SANCTUARY

Newsletter of the White Memorial Conservation Center Vol. XXVIII No. 1 Winter 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



Winter in the Woods

Text and Illustrations by Kathy Goff

It's the original game of Survivor. While we fire up the furnace and get cozy under our flannel sheets, Our animal neighbors have their own remarkable ways of enduring cold, dark days and nights.



White-tailed Deer seek the shelter of low-hanging evergreen boughs and will yard up together to keep the elements at bay. Their thick winter coats consist of hollow hairs that provide such effective insulation that snow can pile on top of them without melting. Their metabolism drops in the winter as they become half as active as usual, but they still need to eat every day. They will move to feed when the weather moderates—perhaps only as far as the tender shrubs in your back yard.



Eastern Bluebirds are becoming more common year-round residents of southern New England.

The efforts of many to provide nesting boxes for them has begun to pay off.

In winter, bluebirds survive the coldest nights by roosting together in cavities and nesting boxes—more than a dozen birds have been observed stacking their bodies together.



They will even use the eaves and ledges of your home.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection website offers detailed instructions for building bluebird nesting boxes and where to place them.



In Connecticut, the DEP lists the
Eastern Box Turtle as a
"Species of Special Concern" because of its
swiftly declining numbers. They are
terrestrial but they prefer loose sandy soil
that is found near ponds and streams
as it is essential for hibernation.
The box turtle digs down 2 feet underground
and then backfills to cover itself
with leaves and soil for insulation.
In our climate, it is common for even
hatchlings to overwinter, surviving freezing
temperatures in their underground nests.





Wild Turkeys roost closely together in lower tree branches in wooded areas sheltered from the wind. They seek out areas protected from the deep-snow cover by conifer branches so they can move about and graze on vegetation on the forest floor.



The Black Bears — who have been frequenting our bird feeders all fall — go into hibernation around late November. For roughly five months, they will neither eat nor drink, and their bodies will burn only fat reserves, not protein. They will even recycle calcium and continue to build bone while they slumber. Hibernation is so deep that females barely awaken in January to give birth. Yet the mother bear will be alert to the cries of her cubs, and she will keep the den remarkably clean, even consuming the cubs' waste to make sure the den cannot be detected by predators.

The Canada Goose has evolved a huge non-migratory flock. Rather than retreating to the Chesapeake Bay and points south along traditional migration routes, they spend winter in our park ponds, rivers and marshes. Some have come to see the Canada Goose as a nuisance, but the birds' striking black and white

Goose as a nuisance, but the birds' striking black and white markings make them an elegant addition to the winter landscape.



Life underwater slows down even as fish such as the Bass and Pumpkin Seed continue to feed on algae, invertebrates and each other.



WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER ANNOUNCES ANNUAL YEAR-END APPEAL

Our 2009 calendar has been one of our most exciting yet! You enjoyed programs as diverse as a bagpipe coffee house to a bat house building workshop to a Haight-Brown Vineyard walk and wine tasting. At the Woodcock Cocktail Party you witnessed a great ornithological spectacle. The Climate Action Workshop inspired you and your family to live a little greener! Your children participated in our unique summer camps and afterschool programs which will serve as a foundation for their love of nature for years to come. Our beautifully photographed weekly email newsletter, *The Habittatler*, was launched to keep you informed about upcoming programs and notable sightings. This caliber of fine programming and services often comes at a substantial cost. We once again reach out to you for help.

Enclosed in this newsletter is a contribution card and

envelope. A donation, no matter how small, will indicate that we are serving your interests in the best possible way.

Did you know that White Memorial benefits each time you shop at **Amazon.com** from links on our website? Try it this holiday season!

Sterling Planet provides a clean energy option for your home, as part of your monthly utility bill. Sterling Planet combines energy generated from wind and hydro. A percentage of your electric bill benefits White Memorial when you use this supplier. Call us for more information.

Planned Giving ensures that our programs continue for generations to come. Contact WMCC for further information.

The Center Staff extends its gratitude to our members for their unwavering friendship and support. We wish you very happy holidays and hope to see you frequently in 2010! Cold-blooded creatures like
Painted Turtles and Green Frogs burrow
down into the mud below the frost line
where they can absorb enough oxygen to
survive.

Some of our terrestrial frogs like spring peepers and wood frogs can even freeze solid! Their cells have adapted so they will not be damaged by the ice crystals. In March they begin to emerge from their frozen sleep and start chorusing to find a mate

— a much more reliable signal than any groundhog's shadow that spring is on its way!



The Great Horned Owl seeks out the

shelter of the thickest evergreens. The birds are believed to be the earliest breeders of the season, sometimes laying their eggs in January. To keep eggs from freezing requires almost constant brooding, and mother owls have been observed sitting on their nests under a pile of snow. At night, the owl will hunt for any large prey it can find in the deciduous forest, and it is one of the only birds that will kill and eat striped skunk.

The busy Eastern Gray Squirrel constructs



a sturdy
tree house of dry leaves and branches,
often high up in tall trees. The squirrel
remodels its shelter daily to keep out the
elements.

Even the tiniest creatures have figured out



hibernating among dry leaves near shore, waiting Nature's signal to return to open water once the ice fades away.

how to hunker down and wait for spring. The adult Mourning Cloak Butterfly overwinters under tree bark to fly again on a warm March day. Next to the pond, even the Water Striders are



Kathy Goff is a

painter and sculptor of wildlife art, and a CT

DEP Master Wildlife Conservationist, whose
studio and gallery you may visit at the
Farmington Valley Arts Center
in Avon. Call 860.676.9939.

The Editor thanks

Seasons of West Hartford
for granting permission to
reprint this article.

www.seasonsmagazines.com

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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

There is a certain coffee shop that has an alliterative first name. I love their French vanilla coffee. We have tried to bring home a pound and make it here, but it is not the same. That same coffee shop uses recyclable plastic cups for their iced coffee. I drink a lot of iced coffee in the summer because of that fact. I haven't been there *once* since the weather began changing. Why? Styrofoam cups- not at all recyclable; thought to take upwards of 1000 years to decompose. Love that coffee, though. Problem.

Flash forward to cupboard cleaning and organizing. I do it every fall (every spring, too, but that's a different article). Bingo. There it was in the far back corner - a travel mug. Hey- why not put it in the car (more room in the cupboard) and use IT and go into my favorite shop and get coffee? No biggie. Many people take their coffee from home in

one to work every day. Why not take one from home and stop on your way to your favorite coffee shop? After you bring it home and wash it, put it with your pocket book or keys the same way you do with the shopping bags. I think it will work...I know I'm going to try later today. I just love that coffee!

One more flash ahead to those holidays lurking around the corner- why not give a gift of a travel mug and a shopping bag to everyone on your gift list? That way, you multitask in a big way! Gift; environment; happy faces all around.

Amaryllis bulbs are another nice gift. You get a little kit with a big pot and a bulb with some dirt. You plant the bulb and wait for it to grow. Soon, a little shoot comes "shoosting up out of the ground" (sic). You watch and water and wait and soon you are blessed with bunches of beautiful trumpet like

flowers. Ah, but it is not over yet. You keep the green leaves for the winter as a house plant and then when they turn yellow you cut them off and stick the whole thing in the basement for a few months, where it rests. Pretty soon the process starts happening again and you've just given or received a gift that gives for more than two years. Heck, I have some amaryllis bulbs that I have had going for more than four years!

This stuff is not rocket science. All living green really takes is a bit of thought, sometimes thinking out of the box and a little effort. Isn't it worth it to

make a difference?



WEANTINOGE HERITAGE LAND TRUST RECIPIENT OF THE 2009 WHITE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION CONSERVATION AWARD BY KEITH CUDWORTH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The White Memorial Foundation Conservation Award was established in 1964 to honor an individual or group who has made a significant contribution to the environment. To date, 15 organization and 27 individuals have received this recognition. Each year the award, a bronze rendering of a beaver which was created by Peggy Reventlow of Litchfield, is presented at the Foundation's annual dinner. This year's recipient is the Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust.

Accepting the award for the Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust was their President John Novogrod. In presenting the award to Mr. Novogrod, White Memorial President Arthur Diedrick remarked on Weantinoge's many accomplishments. Founded in 1965 and headquartered in New Milford, the Trust permanently protects over 8,500 acres of land in 16 communities throughout northwestern Connecticut. They are currently the largest land trust in the state.

Their holding, which are a combination of acquisitions and conservation easements, include forests, wetlands, farms and 18 nature trails. During the first half of 2009 alone, Weantinoge conserved 450 acres of land in Goshen, Kent, New Milford, Washington and Warren. Over the past two years about 1,400 acres have been permanently protected.

The Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust has and continues to

make a significant contribution to the environment and to the quality of life in northwest Connecticut. We live in a better place thanks to their work.

For more information about the Trust be sure to check out their web site at www.weantinoge.org, or you may call for information at 860-355-3500.

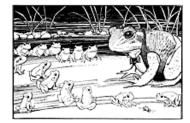


In Land We Trust: WMF President and CEO Arthur Diedrick (L) presents
Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust President, John Novogrod with
the 2009 WMF Conservation Award



20th Annual Museum Sleep-In

Friday, April 23 5:00 P.M. to Saturday, April 24, 12:00 Noon Members \$50.00 Non-Members \$70.00



Call the Museum 860-567-0857 for a registration form or visit our website www.whitememorialcc.org

On a Perfect Autumn Day 28TH ANNUAL FAMILY NATURE DAY DAZZLES!

A crowd of almost 1,100 guests hungry for Mother Nature, flocked to WMCC for the 28th Annual Family Nature Day on September 26, 2009. After gobbling up the bake sale table, eating every hot dog the Litchfield Lions had to offer, and indulging so heartily in the treats provided by Common Ground Café that Debbie and Dean needed reinforcements, the happy crowds indulged in superb programming provided by Wingmasters, Riverside Reptiles, and Wildman Steve Brill. Stilt Walkers, Mortal Beasts and Deities dressed as hawk and doves danced through the grounds and the splendid music of Todd Stoughton and the Still Hillbillies, Kayak Raffle, and the best ever silent auction, ended the day on a very high note.

Family Nature Day is powered by the BEST and most enthusiastic volunteers, the WMCC Education and Activities Committee. Legions of organizations, vendors, and individual members helped to bring the event to life. The Conservation Center Staff is deeply grateful to *Northwest Community Bank*, *Litchfield Bancorp*, and *Thomaston Savings Bank* for funding our celebration!



Dry Run!: Jeff Cote from Watertown was the first prize winner in our Kayak Raffle made possible by Dave Faber, Owner of CT Outdoors, LLC

RESEARCH FORUM

By WMCC RESEARCH DIRECTOR
JAMES FISCHER

Cover-boards are a popular tool that is used to monitor amphibian populations. Cover-boards are pieces of wood that mimic natural cover and are artificially placed in appropriate habitats. Herpetologists, people who study reptiles and amphibians, find it easier to look under these slabs of wood than to lift large rocks and logs. How coverboards function is poorly understood. Cover-board research at White Memorial is yielding interesting results.

To see what we have accomplished click on this link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iwb1lmgUK-w



Here Spot!: Yellow Spotted Salamanders are one example of the species Fischer hopes to attract to his cover boards. Photo credit: Katherine Griswold

Winter came down to our home one night Quietly pirouetting in on silvery-toed slippers of snow, And we, we were children once again.

Bill Morgan, Jr.



AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Great Outdoors

Grades 1 & 2, Wednesdays, March 10, 17, 24, & 31 Grades 3 & 4, Tuesdays, March 9, 16, 23, & 30 3:30 – 5:00 P.M.

Details available in mid-February, Call the Museum for more information 860-567-0857 Or visit us at <u>www.whitememorialcc.org</u>



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT SUE CARPENTER

STORY AND PHOTO BY GERRI GRISWOLD

From as far back as fourth grade, Sue Carpenter dreamed of becoming a teacher. A Torrington native, Sue Kos (her maiden name is "blackbird" in Polish) spent a good deal of time reading and gravitated to arts and crafts. She followed her dream to Southern Connecticut State College (now University), where she picked up undergraduate and Masters degrees in learning disabilities but later pursued her education further at St Joseph's College in West Hartford where she obtained a degree in elementary education. While she loved helping individual students, Sue admits she was "greedy". Carpenter wanted the opportunity to mould an entire classroom. She moved back to the area in the early 1980's landing a job with Region 6. It is where she has taught ever since.

In the late 1970's Sue was working for the Department of Mental Retardation in Niantic. While home for a visit, she had a cocktail with a friend at The Village Restaurant and engaged in a pleasant conversation with a stranger, Peter Carpenter. Several months later, Peter tracked her down through mutual friends. The rest is history. They married in April ,1984. In subsequent years, two daughters, Heather and Sarah joined the family!

Sue's first introduction to White Memorial was taking family strolls along The Boardwalk. Her daughters attended Jeff Greenwood's classes. Carpenter was lured in by Greenwood to teach story hours with crafts. "I always made a mess! Pine cones, peanut butter, and birdseed everywhere!" Her gifts were apparent to Greenwood who asked Sue to take a seat on The Education and Activities Committee. Carpenter was a bit hesitant at first realizing the responsibility involved but said, "Anything that helped me as a teacher or involved my kids was great! You learn things in meetings that you can bring back to your own class."

In her spare time, Sue is the President of *Delta Kappa Gamma Tau Chapter of the Society of Women Educators* as well as a lector at St. Thomas Church in Goshen.

Her passion, high standard, and commitment to teaching were acknowledged in 2001 with the Teacher of the Year Award for Wamogo School District. "This honor makes you very reflective. The ceremony was at the Bushnell Memorial in Hartford. Being surrounded by your peers; teachers from all over Connecticut; learning what they have done. So many good people are working out there with our kids." Sue: You are the company you keep!



One Seedy Character: Sue Carpenter keeps things tidy while making peanut butter pine cone bird feeders.

Winter Calendar of Events

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

DECEMBER

25 **CHRISTMAS** Museum Closed



26 California Condor Narrated by Robert Redford 2:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room



JANUARY

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Museum Closed

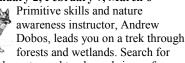


2 Jae Wolf Coffee House!

Back by popular demand Artist, singer, songwriter Jae Wolf performs the work of James Taylor.

See page 7 for details and registration

Winter Tracking Club January 2, February 7, March 6



and learn to read tracks and signs of animal inhabitants. Meet in front of the Museum. 10:00 A.M.

Our New Neighbors

Children learn about Black Bear behavior as author Barbara Herkimer reads her story about a family of Black Bears that graced her backyard for a season. 2:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room



Winter Wonderland Cross Country Ski Tour with Robyn Dinda, Pack a lunch and hit the trails! Meet in the parking lot. 10:30 A.M. For more information call Robyn at 860-567-0738.

Museum Kids Free Week*

Courtesy of Mr. & Mrs. John Morosani In Memory of Remy Edmund Morosani

Family Ice Fishing Workshop

CT DEP Fisheries experts teach you everything about water, fish & fishing, how to think like a fish and have some safe fun! An outstanding opportunity to learn from the best! Pre-registration required. 1:00 P.M.— 4:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room







* Free admission to Children ages 12 and under when accompanied by an adult 18 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Museum Closed

20 Take a Walk Series Winter Walk in Catlin Woods with Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen See page 7 for details and registration



Birds of a Feather: Art & Nature Artist and Master Wildlife Conservationist Kathy Goff displays her breathtaking drawings & sculptures & discusses her nature journals. Participants are invited to bring their own sketches and journals.

2:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room

27 Moose on the Loose! Learn about the history, status, and research efforts on moose in Connecticut with CT DEP Wildlife Biologist, Andrew LaBonte. 6:30 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room



The Beauty of Winter Ice

Meteorologist Tom Alena sees ice as fleeting winter sculptures! Participants will examine ice globes to learn the properties of ice and how scientists study ice to unlock secrets of Earth's past climates. Create ice lanterns and much more in this 2 hour workshop. Pre-registration required. 10:00 A.M., A. B. Ceder Room

<u>FEBRUARY</u>

Forestry Walk

WMF Forest Superintendent, Lukas Hyder leads you to a working forestry operation. Learn tree identification and the thoughtful art of forest management. Meet in the Museum parking lot. 10:00 A.M.

Just Friends Coffee House. 13 Blue Grass music at its finest! See page 7 for details and registration



Presidents Day Museum Closed

Museum Kids Free Week* Courtesy of The Laurel Ridge Foundation in

Memory of

Francesca M. Thompson, M.D.

16-19 School Vacation Day Programs

Call the Museum in mid-January for details 860-567-0857



Stalking Snowshoe Hares with WMCC Research Director, James Fischer See page 7 for details and registration

Chasing Tail: Wildlife in South Africa Biologist and videographer, Michael Sanders shares stories, pictures, and movies of his three month expedition in South Africa. 2:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room

From Sap to Syrup! A Road Trip to Flanders Nature Center's Sugar House Learn the history and science of maple sugaring! Call 860-567-0857 to pre register, Meet Gerri Griswold in the Museum parking lot at 12:00 P.M.

MARCH

2-8 Museum Kids Free Week*

Courtesy of Arthur and Tara Stacom Diedrick in Honor of Claire and Matthew Stacom

6 Horrible Bore: Asian Longhorned Beetle Far East Invader

Rose Hiskes from the CAES discusses this wood boring beetle that kills maples, birches, elms, and other trees.

Pre-registration required. Call 860-567-0857.

1:00 P.M., Mott-Van Winkle Classroom

Satellite Tracking Ducks & Geese

Did you know that the movements of geese from Greenland are being monitored via satellite from Litchfield? Dr. 's Sue Sheaffer and Rich Malecki from Livingston Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy explain their work! 2:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room

13 Winter Birds & Early Spring Migrants with Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen. Meet in the Museum parking lot. 2:00 P.M.

Robert Messore Coffee House

This exceptional guitarist returns to WMCC with a selection of Celtic works. See page 7 for details and registration

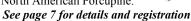
23-29 Museum Kids Free Week* In Memory of Louise W. Willson

24 Take a Walk Series

Explore the Wild Garden with WMCC Education Director, Jeff Greenwood See page 7 for details and registration

27 Travels with a Porcupine

Dr. Uldis Roze is the nation's foremost authority on the North American Porcupine.



Adult Nature Study Workshops and Saturday Workshops: Winter 2010



Jae Wolf Coffee House

Saturday, January 2, 2:00 P.M., Carriage House

Registration Fee: Members: \$8.00 Non-Members: \$12.00

Artist and singer/songwriter, Jae Wolf takes the chill out of winter with beautiful original songs and toasty renditions of the works of James Taylor. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.



Take a Walk Series: Winter Walk in Catlin Woods with Wildlife Biologist Dave Rosgen

Wednesday, January 20, 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum

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

Catlin Woods and Marsh is an interesting complex of old growth coniferous forest, patches of younger mixed hardwood/coniferous trees, shrub marsh, and mixed herbaceous marsh. This year's excellent cone crop should serve as a magnet for a number of seed eating birds, plus an abundance of squirrels



Just Friends Coffee House

Saturday, February 13, 7:00 P.M., Carriage House

Registration Fee: Members: \$8.00 Non Members: \$12.00

Blue Grass at it's finest! WMCC Education Director, Jeff Greenwood and his dynamic wife, Zoe toting her oversized violin, dare you to keep your toes from tapping! Food and beverages will be available for purchase.



Take a Walk Series: Stalking Snowshoe Hares with WMCC Research Director, James Fischer

Wednesday, February 17, 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum

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

We recorded our first hare sighting last year on the property! Search for a variety of rabbits, learn how to differentiate between deer browse and rabbit browse and more. Dress for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, bring water, and prepare to think like a rabbit!



Robert Messore Coffee House

Saturday, March 20, 2010, 7:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room Registration Fee: Members: \$8.00 Non Members: \$12.00

This singer/songwriter, exceptional guitarist, and wonderful guy returns to WMCC with a variety of Celtic and folk music geared towards St. Patrick's Day. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.



Take a Walk Series: Explore the Wild Garden with WMCC Education Director, Jeff Greenwood

Wednesday, March 24, 2010, 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M., Meet in the Museum

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

What was the Wild Garden and where was it located? One of White Memorial's forgotten secrets, this area once featured numerous horticultural plantings all under the fastidious care of one volunteer. Now the garden is all but gone except that the trails are part of the Little Pond Boardwalk complex. What was planted and who was the caretaker of this gem of early times?



Travels with a Porcupine: Lunch and Lecture with Dr. Uldis Roze Saturday, March 27, 2010, 12:00P.M. until 3:00 P.M., A. B. Ceder Room RAIN DATE APRIL 17 Registration Fee: Members: \$15.00 Non Members: \$20.00 ******** INCLUDES LUNCH!*******

Learn about one of Connecticut's least studied and oh so cuddly rodents! Dr. Uldis Roze, Professor Emeritus of Biology at Queens College, CUNY, is the author of "The North American Porcupine". Dr. Roze will recount the story of how he rescued, raised, and released a baby porcupine and answer your many questions. A luncheon with Dr. and Mrs. Roze precedes the presentation.

Jae Wolf Coffee House	Member: \$8.00	Non Member: \$12.00
Winter Walk in Catlin Woods	Member: \$ 3.00	Non Member: \$5.00
Just Friends Coffee House	Member: \$8.00	Non Member: \$12.00
Stalking Snowshoe Hares	Member: \$3.00	Non Member: \$5.00
Robert Messore Coffee House	Member: \$8.00	Non Member: \$12.00
Explore the Wild Garden	Member: \$3.00	Non Member: \$5.00
Travels with a Porcupine		Non Member: \$20.00
Name		
Address		
City	State Zip) <u> </u>
Phone	e-mail	
Please circle one: member non-member		
Payment enclosed: Program fee: \$	Membership fee:\$	Total \$

CEU's available

and individual is \$35.00.

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

For more information call 860-567-0857

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

MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE FRIDAY DECEMBER 18, 2009 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.



STROLL THROUGH THE MUSEUM
WRAP UP YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING
TAKE 10% OFF ALL PURCHASES!
ONE NIGHT ONLY OPEN HOUSE SPECIAL:
BUY A MEMBERSHIP FOR YOURSELF OR A LOVED ONE
AND RECEIVE A FREE WMCC CANVAS TOTE!

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



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