



The Land Steward

NEWSLETTER OF THE FINGER LAKES LAND TRUST

working to protect the natural integrity of the Finger Lakes Region

Vol. 24, No. 3 • Summer 2012

Canandaigua Farmland Protected from Development

Jim Hicks and Gary Wyffels have a great deal in common. Both farm land on the west side of Canandaigua Lake that has been in their respective families for more than 100 years. Both have watched development encroach on their farms as housing complexes sprawled southward from Canandaigua, turning scenic lake-view farmland into subdivisions of single-family homes. And now, both have taken steps to ensure that their family farms will be permanently protected from development and used only for agricultural purposes.

In May, the Land Trust completed conservation easement agreements on the 135-acre Wyffels Farm and the 82-acre Hicks Farm, both located in Canandaigua in Ontario County. The agreements limit future development on the properties while allowing for traditional land uses such as agriculture and forestry. Most important, the easements are binding for future owners of the properties, thereby protecting the land in perpetuity.

Both conservation easements will be held and monitored by the Land Trust, which now holds more than 90 easements in 12 counties throughout the Finger Lakes region. "We're grateful to the Wyffels and Hicks families for their wonderful commitment to the land and their community," stated Land Trust Executive Director Andy Zepp. "The protection of these farms will help ensure the continuation of agriculture in Canandaigua, while also helping to maintain Canandaigua Lake's water quality."

The agreements came about through a public-private partnership between the Land Trust and the Town of Canandaigua. The Town was able to secure a grant from New York State's Farmland Protection Program that helped defray a significant portion of the costs associated with the easements. The Town's Open Space Reserve Fund was also a source of funding for the projects.

continued on page 4

In addition to beef cattle, fruit trees, produce, hay fields, and several acres of vineyards, the Hick Farm also features spectacular views of Canandaigua Lake and a rugged wooded gorge.

100-Acre Easement in Ellis Hollow Forges another Link in Emerald Necklace

In June the Land Trust announced that it had negotiated a conservation easement covering 100 acres of beautiful woodland in the Ellis Hollow area east of Ithaca.

The property includes 3,300 feet of frontage on Hurd Road and adds a valuable link to the Emerald Necklace corridor of forest lands south of Cayuga Lake.

The easement donors are Thomas Seeley, an Ellis Hollow native, and his wife Robin Hadlock Seeley. Both are biologists at Cornell.

Recognizing the importance of conserving forested lands throughout the Finger Lakes, the Land Trust has worked to establish an Emerald Necklace of protected forest in the hills south of Cayuga Lake. Protecting uplands, especially wooded lands with streams and steep slopes—as the Seeley property features—is vital to the larger picture of watershed health.

The Land Trust seeks to accomplish its aims through a combination of land purchases from willing owners and, increasingly, through conservation easements worked out between the Land Trust and landowners who wish to protect their properties from future development.

continued on page 3

Two hundred-forty six miles—that’s the current amount of boundary line that Land Trust staff and volunteers are responsible for maintaining and monitoring on our own land as well as conservation easement properties. With the completion of each successful land protection project, this responsibility grows, as does the need to reach out to neighboring landowners, address invasive pest species, maintain hiking trails, and host an ever-increasing number of visitors to our preserves.

The recent addition of Jason Gorman to our growing team of conservation professionals is a big step forward in terms of our capacity for addressing these issues. Jason is our second full-time land manager and will be working alongside other staff and more than 150 dedicated stewardship volunteers.

Long-term stewardship is perhaps the Land Trust’s most important responsibility. If there is not a strong organization standing behind its conservation easements, they may end up being little more than pieces of paper. And if our nature preserves are not managed well, the special qualities that set them apart may be lost forever.

To ensure the continuity of our protection efforts, each year the Land Trust adds to its stewardship fund to support land management programs. This carefully managed account provides an ongoing income stream, guaranteeing the resources we need to address future challenges—whether that may be the feral hogs you’ll read about in this issue or the wayward preserve neighbor who thinks that our conservation land is the perfect place to discard cast-off appliances.

As we oversee this growing network of conservation lands, we’re also creating new opportunities for the public to get out to some of the region’s natural gems. Near Skaneateles Lake, we’re creating a network of lands that will be linked by a hiking trail with scenic views of the lake. In Tompkins County, we’re working on the development of a handicapped-accessible boardwalk and wetland overlook that will also provide the first link in the Emerald Necklace Greenbelt. On Cayuga Lake, we’ll soon formally open to the public 1,900 feet of natural shoreline across the lake from the village of Aurora. And near the south end of Canandaigua Lake, we’ll soon be restoring native grasslands for birds and developing an interpretive site that will provide information on thousands of acres of adjacent public land.

Everyone is welcome to get involved in our stewardship programs, and I encourage you to participate in our upcoming workdays at the VanRiper Conservation Area in Seneca County on Thursday, September 6th and Friday, September 7th (*see page 11 for details*). Please also consider making a contribution to the stewardship fund. Your financial support can ensure that those special places you love will continue to inspire you, your children’s children, and generations to follow.

—Andy Zepp

VANRIPER CONSERVATION AREA DEDICATION: Saturday, September 22nd at 11:00 am



Please join us to celebrate the opening of the VanRiper Conservation Area and the Whitlock Nature Preserve on the western shore of Cayuga Lake. The Land Trust purchased the 68-acre VanRiper property for less than its fair market value in early 2011. The 15-acre Whitlock property—which adjoins the parcel—was donated to the Land Trust by Louisa Whitlock and her family in early 1998. Together, the VanRiper and Whitlock properties protect 1,900 feet of pristine lakeshore.

The Land Trust constructed a ½ mile loop trail that provides access to the lake, as well as a parking area and interpretive kiosk.

All are invited to join us for a dedication of the trail, followed by a brief tour. Refreshments will be served. For directions and parking instructions, please visit the Land Trust’s website after September 1st at www.flit.org or call the office 607-275-9487.

The Land Trust has thus far raised \$1 million toward a goal of \$1.2 million. If you would like to make a donation or wish further information, please contact Kelly Makosch at 607-275-9487, or by e-mail at kellymakosch@flit.org

Easement Gift Continues Skaneateles Farming Tradition

A small—yet significant—parcel of 22 acres of USDA prime farmland in Niles, Cayuga County, has been added to the protection of the Skaneateles Lake watershed and the scenic beauty of the Finger Lakes landscape as a whole.

Bob DeWitt, owner of Lakeview Auto in Skaneateles, donated a conservation easement to the Land Trust on farmland he owns in the highlands above Skaneateles Lake, just off State Route 41A. The DeWitt family has lived on and farmed land in the area since the 18th century, making them one of the earliest farming settlers in the region.

A member of the Skaneateles Lake Association, Bob DeWitt has a strong sense of stewardship responsibility for the land that he owns. “Whether it’s 500 acres or 20 acres, land protection is the appropriate action,” he said. “And I think there is value in conserving smaller pieces of land.”

DeWitt has been a supporter of other Land Trust projects in his area, including the nearby Bahar Preserve on Bear Swamp Creek and the High Vista Preserve across the lake.

Route 41A, on the west side of Skaneateles Lake, is an emerging target area for developers wanting to take advantage of sweeping views of the lake and the hills to the east. It is a pretty, rural route, with intriguing byways for bicyclists—some say it’s the most scenic route in the Finger Lakes. Whatever the case, agriculture is the main land use along the road, and farms keep the roadside views open and spectacular for visitors and residents alike.

The DeWitt easement ensures that the land will remain in agricultural use. DeWitt leases the field to farming neighbors Karl and Cindy Cuykendall. The Cuykendalls are negotiating to buy the property from DeWitt. In doing so, they will buy into the conservation easement as well, ensuring the open, agricultural future of that piece of the earth forever.

The 22-acre property has conservation value to the Land

Trust as part of a general program to protect water quality in the Skaneateles watershed (the main source of water for the City of Syracuse) and to preserve open space farmland so vital to residents and tourists in the Finger Lakes.

“Of course it’s important that we retain our best farmland for the future,” said Andy Zepp, the Land Trust’s executive director. “We’re delighted to work with Bob to help make this happen.”
—Eben McLane

(left to right) Land Trust Executive Director Andy Zepp with Cindy Cuykendall, Bob DeWitt, and Land Trust Board Member Bob Werner



100-Acre Easement in Ellis Hollow Forges another Link... *continued from cover*

Land development pressures around Ithaca are not new, of course. “Over the 50-plus years that I’ve known the community, I’ve seen many beautiful fields and forested hillsides become filled with houses as Ellis Hollow went from farmland to suburbia,” Seeley said. “I wanted to protect a quiet and beautiful part of the Hollow, and I knew that the best way to do so was to own it. So I let the old-timers know that I’d be interested in buying their land if they ever wanted to sell it, and this worked out.”

The Seeley property lies across Hurd Road from another forestland conservation easement established in 2009 by Steve Keast, also an Ellis Hollow native and Seeley’s childhood friend. The twin easements represent the fruition of a concern they shared about environmental changes to the land in this growing area. “By working together,” Seeley

said, “we achieved something that neither of us could have afforded on our own: protecting the woods on *both* sides of the road.”

The Seeleys and Keasts bought the land of an abandoned farm in the 1990s, with the Seeleys on the north side of the road and the Keasts on the south. The Hurd Farm, for which the road is named, was an early farm in the area but was abandoned in the late 1800s, as so many marginal, upland farms were at about the same time. In the meantime, the land has reforested and the original homestead is gone.

The Seeleys are more-than-usually active managers of their woodlands. By thinning in selected spots, they have created a modest sugarbush of 150 maple trees and look forward to sugar harvests as they move gradually toward retirement from their crowded

academic schedules. They regularly remove invasive plants—notably multiflora rose and European buckthorn—to keep these aggressive plants at bay. Their forest also supplies them with all the winter firewood they need to keep their house warm.

“Mostly, though, I enjoy the woods by studying them,” Seeley said. The human history of the land intrigues him as an Ellis Hollow native: Hurd farmhouse cellar holes, barn foundations, springs, old logging paths, piles of stones from cleared fields. The natural history of the old farm interests him, too. He notes old fields, now “filled in nicely” with sugar maples, and shady hemlock stands on the steep slopes of creeks running through the woods.

Under the terms of the conservation easement, forest management practices

continued on page 8



Canandaigua Farmland Protected from Development *continued from cover*

“The Town is so pleased to have finally secured these farms and preserve them for future generations,” said Canandaigua Town Supervisor Sam Casella. “I hope these projects serve as encouragement to other municipalities to pursue their own preservation efforts.”

The Hicks Farm, located on Coye Road, is adjacent to the Bristol Harbor Resort, but it is also near other protected lands, which help provide a buffer against development. The original homestead, which has been in the family since the late 1700s, covers 53 acres and is owned jointly by the four Hicks siblings. Jim Hicks and one of his brothers each own adjoining parcels that together comprise the other 29 acres covered by the conservation easement.

Jim manages the farm, having given up an engineering career to “play in the dirt,” as he puts it. It is a relatively small but diverse operation—a few beef cattle, fruit trees, produce, hay fields, and several acres of vineyards, including Concord grapes for Welch’s juice and Riesling grapes that are supplied to local wineries. The property also features spectacular views of Canandaigua Lake and a rugged wooded gorge.

As a seventh-generation farmer, Jim feels a bond with the land and has a keen desire to preserve it for future generations. “It was important to me that the farm be taken care of, and not go by the wayside like so many other farms,” said Jim.

Six miles northeast of the Hicks Farm, along Middle Cheshire Road, Gary and Joan Wyffels tend to hay fields and pasture land for beef cattle that roam their 135 acres. The grazing cattle provide a scenic and peaceful backdrop in an area of intense residential development—the Wyffels Farm is surrounded on three sides by large housing subdivisions.

“I have been approached by three big housing developers [to sell the farm],” said Gary. “But I just love this place, my family lives all around me, and some things are more important than money.”

The Wyffels family has been farming this property since the late 1800s and has grown or raised just about everything in the intervening years. For example, Gary notes that his farm was the first in Ontario County to grow soybeans. As a sign of their land ethic, the family eschews chemicals and fertilizers on the farm.

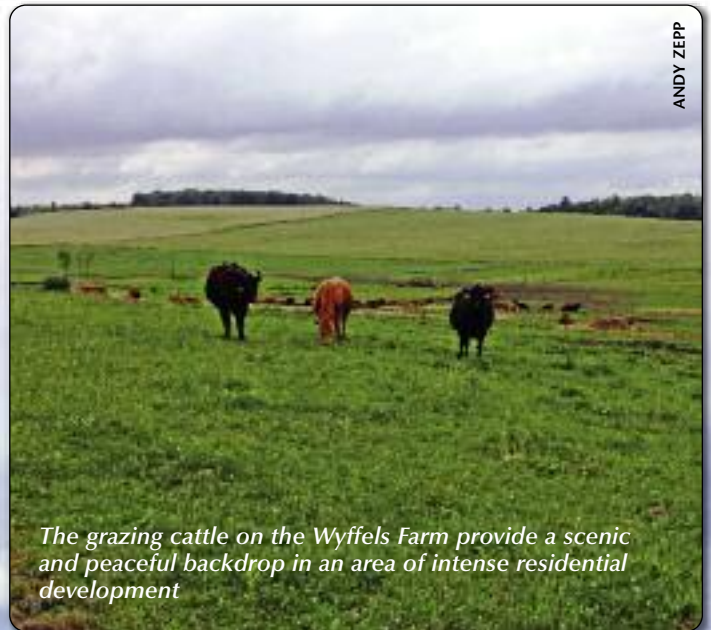
The Hicks Farm includes several acres of vineyards, including Concord grapes for Welch’s juice and Riesling grapes that are supplied to local wineries.

As the next generation displays some nascent interest in working the land, Gary sees a bright future ahead. “Protecting this farm is good for the lake, good for the town, and good for our family,” he said.

With the Wyffels and Hicks easements, the Land Trust has completed 16 land protection projects within the Canandaigua Lake Watershed. Other accomplishments include the establishment of Grimes Glen County Park in Naples, and the organization’s partnership with the Town of South Bristol to secure lands adjacent to its scenic overlook on County Route 12.

—Jeff Tonole

The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorney Robert L. Besanceney in Orchard Park for providing pro bono legal services in support of these projects.



ANDY ZEPP

The grazing cattle on the Wyffels Farm provide a scenic and peaceful backdrop in an area of intense residential development

NIGEL KENT ©



Conservationist of the Year: Peter Landre

Dedicated, knowledgeable, invaluable, a true leader. Anyone who knows or has worked with Peter Landre uses these words to describe him. And it's no wonder: his professional and personal life for the last 20 years has been dedicated to the health and well-being of the land, water, and people of the Keuka and Canandaigua Lake watersheds.

Peter's interest in conservation and the outdoors began when his family moved from suburban Fairport to rural Canandaigua when he was twelve years old. With Canandaigua Lake and the Bristol Hills as a backdrop, he became an enthusiastic fisherman and downhill skier. His family spent lots of time on the lake and also at his grandfather's hobby farm in Bainbridge, NY. He attended St. Lawrence and Cornell, for his bachelors and masters degree, respectively.

In 1990, Peter went to work for the Keuka Lake Association (KLA). His work there eventually led to a partnership of all eight municipalities in the Keuka Lake watershed and the development of a comprehensive watershed plan for the lake which, according to the KLA, "is considered one of the best in the

country." Peter has stayed on as a volunteer and advisor to the KLA, even after leaving them as a staff member. As a consultant he has taken a leadership role on many projects, from water quality monitoring to the development of a watershed land use guide, and he has served as an advisor on numerous technical issues. He also edited the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Management Plan and advised municipal officials and volunteers in that watershed as well.

Hired by Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Yates County in the early 1990s, Peter was instrumental in implementing a farmland protection program and advising the wine and grape industry on land use and agricultural issues. The program—a partnership of Yates County, the Finger Lakes Land Trust, and New York State—has been successful in protecting over 1,100 acres of prime farmland in the county. While at CCE, Peter also brought to Yates



County a training and certification program developed by PACE University called the Land Use Leadership Alliance, bringing together municipal officials from the Keuka Lake watershed to teach them about farmland protection, water quality, and land use law. Peter recently left CCE Yates and is now working for the statewide cooperative

extension system out of Cornell University.

"Peter was and is a monumental part of CCE," says Jessica Spence, a long-time CCE employee and colleague. "He has a tremendous rapport with the county legislature and excels in building partnerships in the community. He has set a strong precedent for CCE and an excellent foundation to guide us into the future."

The Land Trust is honored to present the 2012 Conservationist of the Year Award to Peter Landre.

—Emily Eisman, Outreach and Membership Manager

Volunteer of the Year: Steve Lewandowski

Steve Lewandowski's connection to the Land Trust goes back to the very first years the organization was in existence. He served on the board of directors starting in 1991 and first brought attention to the need to conserve the Hemlock and Canadice Lake watershed lands. In fact, as founder of the Coalition for Hemlock and Canadice, Steve was awarded the Land Trust's Conservationist of the Year in 1997. More recently, he received The Nature Conservancy's Friend of the Land Award for his tireless work in that area. That project has now borne fruit, since the watershed forests have been acquired by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

To the casual observer, Steve's path to conservation and watershed protection may seem a bit circuitous. He was an English literature major at Hamilton College and then went on to Washington University to do graduate work in philosophy. He continues to write poetry and has published 10 volumes. But, as he says, "It turns out I'm the same person in whichever thing I'm doing, whether it's writing poems or doing a watershed study."

Steve worked for the US Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resource Conservation Service) for 24 years, where he learned vital lessons in science and engineering through hands-

on experience. Ever since leaving that federal job, he's been making a gift of his experience through environmental education and management plan consulting in the Finger Lakes. Some of his most recent work has involved data gathering and computer modeling of watershed stream chemical pollution loads.

For many years, Steve has been active with the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association and has served on town boards and planning councils to make his valuable voice heard.

He recently undertook an ambitious project for the Land Trust involving a study of the archeological background of a parcel of property at the south end of Canandaigua Lake donated to the Land Trust by Constellation Brands last year. It was rumored that there had been historic use of the site by Native Americans, and Steve set out to try to confirm or deny those rumors. "As a volunteer, Steve really went above and beyond for this study,"

says Andrew Zepp, Land Trust Executive Director. "He did numerous interviews and spent many hours on research, compiling an important reference document that will serve the Land Trust well."

Thank you, Steve!

—Emily Eisman, Outreach and Membership Manager



SCENES

from Around Our Region...



Paddlers on a recent field trip to the Land Trust's Cora Kampfe Dickinson Conservation Area on Skaneateles Lake



Mark Chao (second from the left), leading a bird walk especially for families and children at the Roy H. Park Preserve in Tompkins County



(left to right) Volunteers Tom Reimers, Monika Wood, Catherine Lusardi, Ed Haff, John Sirriani, and Bob Corneau at the Steege Hill Nature Preserve in Chemung County



TOM REIMERS

(left to right, standing) Land Trust members Jim Kersting and Betsy Darlington with (seated) members John Confer, Ed Hart, Advisory Council member Lynn Leopold, and Board President Stu Schweizer

(right to left) Land Trust Director of Stewardship Chris Olney and Cornell Outdoor Education Executive Director Todd Miner with members of Cornell's Beta Theta Pi fraternity, who volunteered to help move and reset a bridge at the Etna Preserve in Tompkins County



PETER MILLER

Woodland Gift adds to Emerald Necklace

The Land Trust has sold a 35-acre property in Danby, Tompkins County, with the proceeds to be used in support of local land conservation projects, as well as for the long-term monitoring of a conservation easement on the property itself.

The property is located on Olsefski Road within Deputron Hollow, a county-designated Unique Natural Area (UNA), and it is in close proximity to another property which is also protected by a Land Trust held easement.

Priscilla Noetzel-Wilson donated the parcel to the Land Trust in January 2011, with the understanding that it would eventually be sold with conservation restrictions that limit construction of any structures to the area outside of the UNA. The buyer is an outdoorsman who plans to use the land for recreation.

Protection of the land, which features a mix of hardwood and coniferous forest, will help maintain water quality within the Six-Mile Creek watershed, the source of Ithaca's drinking water supply. The land is also within the Emerald Necklace Greenbelt, an effort to link 50,000 acres of existing public open space that extends in an arc around Ithaca through portions of four counties.

"This easement is a great addition to the Emerald Necklace," said Land Trust Executive Director Andrew Zepp. "Thanks to the generosity of Priscilla, we're able to take another step towards ensuring a future that will include clean water, scenic countryside, and productive habitat for fish and wildlife."

—*Krishna Ramanujan*



A little planning today will make a big difference tomorrow

More than 14,000 acres
Protected since 1989

Discover the many ways you can conserve the lands and waters you call home while meeting your financial goals

Invest in the mission of the Land Trust through gifts from your estate

Join the White Pine Society

100-Acre Easement in Ellis Hollow Forges another Link... *continued from page 3*

that the Seeleys are already following will continue, including tree thinning for various purposes and limited timber harvests. Tom Seeley recently concluded a small timber sale of white ash trees "in

anticipation of the arrival of the emerald ash borer," an ash tree killer working its way into the Finger Lakes.

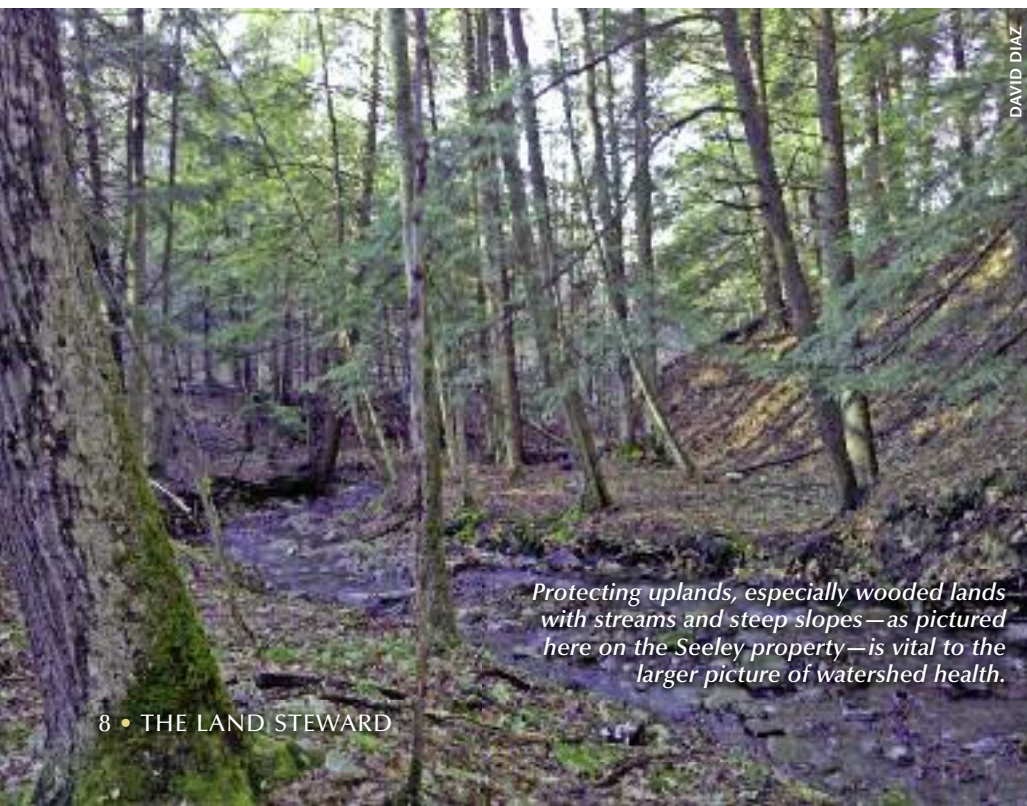
The Seeleys are keenly interested in maintaining the health and character

of their woods. Routine forest maintenance is a way of life for them. But Tom Seeley is particularly pleased that, under the easement he worked out with the Land Trust, a special part of his property could be set aside as an Environmental Protection Zone. This part of the woods contains trees not logged on the old Hurd farm, some as old as 140 years. This section of the property is off-limits to logging, permanently.

"Tom is one of the most thoughtful and informed landowners I've ever met," said Director of Land Protection David Diaz. "And that's most apparent when you walk his amazing land with him. Tom knows every nook and cranny of his land and the value of conserving them for future generations."

—*Eben McLane*

The Land Trust gratefully acknowledges Attorney Carrie Pollak and Legal Assistant Michelle Morris of the law firm of Miller Mayer, LLP in Ithaca for providing pro bono legal services in support of this project.



Protecting uplands, especially wooded lands with streams and steep slopes—as pictured here on the Seeley property—is vital to the larger picture of watershed health.

A CLOSER LOOK

Wild Pigs: Our Hogs Gone Wild

For thousands of years, the hunt of the Eurasian boar (*Sus scrofa*, also known as the wild boar) presented the ultimate challenge to heroes and those who aspired to become heroes. These fierce animals, once found in most parts of Eurasia and along the rim of North Africa, were pursued by gutsy hunters from Ireland to Japan. Wild boar are canny and formidable opponents: they have keen senses, run fast, are highly intelligent, and are extremely aggressive when confronted. Males have razor-sharp tusks up to five inches long; females lack tusks but bite viciously. A man who was able to make a kill from horseback—or, even more daringly, on foot—won great acclaim from his peers. With its front-heavy body, long face, and ridge of hair along the backbone (a feature that has earned it the nickname of “razorback” in some parts of the U.S.), the wild boar looks primitive and menacing, quite unlike a barnyard porker.

Once noble opponents of ancient champions, wild boar and their kin have become serious pests in many parts of the world. In the U.S., free-running swine may be escaped domestic pigs, imported Eurasian boar, or hybrids of the two. In common parlance, these animals are usually known as feral pigs, which is an inaccurate moniker because only some of them are feral: that is, domesticated animals that have escaped from captivity. To avoid confusion, scientists use the blanket term “wild pigs” to refer to this motley group of animals.

Wild swine have long been a problem in the South, in parts of California, and in Hawaii; now they are breeding in at least six New York counties and have been sighted in several more. Ironically, they are spreading rapidly on this continent for the same reason that they have disappeared from many areas of their native range: their hunt is a dangerous and exciting test of skill and nerve. Many animals are deliberately released into the wild by hunters, and many others are escapees from game preserves. The pigs that have been found in our state seem to be mostly of the latter sort, fugitives from hunting ranches in New York and Pennsylvania.

The same aggression that makes wild pigs such sought-after game animals also makes them a danger to pets, livestock, and people. Furthermore, their close genetic ties to domestic pigs make them dangerous vectors for diseases that farmers have worked hard to eradicate from their livestock. Several cases of pseudorabies, fatal to many domestic animals, have been found in New York’s wild swine.

However, the greatest threat is not to humans or their animals, but to the environment. Pigs, whether domestic or wild, are rambunctious and messy, and eat just about everything in their paths. A sounder of pigs can root up a corn field or a lawn in no time, or damage fragile wetland ecosystems with their wallowing. They are ravenous omnivores, devouring anything from roots and seedlings to bird eggs, snakes, and even fawns. As wildlife disease biologist Justin Gansowski says, “They’ll eat anything with a calorie in it. They’re living rototillers.”

In areas where they’ve become endemic, wild swine are proving difficult to eradicate. Eurasian boar reproduce only once a year, but domestic pigs have been selectively bred to maximize reproductive capacity. Consequently, many wild pigs in the U.S. reach sexual maturity earlier, have larger litter sizes, and are able to breed twice as often as their Eurasian counterparts. In addition, their large size and aggressiveness mean that they have very few predators, and their intelligence means that they can evade almost any trap. In fact, the more they’re hunted, the more wary they become and the harder they are to catch. Government agencies attempting to remove the animals are careful not to reveal the exact locations of pig populations, lest overeager hunters make a hard job even harder.

In classical myth, the Calydonian boar was a monster sent by Diana to torment an impious people. It ravaged their vineyards and crops, causing a great famine, and could only be killed by the concerted efforts of many heroes. New York’s current population of wild swine is small, but without heroic efforts, we will soon be faced with a pig problem of Calydonian proportions. Unfortunately, time and circumstances are not on our side. Animal control efforts have suffered from a lack of funding. At the same time, more and more animals are being released or are escaping into the wild. Stephen Ditchkoff, an expert on wild swine in Alabama—a state with an exponentially increasing pig population—warns of imminent disaster: “In New York, you don’t have long before the problem becomes very grave. Five to ten years would be my guess.”

If you see a wild pig, please notify the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (instructions at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/70843.html) and/or the USDA at 1-866-487-3297.

—Jacqueline Stuhmiller

PHOTO BY USDA APHIS J. GANSOWSKI



STAFF Developments

We're delighted to announce the hiring of Jason Gorman, who will be filling the Land Trust's first, full-time, dedicated Land Steward position. Jason will assist Director of Stewardship Chris Olney in managing the Land Trust's growing network of conservation lands—now over 4,000 acres of nature preserves and another 7,500 acres under conservation easement throughout the organization's vast 12-county service area.

An avid birder and nature lover, Jason has a bachelor's degree in conservation biology from SUNY Cortland. In addition to his volunteer stewardship work with the Land Trust for the past four years, Jason has helped out as an avian monitoring technician at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and worked for the Audubon Society of New York as a seasonal grassland bird technician. Please join us in welcoming Jason.



In our Western Lakes region, part-time Senior Field Representative Betsy Landre has left for a full-time position as a senior planner with the Ontario County Planning Department. Betsy's hard work and dedication were unsurpassed. She was also a joy to work with, and we will miss her dearly.

Betsy's work will be taken over by Land Protection Specialist Elizabeth Newbold, who will be expanding her duties to include the Western Lakes region.

Please join us in wishing Jason a hearty welcome and wishing Betsy all the best in her new position.

Board of Directors and Advisory Council Grow

We are also excited to announce that Mary Jo Yunis has joined the Land Trust's Board of Directors. Mary Jo is President of Yunis Realty, Inc., a commercial real estate company located in Elmira. She has worked for the company for over 20 years. Prior to returning to her native Elmira, she worked as a C.P.A. for Ernst and Young in New York City. She graduated *magna cum laude* from Boston College with a B.S. in accounting and currently serves on the boards of the Clemens Center, as treasurer, and Chemung County Planning.

We are also pleased to welcome Liz Thorndike to our Advisory Council. Liz is the founder, former executive director, and a former board member of the Center for Environmental Information in Rochester. She is also co-founder of the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network. Her work in the public sector has included serving as commissioner of the Adirondack Park Agency for nearly 16 years and, more recently, as a board member of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. Since 1996, Liz has served as a Visiting Lecturer at Cornell University, developing and teaching a course on "Wilderness and Wetlands: Sustaining the Built Environment."

In looking forward to her place on the organization's Advisory Council, Liz said, "The Finger Lakes Land Trust plays a critical role by insuring a sustainable landscape and largely involving the private sector in achieving this goal. As with only a few areas, the environment is the economy of the Finger Lakes region, and the Land Trust catalyzes support for this economy in the most effective way."

Welcome aboard Mary Jo and Liz!

Our appreciation for gifts
in honor of:

Burch Craig
FROM
Rachel Hall

Betsy Darlington
FROM
Jean Darlington

Thomas Egan
FROM
Ronald Egan

Joseph Zvolensky
FROM
Matthew Zvolensky

Our deepest gratitude for
thoughtful gifts in memory of:

Tom Eisner
FROM
Pearson Education

David Hamlin
FROM
Bonnie Hamlin

John Higinbotham
FROM
G. Yvonne and Lawrence Chavez

Sheela Kingsbury
FROM
Ruth and Roger Hopkins

Carl Leopold
FROM
Amy Jaffe

Dr. Robert Morris
FROM
Marci and Glenn Beck

Laura Lee Smith
FROM
James and Janis Smith

Edward J Thompson
FROM
William Thompson

Linda Underhill
FROM
Mary Hood

Talks & Treks!

Summer 2012

Saturday, August 18, 8:00PM-11:00pm, Star Gazing and Observatory Tour at the Mees Observatory.

A unique opportunity to see the stars high atop the Bristol Hills at the University of Rochester's observatory! Learn about celestial bodies and deep space objects while gazing through the 24-inch telescope. Space is limited and registration is required, please call 607-275-9487. Meet at the Gannett House at 6604 East Gannett Hill Road in Naples.


Saturday, September 8, 10:00am, A Forest Regenerates: Tornado Aftermath at Kingsbury Woods.

In April 2011, a tornado touched down in Danby, affecting a swath of land including the Land Trust's Kingsbury Woods Conservation Area. Join forest ecologist Peter Marks for an examination and interpretation of the forest more than a year later. From Ithaca, go south on Rt. 96B. About 2 miles past Ithaca College, make a right onto Comfort Road. Go 1.6 miles and turn right on Jersey Hill Rd. At the split in the road, continue to follow Jersey Hill Rd (a left). Go a short distance and park in the parking area on the right, just before the bridge; the trail is on the left opposite the parking area.

Saturday, September 29, 10:00am, Fall Fungus at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve.

Join mycologist Kathie Hodge again this year to explore the curious fungus kingdom that sprouts around us in the fall. Please register by emailing info@fllt.org or calling 607-275-9487. From Ithaca, follow Ellis Hollow Road 2.5 miles past East Hill Shopping Plaza. Turn left on Genung Road, then right on Ellis Hollow Creek Road. Preserve entrance is located 0.2 miles past intersection, on left side of road.

Events are free and open to the public. For detailed directions and information call 607-275-9487; or visit www.fllt.org. Walks go rain or shine so please dress appropriately for the weather and be sure to bring water and snacks. Please see the summer issue of *The Land Steward* and be sure to check your local papers for more events in this series.

 **M&T Bank** is a generous sponsor of the Land Trust's Talks and Treks series.

Volunteer Work Days

Thursday, September 6th AND Friday, September 7th, 9:00am-3:00pm VanRiper Conservation Area – NYS Route 89, Town of Romulus, Seneca County

Volunteers are needed to help install a large new kiosk at the Land Trust's new VanRiper Conservation Area and the adjacent Whitlock Nature Preserve. With their beautiful woodlands and unspoiled shoreline, help us make these protected properties an inviting place for the public to come and enjoy Cayuga Lake. Tools and work gloves will be provided. Park at the new parking lot on the east side of Route 89 if construction of the new parking area is finished; if not, then park on the shoulder of North Cayuga Lake Road, just off Route 89 on the west side. Bring your own lunch and water. Please RSVP before the work dates to Jason Gorman (jasongorman@fllt.org) or Chris Olney (chrisolney@fllt.org), or call 607-275-9487.

Directions to our preserves may be found on our website at www.fllt.org

Finger Lakes Land Trust

Officers:

Stu Schweizer, *President*
Howard Hartnett, *Vice President*
Steve Green, *Secretary*
Burch Craig, *Treasurer*

Board Members:

Robert Brancato Doug Sutherland
Marti Macinski Jan Suwinski
Edward F. Premo, II Bob Werner
Chris Proulx Marianne Young
Donald Specker Mary Jo Yunis

Advisory Council:

James Byrnes Robert Mrazek
John Fitzpatrick Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.
James Fralick Richard Raines
Alexa Gifford Mark Stash
Barbara Hamlin Liz Thorndike
Albert Joerger James Walsh
Lynn Leopold David Zorn

Staff:

Andrew Zepp, *Executive Director*
Abbey Chernela, *Office Manager*
David Diaz, *Director of Land Protection*
Karen Edelstein, *GIS Projects Manager*
Emily Eisman, *Outreach and Membership Manager*
Jason Gorman, *Land Steward*
Kelly Makosch, *Director of Development*
Elizabeth Newbold, *Land Protection Specialist*
Chris Olney, *Director of Stewardship*
Kris West, *Senior Field Representative*

Newsletter Editors:

Eben McLane
Krishna Ramanujan

Newsletter Layout:

Westhill Graphics, Inc.

Advisors:

Legal Counsel: Elizabeth Bixler; Randy Marcus; Miller Mayer, LLP; Peter Miller; Richard Ruswick; True, Walsh, & Schubert, LLP
Forestry Consultant: Michael DeMunn
Stewardship Advisor: Betsy Darlington



Finger Lakes Land Trust

202 E. Court Street
Ithaca, New York 14850
Ph: 607-275-9487
Fax: 607-275-0037
email: info@fllt.org • www.fllt.org



Finger Lakes Land Trust

202 E. Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TRUMANSBURG, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

Summer 2012 Calendar



SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 8:00pm-11:00pm

Star Gazing and Observatory Tour at the Mees Observatory (*see page 11 for details*)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 & FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 9:00am-3:00pm

Volunteer work days at the VanRiper Conservation Area (*see page 11 for details*)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 10:00am

A Forest Regenerates: Tornado Aftermath at Kingsbury Woods (*see page 11 for details*)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 11:00am

VanRiper Conservation Area Dedication (*see page 2 for details*)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 10:00am

Fall Fungus at the Ellis Hollow Nature Preserve (*see page 11 for details*)

PLEASE SEE PAGE 11 FOR THE SCHEDULE OF OUR 2012 SUMMER TALKS & TREKS SERIES & VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS.

See our web site for maps and photos of the preserves.

WALKS GO RAIN, SUN OR SNOW. PLEASE BRING SNACKS AND WATER, AND WEAR STURDY SHOES. CALL THE LAND TRUST AT (607) 275-9487 FOR DETAILS.