

EGREMONT

LAND TRUST

◆ 2021 NEWSLETTER ◆



HEPATICA

ELT Spring Wildflower Walk 2020

Egremont Land Trust is very fortunate that, even though our annual spring wildflower/Green River walk was canceled because of the pandemic, Egremonter Stephanie Bergman created a YouTube video so that we can enjoy it virtually. In April 2020, she went to ELT's property on Route 71 in North Egremont, where we usually celebrate spring with her in person. Accompanying her were cameraman Robert Hoechster and their two daughters. Stephanie points out native plants and invasives, shows us activity by beavers along the Green River, and speaks about river ecology.

To view the YouTube video, go to www.egremontlandtrust.org, and click on the News tab in the upper right corner of the homepage. Then click on "2020 Wildflower Walk."

Stephanie lives in Egremont with her husband and two daughters, where she tends to a big garden, makes herbal remedies, and raises chickens. Stephanie is currently the Development Manager for Mass Audubon Berkshire Wildlife Sanctuaries. She holds a master's degree in environmental education from Lesley University/Audubon Expedition Institute and a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Michigan. ◆



BEAVERS CAN BE SEEN ALONG THE GREEN RIVER



PEGGY MUSKRAT,
URSULA CLIFF AND
KEILA SHELDON
(2017)
EGREMONT TOWN
BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION.

FOUNDING MEMBER AND PAST PRESIDENT:

Ursula Cliff Transitions to Member Emerita

Ursula Cliff, founding member and former president of the ELT, will be stepping down from her position on the board this spring.

Ursula, along with other concerned Egremont residents, was instrumental in the founding of the Egremont Land Trust. ELT's predecessor group, Egremont Environmental Action, had successfully supported the town and Planning Board in its review of a developer's application for 300 houses on the Jug End resort property. Remember those "Keep Egremont Small and Beautiful" bumper stickers? In the end, the development was not built, the state purchased the property, and today we can all enjoy the scenic beauty and hiking trails at the Jug End State Reservation. And the new Egremont Land Trust began looking toward protection of other scenic landscapes in Egremont.

Ursula served as president for many years and as board member after that, guiding us through the conservation or purchase of many additional properties (notably on Baldwin Hill and along the Green River), which ensured the preservation of so much natural beauty in our community.

She was also instrumental in developing an Open Space and Recreation Plan for the town and in having portions of Egremont designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, providing valuable environmental protections for the town.

We wish her all the best as she moves on to a well-earned retirement in the town she has helped protect. We hope she will allow us to rely on her experience and wisdom as we go forward. ◆

Chuck Ogden Retires 2020

Chuck Ogden recently submitted his letter of retirement to the Egremont Land Trust board of directors, and he will be sorely missed. He joined the board in 2002 and became our secretary in 2003, bringing order and content to our minutes. He kept that position for about 12 years. We could always count on him to be knowledgeable about regulations and protocol. He continued to serve as an active board member until November 2020.

Chuck has lived in Egremont his entire life and has served on many committees and town boards. He is currently the chair of Egremont's Board of Health. We are deeply grateful for his years of service on the ELT board.



AFTER THE STORM - PHOTO BY SUSAN S.

HOUSATONIC VALLEY ASSOCIATION



Meet one of our partners, the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA). They are committed to protecting and restoring the Housatonic watershed, of which Egremont is a part. Learn about them at <https://hvatoday.org/>.

Naturalist Alison Dixon, the Berkshire Watershed Conservation Manager, manages HVA's Berkshire river monitoring and education projects. You can contact her by emailing adixon@hvatoday.org.

We at ELT hope you will join the HVA at their virtual "Auction for the Environment" on February 21, from 4 to 5 pm. Christine Baranski will host a reception at 3:30. View the auction offerings! (see their website for information)



MAP OF SABIN PROPERTY

ELT Forest Stewardship Grant

The Egremont Land Trust was recently awarded a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to fund the development of a Forest Stewardship Plan for the Land Trust's 37-acre property on Mt. Washington Road (as seen in the accompanying map). We have engaged the services of a licensed forester, James Wilson Kelly, to conduct a survey of the property to determine what species of trees and shrubs, both native and invasive, are growing on the land, to determine the health of the ecosystem, and to make recommendations for its management in a ten-year plan. We will develop a set of overall goals for the land, which may include enhancing animal habitat, preserving or improving scenic beauty, protecting water quality, and controlling invasives. Based on our general goals, the plan will identify challenges, lay out some general management recommendations, assess the potential for achieving our goals, and indicate priorities for achieving those goals.

In keeping with our mission to preserve the rural character of Egremont, this will mark the first time that we have had the opportunity to obtain professional services to aid us in actively managing our lands. It may serve as a model for the development of additional Forest Stewardship Grantship planning in the future. ♦

ELT COMING EVENTS 2021

As soon as it's
safe to start scheduling events
we'll do so, until then...
know we're missing the activity
as much as you are!

**PLEASE CHECK THE ELT ONLINE
CALENDAR FOR UPDATES:
WWW.EGREMONTLANDTRUST.ORG/CALENDAR.PHP**

LOCATION FOR THE
PROPOSED WALKING PATH AT KARNER BROOK



Karner Brook Walk Update February 2021

Terry Moore

I'm happy to report that the Karner Brook Walk (KBW) is moving along, albeit at a snail's pace. The transfer of the donated land to the ELT from our wonderful neighbors was a monumental task. The survey and title search took months but is now accomplished!

It has been a great privilege working with Egremont residents Alexis Wreden and Robert Fakelmann, the principals of Working Design—Landscape + Architecture. Together we have been gathering ideas and concepts, with visits to Parsons Marsh in Lenox, Berkshire Botanical Garden in Stockbridge, and Innisfree Gardens in Millbrook, NY. All of these unique places have inspired us to create what we hope will be a model project for our village for many years to come.

The concept behind the KBW is the creation of a contemplative path to view the brook and enjoy the wildlife in our area. The proposal Alexis and Robert have submitted calls for removal of non-native and invasive species, while encouraging the growth of the existing mature trees. The pathway between Mom's Restaurant and the Old Mill will vary from gravel path to raised black-locust decking, including an elevated observation platform from which the brook's bending course can be observed at full advantage.

I have a detailed map of the entire project with all of the supporting information and would be happy to share it with any interested party. I will be reaching out to all of you, and others, in hopes that your generous donations will bring the project to fruition.

Best wishes to all,

Sincerely,

Terry Moore. ♦



FUTURE KARNER BROOK WALK

GOING GREEN!

We at the Egremont Land Trust continue to collect email addresses so that we can save paper (not to mention postage) when we send out announcements and notifications of events.

Please send us your email address!

Click the "contact" tab of our website

egremontlandtrust.org

or by contacting Marj directly at
mwexler43@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

ELT Members & Supporters 2019-2020 Many thanks to our loyal supporters, listed below. Without you, our accomplishments would simply not exist. Please renew your membership for 2021, or, if you are not already a member, join us. Use the enclosed envelope. We welcome you!

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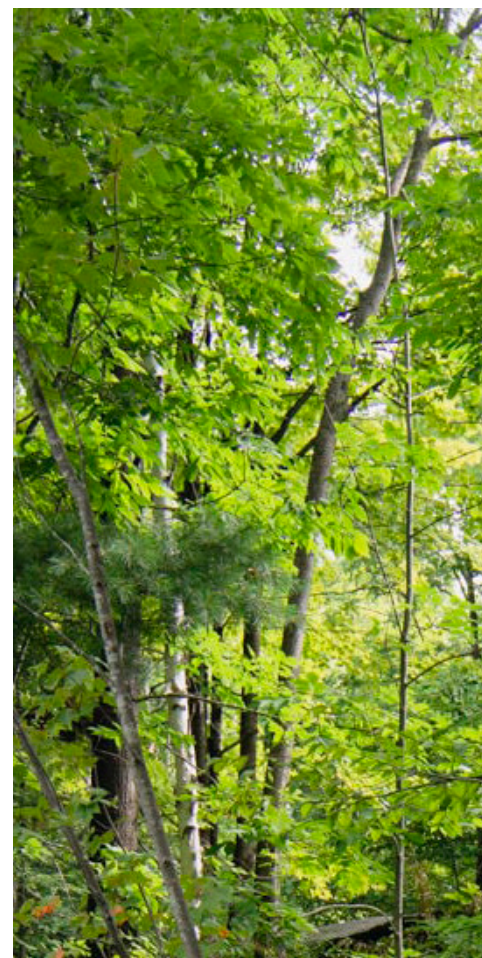
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SMILEY'S POND

ARI ZORN, NATURALIST:

Friends of Smiley's Pond

One of Egremont's richest wildlife habitats is Smiley's Pond at the junction of Routes 23 and 41, just west of the village of South Egremont. And one of Egremont's most devoted wildlife guardians is Ari Zorn, the owner of Zorn Core Fitness. Ari has degrees in both Culinary Arts and Hotel Restaurant management, but he calls himself a naturalist now. He says that the landscape of the Berkshires is similar to that of his Seattle birthplace.

Of the animals who call the pond their home, his first love is the turtles. Drivers have seen Ari out on the road, pausing traffic to allow a turtle to cross safely on an egg-laying mission. (Ari also keeps tabs on the herons who frequent the far edge of the pond.) He founded Friends of Smiley's Pond, a Facebook group dedicated to the preservation of the pond and all the creatures that call it home.



ARI ZORN AT THE DAM



THE TURTLE MAN

Right now, his crusade is to modify the underwater dam hidden beneath the road at the junction. The dam makes it difficult for creatures—turtles, snakes, frogs, fish—to move between the brook and the pond, and Ari has had to rescue turtles stranded at the base of the dam, which, he says, is too high and too slick. But help is on the way. He has enlisted the state's Department of Transportation as well as of our Representative Smitty Pignatelli. Ari promises that by spring the problem will be partially solved when a temporary turtle crossing is installed, and, based on Ari's environmental conservation work, research on modifying the dam will begin. We will then be on our way to becoming a role model for other communities—even worldwide.

Smiley's Pond with its accompanying land is presently for sale. We are hoping that whoever buys it will agree to preserve its natural beauty. ♦



Aunt Rose

OK, 2020 is more than just a memory: It's left us some real problems. And it looks like the new administration is going to raise taxes to deal with some of those problems. Now, nobody who has followed my journalistic career in Egremont (and there are several of you) will call me a friend to taxation. (Although I grudgingly admit that it makes the governmental wheels go round.)

But as you calculate your (always insufficient) income, remember that the tax man can't take that part of it you've already given to charity. When you write your check to, for example, ELT, you've snatched it from his greedy claws. And you will have done many good deeds. In Egremont alone, you will have helped preserve our beautiful landscape, our healthy air, and our marvelous habitat for wildlife. (The hardhearted editor of this publication won't include the very artistic photo I took of my backdoor opossum.)

So, do that Good Deed! Remember ELT!

A look back....

A sample of birds seen on our annual Bird Walks

- American crow
- American goldfinch
- American robin
- Baltimore oriole
- Barn swallow
- Black-capped chickadee
- Black-and-white warbler
- Black-throated blue warbler
- Black-throated green warbler
- Black vulture
- Blue jay
- Blue-gray gnatcatcher
- Blue-headed vireo
- Blue-winged warbler
- Brown-headed cowbird
- Chipping sparrow
- Common grackle
- Common raven
- Common yellowthroat
- Cooper's hawk
- Downy woodpecker
- Eastern bluebird
- Eastern phoebe
- Eastern towhee
- European starling
- Field sparrow
- Gray catbird
- Hairy woodpecker
- House wren
- Indigo Bunting
- Least flycatcher
- Lincoln's sparrow
- Louisiana waterthrush
- Magnolia warbler
- Mallard
- Mourning dove
- Northern cardinal
- Northern flicker
- Ovenbird
- Pileated woodpecker
- Prairie warbler
- Red-bellied woodpecker
- Red-tailed hawk
- Red-winged blackbird
- Rose-breasted grosbeak
- Ruby-crowned kinglet
- Savannah sparrow
- Scarlet tanager
- Song sparrow
- Swainson's thrush
- Swamp sparrow
- Tree swallow
- Tufted titmouse
- Turkey vulture
- Warbling vireo
- White-breasted nuthatch
- White-throated sparrow
- Wood thrush
- Yellow-bellied sapsucker
- Yellow warbler



RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER



LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH



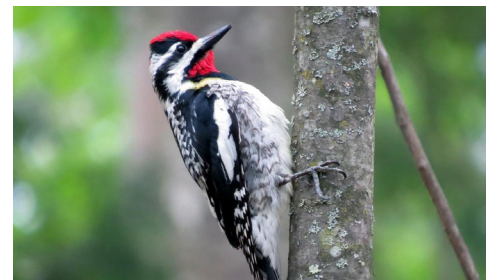
BLACK THROATED BLUE WARBLER



BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE



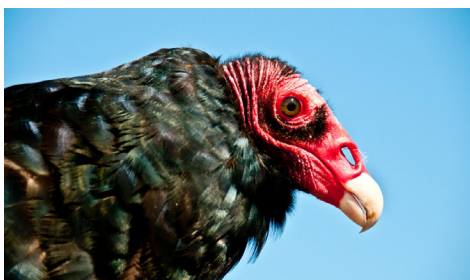
WARBLING VIREO



YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER



NORTHERN CARDINAL



TURKEY VULTURE



INDIGO BUNTING

ELT Office

The Egremont Land Trust meets at April Hill, the home of Greenagers, at 62 Undermountain Road, or by Zoom when necessary. We meet about once a month, usually on Friday afternoons, and we welcome visitors. Call our president Peg Muskrat for the date of the next meeting.

Egremont Land Trust Online: www.egremontlandtrust.org

Our calendar of events is always posted on our website, but as of now, none are scheduled. We expect to resume our bird, wildflower, and invasive plant walks as soon as the pandemic allows. Stay tuned!

Send us your email address to receive announcements, or print out a membership and donation form. We do not share membership information with anyone, no matter how worthy the cause.



PHOTOGRAPH BY: SELIGMAN

BALDWIN HILL ELM

PLEASE RENEW OR JOIN US!

THIS IS THE TIME FOR MEMBERS TO RENEW THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN ELT!

If you love Egremont but haven't yet joined ELT, please use the envelope to become part of our work. If you are already a member and don't need the envelope to renew, please pass it to a friend who might be interested. Not sure if you have renewed? Email information@egremontlandtrust.org and ask us!

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www.egremontlandtrust.org

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