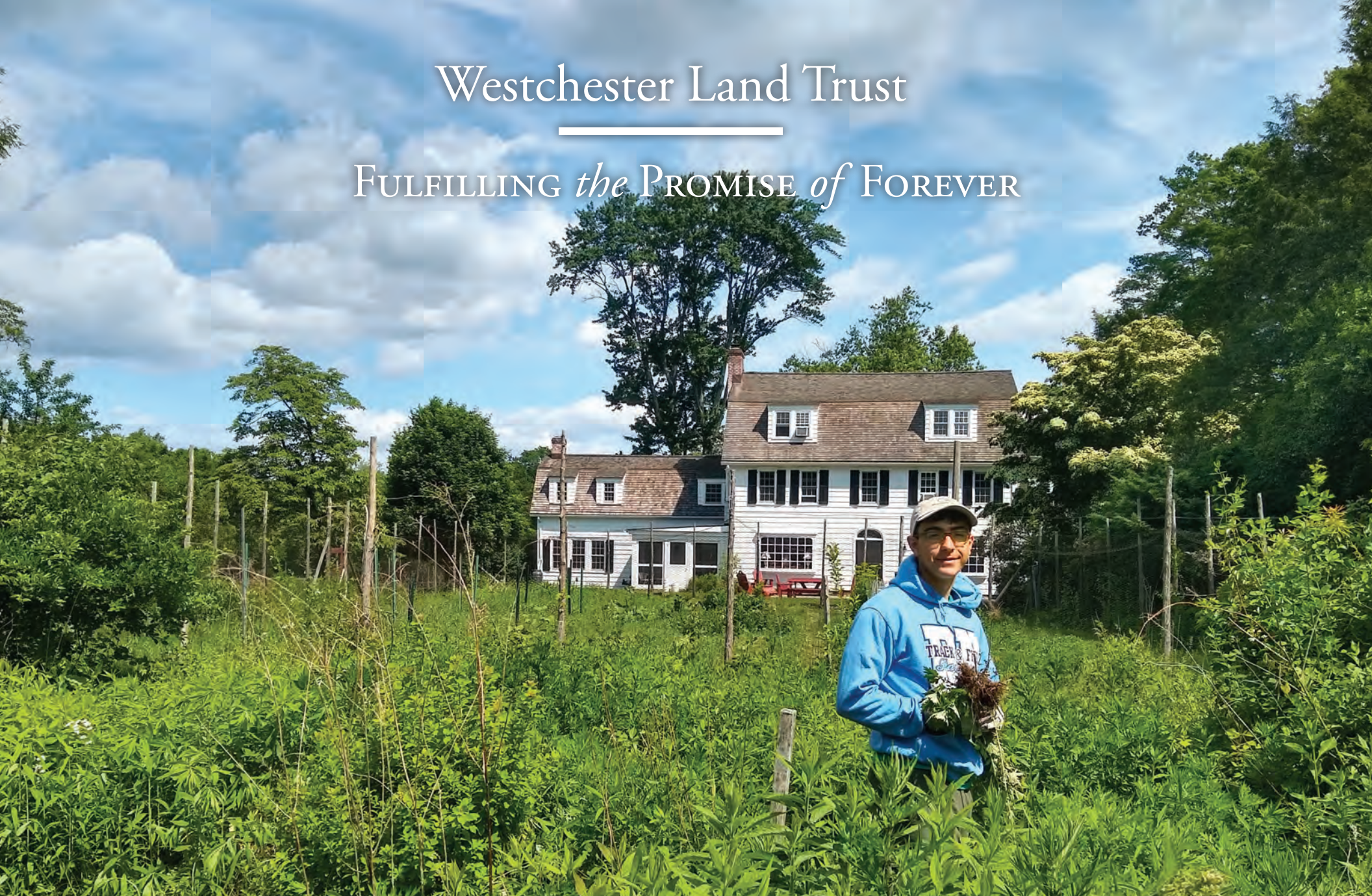


Westchester Land Trust

FULFILLING *the* PROMISE of FOREVER



Spring 2020 Newsletter  The Time to Act is Today

\$1.062 Million Grant Will Fund
Purchase of 63 Acres

~ 3 ~

Pollinator
Pop-Up

~ 5 ~

Angelina and Monte Lipman to host
Annual Benefit on June 6th

~ 7 ~

Westchester Land Trust works together with public and private partners to preserve land in perpetuity, and to protect and enhance the natural resources in our communities.

Westchester Land Trust

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Westchester Land Trust (WLT) is a member of EarthShare, a nationwide network of America's most respected environmental and conservation charities. You and your employer can support WLT through an EarthShare workplace giving campaign. Visit earthsharenetwork.org or contact Michelle Pleim at michelle@westchesterlandtrust.org or 914.234.6992 ext. 22 to learn more.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)
Number: 77308

ON THE COVER:

"My internship with WLT, which was a great bridge between the environment, law, and people, made me feel like I was in the right place doing the right thing."

- Daniel Ricci, 2019 Summer Intern

FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE TIME TO ACT IS TODAY: WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Dear Friends,

Every day, we are inspired by bold individuals who have stepped up, rolled up their sleeves, and carved out their role in the critically important fight to protect our land. Your neighbors—and we've profiled some of them in this newsletter—are choosing to make a difference in an affirming way, and we know many of you are, too. We're talking about conservation where you live, your family lives, and where you and we must all stand up and take action.

The urgency of this work cannot be overstated. The planet is burning—from Australia to Europe, California, and beyond. If 2019 was the year when people around the world seemed to wake up and acknowledge the life-threatening and economy-threatening implications of global climate change, 2020 must mark the beginning of a decade of bold, transformative action in our backyards and across the planet. Now is the time for all of us to convert words into actions and define our individual role in mitigating the devastating effects of climate change.

One of the most important solutions is all around us; natural lands in their undeveloped state (forests, meadows, and wetlands) offer powerful protection against climate change. The US Geological Survey estimates that terrestrial carbon capture in the US offsets 30% of our country's annual emissions.

With such promising potential for mitigating climate change, we must view land conservation as a highly effective tool and prioritize it globally, nationally and most important of all—locally.

Local land conservation is about you and for you. National and global conservation efforts play a critically important role, but they are not focused on us here in the lower Hudson Valley. Are our trees, land, water, soil—and public health—any less important to zealously protect? Of course not.

We all must rally to the local cause because no one is going to do it for us. Westchester Land Trust exists to help us all make a positive difference in the fight for climate resilience right here at home.

2020 has been referred to as "The Decisive Decade" when we will determine if international climate goals can be realized. As you read these profiles, we hope that you are inspired and moved to act by the diverse voices and varied ways in which each of these faces of conservation have defined their own role in climate mitigation. These people have made a commitment to show up and dig in.

We encourage you to join them and continue fighting for the land that sustains us all.

Sincerely,

Lori Ensinger, President

P.S. We hope to see you at our Annual Benefit on June 6th when we announce Daniel Ricci (front cover image) as the inspiring recipient of our newly created Youth Conservation Award!



Public and Private Partners Join Forces to Protect Climate Resilient Land and Drinking Water Supply

Earlier this year the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** awarded WLT with a \$1.062 million grant to acquire and permanently protect 63 acres of land in the Town of North Castle. The Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grant will fund approximately 75% of the total cost of the acquisition project, with the **Town of North Castle** and **Westchester Land Trust** providing the remaining 25%.

“Your annual support of WLT made our financial contribution to this important project possible! Thank You,”

– Kara Whelan, Vice President

Westchester Land Trust received the grant as part of the DEC’s WQIP program, a competitive, statewide reimbursement grant program for projects that directly address water quality impairment or protect a drinking water source. North Castle is notable in that 90% of its drinking water comes from groundwater supplied by public and private wells. Sand and gravel aquifers such as the one that underlies this property are shallow and can be particularly susceptible to contamination from nearby

The People Behind the Deal



“Acquiring and protecting this open space has been a long-standing goal of the Town and is now a reality,” said **Michael Schiliro, Supervisor of North Castle**. “Our partnership with WLT to secure the needed resources to acquire this land demonstrates the true value of public-private partnerships. This is a great example of how municipalities can effectively leverage limited local funds and allow their dollars to go further to achieve their open space conservation goals.”

“The preservation of this property is crucial to prevent further fragmentation of a large forested habitat corridor for development-sensitive species, and to protect one of the most fragile groundwater supplies in our community,” noted **Kerri Kazak, Chair of the North Castle Open Space Committee (pictured, left)**.



Join us for a “Moss Madness” walk on April 18th with moss Instagram influencer @MossGirlNY. Turn to page 7 for details.

development and stormwater runoff. Maintaining a healthy forest cover will play a key role in buffering the groundwater from these types of pollutants.

Located on Byram Lake and Byram Hill Roads, the property is part of a 700-acre forest block, one of the few remaining unfragmented pieces of land in the area. The land has diverse habitats including a pond, wetlands, steep slopes with large rock outcroppings, and an upland forest.

WLT and the Town will partner in the management of the property as a nature preserve. Public access to the property, including a hiking trail, is envisioned as soon as practical after the acquisition is completed, expected to be in late 2020.

This deal marks a significant success in WLT’s proactive approach to working with public and private organizations across the county to protect our land for future generations.



Paul Zofnass and Renee Ring Donate Land to Expand Flagship Preserve

We are thrilled to announce the permanent protection of a three-acre parcel adjacent to Westchester Wilderness Walk/ Zofnass Family Preserve. The land was donated to WLT by **Paul Zofnass and Renee Ring**. The parcel features an arboretum conceptualized and cared for by Paul over the past ten years. It features 250 different species of trees, plants, and grasses, all identified, along a winding foot path which will become part of the South Loop Trail.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR BACKYARD

Protect Our Food System: Join the Pollinator Pathway!



A pollinator pathway is a pesticide-free corridor of public and private properties that provide native plant habitat and nutrition for pollinators!

The goal of the Pollinator Pathway is to connect properties that are no farther apart than a half mile—the approximate range of most native bees.

The Pollinator Pathway is a regional grassroots effort that spans more than ONE MILLION ACRES in Fairfield County, Connecticut and Westchester and Putnam counties, New York. Peer-to-peer gatherings and neighborhood events empower community members to provide pollinators with life support by planting native plants and minimizing the use of pesticides.

POLLINATOR PATHWAY PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS

Mt. Kisco Pollinator Pathway

John Rhodes, one of the inspiring conservationists behind the launch of the Mt. Kisco Pollinator Pathway, and his team are working to expand and enhance their stretch of pollinator-friendly plantings through creative, community-based efforts. “It’s a wonderful project that brings together many segments of the community, and it’s good for health and heart,” says Rhodes. The Mt. Kisco Pathway plans to welcome several new resident properties to the 30 existing participating properties, expand native planting, and continue the removal of invasives along village-designated “No-Mow Zones.” They also plan to enhance teaching gardens around town; work closely with the Village Beautification Committee to restore the Branch Brook riparian zone north of the American Legion; work with local multi-family buildings to eliminate pesticide use; and hold several workshops for gardeners and landscapers. **If you’re thinking about launching a pathway, John offers this advice, “Publicize and recognize: Use every means available to publicize your efforts, and recognize Pollinator Pathway supporters with garden signs, certificates, and on social media and in the press!”**

White Plains Pollinator Initiative

Nancy Giges, member of the White Plains Beautification Foundation which sponsors the Pollinator Pathway in White Plains, and her team are directing their efforts toward engaging the community to build on the momentum of their pollinator work in 2019. The group is promoting the Pollinator Pathway in more than 65 public gardens across the greater White Plains area. Nancy credits the City of White Plains for their help in promoting pollinator-friendly habitats in public spaces and her group is now working to build sponsor support for a pollinator garden at City Hall. Nancy encourages those looking for inspiration for their own gardens to check out the newly planted pollinator garden at the White Plains Library. **“It is all coming together in bits and pieces and we can use more people to help us with community-wide native plantings this spring,”** Nancy said.

VISIT www.pollinator-pathway.org to learn about pathways, programs, and events in the lower Hudson Valley!



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Photo of a Common Eastern Bumblebee (*Bombus impatiens*) on a native Blue Wood Aster (*Aster cordifolius*) taken by Karalyn Lamb, a longtime friend of local Bees.

Karalyn is assisting WLT with the launch of the Pollinator Pop-Up. She is a member of the Inter-State Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee and the Native Plant Center Steering Committee.

Did you know that one out of every three bites of food we eat is thanks to an insect pollinator?

Bumblebees are typically more efficient pollinators than non-native honeybees because they have the ability to “buzz pollinate” by vibrating their wing muscles to shake pollen from the flower’s anther. This makes them important for pollinating crops grown in our region, like tomatoes, cucumbers, and blueberries.

Threats to non-native honeybees have received widespread attention, but our native bee populations—which are important pollinators of both wild and cultivated plants—are also declining at unprecedented rates. Awareness is growing about the importance of native bees to our native ecosystems, thanks in part to citizen-led movements like the Pollinator Pathway.

Simple steps like planting an early blooming native tree like Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) will not only beautify your yard, but also provide important early forage for queen bumblebees who awake from winter hibernation with an urgent need to find nectar and pollen to begin their new colony.

**No land?
No problem!**

Community traffic triangles and strategically placed flower pots can provide important resources for native bee populations: Just add native plants!



The Pollinator Pop-Up is Coming to You!

The impacts of the 74% decline in insect populations reverberate throughout the food chain and affect our local food supply. You can help pollinators by taking action today! Our newly launched **Pollinator Pop-Up** has been created to educate and empower citizen scientists of all ages to participate in expanding pollinator habitat and help with accurate reporting of pollinator species to benefit state-wide pollinator research. Thanks to Con Edison for helping to fund the Pop-Up and for supporting local efforts to make our communities more pollinator-friendly. The Pollinator Pop-Up will be popping up at several community festivals this year.



 **conEdison** Everything Matters



Contact For All Things Pollinators

Westchester Land Trust staffer **Kristen O'Hara** has been buzzing around the region assisting individuals, neighborhoods, and towns with the launch of their Pollinator

Pathways. Kristen is a proud member of the inter-state Pollinator Pathway Steering Committee and serves as the coordinator for the newly launched Pollinator Pop-Up. Contact Kristen to learn more about getting involved in both programs.

Kristen O'Hara – Kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org or 914.234.6992 ext. 15.

Get Involved! Take Action to Protect Land



Lend a Hand to Our Natural Land

Put on your boots and give a few hours of your time to care for our open lands. Lend a hand by pulling invasive plants, planting veggies at Sugar Hill Farm, or volunteering at one of our events in 2020.



Every Bit Helps

Recurring monthly gifts of \$10, \$15, \$20 have a big impact and help to sustain our land protection work year-round. Become a sustaining donor today by checking the “Monthly” donation box on the back remittance card.



Follow Us on Social Media

Stay up to date on the latest WLT news, programming, volunteer opportunities, and tips to help protect the land in your backyard. You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.



Got Land? Put a Farmer on It!

WLT is working with dozens of land-seeking farmers looking for tracts of land between 1-20 acres to farm in Westchester and eastern Putnam. Check out a profile of one of them (to the right) and contact Kara Whelan to learn more.



Toast to the Land You Love

Celebrate with neighbors and fellow community members at our 2020 Annual Benefit on June 6th (see page 7 for more details).

MEET OUR NEW LEADERSHIP

Offutt Porter Joins WLT Board

We are thrilled to welcome **Offutt Porter** to our Board of Directors. “Our local lands are beautiful and often times taken for granted,” says Porter. “I want people—especially people in lower Westchester—to begin to experience the local earth and become ‘caught up’ in wanting to be out there and protect it.” Offutt chairs the Westchester Chapter of Outdoor Afro which is the nation’s leading network that celebrates and inspires African American connections and leadership in nature. “The mission of WLT lines up perfectly with Outdoor Afro—protecting and enhancing resources in all communities. People protect places they know and land they feel a connection to,” says Porter, “Outdoor Afro ensures that African Americans connect with the land in Westchester to love and find joy in it, thereby feeling called to protect it. We appreciate all that WLT has done to welcome us.”



LOOKING FOR LAND

Innovative Farmer Seeks 6+ Acres

John Paul Learn is the owner and operator of Mandala Farm (www.mandala.farm), a perennial edible plant nursery, farm, and regenerative design group. He is actively seeking at least 6 acres of land in our region to steward for Mandala Farm and develop an agro forestry and perennial plant-based site which would integrate agritourism and educational programming. John Paul is a public speaker on the topics of food, land, product, and market development. He’s cooked for celebrities including Dr. Oz and Jay-Z and was the chef in the room, preparing Gardein’s products for the executives that bought the company for \$154 Million. He is dedicated to the intention of creating positive change for the environment and encouraging health and well-being for community members. View his profile on the Hudson Valley Farmlink website or contact Kara@westchesterlandtrust to learn more.



“As the parents of three children, it’s so important to us that we preserve natural areas that ensure our air and water are safe for not only our children’s generation but for generations to come. We support Westchester Land Trust because they are one of the only organizations prioritizing the conservation of land in our community, for the health of our families and the natural beauty of our region.”

– Angelina and Monte Lipman



ANNUAL BENEFIT SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH
for
AN EVENING
CELEBRATING
THE LAND YOU LOVE

Angelina and Monte Lipman
invite you to their
Katonah home for
Westchester Land Trust's
Annual Benefit

HONORING

Jamie and Michael Wolff

PRESERVATION ANGEL AWARD
For their leadership support of land protection
projects throughout Westchester

Steven Beckwith





LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
For his inspiring leadership
and dedicated service

Daniel Ricci

YOUTH CONSERVATION AWARD
For his service to WLT
as a Summer Intern

For early ticket information
and to join the event committee,
please contact Michelle Pleim
michelle@westchesterlandtrust.org
or 914.234.6992 ext 22

Calling All Adventurers! Join us to learn about conservation while having a great time with family and friends!
For more info, or to RSVP – Visit westchesterlandtrust.org or contact [Kristen kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org](mailto:kristen.kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org)

Sunday March 22nd 3 – 5 PM		Frog Walk Hunter Brook Preserve Yorktown	Do you love frogs and toads? WLT staff sure does! Join our team on an amphibian adventure to learn about these amazing animals who call our flagship preserve their home. Together we'll discover what makes amphibians so special, why spring is best for frog watching, and how to identify different frogs (and toads) by sight and sound.
Saturday April 18th 10 AM – 12 PM		"Moss Madness" Talk & Photography Walk Westchester Wilderness Walk/ Zofnass Family Preserve, Pound Ridge	Explore the beauty and mystery of a diverse array of mosses during this photography nature hike. With @MossGirlNYC as our leader, we'll learn about local land use history, ecology, and moss gardens, and capture beautiful mossy pictures with the help of Leslie Archambault from Westchester County Photography.
Saturday May 9th 1 – 2:30 PM		Mother's Day Turtle Program Frederick P. Rose Preserve Waccabuc	It's one of our favorite times of year...turtle breeding season! And those momma turtles can use your help! Alongside Anna Moser from Lewisboro Library, we'll learn how to identify turtles in our local natural areas, how to create a backyard habitat for these mothers-to-be, and what to do when you see a turtle traveling across a road.
Saturday June 27th 3 – 4 PM		Adult Rewilding Forest Walk w/ Cindy by Nature Hemlock Brook Preserve Yorktown Heights	Join WLT and Cindy Olsen from Cindy by Nature for a program meant to relax your mind and de-stress your day. Includes a short forest meditation walk, gentle stretching and yummy tea! Suggested donation is \$20.

Volunteer Opportunities

2nd & 4th Tuesdays, and some Saturdays, 10 AM – 1 PM, Rain or Shine	Grow & Share! Farm Volunteer Days @ Sugar Hill Farm, 403 Harris Road, Bedford Hills Help us grow produce for our neighbors in need. All produce is donated to the Community Center of Northern Westchester. All ages welcome.	Would you like to bring a group to volunteer at the farm? Please contact Kristen O'Hara at kristen@westchesterlandtrust.org or call 914-234-6992 ext. 15
April 14 & 28 May 12 & 26 June 9, 13 & 23 July 14 & 28	August 11, 15 & 25 September 8, 12 & 22 October 13 & 27	

Stewardship Volunteer Days at various WLT locations

Join WLT's Stewardship team on the land to learn and help with invasive plants removal, trail care, and so much more!

Saturday March 21st 10 AM – 12:30 PM	Stone Wall Restoration Volunteer Day Tom Burke Preserve, Bedford	"A stone that looks satisfied with its position, reflects the sense of ease the waller felt when placing it there," Dan Snow. Volunteers will clear invasive vines and brush along a historic stone wall on McLain Street that borders our Tom Burke Preserve. This important project will protect the preserve's ecology from invasive plants while showcasing Bedford's cultural heritage.
Wednesday April 15th 10 AM – 12 PM 1 – 3 PM	Earth Day "Spring Cleaning" Sugar Hill Farm, Bedford Hills	Let's celebrate Earth Day at WLT's headquarters by removing vines from shrubs, weeding, and pruning trees. Volunteers will learn how to create a garden that both provides shelter for animals and is aesthetically appealing to people.
Saturday April 18th 10 AM – 12 PM 1 – 3 PM	Earth Day Forest Restoration Otter Creek Preserve, Mamaroneck	WLT has invested in caring for the coastal forest at Otter Creek Preserve on the shore of Long Island Sound by protecting it from invasive vines and deer browse. Help us take care of the young trees we planted, so a new forest can grow!
Saturday July 18th 10 AM – 12:30 PM	Mile-a-Minute Removal Challenge! Hunter Brook Preserve, Yorktown	We need all the help we can get to remove a new invasive vine, called mile-a-minute because it spreads shockingly fast. Volunteers will hand-pull mile-a-minute vines and learn what to plant in its place. Bonus: participants will also learn how to identify and map invasive species.

Bionutrient Food Association (BFA) Meetings	Thursday, March 19; Tuesday, April 14; Wednesday, May 13; Thursday, June 18; Tuesday, July 14; Wednesday, August 19; Thursday, September 17; Tuesday, October 13; Wednesday, November 18; Thursday, December 17 6 – 8 PM at Sugar Hill Farm, 403 Harris Road, Bedford Hills, and at local farms on occasion Join BFA for monthly potlucks/meetings that include a garden- or food-themed discussion, hands-on workshop or presentation, as well as time outside in the garden. Participants include farmers, backyard gardeners, nutritionists, and chefs, all of varying levels of experience. All are welcome!
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Westchester Land Trust
 403 Harris Road
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"Libraries are today's community centers, so it's essential that we get outside our four walls to promote literacy. Our seasonal Story Walks with WLT promote reading in a fun and interesting way, while exposing families to the Land Trust's spectacular preserves and unparalleled expertise in environmental education. Together we're fostering a new generation of naturalists and stewardship."

- Anna Moser,
 Children's Librarian, Lewisboro Library



Leave a Legacy Gift to Westchester Land Trust

Have you provided for Westchester Land Trust in your will? The future of WLT depends on our visionary supporters. Contact Kara Whelan (kara@westchesterlandtrust.org) to learn about our planned giving program or to let us know if you have already included Westchester Land Trust in your estate plans so that we can say "thank you" during your lifetime.



You're a vital part of the story. Ensure the places you love will be protected forever.

I would like to contribute

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$50 \$25 Surprise Us \$.....

I would like to make a pledge of

Monthly Quarterly Bi-annually Annually

My gift is in honor/memory of

I have enclosed/will send a matching gift form from my employer.

I wish my gift to remain anonymous.

I would like to learn more about including WLT in my will.

WLT is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Email

Entering my email indicates my consent to receive occasional enews from Westchester Land Trust. We never share this information.

Mail check made out to Westchester Land Trust to WLT, 403 Harris Road, Bedford Hills, NY 10507. **Or donate online at westchesterlandtrust.org**