, that featured foods from more than a dozen local farms and purveyors. The event raised about \$20,000.



CLASSROOMS IN THE PRESERVES

A grant from Rhode Island Foundation last spring enabled the Westerly Land Trust to launch an environmental education initiative with the ultimate goal of connecting students with the environment. By collaborating with local conservation organizations and Westerly public schools, we identified the barriers and benefits of using the natural world to supplement textbook and classroom-based learning. This group of collaborators, called the Westerly Environmental Literacy Council, aims to establish Westerly public schools as a model district for integrating outdoor learning into our schools.

After months of meetings, the Council agreed to develop a pilot program to get students outdoors and enhance current lessons for children in the first, second, fourth and sixth grades. The collaborative, led by the Land Trust, is seeking grant funding for the pilot program that will integrate outdoor excursions with in-class visits from environmental professionals. We are pleased to announce that the Town of Westerly's Conservation Commission has pledged financial support for the program and we look forward to gaining more support in the coming weeks.

PEACEFUL PADDLES

The Westerly Land Trust protects land and waterways for wildlife habitat as well as passive recreational enjoyment for us humans. The Pawcatuck River is the most prominent of these waterways. For kayak and canoe enthusiasts, the Pawcatuck has an abundance of waterscapes to explore, from urban to rural, woodland to salt water estuary.



Paddlers traveling downriver from the Charlestown/Westerly border out to Little Narragansett Bay pass by 10 Land Trust properties, including several with canoe landing sites. So grab your paddles, meander downstream and stop for a picnic in a preserve!

Experiencing the land from the water affords

a whole new perspective for viewing wildlife, photographing nature or taking in the lovely fall foliage that will soon be here. Trail maps with canoe landing sites marked can be downloaded from our website.

Preserves with canoe/kayak landing sites:

- Grills Preserve
- Flora Whitely Preserve
- Anderson Preserve
- Riverwood Preserve

Remember to always follow these safe paddling practices:

- Wear a personal flotation device or life jacket that is properly zipped and/or buckled at all times while on the water, in the manner intended by the manufacturer
- Carry a sound signal (whistle, horn, etc.) in case of emergency
- Map your paddling route ahead of time and make note of dams or other obstacles
- Bring a map, compass and/or GPS device
- Store keys, phone, wallet, etc. in a floating water-tight bag

LAND TRUST SEEKS NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

The Land Trust is applying for accreditation through a national program that recognizes organizations that meet high quality standards for conservation protection.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, recognizes land conservation organizations that meet high quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands. It conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs, as well as public comments about how the organization complies with national quality standards related to the ethical and technical operation of a land trust.

We are hopeful that the accreditation process will make us an even stronger and more effective land trust than we are today.

Guided Hikes

Don Henne Preserve, North Stonington, CT (9:45 am)

October 1

Riverwood Preserve, Westerly

October 8

Chase Farm, Lincoln

October 15

Fowler Grindstone, North Stonington, CT (9:30 am)

October 22

Dr. John Champlin Glacier Park, Westerly

October 29

Hikes are Thursdays at 10 am unless noted; details available at www.westerlylandtrust.org



Events Calendar

Wahaneeta Preserve

Family Hike

October 10, 11am

Join us as we explore the Wahaneeta Preserve on a 1 1/2 mile hike that is easy for children. A guide will point out some great features and tell us a little bit about the history of this property. Please park well within the preserve, about 400 feet down the driveway once you pass the Wahaneeta Preserve sign.

Birding Walk in the Grassland

October 11, 9 am

Autumn mornings are a perfect time to enjoy Avondale Farm Preserve and observe birds that may be passing through during the fall migration. Meet at the Quail Run entrance to the preserve for a leisurely walk for all ages and free of charge.

Land Trust Hosts Westerly-Pawcatuck Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours

October 14, 5-7 pm

The Land Trust welcomes Chamber members and guests to its facility at 10 High St. for October's Business After Hours event with refreshments, prizes and networking opportunities. Be sure to bring business cards. Admission is \$5 for Chamber members, \$10 for non-members.

Full Hunter's Moon Hike

October 27, 6:30 pm

Join us for a tranquil hike through the moonlit forest of Crandall Preserve. This the only night in October when the moon is in the sky all night long and there will be a total lunar eclipse. Dress appropriately for the weather and hunting season by wearing an orange vest. Free to the public, all ages. Registration not required.

Setting the Pace for Conservation 5K

November 8, 10 am

Run for fun at the annual Westerly Land Trust 5K fundraiser featuring a scenic course within Avondale Farm Preserve and on the surrounding historic roadways. Proceeds support our land conservation programs that currently protect and manage over 1,600 acres of preserved lands. Register at www.westerlylandtrust.org.

Visit our events calendar online at www.westerlylandtrust.org