# THE LAND STEWARD

Newsletter of the Finger Lakes Land Trust

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## Land Trust Founder Returns As Its New Leader

*Andy Zepp Land Trust's new Executive Director*

Cornell graduate, Andrew Zepp, has been named the new executive director of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, an organization he helped launch in 1989 while a graduate student at the University. Andy, who brings with him 16 years of land conservation experience, will fill the position left vacant by the departure of Dr. Gay Nicholson, beginning his duties on January 13, 2003.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Andy back to the Finger Lakes region," said John Rogers, president of the Land Trust's board of directors. "He brings a lot of experience in management of land conservation organizations, and he shares our passion for protecting the natural resources and integrity of the Finger Lakes."

Andy Zepp spent the past seven years working as Vice President for Programs at the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), a national organization that provides support and technical assistance to local land trusts. "After enjoying the opportunity to tackle challenges facing the entire land protection movement, I look forward to applying the skills I've developed to benefit a region I care deeply about," he said. While at LTA Andy launched LTA's system of field programs and doubled the size of LTA budget and staff. He also managed development and membership, and served as Acting President, providing strong leadership for LTA during a year of transition. "Land trusts all over the country are more effective thanks to Andy's leadership, and his departure will be a great loss for the LTA," said Rand Wentworth, president of the LTA.

Andy's passion for land protection goes back to the days when he worked with the Middlesex Land Trust in Connecticut as founder and president. A native of Westchester County, Andy came to Ithaca to study at the Cornell University College of Industrial & Labor Relations, where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree. He continued his studies at the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell, where his Master's project was Creation of the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

In his role as Founder and Consultant to the Finger Lakes Land Trust Andy helped recruit members for the very first board of directors, including Carl Leopold as the founding president. He also secured non-profit status for the Land Trust, and provided technical support, training, and guidance in development of programs and policies.

Andy's experience in conservation includes six years with The Nature Conservancy in Rochester, where he served as director of land protection and associate director of the organization. He was involved as a staff member or volunteer with a dozen local and regional land and water conservation organizations over the past 16 years. "I am thrilled to see Andy return to the Land Trust," said Betsy Darlington, director of land protection, and one of the founding volunteers of the organization. "The future of this organization could not be in better hands."

*—Jola Simon*

## Land Trust Voted Ithaca's "Best Non-Profit Organization"

Readers of the Ithaca Times voted the Finger Lakes Land Trust the best non-profit organization. Inspired by the San Francisco Bay Guardian's "Best of" edition, the Ithaca Times' annual "best of" issue has remained one of the most popular since its initial publication twenty years ago. Jim Bilinski, publisher of the Ithaca Times, said, "We print more copies of the 'best of' edition than any other issue. It's been very well received by the community."

When informed by the paper that the Land Trust had won the honors, Betsy Darlington, director of land protection, exclaimed, "You're kidding! Wow! Omigosh, that is so exciting… We protect land, and we have a lot of wonderful nature preserves that are open to the public for walking, and I guess people appreciate that."

Results of the annual survey were published in the September 25, 2002 "Best of Ithaca" issue.

**Please join us for one of our Winter Nature Walks. See the back page for details.**

# Sign Of The Lone Pine

The 2002-03 Annual Appeal is well underway toward our ambitious goal of raising $70,000. This is a challenging goal, but a necessary one in light of all that we must do. Our effectiveness in preserving the natural areas of the Finger Lakes region depends upon the availability of strong resources: resources of time, people, and financial backing to support our educational, conservation, and stewardship work.

The protection of open space is increasing in importance as people connect with nature, and the 23 nature preserves protected by the Finger Lakes Land Trust provide visitors with opportunities to make that connection. After visiting the Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook, G.S. from Erie, PA wrote: *"What a gem so close to town! You here in Ithaca are truly blessed with some of the greatest scenery and hiking around…"* A and J visited Lick Brook on January 2nd, 2002 and wrote in the visitor's log: "*We just moved to the area and can't be more pleased with our choice. This place is beautiful! Happy New Year*!" And we received this note from DRL from Gates, NY: *"I had the pleasure of hiking Wesley Hill Nature Preserve and I was very pleasantly surprised. In an era when trails are dying of neglect, the New York State DEC has been transported to Mars and whole parks are being put off limits, it was both nice to see well maintained new trails and expanding trails. I found your trails to be well blazed, well maintained and with generally good signage. Kudos.*"

More than one million people across the country are members of nonprofit land trusts or in other ways support land conservation. And the numbers are growing. In fact, private land conservation may be the fastest growing segment of the environmental community.

The Finger Lakes Land Trust is a membership-based organization, but membership dues alone are not enough to cover the cost of our programs, which are vitally important to our ever-changing region. That's why it is necessary to have an annual campaign to raise additional funds. It costs the Land Trust $275 per acre to protect over 6,400+ acres of nature preserves and conservation easements. And this is just the cost of maintaining our program at its current level. That's not much when you consider that the work we do today will keep these natural treasures for future generations forever!

If you haven't made your gift to this year's Annual Appeal, there is still time to do so. With your gift, you will help people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities enjoy the beauty of the Finger Lakes region and ensure the quality of life that makes the Finger Lakes a great place to live, work, and play for generations to come.

*—Jola Simon*

## Gift Giving

*It is easy to put a price on most things,*
*and to assume that things without a*
*definitive price are worth less.*
*Such assumptions are wrong.*

*Gifts most precious are given through*
*time, energy, commitment, dedication,*
*creativity and compassion.*
*They touch the human heart.*

*Thank you for your gifts to others,*
*Linda and David Caughey*
*Members since 1989*

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*Jim Fralick, Western Lakes Chapter volunteer, connecting with nature at the Great Hill Preserve, with a backdrop of Canandaigua Lake and its western shore.*

# VOLUNTEER PROFILE: JOHN SMITH

## A story of a working whistler

Photo by Rich Sheiman

*John Smith, volunteer extraordinaire!*

The backhoe comes trundling through the woods, its loader piled high with trash of every description—discarded mattresses, broken furniture, buckets, and boxes—its driver whistling cheerily. That is the image that comes to the minds of many who helped with the big dump cleanup of the Browning addition to the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve. The whistler is John Smith, **volunteer extraordinaire** to the Land Trust and to the community of West Danby.

"His backhoe was a tremendous asset to the cleanup," says preserve steward Geo Kloppel, "and after we were done, he brought over his bulldozer to regrade the site. In addition, his farm tractor and brush hog keep the field trails open in summer."

When John noticed some abandoned utility poles on the preserve, he used them as beams for three footbridges built, under his guidance, by volunteers from Cornell University and Ithaca College.

"He has block and tackle and all kinds of ropes," adds Betsy Darlington, "to drag large objects out of the preserves." And he's used his truck and trailer to haul away junk cars, scrap metal, and tires from the Lindsay-Parsons, Ellis Hollow, and King preserves.

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*John Smith, pictured in the center, guiding volunteers building a bridge at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve*

John Smith and his wife, Polley McClure, came to Ithaca from the University of Virginia six years ago. Polley is vice president and chief information officer at Cornell. John recently retired from his position as chief technical officer for Cornell Cooperative Extension where he had been instrumental in creating a high-speed Internet infrastructure to connect all the cooperative extension systems in New York State.

John and Polley volunteered to help out at the Lindsay-Parsons Preserve as soon as they arrived in West Danby, where they had bought a farm on the preserve's northern border.

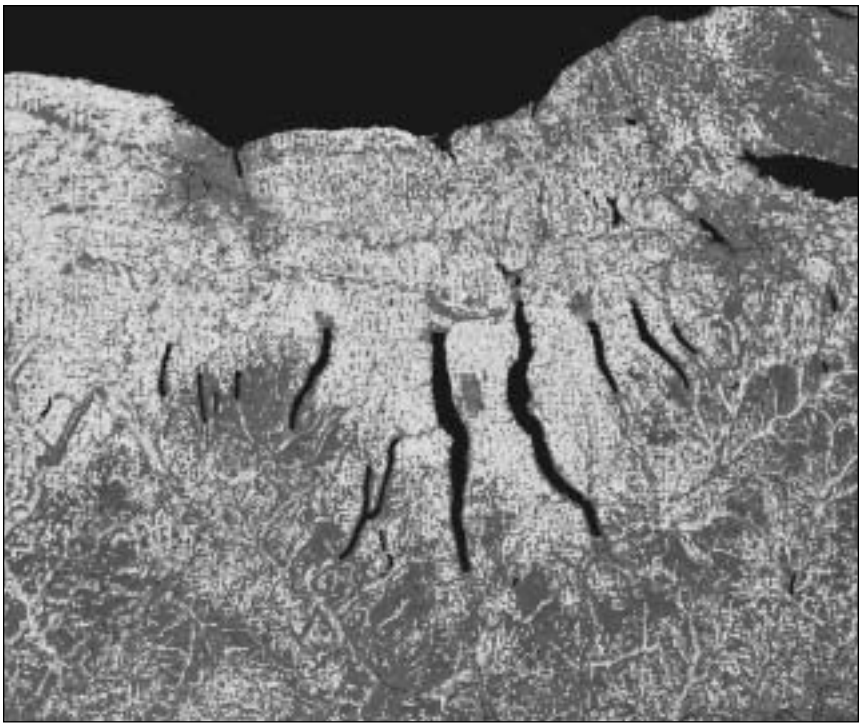
The farm and the involvement with the Lindsay-Parsons Preserve have led John to a new career. First, he joined the West Danby Volunteer Fire Department, where he serves as second assistant chief. Then came the tanker rollover in 2001 that spilled 8,500 gallons of gasoline in the Lindsay-Parsons Preserve. John, having no day job, was called upon to be the incident commander for the first 14 hours; that brought home to him the need to have some hazardous materials expertise in the area. He has become qualified as a Haz Mat specialist by taking a series of four- to five-day courses at the New York State Academy of Fire Sciences in Montour Falls, and continues to attend programs there. Now, he develops training exercises for his fellow fire department volunteers.

John has outfitted a barn on his property as a woodworking shop, where he pipes in his favorite music: 40s pop tunes, themes from Russian romantics, or Celtic ballads. He is also converting a stable into an arena for Polley to practice her skills in canine agility training, and they have stocked the farm with a few sheep for herding exercises.

"John Smith has insatiable energy," says Geo. "He's an active member of the Land Trust's Preserve Management Committee, where he makes a point of reminding us periodically that he is very willing to do more of the sorts of things I've described." With his backhoe or bulldozer he can do in one hour what it would take 20 people to do in ten — and that makes him a giant of a man and a giant addition to those who help preserve the natural heritage of the Finger Lakes region.

*—Caissa Willmer*

# WATER The greatest treasure of the Finger Lakes



GIS Map by Karen Edelstein

*Aerial view of the Finger Lakes and Lake Ontario*

People in the Finger Lakes take clean, fresh water for granted. And why shouldn't we? There are about 2.5 trillion gallons of it in Cayuga Lake alone. This is enough drinking water to keep every person in the world from getting thirsty for about 14 months. Seneca Lake is even bigger than Cayuga, and there are nine more Finger Lakes in reserve. Just to our north is Lake Ontario, which tops out at about 433 trillion gallons. Ontario is one of the *smaller* Great Lakes. Just put a little iodine in your water bottle and shake it up first, and you can drink from any of them.

Surrounded by this seemingly infinite resource, many of us are only vaguely aware that many parts of the world are running out of fresh water. Critical shortages of clean water are already raging in much of the world, including the American Sunbelt.

In the United States, the first strategy for a crisis is to throw money at it. Phoenix is now buying farmers' water allotments. This brings water to the city but also raises the price of both food and water. Tampa, Florida has broken ground on a large desalinization complex: its product will be pure but expensive, and it will make Tampa Bay saltier and less attractive to fish. And recently, the supervisors of Orange County, California approved a high-tech plant that will suck in sewage and spew out stuff they say you can use to wash off your toothbrush. Aren't you glad you don't live there?

Measures like these make water more expensive in places where the population is growing rapidly and the water supply is fickle, such as California, the Southwest, and Florida—not to mention the Middle East, Mexico, Northern China, and almost two dozen countries in Africa.

Naturally, businesses are rushing to this new well of profits. Indeed, privately owned water production and distribution facilities are one of the hot spots in the global economy. *Fortune* magazine estimates that the annual profits of private water companies like Vivendi Universal and Bechtel-United Utilities now amount to about *40 percent* of the profits of the oil industry. Now think about the many industries that need huge quantities of fresh water to operate—food processors, paper mills, and power plants, to name a few. These are economic heavyweights that play to win. To them, clean water is not a basic human right. It's a commodity that can be sold to the highest bidder—and kept from those who cannot pay.

The Finger Lakes and upstate New York have not just vast supplies of clean water but inexpensive land and housing—and a hunger for economic development. Here we sit, seemingly unnoticed, while the global water crisis worsens and the private water giants consolidate their holdings.

But one day, probably within the next 25 years, the economics of water will reach the tipping point. Fresh water will become scarce enough, and expensive enough, that it will pay to locate water-hungry industries here. It may also pay to buy and take our water to places that are desperate for it. In 1998, the Nova Group proposed to scoop 156 million gallons a year out of Lake Superior and ship it by tanker to Asia. The proposal was defeated, but ten years from now, we may look back on the Nova Group as an early skirmish in our region's water war.

Of course, bringing new industries into Central New York is not necessarily a bad thing. We do need jobs. But we need our water more. So before the tipping point comes, local governments around the Finger Lakes need to adopt the most stringent water protection standards.

For example, we need to see our region's swamps and marshes for what they really are—natural water filters that do the job for free. They must be permanently protected from development before the water merchants arrive. Building and logging should be regulated on steep slopes and prohibited in stream corridors, to keep erosion and silt to a minimum. And we should insist on vigilant monitoring and enforcement of all waste-disposal laws for lakeside property. We must do this now to keep the clean water of our region from becoming a commodity. Clean water should be part of the public trust, guaranteed to all, but it will be taken away from us unless we protect it.

We can protect our water fairly easily now, while land in the Finger Lakes is inexpensive and population growth is slow. Groups like the Finger Lakes Land Trust, the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network, and the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance are working toward these ends. The efforts we make now will pay huge dividends for our children and grandchildren.

*—Brad Edmondson*

# Lessons from the outdoor classroom

A group of juniors and seniors from Newfield High School embarked on a field trip recently to the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve. Accompanied by their teachers, Nicole Kirschten and Glen Caslick, the students spent a few hours with naturalist Betsy Darlington of the Land Trust and our student intern Sudha Nandagopal as their guides, learning as much as possible about nature and the environment.

"I liked seeing the lake the most on our field trip," said Trisha Eccleston. "I enjoyed learning about the habitat of the animals that live around and near the water, like the otter hole and mud slide." Classmate Coleman Stitler was more practical: "I liked learning about the edible plants and then eating them for everyone else's amusement," he said, adding, "the knowledge of the edible plants might come in handy in the future."

Photo by Glen Caslick

*Naturalist Betsy Darlington tells Newfield High School students about edible plants, such as staghorn sumac.*

The trip was part of studies designed to prepare the students for the Envirothon, an annual competition held each spring among New York's high school students, and designed to test their knowledge and understanding of natural resources within the state. The competition starts at the county level, with winners moving on to the state contest, where their knowledge is challenged in five areas: aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and current issues. This year's current issue is, "Introduced species and their effect on biodiversity." This spring will be the first time Newfield High School students will have taken part in the competition.

"During our trip to the West Danby nature preserve I learned many new things," said Lauren Ferrara. "One thing that stuck out was how to identify different plants. The thing that sticks out in my mind the most was the 'guacamole' pond. I know there must be a lot of wildlife living in that." *(Coleman Lake had a solid layer of duckweed covering it.)*

*—Jola Simon*

Photo by Glen Caslick

*Betsy Darlington and Sudha Nandagopal with Newfield High School Students at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve*

## Our sincere thanks

For a generous holiday gift in honor of:

**Irvin Rapp**
**&**
**Norma Dulman**

*From*

***The Maxwell Family***

# FINGER LAKES

## Who We Are...

**The Finger Lakes Land Trust** is a membership-supported, nonprofit land conservation organization founded in 1989. The Land Trust works to protect the cherished natural places of the 12-county Finger Lakes Region. We conserve the beautiful, wild, and working landscapes of this area by establishing nature preserves and holding conservation easements, educating for responsible stewardship, and collaborating with organizations, communities, and individuals.

By protecting the region's 6,000 square miles of forests, farms, and open spaces, the Finger Lakes Land Trust provides many benefits to the communities we work with: clean air and water, plant and animal diversity, scenic views, and opportunities to learn about and enjoy the natural world.

## How We Protect the Land...

The Finger Lakes Land Trust helps landowners to take direct and positive action through private, voluntary land conservation. Our members have made it possible for the Land Trust to protect a mosaic of natural habitats and landscapes among the long, lovely lakes, rolling hills, rich farmland, rugged gorges, vibrant wetlands, and mature forest that we call home.

Here are just a few of our recent projects that were made possible with our members' support:

- **Steege Hill Nature Preserve**, an 800-acre preserve of forested hillsides and rare species habitat along the Chemung River (Chemung County)
- **McIlroy Bird Sanctuary**, a 128-acre preserve that protects critical bird and plant habitat in the Cayuga Lake Watershed (Cayuga County)
- **Nundawao**, the 226-acre Great Hill Nature Preserve, a massive hillside on the east side of Canandaigua Lake (Yates County)

———

For information about other Nature Preserves please go to www.fllt.org

Photo by Jola Simon

*Tom Reimers and Betsy Darlington hard at work installing a new gate at the King Preserve*

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*Preserve steward Bob Corneau blazing the White Trail at Steege Hill Preserve*

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*Members of the Preserve Management Committee, Linda Buttel, Eileen Maxwell, Matt Young, Tom Reimers and Nick Gavrielides discuss a possible new trail at the McIlroy Bird Sanctuary*

# LAND TRUST

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*Left:*
*Jake and Jessica help with clean-up at the coming addition to the McIlroy Bird Sanctuary.*

*Right:*
*Cornell Herpetological Society on a trip to King Nature Preserve – Club President, Josh Leisenring and Land Trust volunteer, Tom Reimers seen here admiring a praying mantis*

Photo by Betsy Darlington

*Below:*
*Volunteers tackling mountains of trash at the McIlroy Preserve addition*

Photo by Betsy Darlington

## How You Can Help...

In order to protect more land we need your participation through membership, annual appeal donations, and contributions of time and energy.

Become a member if you haven't joined yet and team up with hundreds of your friends and neighbors as we work together to protect the Finger Lakes.

As a member of the Finger Lakes Land Trust, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that your membership support will result in protection of cherished places throughout the Finger Lakes Region. In addition, members also receive:

- A complimentary subscription to our newsletter, *The Land Steward*, published four times a year. *The Land Steward* is a fantastic source for up-to-date information about our latest land protection projects, stimulating discussions of conservation issues, announcements of hikes and events, and information for landowners in the Finger Lakes Region.
- Invitations to our events, such as hikes, concerts, lake cruises, book readings, and our Annual Celebration.
- Membership benefits and discounts at many local businesses that also support the mission of the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

**Volunteer with us!** Over 200 volunteers help us each year with everything from trail work to office work.

Together we can leave a natural legacy and shape what our Finger Lakes landscapes will look like tomorrow and for generations to come

*"Land Trusts give people the power to shape the future of their neighborhoods, and to ensure for future generations the existence of the wild and scenic places, the farms and forests, the rolling hills and quiet places that make our lives meaningful."*

# REFLECTIONS ON CONSERVATION

## Rounding up Japanese Knotweed

The Salmon Creek Bird Sanctuary in Lansing is 33 acres of sloping woods and streamside forest. This habitat is attractive to cerulean warblers, whose populations have been declining nationally by up to three percent per year since the mid-1960s. These small blue birds have specific requirements for their nesting sites over the two months they are in North America, and the tall walnut and black locust trees in the preserve's lowlands fit the bill. The sanctuary is also an oasis for a handsome sampling of other migratory songbirds, as well as the location of a recent (and rare!) siting of a giant swallowtail butterfly among the rich patchwork of flowering streamside plants *(Ed.: see "A Closer Look" in this issue).*

For many of us, the value of Land Trust preserves is simply in the opportunity to visit them and appreciate their beauty. But preserve stewardship—the behind the scenes work of trail-building and environmental problem solving—may require that our staff and volunteers have unexpected management decisions to make.

I'm the steward of the Salmon Creek Preserve. Last fall, I discovered a healthy patch of Japanese knotweed *(Polyganum cuspidatum*) growing in the floodplain. A native of Asia, Japanese knotweed is an invasive plant that can quickly turn into a dense monoculture of rampant, 8-foot-high growth that provides neither food nor shelter for most native animals (our non-native honeybees *do* love to visit them when they're in flower, though). I've seen Japanese knotweed growing in solid stands hundreds of feet deep along the shores of the Chemung and Connecticut Rivers. This plant spreads by rhizomes so vigorous that a one-gram (that's around 1/30 ounce) piece of root can sprout a new plant. Cut stalks can send out roots, too. Once established, knotweed can break through a six-inch-thick layer of asphalt. And there are no biological controls available in this country that can manage these plants.

We had a difficult decision to make. Here's a preserve that's set up to protect the breeding habitat for a "species of concern," as well as countless other birds, mammals, and insects. Smothering the knotweed with cardboard or even thick plastic—heck, even paving the whole site—would not hold back the sprouts. Digging the plants would be not only backbreaking (by this past summer, about 3000 square feet of the preserve were covered with the stuff), but would leave bits of rhizomes behind to sprout again. Cutting the plants back every week throughout the growing season would be labor-intensive, and besides, it wouldn't stop the rhizomes from spreading laterally. It's uncertain how viable the seeds are, but each season that the knotweed fruits, the greater the chance that seeds could spread elsewhere on the preserve, or downstream to other properties.

I turned to the experts for answers and they were unanimous in their recommendations. Both The Nature Conservancy's Berkshire Taconic Landscape office in Massachusetts and Cornell's researchers in invasive plant ecology suggested the same solution: Roundup®.

That's right. This life-long organic gardener needed to make a choice. Advocate for use of one of the most popular herbicides on the market today, or stand by as the floodplain of my beloved preserve got overrun by knotweed. Fortunately, spraying *per se* was *not* the recommended technique. Instead, The Nature Conservancy advised cutting the plants to about a foot above ground level before they set seed, then injecting about a tablespoon of diluted Roundup® into each hollow stem. The plants would carry the chemical to their roots, and after about two years of treatment the plants should be well contained.

It took six of us about three hours to cut and treat the knotweed patch. We used rubber gloves and barely spilled a drop of the chemical outside of the plants. The tidy mountain of cut stalks, set away from the stream, composted down to about half its height within two weeks. Of course, we'll need to be vigilant because more plants can always wash in from upstream—which is probably how the knotweed got here in the first place.

Constant monitoring is the key to successful preserve management, and I'm already looking forward to next year's growing season to see where the knotweed stands have been reduced. I had never purchased agricultural chemicals before, so this was a "first" for me in many respects. Perhaps the best lesson was in learning how to place the interests of the preserve ahead of what might have been my personal preferences.

*—Karen Edelstein*

## In Memoriam

Our deepest thanks for generous contributions in memory of:

***Barbara Booker***
*From*
***Cornelia Farnum***
***John L. Paul and Katy Gottschalk***

***Sally Spofford***
*From*
***The Etna Women's Community Club***

# *Land Trust honored…* by the Center for Environmental Information

The Finger Lakes Land Trust was one of six environmental organizations recognized at this year's 28th Annual Community Salute To The Environment. The annual event, held at the Rochester Hyatt Regency Hotel in October, is organized by the Center for Environmental Information, an organization dedicated to advancing public understanding of environmental issues in this region and in the national arena.

CEI's mission is to bring together scientists, educators, decision makers and the public, and to advocate for informed action based on the free exchange of information and ideas.

Each year CEI presents the Hugh E. Cummings Environmental Quality Award to an individual, group or organization that has made significant contributions to environmental protection, improvement or education in the Rochester-Genesee-Finger Lakes region. This year's winner was the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance. Others being honored included the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Council; Patricia Dann, Ken Pike, and Katherine Snyder; Monroe County Bureau of Environmental Quality, Otetiana Council, Boy Scouts of America; and Mrs. Florence Muller.

*Jim Kersting, Land Trust board member and chair of the Western Lakes Chapter is pictured in the center, holding the Certificate of Award. Also in the picture, seated from left, are Liz Brown, Western Lakes Director of Outreach and Development, and Sara Kersting. Standing from left to right are Chris White, Land Trust volunteer; Jola Simon, Director of Development and Communications; David Klein, Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy for Central & Western NY; and Dan and Diane Hall*

# Our Sincere Thanks

Our sincere thanks for generous contributions in celebration of the marriages of:

**Beth Boyer & Mike Brown**
*From*
***Marissa Weiss***

• • •

**David Connors & Iana Fraser**
*From*
***Leslie Ackerman***

• • •

**Katie Fry & Bill Hester**
*From*
***John L. Paul &***
***Katy Gottschalk***

• • •

**Graham Kerslick &**
**Jennifer Wilkins**
*From*
***Helen Cicirello & Martin***
***Korkowski & Joan Dye Gussow***

• • •

**Elissa Wolfson &**
**Stephen Kress**
*From*
***Monica Bosworth &***
***Paul Viscuso***
***Thomas Marino***
***Jane & Roger Segelken***
***Kathy & Wally Woods***

# Bob Nolan
## *at Nolan's Sporting Goods*


*No, that's NOT Bob Nolan on display in the window of his Sporting Goods Store*

For Bob Nolan it's as natural as autumn leaves falling or a blanket of snow covering the hills. "We're land owners," he says, talking about his interest in land preservation, which leads him to support conservation causes internationally, nationally, and locally—through a business membership in the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

Nolan's Sporting Goods is one of the oldest businesses in downtown Auburn, NY, which lies midway between Skaneateles and Cayuga Lakes. Nolan's roots in the community go deep. His father ran a shoe store in the building that also housed a sporting goods store next door. Bob loved the outdoors, so when the sporting goods business closed shop in 1953, Nolan thought, "I'd like to go into that." Half a century later, Nolan's is a large operation, spread over 15,000 square feet and three quarters of the block at 39 Genesee Street.

In a world of mega shopping malls and LL Bean mail order catalogs, Nolan is working hard to keep this independent business alive. During the 1960's, urban renewal took out most of the other businesses on their block, but Nolan's Sporting Goods survives. "So many places have lost out to the monsters, always knocking the little guys out," says Nolan.

In his fifty years of serving those with outdoor interests, Nolan has seen a lot. "There have been lots of changes. Hunting and fishing are about gone. We're surviving, but it's different from when we started."

Nolan's Sporting Goods is surviving by supplying people in the region with an extensive line of sports clothing and foot wear, and following up with personal service focusing especially on skiers and cyclists. "Our bicycle shop is always busy with repairs and service," says Nolan.

Don't look for a web address. Instead, visit Nolan's at their historic Genesee Street location for some old-fashioned quality and service.

*—Pamela Goddard*

## Bon Voyage!

to departing student intern

**Charlotte Nunes**

*Good Luck in your studies at the Sorbonne!*

## Wish List

Power Brush Cutter
for clearing trails
and
IBM Selectric Typewriter

## Our sincere thanks

*to those of you who responded so generously to this year's Annual Appeal*

# Citrus groves and giant butterflies of Salmon Creek

*Two seemingly unrelated observations added up to insights and intrigue….*

One sunny Sunday afternoon this past August, I visited the Land Trust's Salmon Creek Preserve in Lansing. As the volunteer preserve steward, I'd been concerned about the invasive species taking hold there. I needed to map out the locations of stands of Japanese knotweed that threatened to crowd out native streamside plants.

Though the summer was dry, the gravel bars along the stream were a lush jungle of flowering native plants like the purple-pink Joe-Pye weed, several species of goldenrod, and boneset, along with non-native teasel, burdock, and that prolific knotweed. Monarchs, great spangled fritillaries, tiger swallowtails, cabbage moths—a riot of butterflies and moths were flitting among the blossoms. I also noticed a few American prickly ash, *Zanthoxylum americanum*, a plant I'd only recently learned to recognize. I'd previously thought it was just some weird-looking young black locust.

Prickly ash needs the sort of calcium-rich soils you find along streams that, like Salmon Creek, flow over limestone. Its bark is rich in salicin (aspirin's precursor), which accounts for the plant's nickname, "toothache tree." Native Americans and early white settlers made good use of it. Prickly ash grows to 15 feet and, from July to September, produces leathery, pea-sized fruits in the forks of small branches. True to its name, this shrub has cone-shaped thorns on the branches and between the ash-like leaflets. Crush its leaves or scrape the bark or fruits—you'll be surprised by their orange-y scent, faintly bitter.

Photo by Dr. Donald Farrar & Anna Gardner

*Zanthoxylum americanum* – the American prickly ash

Photo by John White

*Papilio cresphontes* – the giant swallowtail

Then suddenly, something new. With slow flapping—no, *flopping*—wingbeats, a new butterfly settled on the Joe-Pye in front of me. It was nearly half again as large as any monarch I'd seen, dark brown with a bold horizontal stripe of yellow across the forewings, and "fins" that are common to swallowtails. After scouring my field guide, and later checking for better pictures on the web, I knew I'd seen my first giant swallowtail, *Papilio* (or *Heraclides*) *cresphontes*.

Giant swallowtails are aptly named, given their six-inch wingspan. Cornell University butterfly expert Bob Dirig let me know that this was indeed an unusual find. The butterfly was at the far northern end of its range. There are only a handful of reports of giant swallowtails breeding in New York State. What was it doing here?

Giant swallowtails are common in Florida because the most desirable foods for its larvae are plants in the citrus family (Rutaceae). In Florida, adult female giant swallowtails selectively lay their eggs on orange tree leaves, which the caterpillars—that look remarkably like bird droppings—then feast upon. In Florida, these caterpillars, known as "orange dogs," are considered such a pest that citrus growers often resort to massive spraying programs to control them.

Dirig speculated that the recent hot, dry weather had driven the adult giant swallowtails northward. But why did they turn up in typically overcast Central New York, so far from the citrus groves of the Sunshine State? It turns out that prickly ash, also in the citrus family, is another of their favorite foods.

Prickly ash, giant swallowtails, cerulean warblers—the Salmon Creek sanctuary is a place to find some very special plants and insects, as well as birds. I returned home with a renewed commitment to manage this preserve carefully to provide for all the amazing species that call it home.

*—Karen Edelstein*

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## WINTER-EARLY SPRING 2003 CALENDAR:

**Sun., Feb. 2, 1:00 PM:** GROUNDHOG DAY HIKE at the Wesley Hill Preserve. Join us for a hike/ski/snowshoe. Meet at the Wenrich cabin which will be open and heated. Hot drinks will be provided. Help us locate the "Preserve Groundhog" and check for its shadow. Call 585-394-4189 with questions.

**Sat., Feb. 8, 10:00 AM:** CROSS-COUNTRY SKI/HIKE at Steege Hill Preserve in Big Flats. Led by Linda Buttel and Betsy Darlington. From Rt. 17, take exit 49. Turn south from the exit ramp and follow signs to Olcott Rd. At T intersection, turn right on Rt. 64 (unmarked), and right again on Rt. 352. Turn left on S. Corning Rd., cross the river, and turn left on Steege Hill Rd. Go about 1 mile to the gate, on the left, just before the pipeline cut. Park on shoulder of road on the right, *off* the pavement.

**Sun., March 23, 1:30 PM:** DEAD-OF-WINTER or EARLY SPRING NATURE WALK at the Sweedler Preserve at Lick Brook, led by Betsy Darlington. From Ithaca, go south on route 13. Turn left on Sand Bank Rd. (1st left after entrance to Buttermilk State Park). Bear right at fork and park off the right side of the road.

**Sun., March 30, 2:30PM:** BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND – Carl Leopold will do a reading from "A Sand County Almanac" in the Borg-Warner Room of the Tompkins County Library, sponsored by The Bookery and the Finger Lakes Land Trust. Call 607-275-9487 for more information.

**Sat., May 10, 7:30 *PM*:** FROG SONGS at the Lindsay-Parsons Biodiversity Preserve in West Danby. Led by herpetologist Jackie Grant. ***Bring flashlight or headlamp!*** From Ithaca, go south on route 13. Take left exit on route 34/96 and go about 7 miles to the preserve parking lot, opposite house #2500 and just beyond the W. Danby Fire Station.

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.