



BARRINGTON LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

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PRESERVE. ADVOCATE. EDUCATE. ENGAGE.

Barrington Says Farewell to Helen Tjader



It is with tremendous gratitude that BLCT conveys best wishes to Helen Tjader, a dedicated environmental conservation advocate and former president of BLCT, as she and her husband, Rick, prepare to move to South Dakota. Helen's energy, imagination, and dedication have made a big impact on the environment of Barrington and throughout the State of Rhode Island.

Helen's first role in the RI conservation community was as president of the Rhode Island chapter of the Sierra Club. She subsequently became a member, and then chair, of the Barrington Conservation Commission. During her tenure on that Commission, she spearheaded the Town's acquisition of the Vitullo Farm on Wampanoag Trail and the large tract of land behind Shaw's Supermarket that became part of

Veteran's Park. She also helped plan the watershed district that includes Brickyard Pond.

Helen became president of BLCT in 2003. During her 5-year term, she masterminded the Trust's acquisition of Sowams Woods, a 12-acre property on Washington Road with special significance to the native Pokanoket Tribe. Helen's successful campaign to raise the necessary funds from governmental sources, philanthropic organizations, and private individuals allowed BLCT to preserve this special property forever. Helen also implemented a computerized database of BLCT properties and members and organized various committees to help the Trust better fulfill its mission. Helen has remained an active member of the BLCT, continuing to serve on the Stewardship

Committee and coordinating its efforts with the Town Trails Committee to maintain trails throughout the Town.

Helen's efforts also have benefited conservation efforts statewide. A member of the board of directors of the RI Land Trust Council, Helen helped establish Land Trust Days as a way to encourage community residents to get outdoors and connect with land trusts. After helping the Neutaconkanut Hill Conservancy with their Land Trust Days events, Helen joined its board of directors and helped this relatively new conservation organization achieve its mission.

BLCT and many others around Rhode Island will miss Helen tremendously. We thank her for her many contributions to environmental conservation and wish her and Rick all the best in their new home in South Dakota. Please come back to visit!



Story by Melissa Horne
Photos by Robert Puckett

Annual Meeting 2018!

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust Annual Meeting is Wednesday, June 20 at 7 p.m. at the Barrington Public Library Auditorium. Following a brief business meeting, our featured speaker, Mark Richardson, will present.

"Replace your Lawn for More Biodiversity."

Learn how to replace your lawn with native plants that are functional, beautiful, and environmentally friendly. The multimedia presentation will explain how lawns are resource-heavy, requiring irrigation, fertilizer, and pesticides to thrive in our climate and why most of us would be better off reducing or eliminating them altogether.

Mark Richardson oversees the New England Wildflower Society's botanic garden, Garden in the Woods, and its native plant nursery in Whately, Mass. He studied ornamental horticulture at University of Rhode Island and helped run a mid-sized ornamental plant nursery before finding his passion in public horticulture. Mark is the author of a new book "Native Plants for New England Gardens."

Refreshments will be served.

The Vernal Pools of Sowams Woods



Barrington residents – both human and otherwise – can breathe a sigh of relief that the cold winter is behind us. With spring finally arriving, the animals that thrive in our local vernal pools will be making their annual appearance.

Vernal pools are shallow depressions in the landscape that sit between the trees in wooded areas. Important to the natural ecosystems of Sowams Woods, the pools are responsible for providing hatching grounds for peepers, salamanders, turtles, and other amphibians.

Unlike a regular pool or pond, vernal pools often dry up during the summer. Without the water, the pools cannot host the fish that would normally eat eggs and other small life forms. Depending on the weather patterns from year to year, the pools can fill back up by the spring with rains and winter run-offs. When the vernal pools are dry, you may think you've simply come upon a gentle hollow. But in April, when filled, they become home to a variety of new life.

Once the pools fill, life can begin. Spring peepers, with their distinctive voices, are among the first to say hello. Other possible inhabitants are spotted salamanders, wood frogs, and even newts.

Vernal pools are protected under the State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Fresh Water Wetlands Act. In compliance with the rules and regulation of "special aquatic sites," a 50-foot circumference is required around each pool.

Sowams Woods has two distinct vernal pools: The deeper pool, which fills up first in the spring, is located on the southwest corner of the property. The more shallow pool is near the ridge where the woods abut Echo Lake. Both pools and the surrounding land are fully protected by the Trust. Sowams Woods is located off Washington Road and is open to the public year round.

Article by Jodi Hellman; Photo by Robert Puckett

Barrington's Best Kept Secret: Osamequin Nature Trails and Bird Sanctuary



Thousands of motorists drive by one of Barrington's best-kept natural secrets on a daily basis, unaware of the wonders they are missing.

Osamequin Nature Trails and Bird Sanctuary is 42 acres of waterfront town-owned property that is the home to an extensive and diverse sample of Rhode Island's coastal plant and animal communities. Regulars that walk the property on a daily basis have seen deer, turkeys, fox, coyotes, osprey, and bald eagles while visiting the area just off the Wampanoag Trail (Rt. 114). A bird lovers' paradise, the conservation area is the perfect place for a hike, picnic, and an up close and personal view of an abundance of coastal and migratory birds.

Osamequin is named in honor of Massasoit, the "great leader" of the Pokanoket Tribe of the Wampanoag Indian nation. The town took ownership of the conservation area in 1968 and it has flourished under the care of the Barrington Garden Club and BLCT.

With spring finally arriving in Southern New England, seasonal birds are once again making their homes at Osamequin. Aquatic creatures are coming to life too, with horseshoe crabs laying eggs, fiddler crabs staking claim for territory and, soon, Diamondback Terrapin turtles peeking their heads out of the waters off the coast.

Managed and maintained by the Barrington Garden Club and the BLCT, conservation efforts focus on trail maintenance and removal of invasive plant growth. Local Boy Scout troops have built bridges and other structures as part of Eagle Scout projects, helping to keep the area functioning and safe for visitors.

The flat, easy-to-access trails are all color coded and well marked, beginning with the yellow trail at the park entrance that provides plenty of safe parking. The red Tamarack Trail leads to a wildlife-viewing shed, constructed by Scouts, and overlooks a salt marsh to the south. Bring

your binoculars for an intimate experience with an array of coastal aviary. You may be lucky enough to see a bald eagle! An osprey nest viewing area is on the green Bayberry Trail; in the coming months you can watch new hatchlings practicing their flying skills under the tutelage of their majestic parents.

Although the trails are flat, choose a trail that is suitable for you and your companions' physical abilities and hiking experience. Bring a blanket and picnic basket and have a leisurely meal by the water's edge off the Arrowwood Trail and watch the ospreys fly to and from their nest, bringing food to their young in their massive talons.

Make sure you consider likely trail conditions, too. Locations perfect for summer hiking may be too wet and muddy after spring rains. It's best to avoid some trails at high tide or in high wind conditions. As always, wear shoes that are sturdy and appropriate for trail conditions. Comfort and foot protection are both important. Hiking boots, running or athletic shoes, or other sturdy shoes with a closed heel and toe are best for most hikes.

Do not forget the insect repellent. It is now recommended year-round to avoid ticks that carry disease and during non-freezing weather to repel mosquitoes that are also potential disease carriers.

Story by Joan D. Warren

Photos by Robert Puckett



Announcing New Walks and Talks Events

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust, in partnership with The Barrington Public Library, has kicked off a new Walks and Talks initiative for 2018. Please join us for these upcoming events:

Our May talk is **Choosing Pollinator Plants for Your Landscape**, on May 15th at 6:30pm at the Library. The event will offer a compassionate approach to our relationship with the landscape. Speakers will be Blakley Szosz, current president of RI Federation of Garden Clubs, and Liying Peng, beekeeper and scientist. More info on the BLCT and BPL website.

In June, the talk **Rethink Your Lawn** will be part of BLCT's Annual Meeting, also at the Library. See the Annual Meeting notice on page 2 for more info.

The July talk will be a presentation on **ticks and Lyme disease** at the Library. Please check the BLCT or BPL website in June for details.

In August, join us for our **Land Trust Days Kayak Event** that we are hoping to make an annual event.

In September, we will host a talk on **local Indian history**.

October 28th takes us outside again for a guided walk at **Nockum Hill** from 2-3 p.m.

In November we bring back a favorite – the **Thanksgiving Walk**, on Friday the 23rd at Johannis Farm. Time TBD

Please check the events calendar on the BLCT.org website for details and updates, or like us on Facebook!

BLCT says Thank You!!

The Barrington Land Conservation Trust recently accepted a donation of two properties located in the Bay Spring neighborhood from the Edward W. and Eleanor F. Barlow Trust. Located close to property already owned by BLCT, these properties will help provide additional habitat for the many varieties of wildlife that inhabit the Bay Spring area. Thank you to R.M. Barlow, Trustee of the Edward W. and Eleanor F. Barlow Trust for your generous donation!



Trails Team Update

Winter recap: We've had three events since February, including two Tuesday Trails Team events. On Feb. 13 and April 10th, the team worked at Sowams Woods and Pic-Wil doing trail maintenance and clean up, removing fallen trees at Sowams, and tree limb clearing at Pic-Wil after recent forestry management activities there. Our numbers continue to grow and we attracted a record turnout of 19 at the April event, including 3 first timers. On April 8th we ran a cleanup at Osamequin with Temple Habonim as part of "Mitzvah Day", a day of service. Accompanied by BLCT volunteers Peter Burke, Helen Tjader, Ed Schottland and Victor Lerish, we spent 1-1/2 hours picking up litter and replacing trail signs in the nature preserve. We had a total of 30 attendees, mainly in family groups.

Upcoming trail events:

Our next Tuesday Trails Team will be on May 8, 2018, just in time to take advantage of some nice spring weather. We will be working at "Heritage Woods" doing trail maintenance and removal of invasive species. Bring your usual hand clippers and/or loppers. There will be additional tools available. We will meet at 10am, weather permitting on Ferrier Ave., which is between Tall Pines Dr. and Heritage Rd. in Hampden Meadows.

As always, don't forget about tick precautions!



Dangers Lurking in the Woods

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

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

Being able to identify ticks is an important part of determining risk. For example, only adult female Blacklegged (deer) ticks (pictured below) can carry lyme disease. There is a lot of misinformation about removing ticks and tick bites. Tick



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

Oftentimes, people will see a red spot on their skin and worry if it is an infected tick bite. From Tickencounter.org: *"Within 3 days of being bitten by a tick, many people will develop a red spot that never expands bigger than a dime. This is just an allergic*

reaction to the saliva that the tick is spitting into you. Watch the site, however. If the red spot grows in size over a period of a week or so, to bigger than two inches, then it is likely to be a sign that you are infected with the Lyme disease agent."

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

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



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

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

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

Article by Ian Donahue

Become a Member!

With membership to the Barrington Land Conservation Trust you help to preserve and protect Barrington's precious open space forever.

With the help of our members:

Our volunteers steward over 285 acres of open space – forest, meadows, salt marsh and coastal dune.

Programs we sponsor educate children and adults about the rich natural resources and fascinating creatures in our area.

We maintain the only nesting site in Rhode Island for the Northern Diamondback Terrapin.

We provide scholarships and internship opportunities for students.

Every piece of Barrington land set aside for conservation adds to the value of the entire community, helping to preserve the beauty and natural health of our town. As a member, you help us conserve open space through the purchase of new properties and the maintenance of properties already owned.

We invite you to visit our website at www.blct.org for more information or to donate online. To become a member, contact us at info@blct.org.

We thank you for your membership and continued support. Can we count on you to renew today?

Upcoming Events

May 15: Pollinators Are Important.

Please join the Barrington Public Library and the BLCT for the discussion: **Choosing Pollinator Plants for Your Landscape**. The event will offer a compassionate approach to our relationship with the landscape. Speakers include **Blakley Szosz**, former president of Barrington Garden Club and head gardener at RI Country Club and **Liying Peng**, beekeeper and scientist, a native of China and a member of RI Beekeeper Association. More info at the BLCT and BPL websites.

Please visit us at
www.BLCT.org or on
our Facebook page!



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