

SANCTUARY

Newsletter of the
White Memorial
Conservation Center
Vol. XXXVI No. 4
Fall 2018

Museum Hours:

Monday - Saturday 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

Sunday 12:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

For Information

Phone: 860-567-0857

E-Mail: info@whitememorialcc.org

Website: www.whitememorialcc.org



*Hunting Trophy: A Javan Rhino shot around 1900.
This species is critically endangered.
Only a few mounted specimens exist.*

From Mortal to Immortal: The Significance of Taxidermy

Story by Errol Fuller, Artist ~ Author ~ Collector <http://errolfuller.com/>

All photographs courtesy of the Author

The wish to smudge the boundaries between life and death is an ancient one, and throughout history it has taken many guises and a variety of forms. One of them is taxidermy. And this smudging is perhaps part of the reason why taxidermy has assumed a large role in the lives of many people. Our inability to come entirely to terms with the concept of death must surely play some part in the fascination (either positive or negative) that taxidermy can hold. In certain superficial respects it provides a kind of hedge against the unthinkable. Such an idea can be illustrated quite simply. Occasionally, we all come across the body of a dead songbird lying in the road or in the fields, and if it is a very recent death the little corpse might seem so beautiful that it takes our breath away. The idea that in a few brief hours, this exquisite object will have decayed and lost forever all of its beauty seems quite unacceptable, and the forlorn wish to preserve, somehow, the fragile beauty that still remains is surely a common one. For an actual taxidermist it might seem an irresistible temptation. Perhaps such wishes lie at the very root of taxidermy – a profound wish to defy the process of decay and preserve at least some small semblance of life. Perhaps it is a similar instinct to the need that a painter of realistic subjects has in wishing to preserve and freeze in paint a memory or a moment of time.



A pair of Quetzals under a glass dome prepared around 1870. These show the sheer beauty that taxidermy can achieve.



So, for many people taxidermy answers a great emotional, and almost alchemical, desire to re-create or restore the appearance of life. This may be the most profound need that it satisfies but there are, of course, many others. A hunter would claim, for instance, that a sporting trophy provides him with the opportunity to remember one of his most satisfying moments, and gives him a record of those moments. A lover of the wild may feel that a specimen allows him or her to bring a little segment of that wild into their home. The dioramas made in Victorian Britain where imitation rockwork and vegetation surrounded and made a backdrop for a taxidermied subject perhaps added to the illusion of the wild, but contained it neatly within a glass case. And these homely dioramas were surely the inspiration for Carl Akeley to produce, on a much larger and more impressive scale, the hugely impressive scenes of African wildlife that grace the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

This leads naturally on to education and science itself. The Akeley exhibits have given generations of Americans who would never have travelled to the Dark Continent, an insight into the African scene. These days this has been superseded to some extent by wildlife films and the ease of travel, yet there is still something overwhelmingly powerful about being confronted by these masterful re-creations.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

In scientific terms, taxidermy has provided the means to catalogue differences between species and list them in ways that might be impossible if one were just seeing animals in the wild. And as far as science is concerned there is one aspect that is almost universally overlooked. This is the pivotal role that taxidermy played in the forming of the concept of evolution.

Few evolutionists are aware of the fact that as a young man Charles Darwin had taken lessons in taxidermy from a former black slave named John Edmondstone, a man who had been freed from slavery by the celebrated English travel writer and taxidermist Charles Waterton. It is sometimes thought that the warm relationship Darwin and Mr. Edmondstone formed was the foundation for the vehement anti-slavery views that Darwin expressed in later life. However this may be, using the skills he had learned, Darwin was able to preserve specimens during his famous journey around the world on HMS Beagle. When he came to the Galapagos Islands he preserved a long series of seemingly similar finches, some from this island, some from that. A year or two later – back in London – he laid his specimens before John Gould (the celebrated author of monumental ornithological works – and also, incidentally, a taxidermist). Gould took one look at the long series of specimens and asked Darwin why some of the birds had differently



Darwin's Finches. Prepared on the Galapagos Islands by Charles Darwin as study skins rather than being made to look alive.

shaped beaks to the others, even though they were similar in most other respects. Gould thought this factor needed some kind of profound explanation, and his query caused a slow-burning fuse to be lit in Darwin's relentless mind, which finally resulted in Darwin formulating his theory on evolution.

So. Many of those professional ornithologists who disregard taxidermy do not realise that their most cherished theory owes its starting point to the very process that they are inclined to disregard.

There is another aspect of the craft that is often overlooked. In shaping the lifeless remains placed before him, the skilled taxidermist acquires a knowledge of form and order in much the same way as a painter who studies anatomy to give additional power to his works. A famous example is the English painter George Stubbs who dissected animals so that he could better understand the musculature of the horses he was so keen to paint. A taxidermist does this as an essential part of his process.

www.rodrypainefilms.co.uk
Short snapshot of Errol Fuller.
Dealer, collector,
artist, and author.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mijDFfLNRFU>

(continued on page 10)



2018 ANIMAL FOOD FUND APPEAL

THE CONSERVATION CENTER REACHES OUT TO YOU FOR HELP IN DEFRAYING THE MONUMENTAL COST OF FEEDING THE WILD BIRDS AND OUR ANIMAL AMBASSADORS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

THE ANNUAL EXPENSE OF KEEPING OUR BIRDS, SNAKES, TURTLES, SALAMANDER, AND FEEDERS FULL IS APPROXIMATELY \$5500.

YOUR DONATION, NO MATTER HOW SMALL, WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Yes! I'd like to help feed wild birds and animal ambassadors at the White Memorial Conservation Center with my gift of:

() \$5 () \$10 () \$20 () \$50 () \$100 () Other \$ _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please make your check payable to WMCC, 80 Whitehall Road, P.O. Box 368, Litchfield, CT 06759
Your donation can also be made on-line or over the phone by credit card! Visit www.whitememorialcc.org or call us at 860-567-0857!

Make a Difference

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

Recently, I was in line at the deli of a local market, leaning heavily on my small cart. I had no energy and really wanted to go home and take a nap! Hubby was nearby, wearing an out-sized fabric boot, two different sized shoes and leaning on a crutch. Suddenly, a beloved long time White Memorial Trustee stopped and asked us what had happened. And he thought it would make a good topic for the next installment of "Make a Difference." So...

Ah, yes, what *had* happened? Well, let me give you the short version. In mid-May at our second home in NY, hubby found himself on an old wooden ladder, inspecting gutters. This ladder has been in the family for many years and was, in fact, handmade by his aunt's father, sometime in the late 30's or early 40's. The ladder had been used each year for roof and gutter inspections, chimney cleaning, etc. It had never been a problem until this day when the extension end of it finally decided that it would give up the ghost. Not a good thing when someone is on said ladder. Down he came! Into the house he crawled, thinking it was a very bad sprain! To the neighbor I ran, to see if they could help. They brought over crutches and he took hubby in his truck to the hospital while I followed with his wife in our car. X-rays, CAT scan and temporary plaster splint later, we were sent home to follow up with an Orthopedist the next day. Said Orthopedist told us they couldn't help... we needed to go to Albany or Burlington, VT or home. We chose home. And what a good decision that was!

The first couple of weeks were okay. I was coping. I was shopping and cleaning and doing laundry and cooking. I put gas in the car. I put air in the car tire. I paid the bills. Hubby was waiting for two weeks for the swelling to go down so they could operate. All was well in our little world.

Then, one day, a friend asked me if I realized that I was not using the right side of my face and made me promise to call the doctor first thing in the morning. I did and the doctor told me to get to the ER. I did and was diagnosed with Lyme disease and Bell's palsy. Bell's palsy is a bit like a stroke in that you can't move part of your face. You can't blink. You can't really chew or brush your teeth. There is really nothing that can be done except wait. I was put on doxycycline for the Lyme. You may remember that several years ago, I had Erlichiosis, another tick-borne disease. With that, I had a high fever and no energy. With Lyme disease, however, I had a LOT OF PAIN! I hurt *all over, all the time* and I had no energy.

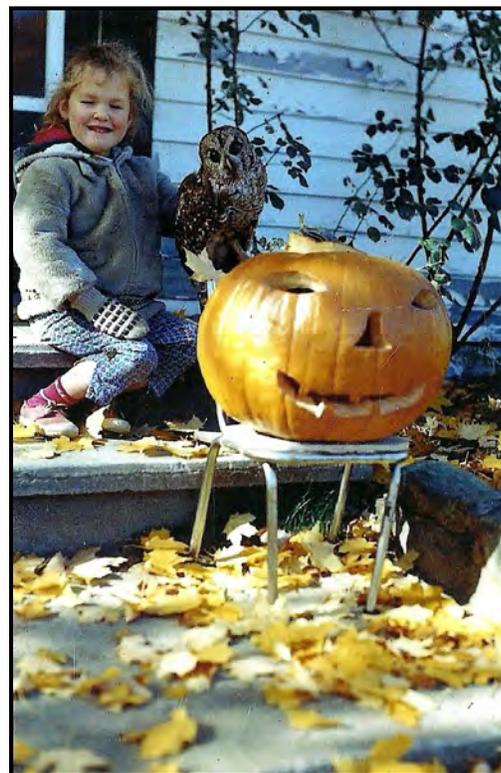
So, what do our health woes have to do with you making a difference? Well, let me tell you. We had many, many people come forth and offer to mow the lawn; make meals; clean; grocery shop; drive. We received gifts of cookies; muffins; pie; cake; casseroles; fruit; soup; salads; roasted chicken; meatloaf. A dear friend, herself suffering from a physical pain, brought lunch and ate with us. A neighbor called whenever he was going by to see if we needed anything. We got calls and letters and cards and flowers. VERY BUSY people took time out of their VERY programmed busy days to reach out and help someone in need - us. We had been on the giving end many times, but never the receiving end. It was a very humbling experience.

Sometimes it was "just a call", sometimes it was a whole dinner. But, let me tell you that EACH AND EVERY outreach helped! It helped us heal. It helped us realize that we were not alone. It made us aware that we can ALL do SOMETHING to help SOMEONE.

So the next time that you find out about a situation where someone has had a mishap or trauma, reach out. Make a call. Bake a chicken. Send a card.

Make a difference in someone else's life. You never know when you might be on the receiving end and someone will **make a difference** in yours.

PS... Hubby and I are both improving! He is off crutches and is going to PT. I am okay if I don't get overtired.



Director of Administration and Development Gerri Griswold's fondness for taxidermy began at a very early age. Circa 1960



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

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

NATURE'S NURSERY

For Ages 3-6 Years
 First Thursday Every Month
 All Classes 4:00 - 5:00 P.M.
 Members: \$8/session
 or \$25/whole series
 Non-Members: \$12/session
 or \$45/whole series
 Advanced registration required.



AFTER-SCHOOL ADVENTURES

For Grades 1-3: Tues., October 2, 9, 16, 23
 For Grades 4-6: Weds., October 3, 10, 17, 24
 All Classes 3:45 - 5:00 P.M.
 Members: \$9/session
 or \$28/whole series
 Non-members: \$13/session
 or \$48/whole series
 Advanced registration required.



MYSTERY ANIMAL MEET AND GREET'S!

For Families!
 December: 5th, 12th, & 19th
 4:00pm
 Members: FREE
 Non-Members: Admission to the Museum

Call 860-567-0857 or visit www.whitememorialcc.org for more information.

THE WHITE MEMORIAL CONSERVATION CENTER
PRESENTS THE 37TH ANNUAL

FAMILY NATURE DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018, 11 AM - 5 PM
ADMISSION \$6.00 (CASH & CHECK ONLY)
CHILDREN UNDER 12 & CENTER MEMBERS FREE



SKYHUNTERS IN FLIGHT + RIVERSIDE REPTILES
MEET THE NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE
HORIZON WINGS RAPTOR CENTER
THE BAT LADY + THE TURTLE'S BACK
MUSIC BY: THE ZOLLA BOYS
& THE REDWOOD HILL BAND

HORSE DRAWN WAGON RIDES + CRAFTS FOR KIDS
GUIDED WALKS + DEMONSTRATIONS
BOOTHS & EXHIBITS + FOOD + NATURE TAG SALE
LOCAL ARTISANS + SILENT AUCTION + PIE SALE
THE POCKET LADY + MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE
WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO ICELAND IN OUR RAFFLE!



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

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 860-567-0857 WWW.WHITEMEMORIALCC.ORG

Monitoring Bat Populations at White Memorial

By James Fischer, Research Director

White Memorial adds its efforts to an ongoing survey of Connecticut's bat species through a variety of collaborative projects. The white nose fungus (*Pseudogymnoascus destructans*) has been present in Connecticut since the winter of 2007-2008, when it was found among hibernating bats in northern Litchfield County. Bats affected by the fungus exhaust their fat reserves and die during their winter hibernation. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Wildlife Division surveys by using sound recordings to monitor bat activity. Starting a half-hour after sunset and continuing until late at night, White Memorial's research technicians drive a 24-mile route through the woods roads of the property, using a truck-mounted microphone to record high-pitched sounds. We also have a microphone that is designed for stationary recording scenarios. The microphone is sensitive to sounds well above the range of human hearing, and records the calls of bats as they seek out insects for food, along with any high-pitched background noise from nearby tele-



Abby Wilson installs the stationary microphone. Abby interned the summer of 2018 and is pursuing a Wildlife Conservation degree at Unity College.

erty because he heard about the plight of bats in Connecticut. Ashton and his fellow scouts installed nine additional bat houses on the property, bringing us to a total of 17 bat houses. You'll notice that these bat houses are installed in open areas near wetlands to insure that they get adequate sunlight and lots of insects. Ashton went one step further and invited Gerri Griswold (a.k.a. The Bat Lady) to come to his scout troop to learn about the importance of bats in the world and in their own backyards.

The past decade for bat conservation demonstrates that the future of bat populations in North America will rely on new technology that allows professionals and citizen scientists to accurately monitor bat populations. Citizen scientists can participate in detecting bats using ultrasonic microphones that are plugged into their smartphones. The software interprets the recordings and instantly designates a species. This observation can be uploaded instantly to databases so that professionals can use the data to develop proper policy and conservation



Bat Mobile with microphone driven throughout the property.

much so that species that were once common and widespread are now listed by federal and state government as threatened and endangered species.

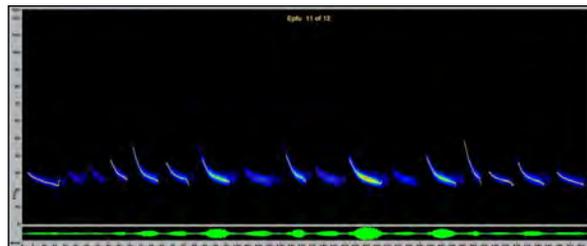
Acoustic recordings of bats allows us to form a much more detailed picture of bat populations, distributions, and activity than do other methods such as counting bats that exit bat houses and other roosts. Furthermore, as white nose syndrome continues to decimate bat populations in the eastern United States, bat monitoring has become increasingly important. Monitoring efforts at White Memorial and in towns around Connecticut will help measure surviving bat populations, determine which species are affected and not affected, and provide long-term data against which management efforts can be judged. The Green Barn next to the Museum has served as a roost for big brown bats for many years. Emergence counts are conducted twice a year. The early season count indicates the number of potentially breeding adults while the later season count indicates the number of pups produced that summer.

Our work to support the local bat population has expanded even further. Ashton Tyler, a local Boy Scout earning his Eagle Scout rank, approached us to install bat houses on the prop-



Ashton Tyler points out a bat house to his fellow Boy Scouts and leaders, showing them how to properly install a bat house.

phone wires, insects, and radio transmissions. We'll pass these recordings on to the DEEP, where computer analysis will distinguish the bat calls from surrounding noise and identify the bats by species based on their unique sound patterns. We'll likely find evidence of big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*), little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*), northern long-eared bats (*Myotis septentrionalis*), hoary bats (*Lasiurus cinereus*), red bats (*Lasiurus borealis*), silver-haired bats (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), and tri-colored bats (*Perimyotis subflavus*); all known to inhabit White Memorial's property before white-nose fungus spread through the area. Several of these populations have declined severely, so



A visual representation of the sounds recorded from a Big Brown Bat at White Memorial.

actions. So, now nearly everyone can monitor a bat house or roost by counting and designating the species as they exit. Bat watchers walking their dogs in their neighborhood can identify the bats they encounter along the way and then share their observations with the bat conservation community. Now that's what I call multi-tasking with a real purpose.



Fall 2018 Calendar of Events

For more information on any of our programs, please call us at 860-567-0857 or register online: www.whitememorialcc.org

SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER 22nd 37th ANNUAL FAMILY NATURE DAY

Sky Hunters in Flight
Riverside Reptiles + The Bat Lady
The Turtle's Back
Meet the North American Porcupine
Horizon Wings Raptor Center
Music: The Zolla Boys
& The Redwood Hill Band

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

See page 4 for details.

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

OCTOBER

After School Adventures
For grades 1 - 6
See page 3 for details.

Nature's Nursery Series
October 4, November 1, December 6
See page 3 for details.

6 Tree Identification Walk
with Lukas Hyder
10:00 a.m.,
Meet in the Museum parking lot.



6 Taxidermy:
Appreciation of the Art & Science
with James Fischer & Gerri Griswold
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room,
Members: FREE Non-members: \$5.00
Call 860-567-0857 to pre-register.

8 COLUMBUS DAY
Museum Closed



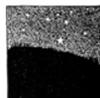
12 - 18 Museum Kids Free Week *
In Memory of Tish Samponaro from her
husband Philip G. Samponaro

13 Fungus Among Us with Dave Paton
See page 7 for details.



13 Restoration: Digital Mosaic Photography
of Marlow Shami
Opening Reception
6:00 p.m., A.B. Ceder Room
Pre-register online or call 860-567-0857.

19 Star Party
Astronomy program. Star gazing
to follow, weather permitting.
7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room



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

20 Our True Colors Meditation
& Woodland Reunion with Marlow Shami
10:00 a.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: FREE Non-members: \$5.00
Call 860-567-0857 to pre-register.

27 Group Reading of *The Bat Poet*
by Randall Jarrell
with Gerri Griswold
See page 7 for details.



NOVEMBER

3 Celebrating Connecticut's Apples!
With Barr Weeks and Russell Powell
New England Apple Association
Pie Tasting and Presentation!
See page 7 for details.



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

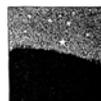
10 Point Folly Family Bird Hike
with Carrie Szwed
10:00 a.m.



Meet Carrie just beyond the gate at
Point Folly Campground on North Shore Road.

10 Michael Anderson, Exhibit Preparator at
Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History:
The Importance of Dioramas
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room

16 Star Party
Astronomy program. Star gazing
will follow, weather permitting.
7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room



17 YOU HAVE GALL! Learning about
Plant Galls with Pete & Barb Rzaa
2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Call 860-567-0857 to pre-register or register
online www.whitememorialcc.org

17 Icelandic Recording Artist
Myrra Ros in Concert
See page 7 for details.



22 / 23 THANKSGIVING
Museum Closed



24 Walking the Cranberry Pond Trail
with Gerri Griswold
2:00 p.m. Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.
Pre-register by calling 860-567-0857 or
register online www.whitememorialcc.org



DECEMBER

1 Woods in Winter Watercolor Workshop
with Betsy Rogers-Knox
See page 7 for details.



December 5, 12, 19
For Families!

Mystery Animal Meet & Greet
Get up close and personal with our animal
ambassadors! 4:00 p.m. In the Museum.
Members: FREE
Non-members: Cost of Admission to Museum

7 Museum Open House 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Stroll through the Museum.
Sip Mulled Cider.
Wrap up your holiday shopping.
Take 10% off all purchases!



8 Crack o' Dawn Owl Prowl
with Fran Zygmunt & Gerri Griswold
4:00 a.m., A. B. Ceder Room.
Pre-register online or call 860-567-0857.
Members: Free, Non-members: \$5.00



15 The Photography of Leo Kulinski, Jr.
Dinner & a Picture Show
See page 7 for details.



16 Litchfield Hills Audubon Christmas
Bird Count. To volunteer, email Ray
Belding: hoatzin1@optonline.net

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

22 Winter Hike Up Apple Hill
with Gerri Griswold
8:00 a.m., Meet at the Apple Hill trailhead.
off East Shore Road.
Pre-register online or call 860-567-0857.
Members: Free Non-members: \$5.00

24 / 25 CHRISTMAS
Museum Closed



December 27 & 28
One Day Fun Day at White Memorial!
Grades 1 - 6
See page 9 for details.



29 Winter Walk Along the Lake Trail &
Butternut Brook Trail with Marlow Shami
10:00 a.m., Meet in the A. B. Ceder Room.

JANUARY

January 1, 2019
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Museum Closed



Llama Walks with Debbie Labbe
Oct. 13, 28, Nov. 3, 18, Dec. 8, 16
Call 860-248-0355 or visit
www.whitememorialcc.org



Adult Nature Study Workshops and Saturday Programs: Fall 2018



The Fungus Among Us with Dave Paton
October 13, 2018, 10:00 am, A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$15.00 Non-Members: \$30.00

Dave's enthusiasm is contagious! We'll begin with a presentation in the Ceder Room. Then it's out to the forest to learn do's and don'ts, basic ID, and stories about the fungus among us. Dress for the weather!

PLEASE NOTE: Foraging on WMF property is prohibited!



Icelandic Chanteuse: Myrra Ros in Concert
November 17, 2018, 6:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$20.00 Non-Members: \$40.00
Dinner Included! BYOB and a place setting!

Direct from the land of glaciers, geysers, volcanoes, and hidden people comes ethereal singer / songwriter Myrra Ros. Her stunning portfolio of hauntingly beautiful ear worms spans the folk and pop genres. Enjoy an authentic Icelandic meal before the show and meet and greet our songbird!



Group Reading of *The Bat Poet*
by Randall Jarrell with Gerri Griswold
POT LUCK SUPPER!
October 27, 2018, 6:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$20.00 Non-Members: \$40.00

This charming story is perfect for kids of all ages. It is beautifully illustrated by Maurice Sendack. Each participant will receive a copy of *The Bat Poet*. Enjoy a cozy pot luck supper and read this shining jewel to each other! A Powerpoint presentation of Sendack's illustrations will accompany the reading. BYOB and a place setting. Dessert and cider provided.



Woods in Winter: Watercolor Workshop
With Betsy Rogers-Knox
December 1, 2018, 1:30 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$35.00 Non-Members: \$60.00

Internationally acclaimed botanical artist, Betsy Rogers-Knox will have you following step-by-step demos to create a simple, scenic, winter watercolor, just in time for Holiday gift-giving. All materials included. For ages 12 and up.



Celebrating Connecticut's Apples!
November 3, 2018, 2:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
Members: \$5.00 Non-members: \$10.00

Join Barr Weeks and Russell Powell from the New England Apple Association as they weave the delicious story of apple growing in Connecticut. Learn about apple history, their growing cycle, Connecticut's ten most popular apples and some rarer New England varieties. Samples will be available in raw form as well as pie form! Vote for your favorite variety!



The Photography of Leo Kulinski, Jr.
December 15, 2018, 7:00 p.m., A. B. Ceder Room
INCLUDES DINNER!
BYOB and a place setting!
Members: \$20.00 Non-Members: \$40.00

All of the holiday hub bub no doubt has you on edge! EXHALE...Spend this evening with Leo as he indulges us in a montage of his very favorite photographs. Kulinski has been White Memorial's court photographer for years. Expect breathtaking images on a variety of subjects and Leo's stories behind them! Comfort and joy await you!

_____ Fungus Among Us with Dave Paton	Member: \$15.00	Non-Member: \$30.00
_____ Reading of <i>The Bat Poet</i> with Gerri Griswold ...	Member: \$20.00	Non-Member: \$40.00
_____ Celebrating Connecticut's Apples	Member: \$5.00	Non-Member: \$10.00
_____ Icelandic Chanteuse: Myrra Ros in Concert	Member: \$20.00	Non-Member: \$40.00
_____ Woods in Winter Watercolor Workshop	Member: \$35.00	Non-Member: \$60.00
_____ The Photography of Leo Kulinski, Jr.	Member: \$20.00	Non-Member: \$40.00

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ e-mail _____
 Please circle one: member non-member
 Payment enclosed: Program fee: \$ _____ Membership fee: \$ _____ Total \$ _____

Clip this form, make check payable to White Memorial Conservation Center and mail to:
 White Memorial, P.O. Box 368, Litchfield CT 06759
 You can now register online: www.whitememorialcc.org !



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 \$60.00 per year and an individual membership is \$40.00 per year.

For more information call 860-567-0857 or visit: www.whitememorialcc.org



"How beautifully leaves grow old!
 How full of light and color are their last days!"
 ~ John Burroughs



Autumn Synesthesia

By David K. Leff Photo by Gerri Griswold

Liquored up with color,
trees grow loud
in retreating daylight and crisp
air. Yellow, orange, and red
sugar maples are a Miles Davis
jam session. Lemony elms and birches
resonate a string quartet's vibe
and scarlet sumacs burn a torch
singer's throaty melancholy.
Taupe beech leaves evoke folk
guitar and coppery oaks
play drum rolls against the hills.
Sassafras is reedy oboe bright.

Choirs of color perform
despite few listeners as foliage
season ripens to a crass theme
park for touring leaf peepers
seeking the peak experience.
It's never as good as promised,
as remembered from childhood,
or as vivid as a photo-shopped
screen shot. We wait for moments
that won't ever arrive even
as saturated tints vibrate the eyes
with waves of sound
urging us to see anew.



Porcupine

By David K. Leff Photo by Gerri Griswold

Do not expect letters from the woods
despite a quiver of quills. Barbs
launching like a river of arrows
assaulting a castle is just a fake
news story that won't die.

Needing neither agility nor speed,
but bristling like a pincushion
when threatened, has left
the passive-aggressive porcupine
happily slow-witted and sluggish.

Craving salt as if it were cash,
they will chew a hiker's idle sweat
soaked boots or socks to shreds
and gnaw a car's undercarriage
until the hoses are shredded.

I sometimes find piles of clipped
twigs and scat beneath tall hemlocks
or pine. Far above, a dark creature
with yellow tipped spines is fast
asleep or chopping tree bark.

Accomplished social climbers,
secretive porcupines lurk in high places.
Reluctant to provoke, I avoid
their prickly ways, hoping
against a launch of barbed words.



David K. Leff is the award winning author of ten books.
He was appointed poet-in-residence for the New England Trail
by the National Park Service for 2016-2017.
View his work at www.davidkleff.com



Have YOU signed up to receive our weekly email newsletter,
THE HABITATTLER?
Calendar of Events, Program Reminders, Top 10 Notable Sightings
The Tail End Video....And more

Visit: www.whitememorialcc.org to sign up.



Volunteer Spotlight: Bob Stern

Story by Gerri Griswold and photograph by Marlow Shami

Bob Stern was interested in nature at a very early age. Very vivid memories were forged as a five year old in New Jersey. An acre of woods bordered his family property. One day he was playing outside and his beagle came out of the woods carrying a dead baby bunny. Bob wanted to make it better and brought it to his mother. The beagle continued to bring in (dead) baby rabbits. Despite his Mother's loving care none of the animals could be revived. When he was about 10 years old, Stern recalled a day when he was returning home from a friend's house and had to pass "the bully of the neighborhood." Bob saw something swinging from a limb in the bully's yard... a small owl dangling from a rope, "Do I take a chance?" He ran into the yard, grabbed the owl, brought it home and nursed it to health before releasing it. "A love of nature has always been in me."

Stern attended the University of Hartford where he studied marketing and became involved in student government. Upon graduation he was offered a graduate administrative assistant position in the provost's office. He ultimately pursued a Masters Degree in Counseling Education.

Bob became the Director of Education at the Greater Hartford Drug and Alcohol Center. He sat on the Governor's Commission on Drug Abuse and was head of the Health Education Department at Southern Connecticut State University. From SCSU he earned another Masters Degree and then gravitated to a job teaching in the SUNY (State University of New York) system in health education and mental health education. Not enjoying the research aspect of his job at SUNY drove Stern back to his roots in Connecticut at the University of Hartford where he was offered a resident director position.

In between all of these career advances, Bob married and became a father of two. He and his wife really wanted to be closer to nature so they moved to New Hartford. What they really fancied was a vacation home... a place "where we could get away."

Ultimately Stern ended up in sales for an entertainment company. He was interested in digital imaging in its infancy and working with a UCONN professor to see if he could develop software to do imaging of landscapes and houses. Stern parlayed this cutting edge



Mr. Interpretation: Multi-faceted Bob Stern

idea into a 30 year career working in 3-D imaging from the beauty business to dental imaging ... ideas and technology which today are the norm.

The stress of sales more and more weighed on Stern and more and more he pined to return to his roots in nature. He and his wife began searching for their little patch. They first considered Lake Placid but the drive was just too prohibitive with two small children in tow. (Are we there yet? Are we

there yet?) Out of the blue a realtor contacted them, "I have a cottage on Bantam Lake." "I had never been out here!" said Bob. They looked at a cottage that needed too much work and became very discouraged. As they drove off they saw a "For Sale" sign on another property at Marsh Point. "We both had a huge smile. Twenty-five years later, "here I am!"

"The stories, the experiences I have had kayaking up the river and walking the trail system (at White Memorial)" ... Stern had accomplished so much in his life... setting and realizing goals. "Now it is time to give back so I approached (Executive Director) Keith Cudworth to see how I could fit in." Bob walked the Braille Trail (Trail of the Senses) and the Ice House Trail and then asked for the brochure for the Interpretive Trail. "From a marketing standpoint... the brochure... Oh my God... We can do better." Education Director Carrie Szwed was just a month into her job. "I talked myself upstairs." Szwed knew the brochure needed to be revamped but it was hardly a priority. Stern offered to help. "We sat down and threw out many ideas. We walked the trail. New posts with QR codes were suggested and of course the brochure needed to be overhauled. I had a lot of creative input on this but if it were not for Carrie's writing... Everybody on this staff is fantastic!" At the time the Conservation Center was charging for the Interpretive Trail map. "You should have paid THEM for taking that old map!" Because of the generosity of Bob Stern's family foundation, the new Interpretive Trail maps are available at no cost.

"I feel so connected to White Memorial especially when Keith wrote his book in 2013 for the 100th Anniversary of The White Memorial Foundation. I felt connected to Alain White. Carrie and I wanted to incorporate history and nature in the brochure. One of the stops is a wooden bridge that was once part of the carriage trail. I found an old photograph of Alain in a carriage. I felt I touched Alain in a way."

ONE-DAY FUN DAY at White Memorial!

Nature is so much fun in the winter! So, grab your coat, boots, and hat, and let's spend one of your vacation days learning about the natural world around you. Get outside, play games, make crafts, meet live animals! A morning snack and drink will warm us up between adventures. Please bring a lunch. Parents/Guardians are welcome to stay, but it is not necessary. Meet in the A.B. Ceder Room. 9:30am-3:30pm. *Pre-registration and pre-payment are required. Please call 860-567-0857 or visit whitememorialcc.org to register. Space is limited!*

Grades 1-3: Thursday, December 27, Grades 4-6: Friday, December 28
Members: \$40, Non-Members: \$70



From Mortal to Immortal: The Significance of Taxidermy

Continued from page 2

Taxidermy has been used for many purposes and with very varied intention. Over the years it has passed through different phases and undergone all manner of change. In the hands of some operators it has been entirely simplistic, even crude, while others have shown highly sophisticated approaches and skilled technique. It has served the cause of science, satisfied curiosity or ego, provided decoration, moved in and out of fashion, been produced to shock, educate, enthrall or entertain, suffered scorn and derision, been overlaid with artistic pretention, and sometimes even received acclaim!



The head of a South American Saki Monkey. The work of Charles Waterton (around 1825), the face was deliberately deformed so that it would look like a little hairy man.



A Lesser Bird of Paradise painted in France by Jacques Barraband around the year 1800. Barraband painted using stuffed birds as models. The specimen itself is long gone but the painting remains to show the high standard that taxidermy had reached in Paris at this time.



An extinct Heath Hen with two Bobwhite Quail stuffed around 1880 in Worcester, Massachusetts, to look as if they were ready for the kitchen.

Regarding Errol Fuller

by Gerri Griswold with the help of Mr. Fuller's Website <http://errolfuller.com/>

I discovered Errol Fuller while developing a series of programs for White Memorial about extinct species entitled, *Nevermore*. It was 2015 and I was quite ill and bedridden for several months. I have always been intrigued by the topic of extinct species. Whenever I travel to foreign lands the first thing I do is seek out a natural history museum in hopes of finding a Quagga, a Thylacine, bits of a Dodo, or a Great Auk. Imagine my glee in finding this jewel of a man!

Errol is a massive collector of taxidermy and other curiosities with the bonus of being a leading expert on extinct species, a talented painter, a gifted author! I began to amass a full collection of his books. I was smitten!

Upon the cajoling of a very (wonderful) bossy friend, I sent Mr. Fuller a fan email to which he so kindly and graciously responded. We became pen pals and I am certain I drove him mad asking myriad questions and favors. He was so patient and always obliged.



Errol Fuller
Photo credit: Roddy Paine
www.rodrypaine.co.uk

Errol Fuller paints and writes from his studio in Kent, England. He is a prolific writer whose books usually cover topics like extinction, art, or curiosities of natural history. His seminal work is *Extinct Birds*. He has written and designed books on the Great Auk, the Dodo, and the Passenger Pigeon as well as *Lost Animals*, a book of photos of now extinct

birds and mammals. One of his favorite topics is Birds of Paradise. He has produced two books on this subject. One, *Drawn from Paradise*, is co-authored with Sir David Attenborough. For me, Errol Fuller's masterpiece is *Voodoo Salon*, a deliciously colorful stroll through some of the greatest works of taxidermy.

Interestingly enough, Errol Fuller's paintings rarely depict animals. From his website: "Instead they often depict snooker, boxing or other slightly disreputable sports."

So you can see, when Carrie, Jaime, and I chose to celebrate taxidermy in this issue of *Sanctuary*, there was only one person we needed to convince to write the cover story.

Thank you so much, Errol, for your kind and giving nature, for loving what some might dismiss as unusual, unappealing, or unethical, and for teaching us to love, understand, and appreciate the beauty and significance of life after death through taxidermy.



A fox by the famous Rowland Ward Taxidermy Company of Piccadilly, London. Victorian cases like this one may have been the inspiration for Carl Akeley's magnificent dioramas at the American Museum of Natural History.



"I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."
~ Anne of Green Gables



"A kestrel can and does hover in the dead calm of summer days, when there is not the faintest breath of wind. He will, and does, hover in the still, soft atmosphere of early autumn, when the gossamer falls in showers, coming straight down as if it were raining silk."
 ~ Richard Jefferies

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VACATION PROGRAMS (SEE PAGE 9 FOR DETAILS)



ONE-DAY FUN DAY!
 GRADES 1-3: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27
 GRADES 4-6: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28
 SPEND ONE DAY OF YOUR HOLIDAY VACATION IMMERSING YOURSELF IN NATURE!

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS (SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS)



AFTER SCHOOL ADVENTURES
 TUESDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS IN OCTOBER

NATURE'S NURSERY
 FIRST THURSDAY EVERY MONTH

MYSTERY ANIMAL MEET AND GREETs
 WEDNESDAYS, DECEMBER 5, 12, & 19

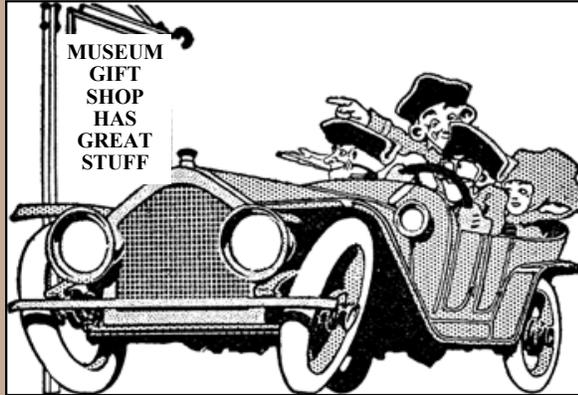
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