

# SANCTUARY

Newsletter of the  
White Memorial  
Conservation Center

Vol. XXIX No. 4  
Fall 2011

**Museum Hours:**  
Monday - Saturday 9 A.M. - 5 P.M.  
Sunday 12 P.M. - 5 P.M.

**For Information**  
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E-Mail: [info@whitememorialcc.org](mailto:info@whitememorialcc.org)  
Website: [www.whitememorialcc.org](http://www.whitememorialcc.org)



*For the Love of a Moose: CT DEP Biologist Andrew LaBonte gets up close and personal with one of his subjects. Photo credit: Bill Myers*

## MOOSE

by Andrew LaBonte, Wildlife Biologist, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Moose (*Alces alces*) are one of North America's largest land mammals and are the largest member of the deer family (Cervidae). An adult moose stands 6 feet tall at the shoulder and can weigh up to 1,400 pounds. Moose are well adapted for cold weather that persists in the northern portion of their historic range which includes the northeastern United States and eastern Canada (including Newfoundland), westward to the Great Lakes.



Wildlife Biologist Andrew LaBonte preparing to dart a moose from an R22 helicopter I Hartland, Connecticut.  
Photo credit: Andrew Ocampo

Currently little information exists about moose at the southern extent of their range. In 2007 the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's Wildlife Division began a cooperative project between The University of Connecticut, Wildlife Research Center, and the Northeast Wildlife Damage Management Cooperative, with additional funding from the CT Endangered Species-Wildlife Income Tax Check-off Fund. One of the objectives of the project was to capture and collar moose to evaluate movements, habitat use, and causes of moose mortality in Connecticut. To aid in monitoring efforts the DEP was able to

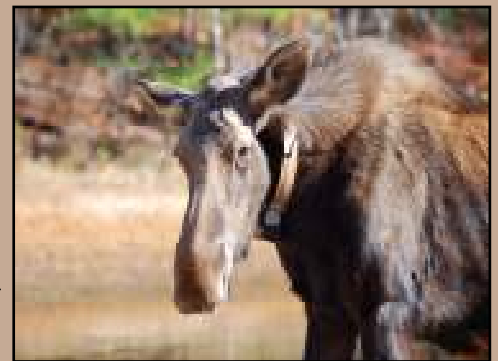
purchase several collars equipped with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) that use satellites to collect location data and store the information until it can be remotely downloaded.

Aside from the difficulties of locating moose who's numbers are estimated around 100 in the state, are the difficulties of immobilizing the moose once they are located. The most important tools available for capturing moose consist of a helicopter and a skillful biologist with a dart gun that can be fired at tree-top level. Over the next couple of years, several moose were captured via helicopter and fitted with ear tags and collars equipped with GPS. Through our collaring and tracking efforts we are able to glean valuable information about moose in Connecticut.

Continued moose expansion in Connecticut may be limited by several factors including disease, forest type, and temperature which is likely influenced by elevation. A neurologic disease known as "moose sickness" is caused by a brain worm that is found in deer in eastern and central North America. Brain worm infestations in moose are known to cause weakness in the hindquarters, turning of the head and neck to one side, fearlessness, lethargy, rapid eye movement, blindness, circling, and the inability to stand. Moose infected with brain worm may not always exhibit signs of infection or be the direct cause of death, however brain worm has been associated with declines in moose populations throughout North America since symptoms were first documented in Minnesota in 1912. Several moose in Connecticut have been documented with brain worm over the past few years, although it is difficult to say how many moose are affected by the worm and go undetected in the forests.

Our GPS data has shown that collared male moose occupied an area of about 20 square miles mainly comprising large forested tracts of land above elevations of 985 feet. During the winter the moose spent most of their time in select cuts in order to meet the demands of their high protein diet (40-50 pounds of food per day) and in old growth conifer/red maple stands the rest of the year.

Unfortunately, Connecticut has few high elevation areas and our forests are primarily mature with 78% of trees greater than 60 years of age, which provide plenty of cover from weather, but limit forage opportunities. Moose are very sensitive to heat, and high temperatures can lead to



Collared cow moose along the Barkhamsted Reservoir in Barkhamsted, Connecticut

reduced reproductive performance in moose due to the trade off of keeping cool versus consuming food. Moose have difficulty dissipating surplus heat during warm temperatures (winter temperatures > 23°F, summer temperatures > 68°F) which can lead to heat stress. The high-energy cost of heat stress can lead to reductions in overall activity influencing feeding time and food consumption rates, and can result in weight loss and eventual death. Temperature sensors on our GPS collars indicated that average daily temperatures in Connecticut exceed heat stress levels for moose most of the year. A model evaluating the suitability of Connecticut's landscape for moose was developed, based on quantity of habitat and temperatures.

*(continued on page 2)*

(continued from page 1)

It is unclear what the future is for moose in Connecticut, but it appears that areas in western and eastern Connecticut along the Massachusetts border will have the greatest potential of supporting a persistent moose population over the years.

It is difficult to place a value on the experience of observing or photographing a bull moose with prominent antlers or a cow moose leading her calves through the forest, however at this time the potential to do so exists in Connecticut and we should embrace it. Although observing a moose can be difficult even when they possess a collar that transmits a signal for the researcher, opportunities do exist in northern Connecticut. Some of the best public viewing opportunities for moose in Connecticut exist at Tunxis and Peoples State Forests (Barkhamsted, Colebrook, Hartland), Goshen Wildlife Management Area (Goshen), and White Memorial Conservation Center (Litchfield). Anyone who does observe a moose can report their observations on the DEP website at [www.ct.gov/dep/wildlife](http://www.ct.gov/dep/wildlife) or email [andrew.labonte@ct.gov](mailto:andrew.labonte@ct.gov).

Efforts to capture and track moose will continue this fall and winter so we can further learn about moose in Connecticut. An episode on moose with footage of Connecticut's moose research efforts was aired on National Geographic Wildlife (<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/wild/shows>) this past August.



Wildlife Biologist Andrew LaBonte standing next to a red maple that was stripped by a hungry adult bull moose in Hartland, Connecticut.  
Photo credit: Bill Embacher



## Make a Difference

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

The older I get it seems to me that the only thing constant in life is change. The world is moving at more than lightning speed. Technology is changing the way we live and even the way we talk and think. It has been, really, since the beginning of time. Webster's Dictionary defines technology as "a method, process, etc. for handling a specific technical problem". Isn't digging a big rock out of the earth a technical problem? Hence, the fulcrum and lever system - technology. Making sharp points out of rock to make arrows - technology. Digging a well - technology.

Nature adapts to change. It has to, or it is no more. Bears have certainly adapted to "our" world - we see news reports of them swimming in swimming pools and sleeping in hammocks. They have discovered that our hummingbird feeders at home are a tasty treat. They don't even hurt the feeder, they just pull the stopper.

We recently had a visit from our dear beekeeper friend, Diana Sammataro, author of *The Beekeeper's Handbook* (soon available in the museum store.). She works at the USDA

Bee Lab in Arizona and is in collaboration with scientists in Sweden working on microbes found in the stomachs of different creatures. It seems that creatures (yes, us too) adapt microbes based on what they have in their environment and what they ingest. People in Japan have a microbe in their gut which allows them to break down seaweed. Other people don't have that microbe because seaweed is not a steady part of their diet - they don't need it. Huh. Makes ya think, doesn't it?

As you read this, I have recently quit my job. I loved what I did for a living, but found that I didn't have time for the OTHER things in my life that I love, too - gardening, reading, quilting, handiwork, writing. My project room just kept getting more and more stuff in it, but nothing ever got done. I just didn't have enough energy. I realized that more of my life has passed than is ahead of me and I realized that I needed to change if I was to survive. I don't want *my* headstone to read, "all she ever did was work". So, I took a big leap of faith and quit. It was green lights all the way. Everyone asked me if I had been on an extended vacation or was "doing"

something new because "you sound so alive, there is a lightness in your voice". No, I just quit what I *was* doing, I CHANGED.

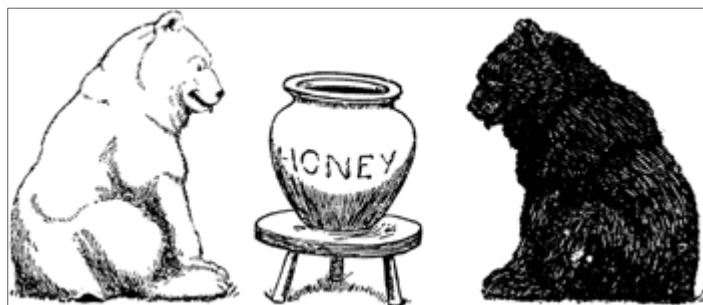
We change our living rooms. We change our looks. We change our diets. But, what we *really* need to change is the way we think. We need to change the way we interact with the world. Get used to the bears in your yard - just take in your feeder. Deal with the fact that the deer are making a salad of your garden - grow different plants. Coyotes see your pets as prey - they are feeding their young - exactly what you are doing when you go to work. We are NOT going to change nature - it HAS to change us. That, dear reader, is the ONLY way we can really.....



**Thanks to Mark Moorman**  
of  
Sprain Brook Apiary, Woodbury

for.....

Reinstalling and overseeing our  
Honey Bee Observation Hive  
again this summer and for his special  
help right after the bear took apart  
the side of the Museum  
trying to get at the honey!  
(see page 9 for the whole story!)



A Planned Gift  
can make a  
difference  
in your future  
and ours.

[www.whitememorialcc.org](http://www.whitememorialcc.org)



## **WHITE MEMORIAL** **THANKS**

Northwest Community Bank

Litchfield Bancorp

Thomaston Savings Bank  
Foundation

Krummi Travel

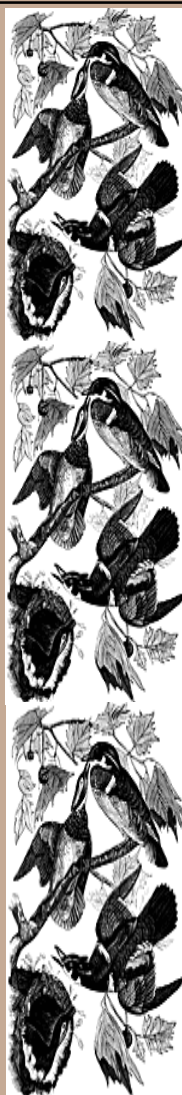
Walmart

Union Savings Bank

and

An Anonymous Donor

for making our  
30th Annual  
Family Nature Day  
possible.



Every leaf speaks bliss to  
me, fluttering from the  
autumn tree.

Emily Bronte

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS: THE GREAT OUTDOORS**

For Grades 3 and 4: Tuesdays in October (Oct. 4, 11, 18, & 25)

For Grades 1 and 2: Wednesdays in October (Oct. 5, 12, 19, & 26)

All Classes 3:45 P.M. - 5:15 P.M.

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

[www.whitememorialcc.org](http://www.whitememorialcc.org)





THE WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER  
PRESENTS THE 30TH ANNUAL

# FAMILY NATURE DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2011 11AM - 5PM

ADMISSION \$6.00, CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE  
CENTER MEMBERS FREE



## FEATURING

DALE JONES: FM 97.3 WZBG FROM 11AM - 1PM

SKYHUNTERS IN FLIGHT

MORTAL BEASTS AND DEITIES

RIVERSIDE REPTILES

ZOO ON THE GO! FOREST PARK ZOO

WILDMAN STEVE BRILL

THE BAT LADY

MUSIC BY NANCY TUCKER



CRAFTS FOR CHILDREN + GUIDED WALKS  
DEMONSTRATIONS + BOOTHS & EXHIBITS + FOOD  
LOCAL ARTISANS + SILENT AUCTION + USED BOOK SALE  
BAKE SALE + MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE + KAYAK RAFFLE

80 WHITEHALL ROAD, LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT  
LOCATED OFF ROUTE 202 BETWEEN LITCHFIELD AND BANTAM

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

860-567-0857 [WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG](http://WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG)



# WHITE MEMORIAL'S NEW GREEN ENERGY PROJECTS

Story and photograph by Keith Cudworth, Executive Director, White Memorial Foundation

The White Memorial Conservation Center has expanded its commitment to use and demonstrate green energy technologies with the installation of a **GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMP SYSTEM** and a **WIND TURBINE**. These new projects are in addition to the 11,050 watt **PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM** which was installed two years ago. To date, the solar panels have produced over 32,000 kwh of electricity!

The new geothermal heat pump system was installed at the Museum last December and is supplying the vast majority of the building's heating and cooling needs, significantly reducing the cost and the energy needed to heat and cool the Museum. During last winter we saw the Museum's heating oil use drop by more than 200 gallons per month, and in June and July the electricity needed to air condition the Museum dropped by 58% compared to last year.

Geothermal heat pumps use the fairly constant underground temperature of the earth, about 55°F, to provide heat in the winter and air conditioning in the summer. Our system, which consists of three ClimateMaster® heat pumps with

an overall cooling capacity of 11 tons, was installed in the building basement. Outside, about five feet below the surface, are four 365 foot deep wells. These are connected to the heat pumps by pipes filled with an antifreeze fluid which is circulated from the heat pumps to the wells and back to the heat pumps. Geothermal heat pumps are one of the most energy efficient and environmentally clean heating and cooling systems available. It is anticipated that the use of this technology will reduce the cost to heat and cool the Museum by at least one third. DePco Mechanical of Farmington and Grela Well Drilling of Terryville were the contractors for this project. The project was made possible through generous support from **The Scherr-Thoss Charitable Trust, Connecticut Clean Energy Fund, and the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund.**

The new wind turbine, a Honeywell Wind turbine manufactured by WindTronics™, has been installed on the roof of White Memorial's maintenance garage. This new turbine design will begin producing power with a

wind speed of 2 mph, well below the speeds needed for most units and therefore ideally suited for White Memorial's low wind site. Most importantly this installation has been placed in a great location for visitors to see it in operation. In addition to being a demonstration of this technology, the clean electricity the turbine produces will be used to supplement the electricity needs in the maintenance garage or will be fed back into the utility grid. The wind turbine was installed by Hammersmith, Inc of Sharon.

With all of these projects, the photovoltaic system, the geothermal, and the wind turbine, in addition to other energy conservation practices that have been implemented, White Memorial is keeping detailed records to better understand the benefits of each. We invite the public and small businesses to contact us and see how these have worked for us and see how they may work for them. This is an open invitation to any and all who have an interest in seeing these practices in use. Call 860-567-0857 or email us at [info@whitememorialcc.org](mailto:info@whitememorialcc.org).



*We've got the power!: Windmill installation on the maintenance garage at White Memorial*

# Fall Calendar of Events

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

## SEPTEMBER

### SEPTEMBER 24th 30th ANNUAL FAMILY NATURE DAY

*Sky Hunters in Flight, Riverside Reptiles*  
*Dale Jones WZBG, Forest Park Zoo*  
*Wildman Steve Brill*  
*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

1 *Woodland Masquerade!*  
*Mask Making with Robin McCahill*  
*See page 7 for details.*

1 *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.

8 *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.

9 *Watercolor Journaling Workshop with Betsy Rogers Knox*  
*See page 7 for details*



9 *Kaleidoscope of Color*  
*Kayak Adventure with Robyn Dinda*  
11:00 A.M. Meet at North Shore Road.  
Call Robyn for details: 860-567-0738

10 COLUMBUS DAY  
Museum Closed



15 *Meet Your Muse, Nature, and Send Procrastination Packing!*  
*Marlow Shami Workshop*  
*See page 7 for details.*

19 *Take a Walk Series*  
*Exploring Kent Falls*  
*with WMCC Education Director Jeff Greenwood*  
*See page 7 for details.*



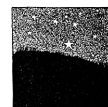
\* Free admission to Children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult

### 22 A Celebration of Connecticut Apples

Barr Weeks of the New England Apple Association tells the story. Raw apple and apple pie tasting! 2:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room



28 *Star Party*  
This month's lecture is: *Aliens!*  
Star gazing will follow, weather permitting.  
7:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room



29 *Halloween Spooktacular!*  
*See page 7 for details.*



## NOVEMBER

5 *Learn to Play Guitar in One Lesson with Jae Wolf*  
*See page 7 for details.*



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

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

12 *Practical Tips for Successful Nature and Wildlife Images with Gary Melnysyn*  
*See page 7 for details.*



16 *Take a Walk Series*  
*Autumn Bird Walk Up Apple Hill with Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen*  
*See page 7 for details.*

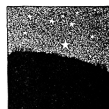


19 *Autumn Bird Tour of Bantam Lake*  
With Wildlife Biologist, Dave Rosgen.  
Meet in Museum Lobby, 10:00 A.M.

24/25 THANKSGIVING  
Museum Closed



25 *Star Party*  
This month's lecture is: *Star and Constellation Names*  
Star gazing will follow, weather permitting.  
7:00 P.M., A.B. Ceder Room



25 *Boxcar Lilies: Coffee House and BYOB Pot Luck Supper*  
*See page 7 for details.*



26 *Early Morning Hike to Little Pond with Gerri Griswold*  
8:00 A.M. Meet at the A.B. Ceder Room.

## DECEMBER

2 *Comfort and Joy: Readings from A Christmas Carol with Ilvi Dulac*  
*See page 7 for details.*



3 *Llama Packing on the Pine Island Trail with Deb Elias and Friends*  
*See page 7 for details.*



10 *Moon Set Sunrise Hike Up Apple Hill with Leo and Gerri*  
5:15 A.M. (yeah...you heard it right)  
Meet in front of the A.B. Ceder Room all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. Breakfast!

14 *Take a Walk Series*  
*Exploring Beaver Pond with WMCC Research Director James Fischer*  
*See page 7 for details.*

16 *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.



17 *Walking the Cranberry Pond Trail*  
Bundle up as we head out in search of life on the cusp of winter. Gerri Griswold leads the way. Crimson Pie is your reward! 2:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum.

18 *Litchfield Hills Audubon Christmas Bird Count.* To volunteer, email Dave Rosgen: [dave@whitememorialacc.org](mailto:dave@whitememorialacc.org)

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

25/26 CHRISTMAS  
Museum Closed



27-30 *School Vacation Programs*  
*Call Museum in November for details.*

31 *Meet the North American Porcupine*  
Fall in love with the world's third largest rodent! 10:00 A.M., A.B. Ceder Room

## JANUARY

1/2 *HAPPY NEW YEAR!*  
Museum Closed



# Adult Nature Study Workshops and Saturday Workshops: Fall 2011



**Woodland Masquerade! Mask Making with Robin McCahill!**  
**October 1, 2011, 12:00 P.M.- 4:00 P.M., A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Members: \$51.00 Non Members: \$61.00 Includes Materials**  
 Become a Bobcat, a Bat, a Doe, an Owl, or any other imaginable creature whether from nature or from fantasy. This needle-felting workshop is the perfect opportunity to make your own mask for that All Hallows Eve celebration or Masque Ball. For ages 6 to 106!



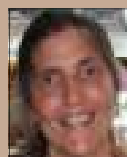
**Practical Tips for Successful Nature and Wildlife Images**  
**November 12, 2011, 2:00 P.M. A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Members: \$15.00 Non Members: \$20.00 LUNCH!**  
 Yellowstone Park Ranger and wildlife photographer Gary Melnysyn shows you how it's done! The program will cover a number of practical field tips and functional tips on how to capture better images. Gary's amazing images will support.



**Watercolor Journaling with Betsy Rogers-Knox**  
**October 9, 2011, 2:00 P.M. - 4:30 P.M., A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Members: \$30.00 Non Members: \$40.00 Ages 10 and up**  
 Working inside and outside the classroom, learn some fun and simple techniques to capture autumn's beauty. Supplies are included but bring a watercolor journal if you have one.



**Take a Walk Series: Autumn Bird Walk Up Apple Hill**  
**November 16, 2011, 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.**  
**Members: \$8.00 Non Members: \$15.00 Meet at Museum.**  
 Stroll to the top of magnificent Apple Hill for a birds-eye view of Bantam Lake while searching for fall migrants. Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen leads the way.



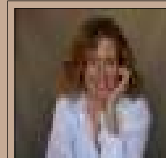
**Meet Your Muse, Nature, and Send Procrastination Packing!**  
**October 15, 2011, 10:00 A.M.- 5:00 P.M. A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Members: \$55.00 Non Members: \$60.00 Bring a lunch!**  
 Whether you live the city life, rural life, or in the suburbs, Nature is everywhere waiting to connect with you! Learn how to deepen your ability to tap into Nature's creative wisdom. Be surprised!



**The Boxcar Lilies: Coffee House and Potluck Supper**  
**November 25, 2011, 6:00 P.M., Carriage House**  
**Members: \$12.00 Non Members: \$20.00**  
 You haven't heard this dynamic trio yet? SHAME ON YOU!!! Settle in for a delicious meal and the best Americana/Folk music you've ever encountered. BYOB. We'll supply soft drinks, set ups, and dessert!



**Take a Walk Series: Exploring Kent Falls**  
**October 19, 2011, 10:00 A.M.- 2:00 P.M., Meet at Museum**  
**Members: \$8.00 Non Members: \$15.00**  
 This state park was another gift to the State of Connecticut by the Whites and the White Memorial Foundation. You will be escorted in the Conservation Center's van. Bring a lunch!



**Comfort and Joy: Ilvi Dulac Reads A Christmas Carol**  
**December 2, 2011, 7:00 P.M., A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Members: \$20.00 Non Members: \$30.00 DINNER!**  
 Ilvi's *Reader's Theater* brings glad tidings as they breathe life into the characters of Ebenezer Scrooge, Jacob Marley, Bob Cratchit, and Tiny Tim! Dinner included!



**Halloween Spooktacular!**  
**October 29, 2011, 6:30 P.M., Tapping Reeve Law School**  
**Members: \$15.00 Non Members: \$25.00**  
 Litchfield Historical Society partners with WMCC! At the Law School enjoy excerpts from The Legend of Sleep Hollow by Ilvi Dulac and Jane Coughlin. Take a walk down Gallows Lane and end up at the A.B Cedar Room for spooky treats!



**Llama Packing on the Pine Island Trail**  
**December 3, 2011, 11:00 A.M., Meet at the Cedar Room.**  
**Members: \$25.00 Non Members: \$30.00 LUNCH!**  
 Join Debbie Elias and friends from *Country Quilt Llama Farm* as they stroll the sweeping expanses of the Pine Island Trail and Duck Pond. Learn all about llamas then wander back to the Cedar Room for a delicious lunch.



**Learn to Play Guitar in One Easy Lesson with Jae Wolf!**  
**November 5, 2011, 2:00 P.M., A.B. Cedar Room**  
**Fee: Members: \$20.00 Non Members: \$30.00 Ages 15 & up**  
 Learn Jae's foolproof technique in the beautiful surroundings of White Memorial! A few guitars are available but you are encouraged to bring your own with nylon strings.



**Take a Walk Series: Exploring Beaver Pond**  
**December 14, 2011, 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.**  
**Members: \$8.00 Non Members: \$15.00**  
 Join Research Director James Fischer on a short hike around Beaver Pond. Explore the topography, intermittent streams, and vernal pools that make it so special. Dress warmly and wear sturdy shoes! Meet in the Museum.

Clip and Mail

___ Robin McCahill Mask Workshop.....	Member: \$51.00	Non Member: \$61.00
___ Watercolor Journaling.....	Member: \$30.00	Non Member: \$40.00
___ Marlow Shami.....	Member: \$55.00	Non Member: \$60.00
___ Take a Walk: Kent Falls ___ Autumn Birds ___ Beaver Pond	Member: \$8.00	Non Member: \$15.00
___ Halloween Spooktacular.....	LHS & WMCC Members: \$15.00	Non Member: \$25.00
___ Learn to Play Guitar with Jae Wolf.....	Member: \$20.00	Non Member: \$30.00
___ Gary Melnysyn: Wildlife Photograph.....	Member: \$15.00	Non Member: \$20.00
___ Boxcar Lilies Coffee House.....	Member: \$12.00	Non Member: \$20.00
___ Comfort and Joy: A Christmas Carol.....	Member: \$20.00	Non Member: \$30.00
___ Llama Packing.....	Member: \$25.00	Non Member: \$30.00

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

## Volunteer Spotlight Art and Donna Potwin

Story and photograph by Gerri Griswold

Harwinton residents Donna and Art Potwin are Conservation Center family...really supportive family...the kind of family that you always want to have stopping by or helping out or attending gatherings (just make sure you have made plenty of food when Art arrives).

Their love affair began in July 1973. Donna, a Stafford Springs resident, was unable to find some girlfriends to join her on a road trip to Misquamicut Beach, so she decided to go it alone. While walking the beach she met Art, a Somers resident. Not only did they realize that they had much in common, they also realized they were practically neighbors! The rest is history.

When Donna was a child she practically lived outdoors. "My mother would have to come looking for me!" Donna was forever bringing "stuff" home. Her brothers and father instilled in Donna a love for the great outdoors. "My mother was a city girl." Donna's mother would often say, "I don't know where you came from!", in regards to the "stuff" Donna would drag home.

As a child Art too loved the outdoors. He and his brother would spend countless hours building forts. Art was particularly fond of ice skating and hockey. His mother had a friend who was a taxidermist. Art found that quite interesting.

When Donna and Art married, his job as a psychologist for the Hartford

Health Department moved the country bumpkins into the city. Separation anxiety from nature occurred. They began collecting camping equipment. Weekends consisted of fleeing the urban jungle to the campgrounds at Hammonasset State Park. Camping trips to the Adirondacks also became the norm and Donna began keeping a journal for each trip. "I was terrified of bears", said Donna (ask her about THAT particular camping trip!) An eventual move to Avon, then to Harwinton (Art took a job as School Psychologist for Torrington Public Schools which he has held for 33 years), brought the Potwins to White Memorial's doorstep.

Donna and Art loved coming to White Memorial cross-country skiing, then hiking, then canoeing with Art's trusty Coleman Canoe. In 1992 the Potwin's became members of the Conservation Center because they had used the facilities so much they felt joining was a good way to give back... and have they EVER!

Donna really became interested in the volunteer offerings that WMCC Research Director James Fischer had advertised. She signed up for Fischer's Vernal Pool Survey. After the first class Donna's head was spinning! "Oh my God! This guy (Fischer) is super! You learn so much! He is so enthusiastic!". She then "roped" Art into participating. Since then, Donna and Art have

participated in Mammal Tracking, and Deer, Frog, and Snake Cover Board Surveys. You will also find them on Dave Rosgen's bird walks, and Gerri Griswold's hikes. They are wonderfully ubiquitous!

Donna became a Connecticut DEP Master Wildlife Conservationist. "It is everything I have dreamed about doing. I used to sit at work in my cubicle after a vacation and I felt like a caged animal." Gardening and designing gardens are also her passions. The Potwin's one and a half acres of gardens and woods, which they've named "Potwin Preserve", have been certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a wildlife habitat.

Art received a major plaudit earlier this year when he was named Connecticut School Psychologist of 2011 by the Connecticut Association of School Psychologists. He has also received the Superintendent's Award by the City of Torrington's Board of Education. When he isn't polishing his wonderful and well deserved trophies, Art enjoys reading and playing the guitar.

For all of the help and volunteer support Art and Donna have given us over the years, for the happiness we feel whenever we see that they have signed up for yet another program, for the pure joy we derive from being in their company, and for Art's hearty appetite and gung-ho approach towards a buffet table: We salute you and thank you.



*All Natural: Donna and Art Potwin soak up the sun on Litchfield Town Beach.*



# Bees and Bears

Story and photos by WMCC Education Director Jeff Greenwood

I was looking at our observation hive the other day and it was packed with honey bees and capped brood (new bees on the way) but little if any capped honey (stored food). By this time of the summer the colony should have built up a surplus of honey to carry them through the winter. It must have been that pesky bear's fault, I thought. What bear, you ask? Oh, perhaps you did not hear about this.

On the morning of May 24<sup>th</sup> we discovered that there were bees flying around IN the Museum. Odd. Further inspection revealed that the outside of the building at the hive entrance had been torn apart and more bees were flying around there in apparent confusion. As the picture shows, something had tried to get at the sweet-smelling honeycomb inside. The staff concluded that the culprit was a bear. The bird feeders on the deck had already been victimized by a bear last fall. Earlier this spring the feeders down at the Bird Blind were hit. Within several days of that damage the bear destruction escalated resulting in the scene before us that morning. Not only had the two wooden feeder poles been broken off and the feeders trashed, but clapboards, insulation, and the entrance tube of the hive had been literally torn from the building! Over the winter

we had talked of just such a possibility, so we were not surprised. But just the same to have this catastrophe staring us in the face was pretty significant ..... almost scary. It really happened. Kind of amazing what a bear can do with just teeth, claws, and brute strength.

So now what? Discontinue the exhibit or bear-proof the building? We selected the latter. A week later not only was the outside wall repaired but we installed a 5-strand electric fence system to protect our investment. The second picture shows the horizontal strands of wire and the wire grid on top of the black pad on the deck. When the bear (or a non-observant staff member!) steps on the grid and then touches one of the strands, the results will be shocking.

So, back to the bees. When disaster struck, our hive maintainer and beekeeper Mark Moorman took the observation hive home to his facility for TLC while repairs were completed here. I think that this disruption has resulted in the colony being somewhat behind its usual routine. I also expect with its current crowded status that a swarm will occur soon. Swarms are mostly associated with the spring season, not the fall when all energy is focused toward winter survival. Stay tuned!



Problem: The aftermath of our Black Bear visit.



Solution: Bear Zapper!



Uh Oh!

Photo by Leo Kulinski

## **2011 BIRD SEED APPEAL**

**THE CONSERVATION CENTER ONCE AGAIN REACHES OUT TO YOU FOR HELP TO DEFRAY THE MONUMENTAL COST OF FEEDING THE BIRDS THIS WINTER. KEEPING OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS WELL-FED IS AN ANNUAL EXPENSE OF \$1200. YOUR DONATION, NO MATTER HOW SMALL, WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.**

**Yes! I'd like to help fill the bird feeders at the White Memorial Conservation Center with my gift of:**

( )\$5

( )\$10

( )\$20

( )\$50

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make your check payable to WMCC, 80 Whitehall Road, P.O. Box 368, Litchfield, CT 06759*

# Playing the Numbers Game: Conclusion Evolution of a Bird Bander

By Gordon Loery, Former WMCC Director of Research

## A. Finis Origine Pendet – Manlius “The beginning shapes the end”

As a boy I lived a double life. For 10 years, beginning at the age of 8, I spent two months at a rather unique summer camp in New Hampshire where the participants were not only allowed but encouraged to choose their own daily activities and so find their own way. My favorite activities were natural history, because of its content, and rifle shooting, because of its challenge to keep moving up to the next level of competence. During the last few camp years I served as a junior counselor assisting the senior counselors who were all mature professional men. During the other 10 months of each of the above 10 years I lived in our Staten Island home where my father made the career decisions. He was the only son of European immigrants and could not afford college but worked his way thru law school and then lived thru the Great Depression of the 1930's. Not surprisingly he was very security conscious. He decided early on that his two boys should attend a top Ivy League College, Harvard, where they could prepare themselves for a first rate medical school. No matter what the future might hold there would always be secure job openings waiting to be filled by well-trained physicians. If he were alive today I am sure he would cite our aging population as further evidence of the soundness of his philosophy. My natural history interests were not entirely left out of my Staten Island 10 months of the year but they played a relatively minor role there.

## B. Succumbing To Pressure

In 1941 the United States entered World War II. The war years were pressure years for everyone but especially so for my age group. Gone were the summer months with their freedom to explore the world we inhabit. Within weeks of my high school graduation in 1942 I was a freshman in college preparing myself for medical school. The pressures were intense and



Gordon Loery Summer 2009, Photo credit: Gerri Griswold

unrelenting – from a security-conscious home, from an all-out war oriented government, and from an internal craving for academic success. It all became too much for me. But what at first appeared to be a terrible failure to live up to expectations in time proved to be an extremely difficult but necessary recognition of who I really am.

## C. Adjusting to Being Myself

When I was discharged from the Navy at the end of World War II, I was determined to find my own way but uncertain as to what it would be. I decided to return to Harvard as an undergraduate and,

following the advice of philosophy professor Demos, explore some of the many fields that had been completely squeezed out of my previous short stay there. The support of the G. I. Bill made this possible. The next several years turned me into a confirmed interdisciplinary and one special course, Zoogeography, returned me to my love of natural history. For the first time I fully realized that the latter need not be limited to the two summer months.

The next major step in my road to recovery was a new graduate program at Yale entitled Conservation. It was a very interdisciplinary program challenging its participants to find their own way. Just what I needed at that time. It created the first opportunity for me to put into practice some of the ideas I had been incubating in my mind. As part of my work at Yale I found some graduate art students who could design a book using data I had collected in the field. The book was published and I was sold on the idea of collaboration.

## D. Creating My Own Job

When I came to work at the White Memorial Foundation several years before its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary I found it in a state of transition opening up to its surroundings and inaugurating new activities. Of all the new educational and research activities I have been involved in here the one that has given me the most satisfaction and feeling of accomplishment has been bird banding.

I can trace the earliest seeds of my banding back to my days as a boy amusing myself, when bed-ridden, by keeping track of the buses detouring back and forth past our house.

*Continued on page 11*

## HOLIDAY NATURE CRAFTS



FOR GRADES 1 & 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29  
FOR GRADES 3, 4, 5, & 6:  
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No spring nor summer beauty hath such grace  
As I have seen in one autumnal face.

~John Donne



### Playing the Numbers Game: Conclusion Evolution of a Bird Bander

*Continued from page 10*

I did so by identifying each individual bird by its unique number. Later before joining the Foundation staff I worked for a summer at the Greenwich Audubon Center where I had the opportunity to observe the operation of a banding station and I was impressed. Then after coming to Litchfield I became acquainted with a Hartford insurance company executive, Alex Bergstrom, who had a very active second career banding birds. He showed me how to catch birds and attach the bands. Then when I was ready he helped me obtain a banding permit from the federal government. In 1958 I began collecting data at my own station.

I started by catching birds in potter traps. When mist nets were introduced I tried using them but returned to the traps which yielded a much higher percentage of returns. The percentage of returns of Black-capped Chickadee I found to be particularly high. I was catching an average of 160 of them in the mid-winter months and over 50% of them would be returns from previous years.

After collecting 15 years of this capture – recapture data I

began looking for a statistician with whom I could collaborate in interpreting it. Finally in 1980 I read an announcement about a week-long joint conference of ornithologists and statisticians to be held in Asilomar, Calif. The conference introduced me to the new (1965) Jolly-Seber models and some of the statisticians with whom I could collaborate. All of this led to a series of three articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. I have received requests from all over the world for reprints.

#### E. Living A Creative Life

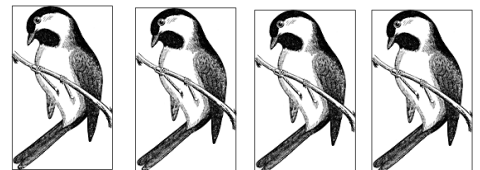
If you are a parent make sure your child has opportunities to find his or her own way. If you are a child and you find you have made a mistake do not be afraid to make a change. Once you have found the path of your choice persevere thru thick or thin, thru warfare, military and or civil if necessary.

Having reached a certain level of proficiency in your chosen way of life do not ever just coast the rest of the way. I am afraid this is all too often just what happens to many students of natural history. The creative mind always wants more.

The world around you will

always be changing. Keep track of new developments in your own and related fields. Always be ready to take advantage of them in order to make reaching the next rung on the ladder possible.

Do not become so specialized that you are unaware of what is happening in related fields. Otherwise you lose the invaluable ability to collaborate. If you look at articles published in peer-reviewed journals more often than not you will find more than one author. In many cases they will be working in different departments of institutions.



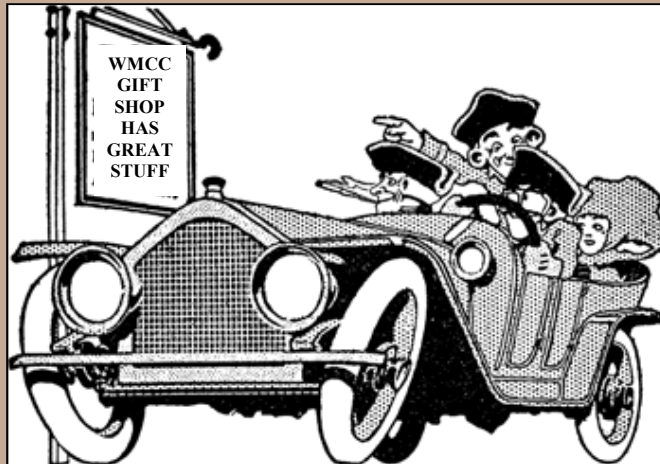
In all things of nature  
there is something  
of the marvelous.

Aristotle



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