

SANCTUARY

Newsletter of the
White Memorial
Conservation Center
Vol. XXVIII No. 4
Fall 2010

Museum Hours:

Monday - Saturday 9 A.M. - 5 P.M.
Sunday 12 P.M. - 5 P.M.

For Information

Phone: 860-567-0857
E-Mail: info@whitememorialcc.org
Website: www.whitememorialcc.org



"In the hushed hours of night when the air is quite still,
I hear the strange cry of the lone whip-poor-will".....Horatio Alger
Photo Credit: Paul J. Fusco / CT DEP-Wildlife

The Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferous*) : The Reclusive Lunatic of Connecticut Forests by Shannon B. Kearney-McGee, Wildlife Technician, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

The whip-poor-will, named for its call, is very unique and specialized in its appearance and is more often heard than seen. It calls loudly and repeatedly "Whip-poor-will! Whip-poor-will!" while consuming insects in open shrubby areas at night, but hides seamlessly camouflaged in mature forests by day. This reclusive behavior has precipitated many myths and misunderstandings about this bird through history. The collective group of birds of which the whip-poor-will is a member, Caprimulgidae, from the latin Capra (goat) and mulgere (to milk), are sometimes affectionately referred to as "goatsuckers." This strange name developed from observations by early European farmers, who noticed the birds' large gaping mouths and their tendency to emerge just after dusk and fly silently and suspiciously over agricultural fields. These characteristics subsequently rendered them guilty of sucking all the milk from goats at night. We now know that their huge eyes and a large mouth combined with falcon-like wings are adapted for night foraging of aerial insects. Ornithologists also refer to this group of birds as "nightjars" because the European nightjar's noisy call would be "jarring" in the night. This assessment of the nightjar song might be seconded by some Connecticut residents who live near a nesting whip-poor-will, and have been kept awake by the sometimes frantic calling of the male on full moon nights in late spring.

Ironically, as noisy as it is, because it is so secretive, the whip-poor-will was not even recognized as its own species by many who lived in New England through the late 1800's. Instead, it played the role of Cyrano de Bergerac, and the common nighthawk who was more visibly flying over open fields was

"Almost every man, woman, and child living in the wide breeding range of the whippoorwill knows the bird by name. Those who once hear it singing, reiterating its name perhaps a hundred times or more without a pause, cannot fail to realize that they are listening to a whippoorwill, but how many of this multitude who know the whippoorwill's name ever saw the bird or would recognize it if they did see it?"
- Authur Bent 1940

given credit for the whip-poor-will's call. Although they are masters of disguise, whip-poor-wills are not tiny and when held in the hand, are about the same size as a robin. It is their plumage, a mottled combination of dark grays and browns, which allows nesting females to hide among leaf litter on the forest floor or roosting birds to go unnoticed on tree branches during the day.

As Bent alludes to in his quote, the

whip-poor-will soared to fame in the early 1940's because of its call and abundance, but today it is in danger of returning to anonymity. Unlike the multitudes of people who heard the whip-poor-will 70 years ago, today there are many fewer people who know that the whip-poor-will nests in Connecticut. In Connecticut, whip-poor-wills are a state listed species of special concern. This striking decline in whip-poor-will abundance is echoed across the northeastern states where the call of the whip-poor-will has mysteriously disappeared from the landscape. Their disappearance is alarming, not only for their sake, but also because they are not the only insect eating bird, nor the only bird of open country that is experiencing population deterioration and these collective population declines indicate a larger environmental problem.

Over the past 5 years, State Wildlife Grants from the federal government have allowed the Connecticut Wildlife Division, in partnership with the other northeastern states, to investigate the status of the whip-poor-will in Connecticut and begin to investigate what may be causing its decline. Northeastern efforts to assess the status of the birds capitalized on both the public curiosity and the "vociferous" nature of the bird to create a volunteer assisted program to monitor calling birds.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

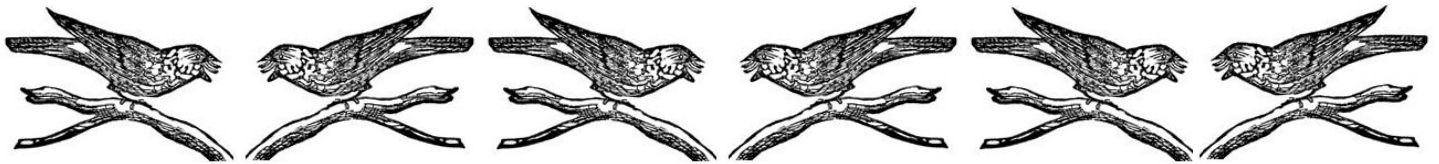

The surveyors have to listen for birds when the moon is at least 50% illuminated and not obscured by cloud cover because whip-poor-wills are more likely to be active under these conditions. Whip-poor-wills use their eyesight to capture prey and hence the light of the moon allows better foraging. The survey locations are placed in open scrubby habitat that is adjacent to mature forest in regions of the state where whip-poor-will populations would be likely to be present. Because the breeding population extends well beyond Connecticut borders, throughout the eastern United States and into the southern section of Canada, regional cooperation was vital to understand the species status, and these local survey routes were combined to join efforts in the Southeastern and Midwestern United States.

The results from this new monitoring program and regional coordination have produced an updated assessment of the whip-poor-will's local and regional distribution and abundance. The preferred habitat for whip-poor-wills in the Northeast Region is considered to be pitch pine/scrub oak, or pine barren. In this habitat there can be 20-30 birds in single locations. This type of habitat, however is very scarce in Connecticut. Instead, Connecticut whip-poor-wills are often found surrounding utility right-of-ways, forest clear-cuts, and other types of scrubby forest openings. In Connecticut, whip-poor-wills are estimated to occupy slightly less than one third of this type of scrubby habitat, and numbers of birds at any one site are much lower. The distribution of whip-poor-wills around the state also is less contiguous compared to the distribution from breeding bird atlas efforts in the early 1980's. Birds now occupy only distinct core areas with suitable habitat. Likewise, some other states in the Northeast report whip-poor-wills have disappeared from 40-60% of the areas where they were found in the 1980-90's.

In an effort to understand the whip-poor-will decline and how we can manage our remaining habitat, specific monitoring of core hotspots was also begun. In Connecticut, the wildlife division placed radios on individual birds to determine which habitat features are most important for Connecticut's breeding whip-poor-wills. It was discovered that whip-poor-

wills did not forage in the same area where they were heard singing. Although they are often observed singing in scrubby forest openings, utility rights-of-way, and fields, the birds were recorded foraging in mature 80+ year old growth consisting primarily of chestnut oak located on acidic rocky summit outcrops. This area had very steep and rugged terrain with exposure to natural disturbance of wind and other weather elements. This chestnut oak habitat also is more reminiscent of the pitch pine/scrub oak communities in Cape Cod and New Jersey where whip-poor-will are more numerous. This type of habitat is quite different from the managed scrubby areas like utility right-of-ways which are more common in Connecticut. These differences may result in a preferred invertebrate community from which to forage or increased protection from predation while foraging.

Although there are still many causes for whip-poor-will decline that remain to be studied, their preference for pine barrens and more natural scrubby areas combined with the rarity of these habitats may be one reason why whip-poor-will populations are declining and contracting locally. Pine barren habitat is disappearing quickly from other parts of the northeast as well because of fire suppression and development. If there is less pine barren habitat regionally, there are lower numbers of whip-poor-wills fledging and a lower population over the years. Birds will always nest in the most optimal habitat first, and hence they are disappearing from some of the less preferred locations. This makes it important to identify and protect the remaining preferred nesting locations for whip-poor-wills. It is also our responsibility to increase productivity at all potential sites. In general, in our heavily developed state it helps to keep predators and disturbance at a minimum. Anyone can help by keeping cats indoors and dogs on leash. You never know if one of these secretive nocturnal birds may be hiding by day along your forest hiking route! And if you are woken at night by a frantic caller, consider it an honor that this unique and declining bird should find your residence acceptable, and then give the DEP a call to report it!

WHITE MEMORIAL
THANKS

Northwest Community Bank
Litchfield Bancorp
The Connecticut Community Foundation
The Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation
and An Anonymous Donor
for making our
29th Annual Family Nature Day Possible.

Thanks to Mark Moorman
of
Sprain Brook Apiary, Woodbury

for
overseeing our
Honey Bee
Observation Hive
again this summer!



Make a Difference

In her continuing series, Zoë Greenwood helps you find small ways to help the environment

I love flowers. Next to being with my family and reading, flowers are my most favorite thing. I don't even really mind weeding, unless it's really hot and humid outside. My daughter knows to give me gift certificates to the local nursery for Mother's Day and birthdays. Great!

My gardens are really full this year. Maybe it is because we had so much rain last year. Maybe it is because it has just been too long since I have thinned the plants. I have a lot of old fashioned plants - Lupine, Foxglove, Lily-of-the-Valley, Daisy, Sweet Cicely, Black-eyed Susan, Columbine, Globe Thistle, Obedient Plant, Bee Balm - you get the idea. I like the "come as you are" type of garden, not really fussy, not overly managed. I love it when plants grow in unexpected places. My grandmother used to tell me that "weeds are just misplaced flowers." I love that philosophy.

But, you know me...I don't want to throw anything away. Heck, I even dry Hydrangea blossoms because I use them in my Christmas decorations. I save spent seed castings from Columbine, Astilbe, Echinacea, Siberian Iris, and Allium to use too. So what am

I going to do with all of these plants that need to be weeded out? Then, it hit me...other gardeners like new plants, so I'll share them. It is not like they are extra zucchini or anything. People should want them. So, I started emailing friends and family that garden, but who have not had the opportunity to have any of my plants. You know what? Most of them said "YES!" So, now all I have to do is find some extra pots (you *know* I have them) or some cardboard boxes and with a little shovel work, viola...new plants for all! And more space in my gardens for me. We all need a little breathing room and flowers are no different.

I got a call a week ago that was unexpected and unwanted. A friend of mine lost her husband from a massive heart attack. Granted, he had had heart problems before, but you never really expect to answer death's knock. When we went to see her, her first words were "My whole world has turned upside down." I've seen her several times since then and she says that everything looks different.

While I was weeding, I got to thinking about how that death and making a difference are related. (Now I

know my brain works in weird ways!) I do some of my best thinking when I am weeding, however. You can make a difference by changing your perspective and really thinking about what you are doing. That's all making a difference is, really. Changing your perspective about the ways things have always been done by you or by society. Simple things go a long way. People keep wanting to know what more they can do. You already have a compost pile, use reusable bags, get rid of unwanted clothes, household goods, and clothes by selling or donating them, and a myriad other things. What else can you do besides reduce, reuse and recycle? Maybe share what you already have with others. Give away some of the beans and lettuce in addition to the zucchini. Share some basil with someone who forgot to plant some. Dig up a few garden plants and give them away...better yet, go and plant them for someone who would love a garden but can't get to it for some reason.

Make a difference
in everything you do.



BRaille TRAIL UPDATE

Our efforts to install seventeen bronze Braille plaques along the existing Trail of the Senses slowly but steadily soldiers on! Only five more plaques remain. Please consider becoming a donor to this very special project. Each plaque costs \$450. A half plaque can be purchased for \$225. Your donation is tax deductible. Honor a loved one, or perhaps your organization might be interested in purchasing one. Please call Gerri Griswold, Director of Administration, for more information at 860-567-0857. There is nothing we would love more than to complete the trail for unveiling in October 2011 in time for International Art Beyond Sight Month! Thank you!



To me a lush carpet of
pine needles or spongy
grass is more welcome
than the most
luxurious Persian rug.

~ Helen Keller

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS: THE GREAT OUTDOORS



For Grades 3 and 4: Tuesdays in October (Oct. 5, 12, 19, & 26)

For Grades 1 and 2: Wednesdays in October (Oct. 6, 13, 20, & 27)

All Classes 3:30 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Details available in mid-September. Call 860-567-0857.

www.whitememorialcc.org

THE WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER
PRESENTS THE 29TH ANNUAL

FAMILY NATURE DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2010 11 AM - 5 PM

ADMISSION \$6.00, CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE

CENTER MEMBERS FREE



FEATURING

WINGMASTERS

MORTAL BEASTS AND DEITIES

SPONSORED BY THE CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

MAGIC WINGS BUTTERFLY CONSERVATORY

SPONSORED BY NORTHWEST COMMUNITY BANK &
LITCHFIELD BANCORP

THE BAT LADY

MUSIC BY NANCY TUCKER

CRAFTS FOR CHILDREN + GUIDED WALKS + HAYRIDES
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80 WHITEHALL ROAD LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT
LOCATED OFF ROUTE 202 BETWEEN LITCHFIELD AND BANTAM
FOR MORE INFORMATION:

860-567-0857 WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG



Union Savings Bank and WMCC
Sponsor Robin McCahill's "Snow Queen"
For Third Consecutive Year!

For the third consecutive year Robin McCahill's adaptation of the Hans Christian Anderson classic, *The Snow Queen* will be performed in the Carriage House at White Memorial.

The tale of friends lost and found, travels to distant lands through changing seasons, and encounters with strange and exotic characters is told by Ms. McCahill's fanciful troupe of hand-felted marionettes.

The Carriage House will be festooned with the trappings of the season including tables groaning with homemade sweet treats and bottomless cups of rich velvety homemade hot chocolate. Local Girl Scouts will be on hand to collect admission of a non-perishable food item for the local soup kitchen.

Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Mary the Elf will arrive by horse drawn wagon at noon and will stay until 2:00 P.M. to greet families and shuttle them to and from the Carriage House to Mott-Van Winkle Classroom where children can tell Santa their deepest hopes, wishes, and dreams. The Keinholtz Firepit will be roaring and Mrs. Claus may even conduct a carol sing by the fire!

The Snow Queen is featured in Diane Smith's new book, *A Connecticut Christmas*. Copies of the book can be purchased at the event.

The day promises to be a memorable one for children of all ages. The Conservation Center is deeply grateful to *Union Savings Bank* for embodying the spirit of the holiday season by funding this beautiful event.



*Union Savings Bank and
White Memorial Conservation Center
Present
Robin McCahill
The Snow Queen*

**Saturday, December 11, 2010
2:00 P.M.**

**Visit Santa and Mrs. Claus
from Noon until 2:00 P.M.**

**Admission :
A non perishable food item for the
Torrington Soup Kitchen**

Author, Radio and Television Personality
Diane Smith Visits WMCC December 4th!

The Conservation Center will host a very special book signing on December 4 from 6:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. in the Museum featuring popular television and radio personality, author, and journalist, Diane Smith.

Ms. Smith is best known for her years of work as television anchor for WTNH TV as well as for her thirteen years as co-host of *Mornings with Ray Dunaway and Diane Smith* on WTIC 1080 AM. She is most loved, however, for her very popular CPTV television program "Positively Connecticut". The program has generated numerous books which tell the stories of the people, places, and things which make Connecticut so special.

This year has been a very busy one for Smith as she released two beautiful books, *Seasons of Connecticut* (released last June) and *A Connecticut Christmas* (release date October). White Memorial has been included in chapters of each book. *Seasons* features a story about WMCC's retired Research Director Gordon Loery and his work banding Black-capped Chickadees in Litchfield for fifty years. Another story features WMCC's Director of Development Gerri Griswold and her work with nature's tiniest and most misunderstood heroes, bats! *A Connecticut Christmas* includes our very own *Snow Queen* event!

We are extremely excited to welcome Ms. Smith to the Museum. Stop in to meet this warm and wonderfully talented woman, do some holiday shopping, stroll through exhibits, have a drink and nibble, and leave feeling *Positively Connecticut!*



Diane Smith's latest masterpiece features The Snow Queen!

HOLIDAY NATURE CRAFTS



**FOR GRADES 1 & 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30
FOR GRADES 3, 4, 5, & 6: WEDNESDAYS, DECEMBER 1ST & 8TH
ALL CLASSES: 3:30 P.M.- 5:00 P.M.**

DETAILS AVAILABLE IN EARLY NOVEMBER. CALL 860-567-0857

WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG

Fall Calendar of Events

For more information on any of our programs, please call us at 860-567-0857

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 25th
29th ANNUAL
FAMILY NATURE DAY
*WingMasters,
Magic Wings Butterfly
Conservatory
The Bat Lady,
Mortal Beasts and Deities,
Music by Nancy Tucker*
11:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.



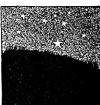
28-Oct. 4 Museum Kids Free Week *
Courtesy of Joan and Jack Benham
honoring Wesley D. Parcell

OCTOBER


- 2 **Evening at Little Pond**
Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen leads a dusk walk in search of fall migrants, beavers, muskrats, and more. 4:30 P.M. Meet in front of the A.B. Ceder Room.
- 9 **Sparrows & Other Autumn Migrants**
Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen searches for a bounty of sparrows and other land birds which peak migration time has to offer. Meet in the Museum. 2:00 P.M.
- 11 **COLUMBUS DAY**
Museum Closed



13 *Take a Walk Series*
Trip to Dean Ravine
with WMCC Education Director
Jeff Greenwood
See page 7 for details

15 **Star Party!**
 This month's lecture is The Outer Solar System. Star gazing will follow, weather permitting.
7:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room

16 **Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air**
This spectacular movie takes an extraordinary look at these tiny marvels.
2:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room

23 **Llama Packing through Five Ponds**
Deb Elias brings a special friend who will carry your lunch to Beaver Pond!
 See page 7 for details

30 **Edible Insects!**
Lisa Monacelli discusses why insects are used as a food source. Meet live insects too!
2:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room

* Free admission to Children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult

NOVEMBER

3 **What You Need to Know About Rabies**
Dr. Randy Nelson from the Department of Public Health answers all of your questions.
6:30 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room.

5 *Out of This World*
Private Planetarium Program with Meteorologist Tom Alena at the Talcott Mountain Science Center
See page 7 for details



6 **Views of Nature from a Kayak**
Photographer and nature lover Jeff Feldmann shares his love of the outdoors in a beautiful hour long presentation.
See page 7 for details.

9 - 15 **Museum Kids Free Week***
In honor of Louise W. Willson.

10 *Take a Walk Series*
Autumn Birds
with Wildlife Biologist
Dave Rosgen
See page 7 for details

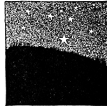


10 **The Whip-poor-will**
CT DEP Wildlife Technician Shannon Kearney-McGee fills you in on her latest research of one of our most haunting and reclusive birds.
6:30 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room



11 **School Vacation Day Programs**
Call Museum in October for details!

13 **Walking the Cranberry Pond Trail**
Nothing could cap off a wonderful autumn walk along this spectacular trail better than a hot cup of coffee and a thick wedge of Crimson Pie (made with cranberries, of course!) Gerri Griswold leads the way. Meet in the Museum. 2:00 P.M.

19 **Star Party!**
 Jon Wallace talks about one of nature's greatest phenomena, "Auroras!". Star gazing will follow, weather permitting.
7:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room.

20 **Autumn Bird Tour of Bantam Lake**
Wildlife Biologist, Dave Rosgen. Meet in Museum Lobby, 10:00 A.M.

25/26 **THANKSGIVING**
Museum Closed



27 **Deck the Halls! Wreath Decorating with Natural Materials**
Artist and floral designer Bonnie Pedersen inspires you to decorating beautiful holiday wreaths for your home
 See page 7 for details

DECEMBER

4 **A Connecticut Christmas : Book Signing and Cocktail Reception with Diane Smith**
WMCC is featured in Ms. Smith's latest masterpiece! Meet the author, have a nibble and a glass of cheer, and leave basking in the glow of the holiday season!
6:00 P.M.- 8:00 P.M. at the Museum.


5 **Holiday Hike Over the River and through the Woods with Robyn Dinda**
Meet in the Museum parking lot at 10:30 A.M. Call Robyn at 860-567-0738 for more information.

8 *Take a Walk Series*
Oak-Hickory Forests Habitat Walk
with Research Director
James Fischer
See page 7 for details



11 **Union Savings Bank**
presents
THE SNOW QUEEN
See page 5 for details



17 **Museum Open House**
 Stroll through the Museum. Sip Mulled Cider. Wrap up your holiday shopping. Take 10% off all purchases!
6:00 P.M.- 8:00 P.M.

18 **Butternut Brook Walk**
Bundle up as we head out in search of life on the cusp of winter. Gerri Griswold leads the way. Hot chocolate to follow. 2:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum.

19 **Litchfield Hills Audubon Christmas Bird Count.** To volunteer, email Dave Rosgen: dave@whitememorialacc.org

21-27 **Museum Kids Free Week ***
Courtesy of Tara and Arthur Diedrick
In honor of Adele and Joseph d'Assern.

25 **CHRISTMAS**
Museum Closed



28-30 **School Vacation Programs**
Call Museum in November for details

JANUARY

1 **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
Museum Closed

Adult Nature Study Workshops and Saturday Workshops: Fall 2010



Take a Walk Series: Trip to Dean Ravine

October 13, 2010, 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum Fee: Members: \$3.00 Non-members: \$5.00

Dean Ravine, off Cream Hill Rd., South Canaan, is a little known but unique corner of Housatonic State Forest. A short trail leads to a view of the falls and interesting rock cuts. Education Director **Jeff Greenwood**, our Chief Collier, will escort the group using the Conservation Center's van.



Llama Packing Through Five Ponds with Debbie Elias

October 23, 2010, 11:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M., Meet at the Intersection of Routes 63/61

Fee: Members: \$25.00 Non Members: \$30.00 Includes Lunch! Limited to 20 Participants!

Join **Debbie Elias** and friend from **Country Quilt Llama Farm** as they carry your lunch to Beaver Pond. Learn about the llama through history and the special feature it possesses which makes this camelid less harmful to delicate vegetation.



Out of This World: Private Planetarium Show at the Talcott Mountain Science Center

November 5, 2010, 7:00 P.M., Meet at TMSC, Montevideo Road, Avon, CT.

Fee: Members: \$10.00 Non Members: \$15.00

TMSC Meteorologist **Tom Alena** is no stranger to White Memorial! His passion for the earth and the heavens is contagious! This evening enjoy a private presentation on Tom's Turf: the beautiful planetarium at Talcott Mountain Science Center.



Views of Nature from a Kayak with Jeff Feldmann

November 6, 2010, 2:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room

Fee: Members: \$5.00 Non-members: \$8.00

Photographer and nature lover **Jeff Feldmann** shares his love of the outdoors in this one hour photographic journey. Paddle rivers, ponds, and streams. Butterflies, birds, and dragonflies are just a few of the creatures Jeff has captured on film.



Take a Walk Series: Autumn Birds

November 10, 2010, 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum

Fee: Members: \$3.00 Non Members: \$5.00

With Bantam Lake serving as a magnet for migrating waterfowl the stage is set for an excursion into the fascinating world of avian migration. Wildlife Biologist **Dave Rosgen** leads the way.



Deck the Halls! Wreath Decorating with Natural Materials

November 27, 2010, 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room

Fee: Members: \$25.00 Non Members: \$35.00 All materials included. For Ages 16 and Up. Limited to 15 participants!

Artist and floral designer **Bonnie Pedersen** helps to make the season bright by sharing her beautiful ideas with you. Decorate two evergreen wreaths with elements from nature or bring your own baubles for a more personal touch.



Take a Walk Series: Oak-Hickory Forests

December 8, 2010, 10:00 A.M.—12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum

Fee: Members: \$3.00 Non Members: \$5.00 Dress for the weather! Wear sturdy shoes!

Research Director **James Fischer** teaches you about the plants and animals associated with this forest habitat which is dominant throughout White Memorial. Find out how the forest is formed and how harvest operations seek to encourage its presence.

_____	Take a Walk: Dean Ravine	Member: \$3.00	Non Member: \$5.00
_____	Llama Packing	Member: \$25.00	Non Member: \$30.00
_____	Out of This World	Member: \$10.00	Non Member: \$15.00
_____	Views of Nature from a Kayak	Member: \$5.00	Non Member: \$8.00
_____	Take a Walk: Autumn Birds	Member: \$3.00	Non Member: \$5.00
_____	Deck the Halls! Wreath Decorating	Member: \$25.00	Non Member: \$35.00
_____	Take a Walk: Oak-Hickory Forests	Member: \$3.00	Non Member: \$5.00

Clip and Mail

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please circle one: member non-member

Payment enclosed: Program fee: \$ _____ Membership fee: \$ _____ Total \$ _____

Make check payable to White Memorial Conservation Center and mail to:
White Memorial, P.O. Box 368, Litchfield CT 06759

Become a member of the White Memorial Conservation Center and take advantage of the member discount, along with free admission to the Nature Museum, a discount in the Gift Shop, and receipt of the quarterly newsletter and calendar of events. Your tax-deductible fee will help sponsor programs like these. A family membership is \$50.00 per year and individual is \$35.00.

CEU's available



For more information call 860-567-0857

Goshen Fifth Grader's Second Place Award in Essay Contest Spreads the Story of Alain and May White Statewide

The foundation for our love of nature is poured at a very early age. Perhaps your parents nurtured this love, taking you for hikes in the great outdoors. Perhaps there was a special place you visited over and over again which sparked your curiosity. Or maybe you had a special teacher, a mentor who captured your imagination with his or her passion for the natural world. In the case of Spencer Musselman, a student at the Goshen Center School, it was all of the above.

Spencer adores White Memorial whether he is absorbing the richness and depth of every detail in the Nature Museum, hiking the Foundation's 35 miles of trails with his parents, Jill and Scott, or participating in one of WMCC's nature classes with Education Director, Jeff Greenwood.

Spencer was so inspired by the thoughtfulness and generosity of Alain and May White that he wanted to learn more about them. After several visits to our library and with the encouragement of Greenwood, he composed an essay about the White's which was submitted to the *16th Annual Secretary of State's Essay Contest* about the person in Connecticut history that you admire most. The judges of the contest were inspired as well, awarding Spencer second place. Essays from all over Connecticut were evaluated for quality, creativity, thoughtfulness, and originality. Spencer and his family attended an awards ceremony at the State Capitol and through Spencer's brilliant effort, the Whites legacy has rippled across the state.

Congratulations Spencer! We are so very proud of your accomplishment!

Mr. Alain C. White

By Spencer Musselman

The person, I admire most in Connecticut history is Mr. Alain C. White. Mr. White's contributions and generosity to the conservation of land in our state is unbelievable. Without him our state would not have such beautiful scenery and abundant wildlife. In 1908, Mr. White and his friend, Mr. William Mitchell Van Winkle, were fishing on Bantam Lake and Mr. White

said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful to preserve this river, lake and countryside as we see it now?" After this thought, Mr. White started to buy land all around him. The locals were worried that the town would lose a lot of money from taxes. Mr. White thought the same, so he paid them. Mr. White is considered to be the founder of Connecticut's State Park system. He was the president of the CFPA from 1923 to 1928. He donated

He then went on to build wide lawns and gardens.

Alain Campbell White was born on March 3, 1880. One of Alain's childhood loves was the game of chess. Alain White especially enjoyed watching his father play chess. He observed much by watching his father play. He created many chess problems and he fixed many chess strategies too. He is considered an expert and he published many of his



Mighty Oak & Little Acorn: Education Director Jeff Greenwood (L) and Spencer Musselman (R)

land for parks, such as Mohawk Forest and Mountain State Park in Goshen/Cornwall, Macedonia Brook State Park and Kent Falls, both in Kent, and People's Forest in Barkhamsted. In 1913, Alain and May White created The White Memorial Foundation in memory of their parents. White Memorial is a 4,000 acre wildlife sanctuary that was created before any state parks existed in Connecticut. Mr. White was a pioneer conservationist. He saw the beauty in the nature around him and wanted to preserve it for the generations to come.

The White family originally came to the United States from England in the 17th century and settled in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Part of the White family ended up moving to Connecticut and is considered to be one of the founding families of Danbury. Alain White's father moved to Litchfield in 1863, and built a Victorian mansion and ended up naming it Whitehall. His home was surrounded by woods and old farmlands.

strategies. In his older years during World War I, Alain White broke the German Navy code in which chess problems were used. Mr. White attended Harvard University and he graduated with honors in Romance languages. He gained a master's degree from Columbia University in 1904.

Alain White studied the subject of Botany and was so interested in the subject that he went to write books about the study. Alain White was a wildlife conservationist and played an important part in saving the Wood Duck from extinction.

His love for nature brought Alain White and his sister together to conserve land in Bantam. They bought up parcels of land on the shores of Bantam Lake and the sides of the Bantam River. This was how the 4,000-acre conservation reservation was born.

White Memorial means to me so much, like going fishing on the Bantam River for opening day,

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catching my limit of trout in half an hour to an hour. I love the summer programs I go to each year with Mr. Greenwood. We always go hiking in really cool places like Macedonia Brook State Park. We found so many blueberries there that day that I will never forget it. We learn a lot about different bird calls and

algae bloom near the log. My father and I like to walk on the trail that wraps around Duck Pond especially in the winter when I snowshoe. I saw snow drifting down from all the pines. I watched as the branches were sagging in the howling wind. It was so beautiful. Tracks of animals were all around us. There is a tree near the museum that every time I look up there I would see thousands of bees weaving in and out of the hole.

Mr. Donald Matthews, former Director of the CT State Parks said, "No individual or organization has ever contributed as much to the cause of conservation in Connecticut." Mr. White was a person before his age in conservation. If I had a dream, it would be like Mr. White's to preserve land as it is now. I am inspired and touched by Mr. White's complete love for nature. That must have been Mr. White's thoughts while fishing on Bantam Lake. Truly without him, the land all around us would not be as spectacular. When Mr. White was asked in 1938 what he could do with the White Memorial land he said, "The greatest thing we can do for the public is keep this as it is."



Jeff Greenwood (L) and Spencer Musselman sitting pretty in Whitehall!

birds. My dad takes me camping on Point Folly and one day I saw a Wood Duck floating on the surface of the lake. I love walking on the trail that follows the shore of Ongley Pond. There is one log, where every time you look at in the summer, you will see at least five Painted Turtles. You hear Bull Frog croaks in the



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Uh Oh!
Photo by Leo Kulinski

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Playing the Numbers Game; The War Years

By Gordon Loery, Former WMCC Director of Research

In the first installment of this series I wrote about the seeds of my banding career planted in my 2 month summer camping experiences as a boy. The major obstacles that would have to be overcome are the subject of the second installment.

B. Coping with Pressures In The War Years

My father was an immigrant. He came over to the United States from what was then Austria-Hungary as a young boy with his mother. Grandmother Loery supported herself and her son working in a Manhattan candy store. I enjoyed her company very much when she came to live with us on Staten Island in her later years.

My father became a self-made man who was never able to go to college but worked his way through law school and became a vice-president and secretary of the Bank of New York, founded by Alexander Hamilton. The bank was noted for its many "to the manner born" clients, e.g. Eleanor Roosevelt. He lived through the great depression of the 1930's and so was very security conscious. He was also very mild mannered on the surface but very determined underneath. He made up his mind early on that my older brother and I should go to the most prestigious Ivy League college in preparation for a career in medicine. There will always be a secure, well-paying job for a well-trained physician. My brother and I were both expected to follow the same route predetermined by my father. So when my turn came I applied to and was accepted at Harvard University as a pre-med student. I never seriously considered an alternative. At the same time my brother was beginning his freshman year at Cornell Medical School.

In the early 1940's not all of the pressures came from home. In World War II the government played a very different role than in more recent wars. Everyone was involved, in one way or another, not just a small minority of volunteers. Instead of being encouraged to consume, consume, consume, we had rationing of scarce goods, such as gasoline. We had higher taxes instead of tax cuts. Wars are expensive. And of course we had a military draft for everyone who had not volunteered, was not working in a job essential to the war effort, and was physically and mentally fit.

Finally, in addition to family and

governmental pressures, for me, there were pressures from within. In my early years my self-esteem depended heavily on academic success. So once I had committed myself to the career path chosen for me it was virtually unthinkable not to finish what I had started.



Band Leader: Gordon Loery and Friend 2009

By the end of the three years after my high school graduation I had joined the U. S. Navy as a pre-med student, completed all of my pre-med requirements, completed my freshman year at Cornell Medical School, and was a patient in the hospital contemplating the unthinkable. This was not the first time I had second thoughts about the course I was on but it was the most serious. It was time to make an extremely difficult decision. I put in a request for a transfer to another branch of the service. I was told that if I withdrew from medical school I would be sent to boot camp. It did not take long for me to decide that this was what I had to do.

I will never forget the long train trip that took me from New York and medical school to Chicago and boot camp. I knew my father was very disappointed in the decision I had made but he never failed to support me at a time when I desperately needed support and for that I shall be forever thankful. My only regret is that he did not live long enough to see the outcome of my fateful decision.

Boot camp proved to be less of a problem than I anticipated. I was placed in a company

of misfits – a group of pilots in training who had trouble flying an airplane with one psycho-neurotic medical student. We had all hit rock bottom which made it easier for all of us but much more difficult for the regular navy petty officer put in charge of our company using techniques he had found effective in working with impressionable young recruits.

After boot camp I completed my service career running a pharmacy at a pre-flight training center in Ottumwa, Iowa.

C. Transition: Adjusting to Being Myself

When I was discharged from the U. S. Navy at the end of World War II, I had still not fully recovered from the pressure cooker in which I had been living. I decided to begin the recovery program by going back to college and completing the requirements for an undergraduate degree. After exploring other possibilities I decided to return to Harvard but to change my major from biology to philosophy. However, when I talked to Prof. Demos at the philosophy department he pointed out that I had already completed most of the requirements for a biology major. If I retained biology as my major I would be free to explore other disciplines, including philosophy, that had previously been squeezed out of my curriculum by wartime pressures. He thought this would be more valuable to me than changing majors at a time when I was obviously so uncertain about where I was going. Following this advice to explore new disciplines I have found to be not only very enlightening but highly productive by making it easier for me to collaborate with others.

As it turned out, the one course that I took in my return to Harvard that had the most immediate impact in my search for a career was strangely enough in the biology department. It was not a regular course and was not typical of the Harvard biology department at that time. As far as I know it was only offered once. The title was Zoogeography. The lecturer was Philip Darlington of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. He proposed the theory that the fossil record indicates the majority of the most advanced, successful members of a group such as mammals evolved in the old world tropics and radiated out over the rest of the world.

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Volunteer Spotlight Zoë Greenwood

Story and photograph by Gerri Griswold

Zoë Greenwood grew up in Dwight, Massachusetts, an only child with 26 cousins all living within ten miles of Grandma. “When I was growing up, kids were sent out to play”, says Greenwood. With herself serving as best friend she made the most of being outside and nature nurtured her obvious creative streak. Greenwood became an architect fashioning pine needles into rooms for a playhouse. She was given old pots and pans for her pine needle kitchen. Family picnics were always big events and the ultimate opportunity to mingle with all those kin and make wonderful music with her father, Wynn Fay, a giant in bluegrass music, and her Uncle Bob who inspired Zoë to play the upright bass. “I liked the sound..the boom boom.”

Zoë Greenwood has been married to WMCC Education Director and natural wonder, Jeff Greenwood for 39 years. That alone makes her a natural wonder! But wait! There’s more! The path she traveled which eventually ended in marrying her “best friend” and becoming the subject of our volunteer spotlight didn’t exactly begin on terra firma.

Jeff Greenwood met 15 year old Zoë Fay in 1968. Zoë’s father was searching for a banjo player for his band, *Wynn Fay and the Ridgerunners*. A friend told him of a talented young banjo player who was performing at a local watering hole, *The Rustic Roost*. Liking what he heard, Fay invited Greenwood to his home for an audition. “I was NOT impressed”, said Zoë. At fifteen, “you kind of had an idea of the guy you were going to fall in love with. He was none of those things.” She began to see some qualities in Jeff which caused her to change course pretty quickly. The two were married in 1971, just twelve days after her high school graduation. Two children, Rebecca and Jeremy, have followed in their parents nature and music loving footsteps.

When Jeff met Zoë, she was already quite an accomplished musician in her own right, having sung her first song live on the radio (WHMP AM) when she was just five years old (while standing on a soapbox). She became a very fine upright bass player and has written hundreds of songs some of which have been recorded with the bluegrass band she and Jeff formed, *Just Friends*.

When Jeff landed at White Memorial in 1977, the family lived in the house which now serves as the Foundation office. While Zoë was out hanging laundry or tending to the kids she would strike up conversations with the rainbow of volunteers who would walk by leading groups on mushroom walks (Marianna Ray) or arrowhead talks (Bill Madden). Surrounded by volunteers, Greenwood began to think that she too would like to “make a difference”. There was a real need for help in the Nature Library. She hunkered down in the trenches through two museum renovations and was instrumental in the design of the old children’s room (now Jeff’s office and originally Alain White’s bedroom) She has volunteered for every single Family Nature Day (that’s 29 this year!) and writes a column, *Make a Difference*, for our quarterly newsletter, *Sanctuary* (see page 3). Zoë has also served on the Conservation Center’s Education and Activities Committee and has sat on the Board for The

Conservation Center.

This multi-talented dazzlingly faceted whirlwind currently works as a remedial tutor and librarian at James Morris School. In her spare time Greenwood enjoys gardening, reading, and “I love to organize”. (I’ll be calling you, Zoë !)

The passion, energy, and creative spirit which Zoë Greenwood brings to White Memorial truly defines what being a volunteer is all about. The Conservation Center salutes you, Mrs. Greenwood!



Natural Wonder: Zoë Greenwood



Conservation is a bird
that flies faster than the
shot we aim at it.

.....Aldo Leopold

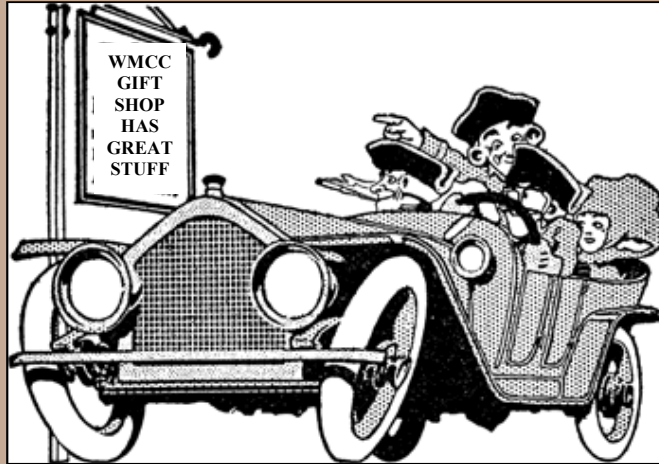
Playing the Numbers Game

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All of this brought me back to the golden days of my summers at Great East Lodge camp. It was natural history biology, not laboratory biology. For the first time I fully realized that natural history need not be limited to summer vacations. This opened up all sorts of possibilities for me. When Charles Darwin came of age his father decided he should become an M.D. That did not work out. Then his father decided he should become a country clergyman. That too did not work out. Finally the younger Darwin signed on as a naturalist on a five year voyage of the *Beagle*. At first his father opposed the idea but his uncle intervened on his behalf. The trip was a physical ordeal for Darwin but he survived and was on his way. So too I was now on my way. Not long after I graduated from Harvard I read an article on the front page of the *New York Times* announcing the creation of a new Conservation Program at the Yale Graduate School. Paul Sears, author of *Deserts on The March* had been recruited to be its director. I applied and was accepted as a member of its first class.

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