

BCT PRESIDENT'S LETTER February 2014

For all the tasks accomplished in 2013 and all the work ahead of us in 2014, one word comes to mind – **collaboration**. That is, the act of working together to accomplish a task and to achieve shared goals. Needless to say, Town Center has been the focus of our collaborative efforts, starting with a massive clean-up of the property in 2012 where, literally, trailer-truck loads of garbage and debris were removed and recycled. Then this past fall, the last car and snowmobile were removed, along with a whole lot more brush clearing.

Throughout this time, the Town Center steering committee comprised of Dick Heaton, Dan Gaffney, Liz Schoepke, Ken Zito, Bob Johnson, Michelle Tuck, Bob Roemer, and Brandon Ducharme, worked tirelessly on the vision of what Town Center would become. That vision came into focus with Town Center Park. It is truly remarkable and it will be a wonderful jewel, set in the center of our town.

The collaboration didn't stop there – Dick and Liz worked throughout this past Christmas holiday completing our

second EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant application and securing letters of support from Sudbury Valley Trustees, First Parish of Bolton, Bolton Local, and our own Board of Selectmen.

This collaboration belies the strength of the Bolton Conservation Trust and I have only just named the work done for Town Center! There is also Tom Denney, Four Winds, and regular trail and signage maintenance.

The Trust does not only act

on our mission dedicated to preserving the rural heritage and natural assets of Bolton but seeks to go forward with co-operative ventures, to realize the deep, collective determination for a shared vision within our community.

So what does 2014 bring? More collaboration – more sharing knowledge, more learning and building consensus, and more leadership as we continue our vital programs such as Tom Denney and Four Winds, and embrace the effort to create a true Town Center.

—Michael Zelenkov

"I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want to own."

—Andy Warhol

TOM DENNEY NATURE CAMP

The Tom Denney Nature Camp offers a unique camp experience to 1st–8th grades students in one-week sessions of fun and learning in the beautiful natural setting of Bolton's Bower Springs conservation area. The goal of our camp is to create a safe, enjoyable outdoor learning experience that provides opportunities for campers to learn about themselves and develop understanding, respect and responsibility for the environment while making new friends, taking on new challenges and most of all having fun!

Camp activities: swimming, group games in the field and woods, Mystery Animal, Predator and Prey, The Amazing Race, arts & crafts, songs, tracking, scavenger



hunt, hiking, exploring, campfires, building a shelter and more. Campers entering grades 6th–8th may choose to participate in the *Eco Adventures* program where they explore local wildlife and learn how to enjoy the outdoors, kayak with Still River Outfitters, go to a rock climbing gym, camp overnight and more.

Applicants for *Counselor in Training* must be entering 9th grade or above for the 2014–2015 school year.

Camp Sessions: Five one week-long sessions July 7 through August 8, Monday–Friday, 9:00–3:00. The cost is \$250 for regular camp; \$370 for *Eco Adventures*. Scholarships are available for any camper in need. Questions: Mail to bcttdnc@gmail.com (best way) or leave phone message at 978-429-3004.

How to support the Bolton Conservation Trust

- * **Dinner & Auction at Nashoba Valley Winery—Sunday, May 18, 2014**
Auction items featuring local "Dining in" dinners, vacation homes, luxury services, and treasures
If you would like to host a dinner or donate an item, contact: Alice Roemer, mar@roemer.com
or Joan Finger, joan@zootergrouptutoring.com
- * **Donate plants from your yard or your excess stuff to our Plant and Yard Sale—May 2014**
If you are cleaning out this spring, contact us. If you have furniture or large items, we can accept early donations/storage.
Contact Rich at rdischler@comcast.net or Cia at ciastudio@comcast.net
- * **Become a member: www.BoltonConservationTrust.org**

Thank you!

Exploring Ecosystems in 2013-2014

The valuable volunteers of our **Four Winds Nature Program** are exploring “Ecosystems” with the K-5 students of Florence Sawyer and Emerson schools this year. An ecosystem consists of all the living and the non-living things in a particular kind of place, like a forest, a pond, or the soil under a field. All the organisms in an ecosystem depend on all the other things—both living and non-living—for food and other needs. When we study ecosystems, we’ll be thinking about the interactions of organisms with each other and their environment.

This fall, we discovered **Signs of Leaf-Eaters**. This winter, we learn about **Staying Warm**. This spring, we’ll look at **Squirrel Tales**. Amazing acrobats of the tree tops and phone wires, squirrels entertain us with their often

nutty behavior. We’ll meet three kinds of squirrels; gray, red, and flying squirrels—all of which occupy the forests of the northeast, often competing for the same foods and shelters. We’ll see how they each have a special niche—particular habits and habitat preferences—that helps them to live side by side. We’ll experience the nature of competition when we hide away

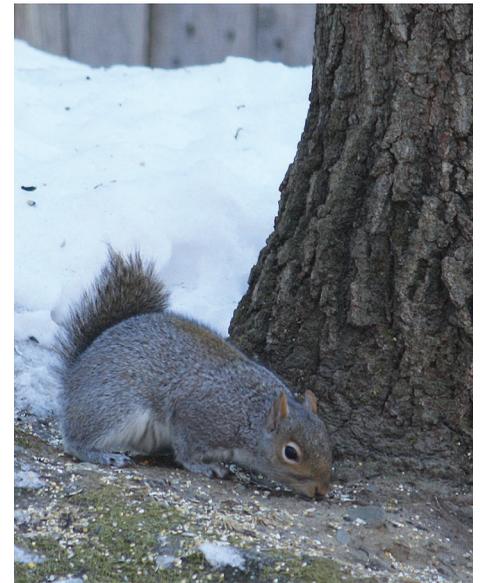
nuts, and compare our success rate to squirrels when we attempt to retrieve our hidden caches.



Photos by Betsy Taylor-Kennedy

Join the Four Winds Volunteers!

The success of the **Four Winds Nature Program** depends on the support of parent volunteers, teachers and school administrators. Three environmental/natural science topics are chosen to be presented in the classrooms each year. Volunteers meet at Florence Sawyer School for a two-hour training workshop on each topic, facilitated by our naturalist-educator from the Four Winds Nature Institute of Vermont, Karen Murphy. In these workshops, volunteers obtain the necessary written materials for each lesson, learn the information and practice the activities they will later share with students. Most workshops include an outdoor component that allows students to experience the natural world firsthand in and around our school grounds and apply their learning.



Volunteers need no prior teaching experience and most do not have a natural science background. The training workshop for the spring session is March 5. Call or email with any questions.

Liz Schoepke 779-0752 or eschoepke@comcast.net
Kathy Romeo, Amy Balewicz, Kathy Zito

BOLTON CONSERVATION TRUST

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<http://www.boltonconservationtrust.org>

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Send me: Trail Guide Magnet Date _____

* Many companies have matching gift programs that will double your donation to the Bolton Conservation Trust. We urge you to take advantage of your employer’s plan by obtaining the necessary form and returning it to the Trust as soon as possible.



Bolton Conservation Trust
 P. O. Box 14
 Bolton, MA 01740

www.BoltonConservationTrust.org

Info@BoltonConservationTrust.org

(978) 429-3004

Dedicated to its mission, "to assist in and promote the preservation of the rural character of Bolton, to preserve and maintain conservation areas, and to educate the public concerning the use of natural resources."

President: Michael Zelenkov

Vice President: Liz Schoepke

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NATURE WATCH

Nature's Oddities

Watching birds at your feeders can be a fun and entertaining pastime. This fall, however, one bird caused more annoyance than pleasure. A male Red-Bellied Woodpecker has been repeatedly flying at his reflection in windows and sliding doors, pecking at the glass. He must imagine that he is defending his territory from what he perceives as a competitor. This behavior is more common in the Spring, when birds are pairing up for the nesting season. He may have lost his mate, as no female Red-Bellied has been visiting the feeders. In order to prevent him from ruining the screen door, I had to move his favorite feeders to another location. So far, so good.

The usual chickadees, titmice, juncos, white-breasted nuthatches, goldfinches and downy woodpeckers have been plentiful at the feeders. Less frequent are the hairy woodpecker, song sparrow, winter wren and cardinal. Unlike last year, I have not seen any common redpolls or red-breasted nuthatches.



Photos by Betsy Taylor-Kennedy

Citizen-science, the term for raw data gathered by average citizens, then shared with scientists, has been made simpler with the use of apps for mobile devices. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology has a new bird identification app, Merlin Bird ID, which helps you identify birds by asking you when, where, what color and what size of bird. The app searches through millions of observations from the eBird online community and returns a list of possible birds, based on your location and the season. This is a free app and is easy to use for birders of all ages.

You can learn more about birding and how to participate in eBird at www.birds.cornell.edu and www.massaudubon.org

—Betsy Taylor-Kennedy



Winter 2014 Newsletter

BOLTON CONSERVATION TRUST

A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE RURAL HERITAGE AND NATURAL ASSETS OF BOLTON

WALK, TALK, & ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, March 23, 2014

You are invited to join us on Sunday, March 23 for one or all of the following BCT activities:



WALK ... The Bolton Center Trail at 2:00 p.m.

Meet at the First Parish of Bolton church parking lot at 673 Main Street at 2:00 p.m.

TALK ... "What's Growing in Your Yard?" 3:15 p.m.

Ted Elliman, Botanist, New England Wild Flower Society

Proceed to Davis Hall in the First Parish Church on Main Street for hot cocoa, coffee, tea and to warm up, followed by the talk and meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING ... Enjoy a delicious dinner provided by *J's at the Winery* and participate in the annual meeting. *

ALL ARE WELCOME! • Attendance is free! • Kids are invited to this fun family event!
Meet Tom Denney Nature Camp counselors.

Wildlife and Conservation in Our Area There's a lot of stuff in our yards we didn't put there. It just appears. What is it? Do you want it there? Ornamental or harmful? Dangerous? Poisonous? If you don't want it, how do you get rid of it? If you want it, how do you keep it? Invasive plants spreading over the landscape and communities present homeowners and gardeners with perplexing, difficult landscape problems, and threaten the natural diversity of our ecological communities as well. In this presentation we will discuss the characteristics of some invasive plants and ways to control them.



About Ted Elliman

For the past 8 years, Ted has worked as a botanist and invasive species program manager at NEWFS. For NEWFS he's currently writing a field guide to the wildflowers of New England, on contract with Timber Press. The book will cover 1,200 species throughout New England. Before his current work with NEWFS, he worked as a contract ecologist for the National Park Service, and did plant and forest community surveys (and also invasive species surveys and control) on the Appalachian Trail and on the Boston Harbor Islands. As a sideline, he has led natural history and botany eco-tours to western China (and more recently northeast India) for Betchart Expeditions since the mid-1990's.

* Please let us know how many children and adults will be attending so we can plan for food:
info@boltonconservationtrust.org OR 978 429-3004