



President's Corner

by John J. Ganem

2010 is upon us. A lot has changed and a lot is changing. What that change results in is up to each of us and how we perceive and deal with all that is happening around us. One thing that hasn't changed is the fact that we continue to lose more and more open space to meet the demands of an increasing population. What this means is that our challenge to preserve open space becomes more difficult with each passing day, month and year. Why? Because there is less and less open space available and an ever growing need for more open space as our population increases.

The Nashoba Conservation Trust is committed to preserving open space for future generations but without your help our goals are even harder to achieve. How can you help? You can help by letting us know if a piece of land becomes available or is worth trying to save. This might mean protecting some land you own by contributing it to the Trust or asking for our help in keeping it as a protected parcel of your property. Even small parcels can be valuable in contributing to the overall effort by creating contiguous corridors between existing open space parcels or protecting small pockets of habitat for special animals and plants.

Your and your neighbor's property becomes more valuable when it abuts open space. This is not speculation but proven fact. You can decrease your tax burden and maintain the beauty of your backyard and neighborhood by setting aside qualifying parcels as open space. Neighbors can join together and set aside abutting portions of their lots

that might not otherwise qualify. Contact us to find out what you can do. Call 978-433-3335 or email jganem@charter.net to find out more about your options.

Wood Duck Nest Monitoring

by Russ Schott

As its name implies, the Wood Duck is North America's woodland duck. Many people believe it's also our most beautiful duck. The male Wood Duck has an iridescent green to purplish and white head, rust colored breast, bronze, black, and white sides, bright red eyes, and a multicolored bill. The females are brown-gray, but have multi colored wing feathers, speckled breasts, and a prominent white eye-ring that tapers toward the back of the head like an exclamation mark.

The Wood Duck is a cavity nester, and its range often overlaps with that of the Beaver, that notorious wetland developer, and the Pileated Woodpecker, a bird particularly good at excavating large holes in dead trees. Like other cavity nesters (i.e. the Bluebird as an example), the Wood Duck suffered a decline due to loss of habitat during the 20th century, but for other reasons. The Bluebird, Wren and Swallow suffered declines as our farms switched over to suburbia, and homeowners removed standing dead trees in an effort to spruce up their properties. Wood Ducks depend on marsh and shoreline habitats, and declined as Beaver

populations were in decline in the middle of the 20th century.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts was in the forefront of states recognizing this decline and was among the first to develop an aggressive Duck Box installation program. Immediately after World War II, the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife had the creative idea to utilize Army surplus ammunition boxes as Wood Duck Nesting Boxes and boxes originally constructed to service American troops in Europe and the Pacific were soon to be nailed to standing trees along our rivers and ponds.

Fortunately, Wood Duck populations have rebounded, but many activists remain committed to preserving their numbers by constructing, installing and monitoring Wood Duck boxes in appropriate habitats.



Dave Armstrong inspects Wood Duck box on Stromsted Parcel

In Pepperell, Dave Armstrong remains one such Wood Duck supporter, and has agreed to lead a NCT Duck Box Monitoring Hike on Sunday, February 14th at 1 p.m. We will visit Duck Boxes near the Keyes Farm property (off of Elm Street) and on the Stromsted Property (off of

Mt. Lebanon Street). If time allows, we will install a new box near the Nashua River on the Wallent Property off of River Road.

We will meet at the Keyes Farm parking area on Elm Street, ½ mile south of Town Hall, at 1 p.m. If there is snow on the ground, snowshoes or cross country skis are recommended. Hope to see you there.

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Trail Monitoring and Maintenance in Pepperell

by Rob Rand

The Pepperell Conservation Commission has established a volunteer-based trails monitoring and maintenance program to help keep our trail system clear and accessible. This program is intended to include all of the trails on properties open to the public in Pepperell, and the commission is enthusiastic to have the support of The Nashoba Conservation Trust in this endeavor

The Conservation Commission held a public meeting on Jan. 5 to discuss the goals and challenges of such a program. The Trust had started a trail monitoring program several years ago, but found that keeping up with the plan was difficult for the volunteers running it. Now, with a single contact person available for all trails in Pepperell, we anticipate a very successful program. It was also agreed that signing up and making trail reports should be as easy as possible and available on-line, as well as by phone or personal visit to the commission office in town hall. All the contact information is listed below.

At a recent Trust meeting, the Board officially agreed to support the new effort of trail monitoring and maintenance. This will allow the Conservation Administrator to oversee the program for the town's conservation land and the Trust's land. Additionally, while the Conservation Commission has no official jurisdiction on Mass. DFW (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife), Mass. DCR (Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation), or town forest lands, the Conservation Administrator will be able to act as a liaison with the appropriate organization. Therefore, volunteers

are also encouraged to monitor those parcels as well and to file trail reports.

The trails program will involve two types of volunteers: monitors and maintainers. Ellen Fisher, Conservation Commission administrator, has set up the program and will be the contact person. The two types of volunteers are described as follows:

Trail Monitors will sign up to monitor one or more specific trails and commit to sending a trail report to the Conservation Administrator at least once a month. Reports might be as simple as saying "all clear." However, the goal is to quickly identify obstructions, down trees across a trail, trail damage, or any other suitable observation, including wild animal or bird sightings.

Trail Maintainers will sign up to assist with trail maintenance as necessary. Maintenance might involve removing downed trees, repairing wetland crossings, replacing or repainting trail identification markers, or other jobs that may come up. The goal is to have list of interested and able people for the Conservation Administrator to call upon in case of need or trail damage.

There are sign-up forms available for both types of volunteers on the Pepperell Conservation Commission web page, as well as a form for reporting needed maintenance. Also there is a link to the commission's web page on the NCT web page. We enthusiastically encourage any and all interested to volunteer, but to at least go out and enjoy the beauty of our town's public lands. If you've been on a trail, feel free to let Ellen Fisher at the Conservation Commission know of any needed trail maintenance or damage.

Here is the contact information for volunteering or anything else about the trail monitoring and maintenance program:

The Pepperell Conservation Commission office is open in Town Hall Monday through Thursday during office hours. Ellen may be out on a site visit at various times during the day, but forms should be available to be picked up or dropped off.

Commission phone: 978 433 0325

Commission web page/trails:

<http://www.town.pepperell.ma.us/conservation/trails.html>

Nashoba Conservation Trust web page:

<http://www.nashobatrust.org> (click on links).

Farm Day 2010

Jon and Anne Kaiser of Twin Valley Farm, once again, invite young and old alike, to visit their farm on Brookline Street on Saturday, April 10 from 11 am to 2 pm. This annual event has taken place since 2001 when the Kaiser family, working with the Town of Pepperell and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, placed an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on their property. The APR Program places a permanent deed restriction on the property that prevents any negative effect on its agricultural viability. To learn more about this program, visit: http://www.mass.gov/agr/landuse/APR/docs/apr_brochure.pdf

Many adults have commented that the walk through the barn brings back childhood memories. The children enjoy patting and feeding the horses and cows. The Nashoba Conservation Trust sponsors this free, annual event. Carrots are provided to feed the horses and cows and light refreshments are served.

For more information, call Paula Terrasi 978-314-1910.

Learn about Vernal Pools

Did you know there is a huge migration taking place every spring, a migration that many people are unaware of? It could be in your backyard!

On the first, rainy, warmish (around 40 degree) night in March, the salamanders begin their migration from their upland habitats and head to vernal pools. This annual event is often referred to as "The Big Night". To learn more about the migra-

tion of salamanders and the activities of other amphibians in Spring, we invite you to join us at the Lawrence Library on Thursday, March 18 from 6:00pm - 7:30 pm for a presentation on vernal pools.

Mid March is a very busy time for these amphibians and we will share with you locations where you will be able to witness this annual event.

For questions, please contact Paula Terrasi at 978-314-1910 or email Paula at lakelover207@yahoo.com

All welcome.

mental health benefits of green space and plan accordingly. Singapore, where my wife Lucy and our dog Lulu have been living the past year, is one city-state that has taken nature and bio-diversity into account.

With a mere 250 square miles of land - smaller in size than NYC - Singapore could have gone the way of many cities and paved its green spaces into oblivion. But in 2002 Singapore created its Green Plan 2012 proposing a number of initiatives for sustainable living, including setting aside .8 hectares (1.97 acres) of park land for every 1,000 persons by 2030. Singapore already has 9500 hectares (23,475 acres) of park land and expects to add another 4400 (10,872 acres) to meet its goal.

The Green Plan is being supplanted by a new plan called Lively and Livable Singapore, which sets targets for recycling, energy efficiency, reduced water consumption and the like, and also recommends 900 hectares (2,224 acres) of reservoirs be available for public use by 2030. Another interesting recommendation is to create 50 hectares (124 acres) of sky-rise greenery.

To Singapore's credit, steps are also being taken to conserve bio-diversity, and in some cases to re-introduce it. One example is the Bishan Park Kallang River waterway project. This classic urban park, dotted with ball fields and man - made ponds is getting a \$53 million makeover. The feature design element will turn a 1.8 mile long drainage canal into a river winding through the park, connecting to ponds that will be re-stored to a natural state. You can read more about this project here: <http://www.pub.gov.sg/abcwaters/AdditionalInformation/Pages/KallangRiver.aspx>

We live along the Singapore River in one of the many condo complexes dotting the embankment. Being Singapore's oldest inhabited area, the Riverside is chock full of restaurants, hotels and mall complexes. Still, it has its share of cooling greenery, is home to beautiful Fort Canning Park, and supports a fair amount of wildlife, some of which you can see in the shots below.

Next time we'll look at one of Singapore's remarkable but largely unknown wildlife habitats...

Calendar

Sunday, 2/14 Wood Duck monitoring - Meet at Keyes Farm, Elm Street 1:00pm

Saturday, 2/20 Tracking at Pepperell Springs - Meet at the Bottling Plant on Chestnut Street at 8:00am

Saturday, 2/27 Full Moon Hike on Keyes Farm - Meet at the parking lot on Elm Street at 7:00pm

Thursday, 3/18 Vernal Pool Presentation - Lawrence Library 6-7:30pm

Saturday, 4/10 (raindate 4/11) - Farm Day 2010, Twin Valley Farm, Brookline Street 11:00am - 2pm,

For additional details on Tracking at Pepperell Springs and the Full Moon Hike please visit our website www.nashobatrust.org

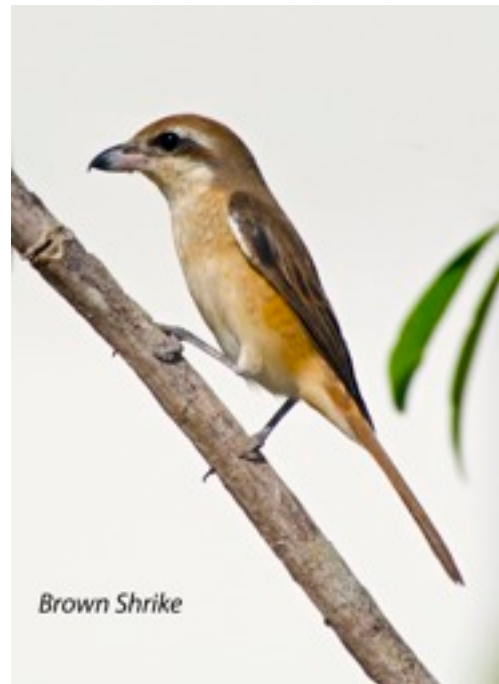
Wildlife Amongst the High-Rises

by Ken Hartlage

While many of us lament encroaching urbanization I think we all appreciate when development authorities recognize the physical and



Birds
along the
Singapore River





WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE NASHOBA CONSERVATION TRUST?

Your support will help protect open space, maintain lands and trails, and provide environmental education and on-going conservation and nature activities. Contributions are tax deductible.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | \$150 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor | \$60 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | \$_____ |

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please Forward Your Contribution To: Nashoba Conservation Trust
P.O. Box 188
Pepperell, Massachusetts 01463



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