

Fall 2021

WLCT TIDINGS

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The Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Newsletter

President's Message by Tom Elliott

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I keep hearing and saying the words **KEEP SAFE AND HEALTHY**. But without really thinking about what they mean.

KEEP SAFE means to take all the available precautions available especially getting vaccinated.

KEEP HEALTHY means not to totally isolate your self but to keep a healthy body and mind.

With this wonderful fall weather, get out and breath the fresh air, and enjoy the wonderful recreational and open space opportunities that we in Westbrook are so privileged to have.

After so long in isolation, say hello to your neighbors and check in on your friends. Our open space resources are not just for the future, but to be enjoyed now!

The Land Trust is looking forward to another year of service to our community. I want to thank the residents of Westbrook for their continued support of the Westbrook Land Conservation Trust.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Elliott

WLCT Mission Statement: *The Westbrook Land Conservation Trust acquires, preserves, and actively stewards its own real property, including wetlands and woodlands, to conserve natural resources and to promote the scientific, educational, and passive recreational uses of open space, all for the benefit of the public. In addition, the Trust supports the town of Westbrook in its endeavors to conserve and educate the public regarding the value of its natural environment.*

Board of Directors: *Tom Elliott, President • Barbara Helander, Vice President • Kate Gilstead, Treasurer • Bill Neale, Secretary • Doug White, Membership • John Cotton, Illustration • Sarah Greaves, Counselor • Kristin Elliott Leas, Alternate*

Land Parcel Spotlight: Six Salt Marsh Properties, Two with Osprey Nests All Critical Habitats



1. **Hammock Road Preserve**

is made up of two tidal marsh parcels:

In 1969, a 0.99 acre parcel of the tidal salt marsh on the west side of Hammock Road was donated by WLCT founding member Evelyn Kabatznick. This was the first open space property of the Westbrook Land Conservation Trust.

In 1972, Evelyn Kabatznick donated an abutting 3.44 acre parcel that provided access off of Hammock Road. This is the location of the WLCT's first osprey nesting platform built in 2006.

2. **Carroll Stannard Memorial Preserve**

is a land locked 5.00 acre parcel of tidal marsh located to the south of the The Deck restaurant of the Boston Post Rd. In 1974, it was donated to the WLCT in memory of Carrol Stannard, a Westbrook teacher.



3. **Trout Lake Dr. Preserve**

was donated in 1978, It is a 3.86 acre tidal pond east of Grove Beach Rd., North and adjacent to the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife refuge to the east.

This brackish tidal pond is unique as a breeding site for salt water fish, and is frequented by water birds.

4. Barn Way

is a 2.57 acre tract of tidal marsh that was a result of dedicated open space from the 1979 subdivision, now a part of the Tom O'Dell Memorial Open Space, next to the Post Office.

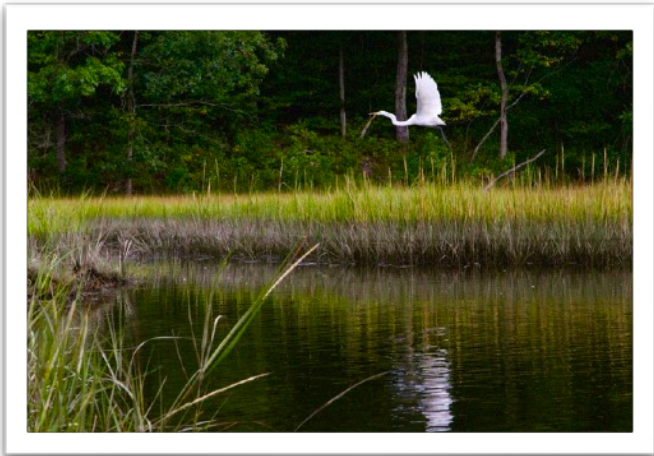


5. Seascape

is a 0.3 acre portion of tidal marsh, east of Seascape Drive, near Middle Beach. It was the result of dedicated open space in 1994 from the Seascape subdivision and is located in the same tidal marsh as the Barn Way parcel. (find our sign in there?)

6. Seaside Avenue Preserve

is our newest property of 11.47 acres of tidal wetlands with access on the north side of Seaside Avenue opposite the Westbrook Town Beach. This was donated by the estate of Marilyn Dauch in 2019. The significance of this tidal marsh open space is that there are 52 neighbors and their dependents who will now be able to enjoy this open space forever. This preserve

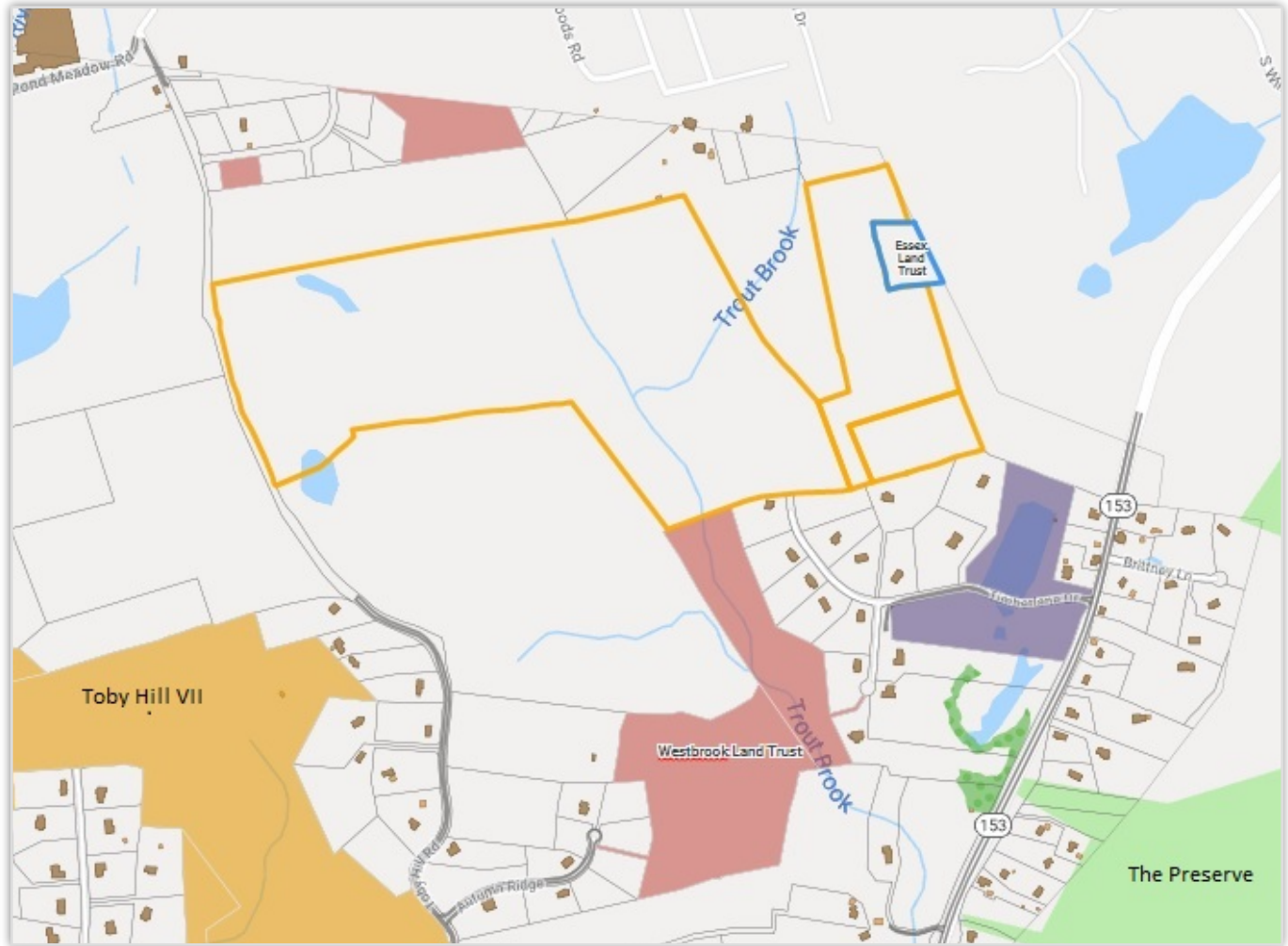


Saltmarshes...Nurseries of the sea...Diverse marine animals feed and reproduce in the still, brackish waters and mud here. The decaying plant life, detritus, bustles with microbes and tiny creatures that wash out to sea with the tide... feeding abundant life in coastal waters. Read about these complex precious natural resources nearby!



Toby Hill VIII Support

This year, the Land Trust was proud to support the town's acquisition of Toby Hill VIII, 146 acres contiguous to several other open space parcels and protecting the headwaters of Trout Brook. We reached our goal of \$5000 and are truly grateful for your support. We received donations from 17 people/families ranging from \$25 to \$1700. These funds were matched by the WLCT to double their impact! We'll keep you posted on any developments on the purchase of this important parcel of land.





Tom O'Dell Memorial

On September 15, a ceremony took place to dedicate the Tom O'Dell Memorial Open Space and Meadow Walk, and to thank those who made this thoughtful project possible. Years in the making, those involved included the Conservation Commission, Westbrook Garden Club and Oxford Academy. Throughout his many years of active preservation of open space, Tom collaborated with the Trust on numerous endeavors, both Town and Trust related. He was, in fact, a founding Board member of the Land Trust in 1968. His working with potential land donors, and knowledge and perspectives in planning the protection of open spaces was inspiring and invaluable. In the back of this Open Space, the Trust's Barn Way property can be found, via set pathways, forever in connection with his memory.



Tom O'Dell with Trust member Doug White at the Cockaponset State Forest Weber Woods parcel addition ribbon cutting ceremony circa 1990s

Tree of Life Book Review

By Bill Neale

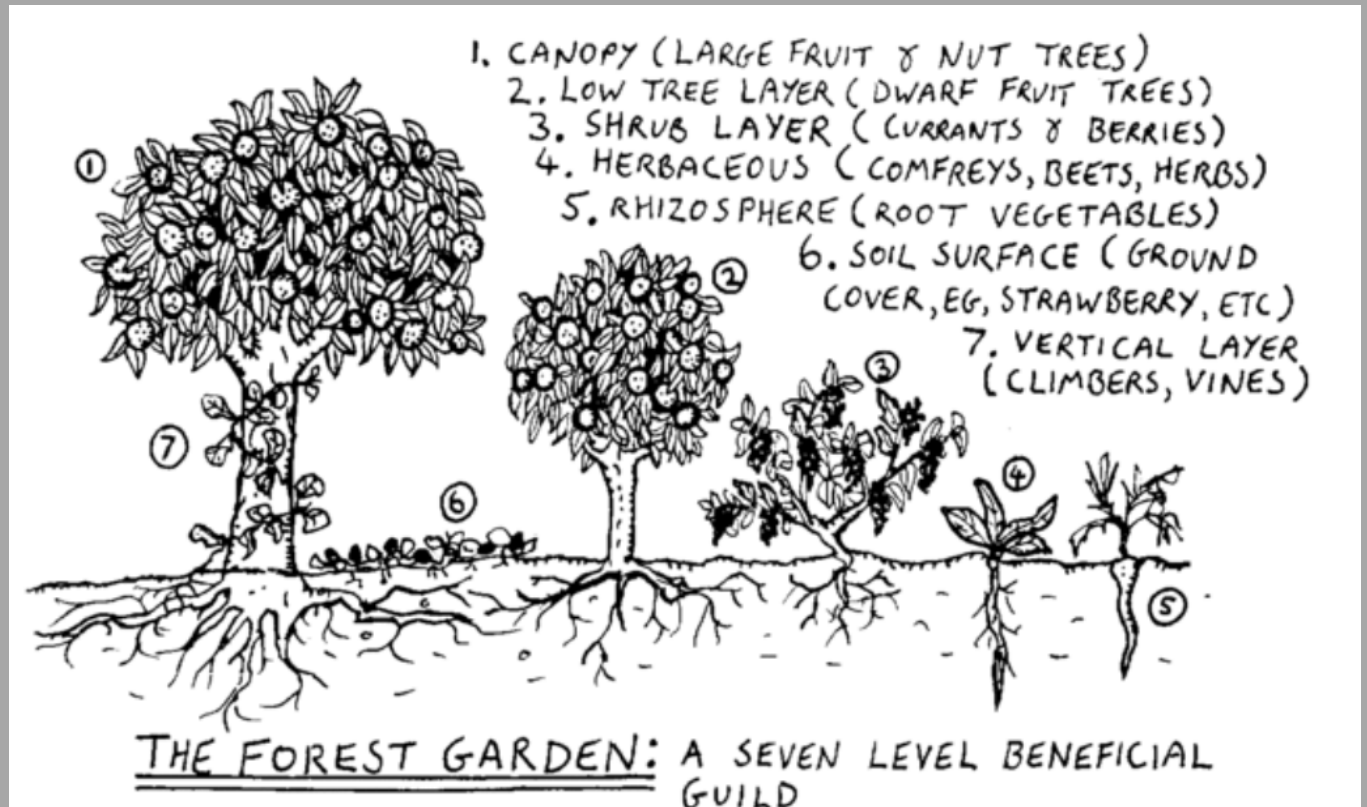
If you are enthralled by the complexity of forest ecology, if you are fascinated by science, if you are engaged in a good yarn, read Finding the Mother Tree by Suzanne Simard, Alfred A. Knopf, 2021.

Simard is now a world renowned forest ecologist known for documenting the interaction between trees in the forest through mycelium. Born into a Quebecois logging family in the mountains of British Columbia, she always knew and loved the forest, but was an outsider to scientific research in many ways. This autobiographical story documents her personal struggle for recognition in the scientific and technical forestry world. Simard uses examples of her experiences of discovery to illustrate the way the forest works. She explains her use of complex research tools in an easy to understand way, while interspersing the adrenaline-pumping experience of a grizzly encounter.

After you read her book you will not hike the woods again without an awareness of the "Woodwide Web" (the title of the 1997 *Nature* cover story about her discovery and documentation of the way trees interact in the forest). It has increased my appreciation and enjoyment of the woods and I am sure it will do the same for you. It is a great gift idea for the outdoor enthusiast in your family.

Food Forests- Is it possible in Westbrook (WLCT hopes so!)

Forest gardening is one of the world's oldest forms of land use. Origins of known forest gardening dates back to prehistoric times in the tropics along the river banks of jungle landscapes and on the wet foothills of monsoon regions. Where useful, edible tree and vine species were identified and protected while undesirable species were removed from the area. The origins of forest gardening meant cultivating desirable, productive plant species within their natural forested environment. Today, forest gardens are planned and created to form self-maintaining "designed ecologies" that look and function like a natural forest ecosystem. Nut trees, fruit trees, shrubs, and perennial vegetables are planted in a way that mimics nature.



Creating a food forest on a WLCT parcel is certainly a possibility. If you or anyone you know has any interest in helping to start a food forest on your own property or on a Land Trust parcel, please reach out to us! Westbrooklct@gmail.com

Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-seven-layers-of-the-forest-garden-Credit-Graham-Burnett_fig6_235884102

Annual Meeting with Speaker

The Annual Meeting of the Westbrook Land Conservation Trust will be virtual, on November 10, 2021 at 7:00 pm. **Margot Burns from River Cog** has agreed to be our speaker. She will explain the relationship between LTE and the new regional land trust under River Cog. She will also discuss the new program that they are working on that involves all the regional land trusts.

International Coastal Cleanup 2021

In October, the Westbrook Land Conservation Trust once again participated in the International Coastal Cleanup at West Beach, Middle Beach and Coral Sands Beach. Over 30 volunteers picked up eight bags of trash, including hundreds of used cigarettes.



The *International Coastal Cleanup* is organized by the *Ocean Conservancy* and has been growing for over thirty years. Since its beginning, over 16 million volunteers have collected more than 340 million pounds of trash. The Connecticut coordinator is *Save the Sound*, and the Land Trust works with them.

Over the years, Westbrook has logged hundreds of volunteer hours and gathered hundreds of pounds of refuse. The people of Westbrook adore Long Island Sound and all it represents. Marine debris is one of the greatest threats our ocean faces, but luckily it is an issue in which we can all play a part. First, we can continue to pick up trash at the beach while on our walks. Second, we can be careful not to release mylar balloons. Third, we can stop throwing trash anywhere but the proper receptacles. While a cigarette butt or an alcohol nip found on the beach is obviously displeasing, the same items thrown out the window of a car will flow into the storm drain system and eventually into the sound as well. Fourth, we can support changes in the laws.

Packaging is the most prolific variety of ocean pollution generated here. We have eliminated free plastic bags, while increasing and broadening the deposit on beverage bottles. We can add nips to the deposit list and require compostable or truly recyclable packaging.



Nature Likes Us

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Land Holdings 2021

<u>Parcel/ Fee Owned</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Description</u>
1. Fawn Hill Rd.	3.61	Upland Forest
2. Shelter Harbor Ln.	1.41	Wetlands & Pond
3. McVeagh Rd.	2.74	Creek & Upland Forest
4. Hammock Rd.	4.43	Tidal Marsh
5. Trout Lake Dr.	3.86	Tidal Pond & Upland
6. Mink Rock Cir.	3.80	Upland Forest
7. Malabar Dr.	3.79	Upland Forest
7B. Messerschmidt	2.01	Upland Forest
8. West Pond Meadow Rd.	1.34	Wetland & Forest
9. Carroll Stannard	5.00	Tidal Marsh
10. Barn Way	2.57	Tidal Wetland & Upland
11. Ortner Dr.	3.24	Creek & Upland Forest
12. Pritchett Dr.	2.32	Creek & Upland Forest
13. Fishing Brook Rd.	9.63	Brook & Upland Forest
14. Pond Meadow Split	0.50	Vernal Pool & Upland
14B. Trojanowski	0.90	Vernal Pool & Upland
15. Plymouth Rd.	5.77	Wetland & Upland Forest
16. Big Creek	1.90	transferred to USFWS
17. Seascape	0.13	Tidal Wetland & Upland
18. Homestead Hills	3.31	Wetland & Upland Forest
19. Blue Point	4.00	Wetland & Upland Forest
20. Horse Hill Farms	13.79	Wetland & Upland Forest
21. Wilcox	6.10	Creek & Upland Forest
22. Zito	8.68	Wetland Upland
23. Stannard Gardens	0.16	Tidal Wetland & Upland
24. Lynn Rd. Bridge	0.45	Pond, River & Upland
25. Winterberry Cir.	1.64	Wetland & Upland Forest
26. Timberland Dr.	14.70	Creek, Wetland, Forest & Trail
27. Westbrook Heights	0.20	Woodland & Trail
28. Pointina	0.11	Wetland
29. Toby Hill Chase	26.04	Upland Forest & Trail
30. Nolf	0.83	Tidal Wetland
31. 1552 Boston Post Rd.	0.84	Wetland & Upland Forest
32. Seaside Avenue	11.47	Tidal Wetland

Total Fee Owned 150.27 Acres

Conservation Easement

1. Elliott	51.0	Upland Forest
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See the Properties page of the
WLCT website for more
information and the locations
of each parcel!

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust Membership

P.O. Box 1124, Westbrook, CT 06498 (860) 399-5224 email: WestbrookLCT@gmail.com

Names and Address: (Please list all family members)

_____ Individual \$15.00/year
_____ Family \$25.00/year
_____ Patron \$50.00/year
_____ Sustaining \$100.00/year
_____ Life \$500.00
_____ Additional contribution
for land acquisitions

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

By providing your email address, members will receive notification of board meetings, special activities, including nature walks, as well as property clean ups, and a newsletter highlighting annual accomplishments.

Make checks payable to "Westbrook Land Conservation Trust." Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Circle one

- Yes No Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.
Yes No Please contact me about neighborhood stewardship.
Yes No Please have a director call me to discuss land acquisitions

Or, join or renew membership online @ WWW.WestbrookLCT.org



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

*Westbrook Land Conservation Trust can be proud of its 53-year history and its part in the protection of approximately 20% of Westbrook's land area as open space. Our responsibility to manage it prudently involves insurance, the majority of the annual expense of the organization. **Please join and make your contribution to the continuation of responsible stewardship.***

*Membership involves as little as paying the \$15 individual membership fee, but there are plenty of opportunities for more involvement including helping with the newsletter, stewarding one of our parcels or becoming aboard member. You will receive our newsletter, be invited to help with special events - including hikes, displays on the Town Green and programs with speakers - and get updates on important environmental issues such as land use and issues in Westbrook. The success of **our Land Trust depends upon an active membership**, for financial support, and to meet local needs for conserving and enjoying open space in Westbrook. Please show your support by returning the form above. Your gift will help sustain WLCT for another 53 years!*



Calendar of Events

Wednesday, November 10

Annual Meeting (Virtual)

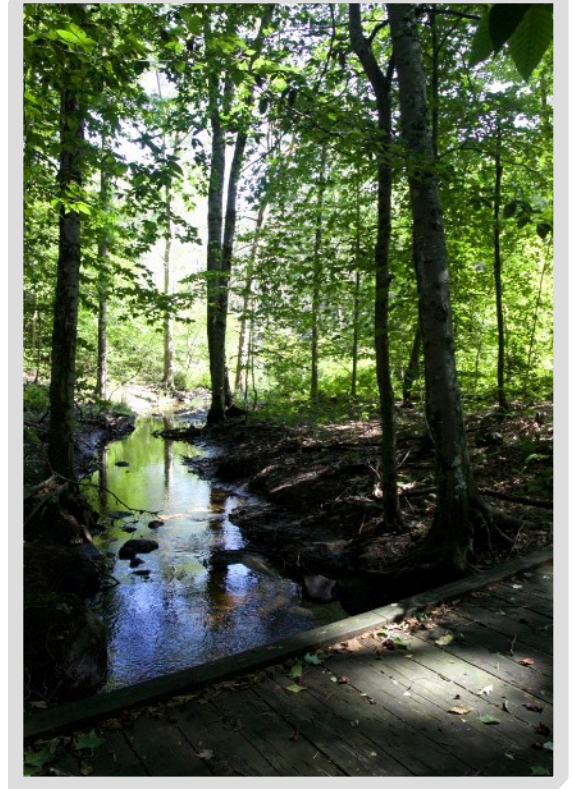
Rivercog Representative Margot Burns

Sunday November 21: 1 - 3 pm: Properties Clean-Up

*Visit some of our parcels, south of Route 1!
Help clean up bottles and litter. Bring work
gloves and a can-do attitude! Meet at the
town hall parking lot.*

Board Meetings are held on *the 2nd
Wednesday* of most months at 7pm in the Town
Hall, or remotely. All are welcome!

For questions about these activities,
e-mail WestbrookLCT@gmail.com



Westbrook Land Conservation Trust
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