

Fall 2005



www.westfordconservationtrust.org



Join us for the Trust's Annual Meeting

Editor
Diane Duane

When: Thursday, November 3rd at 7:30pm

Where: Parish Center for the Arts, Westford Common

Speaker

This year's speaker will be **Ted Williams**. Ted is Editor-at-Large for Audubon Magazine and lives in Grafton, Massachusetts. He has published a book this year entitled ***Wild Moments: Reveling in Nature's Signs, Songs, Cycles and Curious Creatures***. The book cover states, "For more than 30 years, Ted Williams has been one of the most respected nature writers in the United States....Here is a collection of Williams's beautifully crafted seasonal observation columns....Here is a whole year of writings on nature's wild music." He will read excerpts and will do book signings. The book will also be available for purchase.



Conservation Trustee Award

This year, the Trust will be awarding the Conservation Trustee Award for 2005 to **Leslie Thomas**, chairperson of the Board of Water Commissioners. Leslie has worked for many years on projects that preserve water resources, town character and open space. Come join us as we celebrate and acknowledge Leslie's hard work and dedication as an environmentally active citizen.

Business

The meeting will begin with the Trust's yearly business. It will be presented by the Treasurer, Secretary, and the Land/Trail Stewardship Committee. Our bylaws state that elections for Directors, Associate Directors, Clerk, and Treasurer be held at the Annual meeting as well. Our guest speaker will follow this brief business meeting. The new edition of Westford's Trail booklet will be available at the meeting. Refreshments will also be served. Hope to see you there!

Trust Activities

Water Quality Monitoring Project by Peter Severance

Westford's streams and rivers play a critical part in the health and well-being of our town. Since we all live in a watershed, we all have a vested interest in the quality of the water in our streams and rivers. From drinking water sources (our Stony Brook aquifer) to the provision of diverse aquatic habitats (such as Nashoba Brook), watershed health is indeed one of our most diverse and complex challenges.

Westford is part of two major subwatersheds of the Merrimack River: the Assabet-Concord subwatershed which **Nashoba Brook** feeds into, and the **Stony Brook** subwatershed. While our rivers have been largely cleaned up from the extreme pollution generated during the time of post-WWII industrial development, both of Westford's subwatershed are still classified by the DEP as "impaired," due to excess nutrients, organic enrichment, pathogens and suspended solids. In addition, Nashoba Brook is listed as a "stressed basin," a watershed depleted by more water withdrawal in the summer months than is replaced by rains.

How is Westford involved in this pollution, and, if so, what can we do about it?

While much of this pollution has in the past been associated with industry, farms and wastewater treatment plants, the majority of this pollution now comes from what are termed "non-point sources" in our commercial and residential neighborhoods. According to both the EPA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), limiting impervious groundcover (asphalt, cement) in each of our stream basins, reducing the use of fertilizers on our lawns, and using modern engineering practices for managing stormwater runoff (such as low impact development) will help alleviate these problems.

The Trust, with assistance from the Massachusetts Riverways Program and the Organization for the Assabet River has initiated a program to monitor and assess the quality of all of the major streams (the "subbasins") in town contributing to both Nashoba and Stony Brooks. Volunteers have begun regular sampling of the nutrients, oxygen levels and organisms which are the key indicators of stream health. Sub-basin by sub-basin, this data will be combined with estimates of impervious surface and inventories of unique habitat, plants and animals that will help the town manage impacts to this irreplaceable natural resource.

For more info on watersheds, go to www.cwp.org/whats_a_watershed.htm and www.ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/watershed.html



Map of the sub-basins tested in Westford



WCT member Paul Cully sampling stream conditions in Stony Brook

Did you know?

"A Watershed (also known as a basin) is all of the land area that drains to a particular lake, stream, river, estuary, or the ocean and can range in size from part of a township to all of New England."

"Just as there are small creeks and streams which are often tributaries of large rivers, watersheds can be small and large. A small watershed may drain just a few acres of land into a tiny creek. It will be a sub-watershed of a larger watershed." The Stony Brook and Beaver Brook watersheds, for example, are sub-watersheds of the Merrimack River Watershed. The Nashoba Brook is a sub-watershed of the Assabet River Watershed.

-from Beginning with Habitat, 2003 and U.S. Geological Survey, Water Science for Schools



Join the Trust

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (optional)/Email _____

Check here if interested in volunteering for trail maintenance



Check here if interested in volunteering for educational efforts

Please make tax deductible check payable to: **Westford Conserva-**



tion Trust

Please mail to: **Westford Conservation Trust P.O. Box 255**

Westford, Ma. 01886

Or join online at www.westfordconservationtrust.org

\$15 Individual

\$35 Family

\$100 Friend

\$250 Patron

\$500+ Supporter

Other

Trust Meetings—Please join us for our monthly meetings. All members and other interested individuals are invited to attend the Westford Conservation Trust monthly meetings. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month and begin at 7:30 P.M. at the Rogers Fire Station (except the November 3rd annual meeting at the PCA). You can contact us at info@westfordconservationtrust.org or 978-692-3907 .



Non Profit
Organization
Postage Paid
Permit #86
Westford, Ma

Westford Conservation Trust
P.O. Box 255
Westford, Massachusetts 01886



Do you know who made these tracks? Go to our website to find out!