

WARREN LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

30th Anniversary!
*30 Years of Saving Warren's Open Spaces
for All to Enjoy*



'Dicimus Pro Aboribus'
*We Stand for the Trees
and
All of Warren's Natural Environment*

founded 1987

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER/FALL 2018

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*photo by Butch Lombardi
photo description + credit*

President's Note

Hello and welcome to Issue Number 2 of the WLCT newsletter. I don't want to take up a lot of space, so here are some of the significant highlights since last fall's inaugural issue:

- The WLCT has acquired an additional 30 acres of "tax title" land from the Town of Warren
- We have been awarded an EQIP grant to begin improving the Haile Farm Preserve property
- We have launched our new website at <http://www.warrenlct.org>

We are making remarkable progress but we need your support to continue our efforts and have begun a fundraising campaign to help finance legal and property improvement expenses; please support the WLCT.

If you have any comments or questions regarding the WLCT, feel free to contact me at warrenlctri@gmail.com.

Mike Gerhardt
President WLCT

Make a Statement: Become a Member

It is important in these hectic times to speak out about what is important to you, your family and your community. Making a clear statement about core values is exactly what you are doing with your membership in the Warren Land Conservation Trust. Becoming a member shows that you treasure values such as conservation, protecting the environment, public access to open spaces, public/private collaboration, respect for your neighbors and for the natural resources of your town.

The WLCT needs your support to continue the important work of conservation and stewardship of the wetlands, woodlands, farmlands, plant and animal habitats and unique natural and scenic sites that help sustain the quality of life we enjoy. As a member you can be proud of making a difference and doing something positive for our town. The WLCT can only be successful in pursuing its values and mission with your continued support.

Get in Touch with the WLCT!



[fb.com/wlctri](https://www.facebook.com/wlctri)



warrenlctri@gmail.com



new website! <http://www.warrenlct.org>



PO Box 565 Warren, RI 02885

Our Mission.

We invite all who share our passion for our community and for its natural spaces to join in this mission:

"The Warren Land Conservation Land Trust thinks the world of our town's natural lands and waters. We are a community-based organization devoted to conserving, caring for, and providing access to these open spaces. The town's shorelines – the Warren River, the Palmer River and the Kickemuit River – anchor our vision, with their large stretches of connected marshland and wetlands.

Our members recognize the importance of Warren as an area of great natural resources, scenic beauty, historical significance, and cultural heritage. The Bay, river, marshland, wetlands, and other natural areas contribute to the health and sustainability of our historic waterfront village and the surrounding residential, business and agricultural communities.

Our guiding principles are:

- ❖ We are committed to integrity in our business and our work – with landowners, community partners, donors, funders, and volunteers.
- ❖ We cherish our connection to our town's land and water by protecting natural areas and enhancing public access.
- ❖ We have a responsibility to future generations to protect those natural areas that sustain our quality of life.
- ❖ We believe that a healthy environment and a healthy economy are inextricably linked.
- ❖ We are dedicated to working with our neighboring towns to help preserve the natural character of the town.
- ❖ We value our relationship with landowners who have voluntarily entrusted to us the stewardship of their land for the benefit of future generations.
- ❖ As stewards in perpetuity of the lands entrusted to us, we are committed to managing our resources carefully and planning for organizational sustainability.



Annual Jacob's Point clean up of the beach by Bagy Wrinkle Cove residents and friends of the Land Trust



Property Spotlight: The Haile Farm Preserve

The Trust recently acquired 55 acres of land from the Town of Warren, now called the Haile Farm Preserve. Our immediate task was to see what could be done to offset existing problems. Members of the WLCT Board met on the site last winter with Wenley Ferguson of Save the Bay and Ghyll Conley with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Wenley was enthusiastic about how to improve the marshland, and Ghyll expressed strong support that the project would qualify for funding through NRCS’s EQIP program. With this support, we can tackle a variety of improvements: old drainage ditches will be corrected; some trails will be modified; ponding on the marshland will be mitigated; freshwater wetlands currently threatened by storms and astronomical tides will be protected in the near term. All of this brings the marsh to a healthy state, and supports migration of the marsh inland as sea levels rise. An application was made and a grant approved to accomplish this work. The WLCT has now signed the needed contract for the work to begin, a true first step towards developing public trails on this property.

Look for news of this work over the coming months!



Wenley Ferguson of Save the Bay and WLCT Board member Jenny Flanagan start the process of trail development at the Haile Farm Preserve



Call for Volunteers!

It is our intention to open this beautiful parcel of land to the public by developing trails on this property and we would like the assistance of the citizens of Warren in completing this project

The first phase is to do the needed planning – lay out the trails, determine the labor and material needed etc. In the second phase, volunteer muscle will be needed to do the required work.

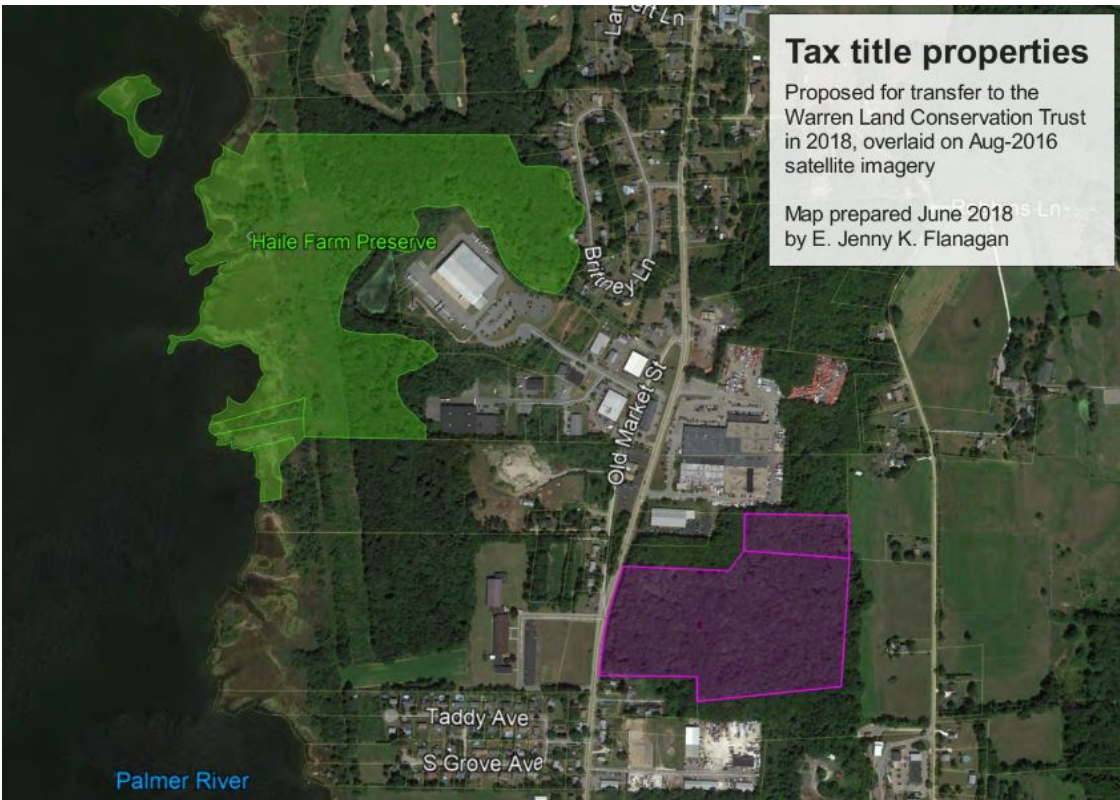
The Trail Development Committee will begin its efforts this Fall. If you are interested in either participating (or getting more information), please contact the land trust at warrenlctri@gmail.com.

Let’s Do it Again!

40 acres of woodland and 20 acres of marshland are lost and can’t find their owners. You can see these properties as you drive down Market Street from Swansea. They look like woods or perhaps “junky” marshland. Their former owners felt it wasn’t worth paying the taxes, and the Town of Warren has been holding these onto these properties for more than 20 years.

While worthless to some, these parcels are priceless wetland habitat. They are on or feed into Palmer River and provide important habitat for marine life and shorebirds. Sometime in the next century, these wooded wetlands will be the newest marshland, as our shorelines migrate inward.

The Land Trust recently partnered with the Town for the preservation of Haile Farm, at the end of New Industrial Road. Now we’re looking to repeat this effort. We look forward to being new stewards of these “lost” lands, for the benefit of all.





The Saltmarsh Sparrow Project

The Trust has approved a five year project to investigate and document the presence of the Saltmarsh Sparrow at Jacob's Point. The Saltmarsh Sparrow is a globally-threatened taxon which has become an indicator species for the impacts of sea-level rise on obligate salt-marsh nesting bird species in the northeastern United States. Our research will fill information gaps on the relationship of tidal-flooding and sea-level rise on the nesting success of this now-iconic species.

The Saltmarsh Sparrow Research Initiative

Research Directors: Steven E. Reinert, MS (sreinert@lifespan.org)
Deirdre Robinson, MS (drobinsong@gmail.com)

Research Assistant: Katie Christ, Senior, URI

2017 Breeding Season Results

During 2017, the first full year of our study, we captured 31 adult males (25 of which were color-banded), 20 females (all color-banded), and 1 juvenile (color-banded). We banded 38 nestlings from 12 nests.

We estimate that a total of 20-25 Saltmarsh Sparrow nestlings, in total, fledged at our Jacob's Point study area during the 2017 breeding season.

The full complement of nestlings fledged from only two of the 21 active nests found. Ten nests were depredated destroying all eggs/nestlings, and one other nest was depredated leaving a single nestling. Flooding during new-moon spring-tide events destroyed three nests in their entirety, and data on nest elevations reveals that many of the depredated nests would likely have been lost to flooding had they survived to the new-moon period.



Each bird is given a 4-band color combination that is unique in the world.
Photo credit: Bryan Stokes



Researchers carefully apply leg bands to a male Saltmarsh Sparrow (SALS).
Photo credit: Bryan Stokes

2018 Breeding Season

The Saltmarsh Sparrow Research Initiative (SSRI) is off to an auspicious start to our second year of researching this threatened bird at Jacob's Point. Our team of 13 local volunteers, (ranging in age from ten years old to mid-seventies), has already recaptured 13 birds that were banded at JP in 2017, has banded 16 new sparrows, and located 4 active nests early in the breeding season.

This summer, we will be hosting four distinguished guests at the study site at JP: Two international Artists-In-Residence from Brown University are studying the impact of rising tides on endangered species and have chosen the Saltmarsh Sparrow at Jacob's Point to illustrate the threat of global warming. A faculty member from the U.Maine, who was a post-doc fellow with SHARP (Saltmarsh Habitat and Research Program) at U.Conn will join us. An editor from Living Bird, published by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, plans to visit in August.

In addition, we will be working on developing a website and continue to explore funding options with the goal of supporting internships for students interested in Conservation Biology.

Nests are located within 2 cm of the ground, making eggs and nestlings vulnerable to flooding with each New Moon cycle.
Deirdre Robinson,
<https://birdsna.org/Species-Account/bna/species/sstspa>



Why I'm a Member

I retired to Warren four years ago, to a condo overlooking the Jacob's Point marsh. This was in the spring, and I soon noticed two raptors, later identified as Ospreys, on the nest in the middle of the marsh. They seemed to be feeding young that I could not yet see in the bottom of the nest. Curiosity and a good telescope got me observing them, and by the time the chicks fledged, I was hooked. They are a sight to be seen, with a six foot wingspan, curved raptor beaks, and impressive claws, perfect for catching fish, their main diet. Amazingly, they fly down to Central and South America each fall and return in the spring--including chicks just hatched a month or two earlier. In mid April, they lay their eggs, which hatch 5-6 weeks later, and fledge in mid July.

I have since gotten involved with the Audubon Society's efforts to collect statistics on this species, and learnt that they were near extinction when the use of DDT was finally banned. The population has since recovered nicely, partially due to the construction of good nesting platforms, which I felt inspired to get involved in by repairing and erecting new ones.

That in turn got me involved with the Warren Land Conservation Trust, which owns and maintains Jacob's Point and many other protected parcels in town.

There is a certain satisfaction in getting up in the morning, fixing a cup of coffee, and looking out on the marsh and the Ospreys, the wildlife, the changing tides, and the weather rolling in. And in having had, in a small way, contributed to something that has enriched my life and hopefully others as well, now and in the future. You can do it, too.

by Finn Brudevold

Sunny Day Flooding

Ever heard of that? It's what happens 3 or 5 times a year, when the sun and the moon and the tides unite to bring an astronomically high tide (literally). Glorious sunshine, calm winds, and 3 inches of water in the Jamiel Park parking lot.

Except it's not 3 to 5 times a year anymore -- it's more like every other month. This is one of the effects of sea level rise. We all saw what happened along Market Street in March with the two nor'easters that came through. That's twice in two weeks! A recent presentation by Save the Bay, URI and CRMC suggested that these storm tides and sunny day flooding will increase.

If you want to see where this all may be headed, CRMC has a new online tool. Put in an address, and then see what the shore will look like in 12 years, or 82 years. You then can see if a "100-year storm" or even sunny day flooding might affect your neighborhood or home. Visit <http://www.beachsamp.org/relatedprojects/pace/>

by Jenny Flanagan



Dangers in the Woods

Reprinted with permission of the Barrington Land Trust
by Ian Donahue

Summer is (finally) here, and that means that ticks are back in force! Although ticks don’t go away during the cold months, they are most active when spring rolls around. In the East Bay, we have a high concentration of ticks, so it is important to always be vigilant when venturing outdoors. Our very own University of Rhode Island is one of the country’s best resources for information on ticks. The researchers there break down protection into three categories on their tickencounter.org/prevention page: You, your pets, and your yard.

You can protect yourself with daily tick checks, tick protective clothing and tick repellent. Protect your pets with daily checks (right after you check yourself!), immunizations, and by keeping your pets out of high tick-concentration areas, like deep woods and brush. Finally, you can protect your yard with perimeter spraying, by keeping the rodent and deer population in check, and creating a tick-hostile area in your yard.

Being able to identify ticks is an important part of determining risk. For example, only adult female Blacklegged (deer) ticks (pictured below) can carry lyme disease.



photo description + credit

There is a lot of misinformation about removing ticks and tick bites. Tick removal techniques that have been debunked over the years include burning with a hot match, smothering with Vaseline and wiggling with your fingers. The best technique is simply to use pointy tweezers to lift the tick straight out from the base.

Oftentimes, people will see a red spot on their skin and worry if it is an infected tick bite. From Tickencounter.org: “Within 3 days of being bitten by a tick, many people will develop a red spot that never expands bigger than a dime. This is just an allergic reaction to the saliva that the tick is spitting into you. Watch the site, however. If the red spot grows in size over a period of a week or so, to bigger than two inches, then it is likely to be a sign that you are infected with the Lyme disease agent.”

There is so much more info at Tickencounter.org. If you spend any time outdoors, please check out the site for accurate information on prevention, identification and treatment.



Poison Ivy is another way to ruin a nice walk in the woods. The best way to deal with poison ivy is to recognize it and avoid it! The old saying is true: “Leaves of three, let them be.” Here is a picture of a classic specimen:



Note that there is a main leaf at the end of the stem, and two leaves coming off the sides. Also, the pointed end of each leaf is a helpful identifier. There is poison ivy (as well as poison oak and poison sumac) in all wooded areas in Rhode Island, so be careful! Wearing long pants and sleeves is the best way to avoid incidental contact when walking in the woods.



This Just In!

submitted to the Land Trust on July 30, 2018:

“Katie Christ found this Diamondback Terrapin on the Jacob’s Point marsh this morning about 200 feet to the west of the osprey platform (and she didn’t even need a net to catch it!).

Nockum Hill in the Barrington River estuary in Barrington is the nesting site for a population of several hundred terrapin, and it is not a stretch to think that this young turtle hatched from a nest there.”

Our New Website is Live!

- We are pleased to announce the launch of our new website, <http://www.warrenlct.org>.
- There you will find a plethora of information about the Land Trust such as News & Events, Protected Land maps and descriptions, membership options, an Annual Meeting schedule, a volunteer application, and a photo gallery featuring beautiful work from our local noted photographer and former WLCT board member Butch Lombardi.
- Thank you to our fabulous web designer, Bruce Hooke, for his great work!
- We welcome feedback and ideas. Use the Contact Us page if you would like to reach us.

Note that there is a main leaf at the end of the stem, and two leaves coming off the sides. Also, the pointed end of each leaf is a helpful identifier. There is poison ivy (as well as poison oak and poison sumac) in all wooded areas in Rhode Island, so be careful! Wearing long pants and sleeves is the best way to avoid incidental contact when walking in the woods.

If you do come in contact with poison ivy, you’ll see a rash, with patches of swollen redness, and an outbreak of blisters, and/or intense itching. The best treatment is to simply use a cold compress, calamine lotion, non-prescription hydrocortisone cream, or an antihistamine to ease itching.

Walking in the woods is a wonderful way to interact with the abundant nature that Rhode Island offers, and by keeping an eye out for ticks and poison ivy, you’re sure to make the most of it.