

Cape Lands

The Newsletter of CAPE ELIZABETH LAND TRUST Summer 2005

Lessons from the Field

One of the three focus areas of our work here at the land trust—alongside land preservation and stewardship—is education. Education in the form of nature walks, interpretive brochures, kiosks, and in-school projects all play a role in fostering a greater interest in the stewardship and protection of our natural surroundings. CELT's growing education programs have proven to be a valuable resource for the community by generating a greater appreciation of our local resources.



Summer Adventure Camp Kids at Pond Cove

Supported in large part by grants from private foundations and donor designated gifts, our education programs are coordinated through CELT's education committee. This committee is

comprised of 11 members who attend 6-8 meetings each year to create, and then implement these projects over the course of the year.

For the past several years CELT has participated in the Cape High School's Senior Transition Program (this year two seniors are co-producing a video highlighting the work here at CELT), and for the past seven years the entire eighth grade has contributed a half-day of trail maintenance and trail building. More recently CELT has begun offering outdoor adventure classes for elementary aged students through Community Services. Taught by local teachers and naturalists, these programs have been extremely successful, with waiting lists for each session.

Utilizing the many talents of our teachers and volunteers we are now working on some very exciting and innovative projects. In recognition of the importance of our schools as not only educational institutions, but also the physical space where our children spend many of their waking hours, we

are exploring with school officials new ways of "greening the school grounds." Similar efforts throughout the nation have created some remarkable living landscapes that incorporate natural learning environments into school grounds.

Over the past 1½ years, CELT has regularly met with school administrators and teachers to identify opportunities for cooperation that will enable teachers and students to utilize the natural environment in Cape Elizabeth as a basis for science learning to complement their current curriculum. With support from teachers and school administrators CELT has already committed to creating a new Environmental Education Resource Center at the elementary school.

In the fall we are hoping to initiate a new small grants program to enable local teachers to pursue professional training or to purchase teaching materials that will assist them in creating new environmental education lessons. Finally, we are attempting to build a list of "on-call" docents to lead field trips to assist local teachers.

At CELT protecting natural areas involves not only protecting land from development but also being good stewards of the land into the future. To accomplish this we must understand, appreciate and protect the natural features represented on our properties. By giving children the opportunity to learn more about their natural surroundings, we are contributing to a foundation on which to build a lifelong appreciation of the outdoor environment.

Please contact Lisa Gent or Suzanne McGinn for more information about the CELT Education Committee: lisagent@verizon.net or smcginn1@maine.rr.com

THE CAPE ELIZABETH LAND TRUST is a non-profit, membership organization dedicated to preserving accessible retreats, wild-life habitat, & other natural areas in Cape Elizabeth to be used for the education & enjoyment of this & future generations. ☞ **The participation & support** of all who share the organization's interests is most welcome. ☞ **The Land Trust now protects** over 560 acres of historic, scenic & ecologically-significant farmland, woods, wetlands & shore land in Cape Elizabeth. ☞ **CELT is a member** of the Maine Farmland Trust, the Maine Land Trust Network & the Land Trust Alliance, the national organization of local & regional land trusts.



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DESIGN: Uninvoice Graphics
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CELT IS GRATEFUL TO GREAT WORKS INTERNET
FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION OF
WEBSITE & EMAIL SERVICES.



Spring is here! The excitement can be felt as the woods come alive with new growth, wild flowers and woodland creatures. The Cape Elizabeth Land Trust has a special excitement as well. WE have completed our major capital campaign! The \$2.1 million dollars that were raised allowed us to complete the purchase of 82 acres of pristine forest in Robinson Woods and 47 acres of development rights of prime farmland and scenic vistas at the William Jordan Farm, and provided some additional money for the stewardship of our properties.

How was a small land trust able to complete these projects? The answer is Private/Public Collaboration. The generous reduction of the selling price of both properties by the land owners, the strong financial support of Cape citizens and the partnership of the Town government enabled us to leverage state and federal monies. 125 acres with a market value of over \$3.2 million dollars is permanently protected for citizens and future generations. With today's economy this type of partnership is the best -if not the only- mechanism for the preservation and conservation of the areas that make Cape Elizabeth so special. Without the continued partnership between the Trust, the Town of Cape Elizabeth and local supporters, the success of future projects will be comprised.

The competition for these funds is fierce and at the moment, there is no more money for The Land for Maine's Future projects. I urge you all to talk to your Legislators and encourage them to put forth another bond issue to restore funds for this important project. The Land for Maine's Future Program has already protected over 97,533 acres including 26,848 acres in conservation easements, 228.5 miles of waterfront land, and 86 miles of former rail line including a total of \$679,450 for our projects. I am confident the voters of Maine will vote for a bond should they be given the chance..

With this in mind, please enjoy the trails, fields and views that are protected for you and future generations, and know that your support contributed to these accomplishments.

My best to you all,

Phyllis Coggeshall
CELT Board President

NEW MAPS!

Featuring photos & descriptions of nearly 20 hiking destinations and over 10 miles of trails, this map is a must have for your Cape explorations! If you have not yet received a copy of our Cape Elizabeth Town and Trails Map, stop by to purchase one from our office, or simply use the enclosed envelope.



Free with \$35 membership



Sure signs of summer are all around us, the spring peepers and bug free days of late spring are quickly leaving and waist high snow banks already seem a distant memory. One rite of spring you may not have noticed, however, occurs each year in our small woodland vernal pools. Teeming with life above and below the surface, these pools play an essential role in the reproductive cycles of our forest amphibians. Due to their seasonal nature these pools harbor no predatory fish and serve as a literal nursery for our native salamanders and frogs.

With care and patience, a visitor to one of these pools in June may still be able to see dozens of tennis ball size egg sacs hanging on underwater branches and grasses, or perhaps a glimpse of the tiny wood frog tadpoles, or young salamanders underwater sporting their external gills. For most of the year amphibians spend their lives under rocks and logs, occasionally venturing out in search of food. But each spring these woodland creatures descend en masse to these pools in a mating frenzy that lasts a few short weeks. In a good year the pool will maintain its water level and temperature long enough to enable the newly hatched tadpoles and salamanders to mature and disperse back into the surrounding forest.

During this time of year vernal pools are extremely sensitive to disturbance and one apparently innocuous swim by a dog can displace hundreds of developing eggs. Likewise handling salamanders may harm them as natural oils from our hands can damage their skin. As we learn more about the many natural resources found on our properties we are developing a much keener eye towards managing these areas responsibly.

As a geographic region New England has more salamander species than anywhere else on earth. The Appalachian Mountains region alone is home to nearly 40 different species. While there are significantly fewer species here in Maine, turning over a few rocks and logs will often reveal one of our many species. Last spring when I came across a 6-inch long spotted salamander trapped in the jaws of a garter snake I was amazed that a salamander this large had eluded my woodland explorations for so long. From this experience I realized how easily we underestimate the complexity and diversity of our surroundings.

These lessons can serve to teach us of the importance of preserving natural areas for walking and relaxation, but also for their own sake. With so much of the world changing around us, it is comforting to walk through groves of trees



Tony Owens displays local salamander eggs.

that have withstood centuries of change and to witness the annual migration of seabirds and warblers as they pass through our region. The glimpse of the occasional bald eagle or great-horned owl or pine marten reminds us that the natural environment surrounding us can, and should be protected as a source of inspiration and renewal.

It is easy to forget that the woods surrounding our homes represent the remnants of what was once a contiguous habitat that evolved over thousands of years. While recent environmental protections have set limits intended to protect our most endangered species, small ephemeral wetlands such as vernal pools are often not protected. To ensure responsible stewardship of our lands we must first understand and appreciate our natural resources—this process begins with education.

Throughout this summer and fall CELT will continue to offer a series of guided hikes, trail work days and other opportunities to get out on the trails with other members to explore, and to participate in the preservation of the 560 acres we manage each year. If you would like to receive notice of upcoming events via email or flyer please let us know, you can also visit our website at www.capelandtrust.org where we hope to begin posting your photos and wildlife sightings. In these ways CELT hopes to encourage you—our members and neighbors --to rediscover and to celebrate the wild in our natural surroundings.

See you on the trails.

—Christopher Franklin
Executive Director

CAPE ELIZABETH LAND TRUST



Fall Harvest Celebration

at Gull Crest Fields

In conjunction with the CELT Challenge, the whole community is invited to a celebration. Join us for a day full of family events, including a barbeque, Pie contest, Arts and Crafts and Games!



Sunday, September

Register Online at active.com OR Call/e-mail Beginning at 8 AM on Sunday morning challenge each participant or team to complete

- 425-yard swim
- 10-mile bike ride
- 3-mile cross-country run

Registration is open to the first 125 participants given the opportunity to register NOW!

We are hoping to have as many Cape residents sign up today.

Not up for all three events? Have your family try their strongest leg.

Especially for the under 12 age group: CELT duathlon swim-run event. Stay tuned for more

VOLUNTEER!

To ensure these events run.....bike...and swim smoothly, we are looking for a few dozen volunteers to help!

TRIATHLON

- Bike Course set up and monitoring
- Cross Country Run set up and monitoring
- Pool area set up and monitoring

FALL HARVEST CELEBRATION

- Kids activities
- Fall Harvest Festival
- Food Set up and cooking

CLEAN UP



TITLE SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE

A great way to get your company name in front of Cape consumers!

Save the Dates! Save the Dates! Save the Dates! Save the Dates! Save the Dates! Save the Dates!

Challenge!

er 25, 2005

ail the CELT office for an entry form.
g, our first local Sprint Triathlon will
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nts (ages 12+). CELT members are being

ts as possible, so gather your friends and

y divide the events, letting each choose

T will host a much shorter and smaller
ore info!

It's our
Anniversary...
and YOU'RE
INVITED!

CAPE ELIZABETH LAND TRUST

1985-2005



Dinner Dance
Friday, November 11
at the
Black Point Inn

featuring
the Tony Boffa Band

In celebration of CELT's 20th year
we invite you to join the
many individuals who have
contributed to our success
since 1985.

Tickets for this semi-formal event
are being made available for
a limited time exclusively to our
current members before
becoming available to the general public.

*With only 100 tickets available, we
encourage you to begin planning now.*

**Tickets include a full sit down dinner
and dancing: \$95 per person.**

VOLUNTEER! We are looking for a few key volunteers
to help make the dinner dance shine!

THE CAPE ELIZABETH LAND TRUST

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND FOUNDATIONS
FOR THEIR GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND GIFTS OF TIME, ENERGY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE



With nearly 200 new or renewing members in the past year CELT is succeeding in the task of ensuring that those of you who receive our newsletter & appreciate our work—are current members. Currently only about 10% of the households in Cape are current members. Membership donations provide the essential support necessary to coordinate the management of our lands and to pursue new land preservation opportunities. In this, our 20th year we hope you will make sure you are able to count your household as current supporters of our work. If you have a question about your membership status please feel free to contact us.

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**New Study Affirms CELT'S
 Solid Standing Among
 Cape Residents**

A new market research study undertaken in March 2005 by the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust clearly demonstrates that Cape residents have both a high level of awareness of the organization as well as very favorable attitudes about its pursuit of its mission.

The study, donated by the Portland-based market research company Critical Insights surveyed a total of 300 Cape residents over a two-week period. Critical Insights and the Marketing Committee of CELT developed the questionnaire collaboratively. Highlights of the study include a "Top-of-Mind" (unaided) awareness rating of 58%. The closest organization in this category was Maine Audubon at 19%. The "Total Awareness" rating (unaided and aided) of 84% led several other larger organizations by a significant margin. Only Maine Audubon had a higher total awareness rating of 94%. "This survey provides a very solid platform for our future communications and membership programs," said Chris Franklin, CELT's Executive Director.

In terms of image and reputation, CELT received what is best described as "extraordinary" ratings in the study. 70% of the residents who participated in the study

rated the organization "Excellent" (41%) or "Very Good" (29%). Fewer than 5% of residents reported unfavorable ratings. Importantly, most residents felt that CELT has a "reasonable approach" to land use in Cape Elizabeth (88%) and that the organization represents the interests of a majority of residents (81%). Fully 87% of residents feel that CELT is a "valuable resource" to the community.

"We are, obviously, quite pleased with the results of this study," said Phyllis Coggeshall, President of CELT. "It provides us with a very clear and positive picture of where the organization stands in the minds of Cape residents and provides us with greater insights with which to direct our future efforts...to ensure that we continue to make the kind of contribution that enables us to continue to earn the respect, and support of the community."



The Cape Elizabeth Land Trust is most appreciative of the time and effort dedicated to this historic project by Mary Ellen Fitzgerald, President of Critical Insights who donated her time, and organizational resources to this survey.

— Francis 'Bud' Guthrie
 Marketing Committee Chair
 and CELT Board Member

UPCOMING EVENTS/INFO/THANKS!

Pizza Night!

Please join the Land Trust for another benefit evening at the Flatbread company on Tuesday June 28. A donation will be made to CELT for each pizza sold. Come early to say hello and enjoy a great night out!

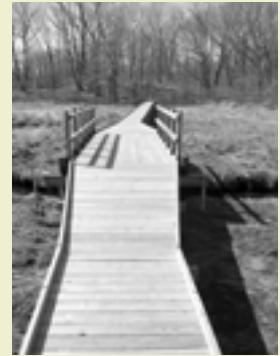
WISH LIST

We are always looking for a few key ingredients to help us fine tune our operations:

- Experienced web design consultation
- CPA consultation and services
- Digital Camera

New Bridge Completed

In early May, the Town of Cape Elizabeth officially opened a new bridge spanning the Spurwink Marsh between the Land Trust property behind Elizabeth Park and Brentwood neighborhoods and the Gull Crest athletic fields and trail system. This bridge provides an essential link in the town's master greenbelt plan to connect Fort Williams to Crescent Beach, and opens up access to many miles of new trail walking. Hats off to our town planner Maureen O'Meara and everyone who made this bridge possible.



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