

No More Wet Feet at the Boggy Hole Preserve



Work at a particularly mucky stretch of the Yellow Trail culminated in a boardwalk to improve the hiking experience at the Boggy Hole Preserve.

The Boggy Hole Preserve is strategically located as a link between the Town of Old Lyme Champlain North and Ames Open Space properties and the Old Lyme Land Trust Griswold Preserve. However, until recently hikers often experienced wet and muddy feet in addition to a lovely hike when traversing it, particularly in springtime. When Brenden Landry of Boy Scout Troop 26 contacted OLLT looking for a potential Eagle Scout project, former Chief Steward Anne Galliher jumped at the chance to craft a multi-stage plan to remedy the preserve's shortcoming. After a couple of soggy Boggy Hole Preserve site walks together in the early Spring of 2022, a general plan was in hand.

Brenden came up with designs for a new bridge and walkways. He then went to work filing specific plans and obtaining approvals with his local Boy Scout Council and the Old Lyme Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Commission members Evan Griswold and Gary Gregory went a bit further, donating and delivering some base material for the walkways. Site work commenced in the Fall of 2022 when an OLLT work party, helped by Brenden and several Troop 26 members, enthusiastically widened

the trails and added blazes to better guide hikers. New signage featuring an updated trail map was subsequently installed.

The transformation was completed in March 2023. By this time, Brenden had obtained materials and organized an impres-

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Featured Preserve

The Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve

This 40-acre preserve is a favorite of many locals who recognize a good thing when they see it! It sits southwest of Rogers Lake in the Lieutenant River watershed and helps to protect the west bank of the Mill River as it flows south into the Lower Mill Pond.

Primarily a woodland setting, the preserve is dominated by a mixed hardwood forest comprised of oak, hickory, maple, beech, and birch. In addition, tulip poplar, sassafras, cedar, white pine, and hemlock are found here. The preserve features laurel stands;

(Continued on page 2)



At the southern tip of the Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve, the White Trail offers a view of the Mill River and OLLT's Griswold Preserve on the opposite bank.



Wildlife, such as this regal bobcat whose image was captured on a trailcam, abounds at the Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve. Recent evidence of bear activity has also been noted.

The Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve

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large, soft patches of ferns; and dramatic rock outcroppings. Wetlands and a pond also contribute to the rich habitat. Hikers regularly encounter wildlife: beaver, swans, ducks, deer, great blue herons, osprey, eagles, and songbirds.

The preserve contains over a mile of trails maintained by the Old Lyme Land Trust for passive recreation. The Blue Trail starts as the old wood road and forms the longest loop, which can take over an hour to walk. It is nearly level and passes over a man-made earthen dam, providing views of the pond. The Red Trail is accessed from the initial portion of the Blue Trail and provides an interesting overlook of the Mill River. It offers a moderate hike through the southern and eastern portions of the preserve and

can be lengthened by exploring the Yellow, White, and Green extensions and cross-trails. The White Trail ascends a knoll and has seasonal views of the Lower Mill Pond. A portion of the Red Trail is closed and rerouted from March 10 to June 1 of each year for wood duck nesting season.

The preserve is comprised of land from three separate generous donations to OLLT. In 1992, John L. Hoffman gifted 24 acres off Sill Lane from his parents' estate. The fieldstone and shingle home (not included in the donation) which the family called Chuluota – a Native American word meaning “beautiful view” – was designed and built by his father, Harry Hoffman. Harry was a member of the original Old Lyme art colony and is best known for his use of color in his oil paintings, including several underwater scenes in The Bahamas.

Eight acres on Mill Pond Lane were added by conservationist Ormsby Hanes Matthiessen in 2001. Ms. Matthiessen was “enthusiastic about saving all the land that can be saved”.

The third segment was added in 2007 when Elisabeth DeGerenday, founder of the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, bequeathed eight acres on Mill Pond Lane. Ms. DeGerenday, who went by the name Elisabeth Gordon Chandler professionally, was a gifted sculptor.

There is parking for several cars at the trailhead at 95 Sill Lane. We hope you will visit this gem. Thanks to the work of preserve steward John Christiano (see page 3), a great hike awaits!

(Some content of this article was previously produced by Lisa Niccolai of Leaf2Landscape Consulting.)

Announcing the Edward J. Sopneski YEA! Grants



The Old Lyme Land Trust is offering Youth Environmental Action (YEA!) grants of \$100 to \$600 to support worthy environmental projects. Applicants must be residents of Lyme or Old Lyme aged 11-21 years. We are especially eager to fund original and independent projects and welcome applications for any project with positive environmental impact. Be creative and take on a neglected problem with a novel approach, or roll up your sleeves to do whatever you think would best help the natural world! Projects on OLLT property will be considered, but projects can take place anywhere.

The YEA! grant program is in honor of Ed Sopneski, former Trustee and longtime OLLT volunteer. Ed died in 2022 at age 87 following decades of work caring for the environment. He installed osprey platforms, removed invasive plants from his beloved Watch Rock Preserve, and worked to boost declining numbers of pollinators. Just as important to Ed was the encouragement and support of the next generation of environmentalists. These grants serve that purpose.

OLLT's first YEA! Grant was recently awarded to 11-year old Jackson Durant. He'll be creating a native pollinator garden at the Belton Copp Preserve in the Spring of 2024.

To apply, please complete the online application at: www.oldlymelandtrust.org/yea-grants. Grants are awarded on a rolling basis.

OUR MISSION

The Old Lyme Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to conserving Old Lyme's natural, scenic and historic land and water resources for the benefit of the public now and for generations to come. The Trust accomplishes its purpose by acquiring land through donation and purchase, managing the land, and providing education to the public.

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2023 Volunteer of the Year: John Christiano



Former Chief Steward Anne Galliher (left) and OLLT President Sabine O'Donnell (right) present John Christiano with the Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2023 OLLT Annual Meeting.

John became a steward for the Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve in 2009, and has been hard at work there ever since! An attentive steward, he keeps the preserve in good order and quietly goes about rectifying conditions which impede hikers' safety or passage on the trails. His creative touch is evident in the arrangements he makes of the cut logs among the downed hemlock trees. In light of his dedication, the Old Lyme Land Trust is pleased to recognize John as the OLLT 2023 Volunteer of the Year.

John is always ready with his chainsaw and a positive attitude. He has been a part of countless work parties at other preserves to clear trails of fallen trees or to battle large established patches of invasive euonymus plants. He helped reinstall a bridge swept down Armstrong Brook on the Goberis-Chadwick Preserve. John is currently a member of the OLLT Stewardship Committee which oversees the maintenance and preservation of all of OLLT's holdings and establishes priorities for preserve enhancements.

John says that "volunteering with OLLT is very rewarding". He is motivated by the opportunities to work with kind-hearted individuals, witness the ever-changing natural environment, take peaceful walks in the woods, and observe wild animals. "It is through these experiences that I find purpose, fulfillment, and a special connection to the community around me."

Anyone who's enjoyed a hike on the Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve over the past 14 years has benefitted from John's commitment to making it a satisfying experience. If you see him on the trails, be sure to say hello and thank him for his work!

Chief Steward's Report

Our ambitious and energetic stewardship team has kept busy over the last year. The work to maintain our 14 preserves can't be overestimated. Among the many accomplishments are:

- Creation of a new Green Trail segment at the **Upper Three Mile River Preserve** to provide a shorter loop as an alternative to the existing 1.5-hour loop.
- A revamp of the **Boggy Hole Preserve** with a bridge, walkways, new signs and blazes, and widened trails (see page 1).
- Additional boundary markings at the **Jericho, Upper Three Mile River, Hatchetts Hill, and Lay-Allen Preserves**.
- Pothole repair at the **Watch Rock Preserve** parking lot as well as the removal of slash and trees downed due to natural causes in the extended field mowing area.
- Trail clearing and rebuilding of higher walkways and bridges to accommodate rising water levels from beaver activity on the **Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve**.
- Clearing of large dead beech trees over the trails at the **Goberis-Chadwick Preserve**.
- Rerouting of the Orange Trail to prevent erosion at the **Heller Preserve**.
- Removal of invasive plants through work parties at the **Boggy Hole, Upper Three Mile River, and Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserves**.
- Replacement of the steep stretch on the **Lohmann Buck Twining Preserve's** White Trail with switchbacks.
- Construction of four sturdy benches for the **Lay-Allen, Mile Creek, Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday, and Upper Three Mile River Preserves** at locations overlooking streams.

Upcoming: We plan to extend the Yellow Trail at the **Heller Preserve**. *All are welcome to join in the effort!*



Jon Lathrop, Anne Galliher, Edie Twining, and Lynn Thoma with the new Upper Three Mile River Preserve sign after the creation of a cross-trail connecting the west and east sides of the White Trail.

Bears in the Woods

No doubt you're aware of recent reports of black bear sightings in Connecticut, including Old Lyme. According to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), bears were reported from 158 of the state's 169 towns and cities in 2022. Bears in our area tend to be young single males that move north for breeding – not females with cubs. This is likely to change in the coming years as their breeding territory extends south.

What do you do if you encounter a bear? Bearwise.org offers a wealth of information about bears, including guidance for dog owners and recommendations for these situations (note, the information below is specific for black bears, not grizzly bears):

■ **If you encounter a black bear in the woods:** If you see a bear before it notices you: stand still, don't approach, and enjoy the moment. Then move away quietly in the opposite direction. If the bear is aware of you: don't run; running may trigger a chase response. Back away slowly in the opposite direction and wait for the bear to leave.

■ **If a black bear becomes aggressive and approaches you:** Stand your ground. Back away only when the bear stops its approach. Make yourself look bigger by raising your arms and jacket, and/or by standing on a rock or stump. Yell "Hey bear" loudly. Get your bear spray out of the holster and into your hand. Remove the safety latch.

■ **If a black bear follows you:** Stand your ground. Back away only when the bear stops its approach. Intimidate the black bear by making yourself look bigger and making noise (wave arms, shout, clap, bang stick). Stay together.



Black bear eating berries.

(Photo from <https://bearwise.org>)

■ **If a black bear charges you:** Stand your ground. Remain calm. If you have bear spray, spray it directly at the bear.

■ **If a black bear makes contact with you:** Fight back with anything at hand (knife, sticks, rocks, binoculars, backpack) or by kicking. Do not play dead.

Bears have a keen sense of smell. For this reason, be extra careful if you take food on your hike.

Bear sightings reported by the public provide valuable information to CT DEEP for monitoring changes in the bear population. CT DEEP encourages reports of bear sightings via <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Wildlife/Report-a-Wildlife-Sighting> or via email to deep.wildlife@ct.gov.

No More Wet Feet *(Continued from page 1)*

sive crew of fellow scouts, family members, and friends. The Lyme-Old Lyme Bike Club, led by Justin Green, as well as OLLT volunteers Pierre Rougny, Craig Taylor, Anne Galliher, and Jon Lathrop also pitched in.

The team hauled heavy loads of materials to three pre-designated locations. The end result of this well-orchestrated effort

is a sturdy bridge and two lengthy boardwalks over wet areas on the Yellow Trail.

OLLT is indebted to Rings End Lumber in Niantic for their generous donation of materials for this project. We appreciate the hard work of all who contributed and the support of Troop Leader Gregg Landry and his wife, Lori.



The hardworking crew rests after a gratifying morning of installing a bridge and two walkways. Leader Brenden Landry is second from the right.

Nature Note: Turtles



The northern diamondback turtle, a state species of special concern, is the only species of turtle in North America that spends its life in brackish water (salt marshes, estuaries, and tidal creeks). Its numbers have increased following a decline in harvesting as a gourmet food. *(Photo from CT DEEP website)*

Does the word “turtle” conjure an image of a slow-moving animal that pulls its head into its shell when threatened? That may be true, but there’s a lot more to these fascinating animals.

Let’s start with the shell. It consists of 50-60 bones (mainly ribs that grow sideways) and is covered in scales (“scutes”) made of keratin. The shell grows with the animal to protect it and shelter it from the elements. In general, land-dwelling turtles’ shells are more domed and thus less apt to being crushed. In contrast, the shells of aquatic turtles are flatter and smoother to reduce resistance when swimming.

Another important distinction among turtle species is the way they retract their head into the shell. Turtles of one suborder (Cryptodira) pull their head straight back, whereas Pleurodirans retract their necks sideways. Sea turtles have largely lost the ability to retract their heads.

Sea turtles also dispel the myth that all turtles are slow. Whereas desert tortoises poke along at less than half a mile per hour (due in part to their heavy shell), sea turtles can propel themselves through the water as fast as 20 miles per hour!

Turtles are opportunistic omnivores. Most feed on plants or on animals with limited movement, e.g. mollusks, worms, and insect larvae. Others, like the snapping turtle, ambush fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Turtles use beaks made of keratin sheaths along the edges of their jaws to eat. The sheaths may have sharp edges for cutting meat, serrations for clipping plants, or broad plates for breaking mollusks.

Turtles vocalize! Bellows, low-frequency calls, clacks, squawks, hoots, chirps, wails, grunts, howls, growls, and drum rolls have been described in different species.

Like other reptiles, turtles have limited ability to regulate their body temperature. In Old Lyme, pond turtles are often seen warming themselves in the sun. In the winter, some turtles hibernate underwater in the mud to escape freezing temperatures.

If the eggs and hatchlings survive (mortality can exceed 90% due to predation by skunks, raccoons, muskrats, crows, foxes, dogs, gulls, herons, fish, snakes, and other animals), many turtles live for several decades. Some extremely long-lived tortoises have reached almost 200 years of age.

The 12 turtle species found in Connecticut include the bog tur-

tle, the common musk turtle, the common snapping turtle, the eastern box turtle, the northern diamondback turtle, the eastern painted turtle, the spotted turtle, and the wood turtle. The four other types are sea turtles recorded in Long Island Sound: the Atlantic green sea turtle, the Atlantic (Kemp’s) Ridley sea turtle, the leatherback sea turtle, and the loggerhead sea turtle. Many are designated as threatened or endangered species or species of special concern.

Turtles inhabit a variety of habitats in Connecticut, among them woodlands; slow-moving rivers and streams; marshes; swamps; bogs; lakes and ponds; field edges; tidal estuaries; wet meadows; and vernal pools. Many of these habitats are found on lands protected by the Old Lyme Land Trust.

Humans cause the largest harm to turtle populations through habitat loss and degradation; over-harvesting for food, traditional medicines, and pets; illegal trafficking; mortality from roads, agricultural machinery, and fishing by-catch; introduction of exotic invasive species and diseases; and climate change.

What can we do to protect turtles? The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recommends:

Leave turtles in the wild. This allows individuals to reproduce and maintain the population.

Never release a captive turtle into the wild. They are unlikely to survive for long, and can introduce diseases to wild turtles.

Do not disturb nesting turtles (May–July). Turtles lay their eggs on land. Give the female time and space to dig her nest and lay eggs in it. If the nest is located in a lawn or other spot with a lot of human activity, flagging or a traffic cone may prevent it from getting trampled.

When driving, be alert for turtles (typically pregnant females) crossing the road. If your safety is not at risk, shoo the turtle or push it with a shovel or stick to the side of the road in the direction it’s heading. Don’t turn the turtle around or move it to a “better” location; it will only try again to cross the road. Some small turtles can be picked up and moved, but snapping turtles are large, heavy, and feisty with a powerful bite and should not be handled.

Make your backyard a better habitat for turtles. Check out <http://northeastparc.org> for ideas.

Information sources: Wikipedia; CT DEEP website.



Connecticut’s most numerous turtle species is the eastern painted turtle, named for its colorful markings. Commonly seen basking on logs or rocks—sometimes on top of each other—in placid waters, they are quick to jump in if threatened or disturbed. *(Photo from CT DEEP website)*

We gratefully acknowledge those who have generously donated to OLLT

(July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

Your support has made it possible to protect land and to maintain and enhance the preserves which are open to the public, as well as engage the community in activities focused on the environment. We especially thank our long-time members!

- | | | | |
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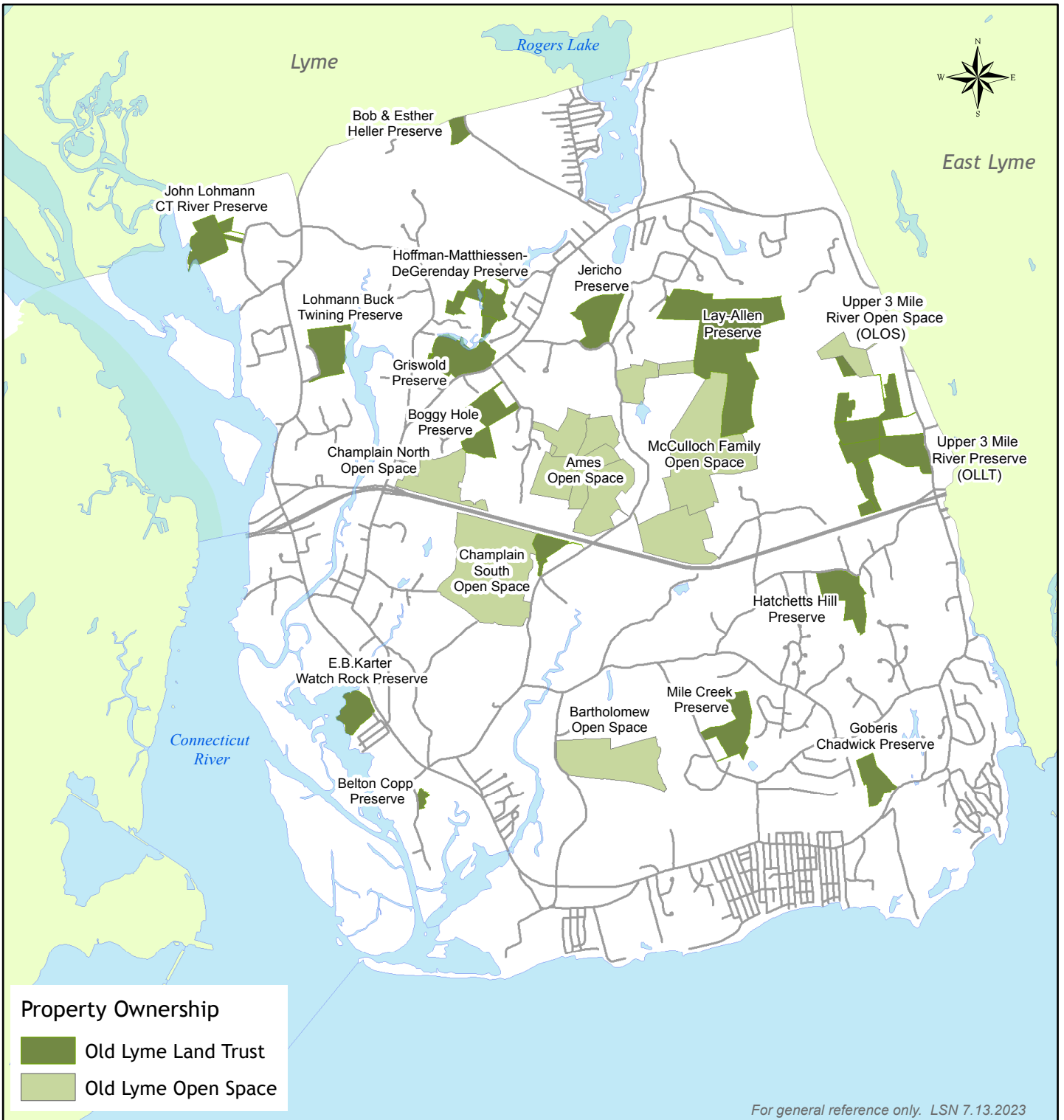
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Old Lyme Land Trust thanks **Essex Savings Bank** and **Charter Oak Federal Credit Union** for supporting OLLT through their generous community investment programs. We are also pleased that the **Lyme-Old Lyme Lions Club** presented OLLT with an award at its Night of Giving in January. Again this year, **The Pfizer Foundation** conferred substantial support to OLLT through its Matching Gift Program and a Volunteer Grant, the latter of which was coordinated by Pfizer employee **Wen He**. We also are appreciative of contributions from the **Amazon Smile** program and the matching gifts from **Equitable Foundation**, **Eversource Energy**, and **TEGNA**.



Old Lyme Hiking Trails

Old Lyme Land Trust Preserves & Town of Old Lyme Open Space



For more information and maps of specific properties please visit:
www.oldlymelandtrust.org or
www.oldlyme-ct.gov/366/Hiking

Old Lyme Land Trust Preserves

See www.OldLymeLandTrust.org to **download trail maps** and descriptions, for land history, etc. Enjoy!

Boggy Hole Preserve – 45 acres. Northern part has wetlands and abundant wildlife. Southern section has wonderful ledge outcrops and an old cart path through open woodland with large trees. Directions: Boston Post Rd to Boggy Hole Rd, trailhead about 600 feet from intersection on right, OR enter via the town-owned Champlain North Preserve: Boston Post Rd to Rose Ln, right at T onto Hillwood Rd, park in cul-de-sac at end.

Belton **Copp** Preserve – 4 acres. Borders a state-owned 32-acre tidal marsh, with views of sunrise and marsh wildlife. Wind chimes and a grove of fairy houses in a garden adorned with fanciful objects are along the “Whimsy Walk” created by local girl scouts. Directions: Rte 156 to 14 Smith Neck Rd, on left 0.25 mi. from turn. Walk through the grassy clearing with a granite bench under a lone cedar tree to the trail.

Goberis-Chadwick Preserve – 25 acres. Bordered by Armstrong Brook. Features rock ledges, huge boulders and stone walls. Alive with spring peepers in early spring and red-tailed hawks year round. Directions: Take the gravel drive at 372 Shore Rd (Rte 156), bear to the left to the parking area. There is a private home on the right; please do not park in the driveway.

George & Woodward H. **Griswold** Preserve – 51 acres. Contains forested uplands and ledges, vernal pools, and riparian lowland. Also the site of a CT DEEP fish ladder. There are beavers in the pond and several species of ducks. Many migratory birds visit. Directions: Parking area off Boston Post Rd directly opposite Stoneleigh Knoll, 2 mi. west of Rogers Lake.

Hatchetts Hill Preserve – 44 acres. Boardwalks cross Armstrong Brook, which originates here. Land is flat, easy walking through woods of large oak, beech, and maple. The blue trail crosses wetlands that are a haven for amphibians. Directions: Four Mile River Rd to Hatchetts Hill Rd just south of I-95. At Machnik Dr (0.65 mi. from turn) the road goes straight but becomes much narrower. Preserve is 0.15 mi. further on left.

Bob and Esther **Heller** Preserve – 16 acres. Flat ledges along the uphill trail are thought to have been used by Native Americans for ritual ceremonies. Directions: Boston Post Rd to 80 Town Woods Rd, on the left just before the big curve where the road enters Lyme.

Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve – 40 acres. Open woodlands with laurel stands and soft patches of ferns. There is a pond formed by an earthen dam, where you may see beavers. Many species of birds present. Directions: Boston Post Rd to 95 Sill Ln (0.3 mi. from turn if Sill Ln is taken from the east, or 1.5 mi. if taken from the west).

Jericho Preserve – 50 acres. Dramatic ledge outcrops and thick conifer stands, ladyslipper orchids in June. Wonderful views from the high points. The fieldstone-clad house is OLLT owned and rented; please respect the tenants’ privacy. Directions: Boston Post Rd to Whippoorwill Rd, 0.5 mi. on the left at 44 Whippoorwill.

Lay-Allen Preserve – 215 acres. OLLT’s largest preserve. High secluded woodland with considerable wetlands in the lower sectors. Blue heron rookery on site. Affords long hikes via connections with Town open space. Directions: Boston Post Rd to Lords Meadow Ln then straight into Lords Woods development. Trailhead at 3rd asphalt driveway apron on right.

John **Lohmann CT River** Preserve – 42 acres. Lovely terraced fields with a few huge trees, edged by stone walls, leading down to Whaleback Point and frontage on Lords Cove in the CT River. Directions: Trailhead at 33 Coult Ln, off Neck Rd (Rte 156). Park along Coult Ln, but please do not park in front of or directly across from driveways. Can also be accessed from the river by kayak or canoe.

Lohmann-Buck-Twining Preserve – 46 acres. Includes 2,000 feet of Lieutenant River frontage. Panoramic views of the CT River (west) and the Lieutenant River (east) from the top of the ridge. Bald eagles are often seen here. Directions: Rte 156 to Riverview Dr (right turn at mailbox that says #79). Park in the graveled area at the sharp bend of the road.

Mile Creek Preserve – 44 acres. Secluded woodland with wetlands created by Swan Brook. You might see turkey, deer, amphibians, and other wildlife here. See website to download a fun self-guided tour along the Mile Creek Educational Nature Trail. Directions: Trailhead parking near mailbox at 191 Mile Creek Rd, 0.2 miles west of Mile Creek School.

Upper Three Mile River Preserve – 160 acres. Part of the largest remaining undeveloped block of land in Old Lyme. Varied terrain includes cliffs, open ridges, a long piece of the Three Mile River, amazing stone walls, thick conifer groves, stands of laurel, wetlands, and woodlands. A very special place! Level: moderately difficult. Directions: Trailhead across from town transfer station on Four Mile River Rd. Park at the I-95 Exit 71 Commuter Parking Lot a few hundred yards south.

Elizabeth B. Karter **Watch Rock** Preserve – 25 acres. Bordered by the Duck River on two sides. Spectacular views from rocky shoreline across the water and tidal wetlands to the CT River and Long Island Sound. Varied habitats of woodlands, meadow, and spruce grove mean there is plentiful wildlife. Directions: McCurdy Rd from Old Lyme town center, cross Rte 156, right turn on Joel Dr, then a left and a quick right to the parking lot. Also accessible by water via kayak or canoe.

We gratefully acknowledge

(Continued from page 6)

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David Hickie & Sue Wnek
David & Lisa Wurzer
Lorraine Yurkewicz
Jocelyn & Peter Zallinger



OLLT volunteers were celebrated at the Volunteer Appreciation Event in September. It was a great time for sharing stories, learning new things, and meeting others who care about the land.

Thank you, Volunteers!

The Old Lyme Land Trust is fortunate to have a cadre of dedicated volunteers who help in many capacities. Preserving undeveloped land, monitoring conservation easements, and keeping trails in good condition year-round are significant undertakings. We are appreciative of those who donate their time and energy to make it happen. If you are interested in joining a work party, serving as a preserve steward, assisting with events, or helping in other ways, please contact OLLandTrust@gmail.com.

Special recognition goes to the Preserve Stewards who monitor and care for their preserves. We extend thanks to the indefatigable Anne Galliher, who retired as Trustee and Chief Steward in March 2023, and her husband Jon Lathrop for their commitment on a daily basis to maintaining and improving our preserves.

Belton Copp Preserve: Peter Engelking

Boggy Hole Preserve: Lisette Grunwell Lacey, Ned Coffee, Eddie Vautrain

Goberis Chadwick Preserve: Anne Haviland, Russell Sharp
Griswold Preserve: Josh Edmed, Winnie Edmed, Craig Taylor, Karen Taylor

Hatchetts Hill Preserve: Daniel Feeney, Susanne Colten-Carey
Heller Preserve: Kent Lacey

Hoffman-Matthiessen-DeGerenday Preserve: John Christiano, Michael Walker

Jericho Preserve: Steve Sarnoski

John Lohmann CT River Preserve: Anne Galliher, Jon Lathrop

Lay-Allen Preserve: Jay Campbell, Gary Dacek, Ann Dacek, Stephanie Mickle, Will Mickle, Jack Craig

Lohmann Buck Twining Preserve: Brian Greenho, Edie Twining

Mile Creek Preserve: Cindy Kovak, Sandy Loether, Liz Edmonstone

Upper Three Mile River Preserve: Mike Kiernan, Pierre Rougny

Watch Rock Preserve: Sandra Downing, Ted Freeman

Last but not least OLLT thanks Attorney Thor Holth of Holth and Kollman, LLC for his *pro bono* legal counsel.

Do You Know Your Boundaries?

Many people aren't fully aware of their boundaries—property boundaries, that is. Knowing and respecting property lines is essential. To that end, the Old Lyme Land Trust commissions surveys of its preserves so that signage alerting hikers not to trespass on neighboring properties can be installed and the land can be monitored for encroachments such as dumping of trash or cut brush. Unfortunately, encroachments occur. Often, it's a case of property owners not knowing the true location of the property line.

It's also important to be informed about any conservation easements or rights-of-way (ROWs) on your property. Conservation easements limit activities that can be performed in the designated area, and ROWs give another party the right to cross on the indicated passageway. Details are based on the associated legal documents. OLLT is obligated to monitor and uphold conservation easements and ROWs granted to the organization.

Surveys filed with the Town of Old Lyme illustrate boundaries and ROWs, and indicate the location of markers placed in the field. Conservation easements and ROWs are typically described in deeds filed at Town Hall.

If your property abuts OLLT land, please confirm the property line before undertaking activities near the boundary. Be sure to abide by any conservation easements, and be aware of ROWs that others may have over your property. Additionally, there are town regulations governing activities in and near wetlands and buffer areas.

Sights from the Watch Rock Preserve Shoreline

The Elizabeth B. Karter Watch Rock Preserve is situated at the mouth of the Duck River, an estuary among the islands near the mouth of the much larger Connecticut River. The preserve packs many habitats into its 25 acres. One of the most active and beautiful is its coastline. These photos offer a sampling of the year-round and seasonal wildlife that have been seen from the shore.



Lucky visitors got a glimpse of this endearing harbor seal at the Watch Rock Preserve. *(Photo by Corey Leamy)*



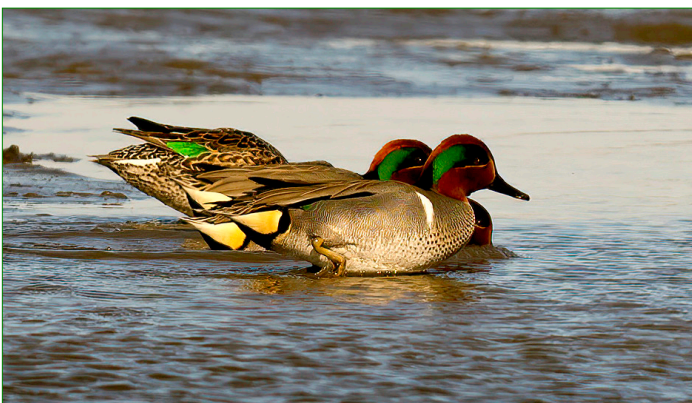
Double-breasted cormorants are plentiful at the Watch Rock Preserve. Because cormorants' feathers are not waterproof, these birds extend their wings to dry after emerging from the water. *(Photo by Corey Leamy)*



A great egret wades gracefully as it hunts. *(Photo by Corey Leamy)*



Local waters provide an abundant source of food for birds of prey such as this osprey. Osprey nesting platforms can be viewed from many OLLT preserves. *(Photo by Jeff Vlaun)*



Green-winged teal are common migratory ducks of sheltered wetlands. *(Photo by Jeff Vlaun)*



The loud clear calls of greater yellowlegs punctuate the air when they are nearby. *(Photo by Jeff Vlaun)*

Why Land Trusts Matter

Land trusts are nonprofit, community-based organizations dedicated to the permanent protection and stewardship of land for public benefit. There are currently over 120 land trusts serving the communities of Connecticut, representing the third most land trusts of any state in the country.

Land trusts work closely with landowners, communities, and other nonprofits to conserve land through acquisition or gifts of property or through conservation agreements. Land trusts are supported through charitable donations and use funds for a variety of purposes in support of their mission.

Land trusts have an ongoing responsibility to care for the land they conserve, ensuring that the conservation agreements (easements) are upheld and public conservation areas and/or nature preserves are taken care of forever.

The Old Lyme Land Trust is a member of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC). Among other activities, CLCC advocates for legislation which supports Connecticut land trusts in accomplishing their goals. A recent victory was passage of \$10,000,000 in bond funding for the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) Grant Program for matching grants to municipalities, land trusts, and water companies to support land conservation projects. There also is a new optional municipal tax abatement program for landowners who grant a permanent conservation easement to land trusts or municipalities to protect the corridor of a state-designated greenway.

The specifics of how a land trust serves the conservation needs of its community vary. OLLT focuses on:

- Conserving land and water
- Connecting people to the land
- Protecting scenic views
- Preserving elements of the community's history

Your donation to OLLT makes a difference!

Your support provides:

\$45 – (Basic Membership): Trail markers and signage

\$75 – Application materials for a State of Connecticut OSWA Grant to fund up to 65% of the purchase price of a land acquisition

\$150 – Extractigator tool for removing invasive plants

\$250 – Materials for constructing 4 durable benches

\$500 – Youth Environmental Action (YEA!) grant for children and young adults in Old Lyme and Lyme

Any amount – Contribute to the purchase and protection of undeveloped land in Old Lyme and to making beautiful outdoor spaces in Old Lyme available to all!

To contribute, go to our website at www.oldlymelandtrust.org or send a donation to P.O. Box 163, Old Lyme, CT 06371.

For more information about land trusts, including how to make a land donation, consult the Connecticut Land Conservation Council website at www.ctconservation.org.



Late June rains provided favorable conditions for fungi, including this striking example at the Griswold Preserve. (Photo by Edie Twining)



Maggie Jones, Landscape Ecologist and Director Emeritus of the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center in Mystic, led an engaging and informative hike in the woodlands at the Mile Creek Preserve in June.



Post Office Box 163, Old Lyme, CT 06371

UPCOMING EVENTS



Hiker's Happy Hour is a partnership of the Old Lyme Land Trust, the Town of Old Lyme Open Space Commission, and the Old Lyme Inn.

Hiker's Happy Hour

Here's a great way to get over "hump day" and energize yourself for the rest of the week. Hiker's Happy Hours occur on Wednesdays twice in both Spring and Fall. The format is simple: a 45-minute hike beginning at 4:15 p.m. at a local trailhead followed by happy hour from 5-7 p.m. at the Old Lyme Inn. You can join for either or both components. The locations of the September 6 and October 4 events will be announced in Lymeline, on the OLLT and Town of Old Lyme websites, and via posters around town.

9th Annual Kayak Regatta

A perennial favorite, the Old Lyme Land Trust Regatta will return on Saturday, September 9 at 1 p.m. Our guide, Fred Fenton, is an experienced kayaker who has led many of the Trust's past regattas. Paddlers of all ages are welcome. A USCG-approved life jacket or vest is required.

Space is limited and pre-registration is necessary.

Contact OLLandTrust@gmail.com with name(s), number of boats, and contact information. More details of the event will be provided upon confirmation.

The event is free. Donations to support OLLT's work are appreciated (go to www.oldlymelandtrust.org).



Kayakers – and a furry freeloader – thoroughly enjoyed the 2022 Regatta.

Visit our website at www.oldlymelandtrust.org