

Winter 2010

The Nature  
Conservancy   
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

# The Oak Log

News From Vermont



## Special Annual Report Edition

Cover Story: Lessons from Atlas Timberlands, pg. 4

New faces in the Vermont Chapter, pg. 7



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**The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.**

The Nature Conservancy is a private, international membership organization committed to the preservation of natural diversity. To date, we have protected more than 117 million acres in the United States and around the world.

The Nature Conservancy is supported by contributions from individuals. Donations may be sent to the Vermont chapter at 27 State Street, Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602-2959.

The Oak Log is edited by Susan Reid and designed by The Laughing Bear Associates, Inc.

**CORRECTION:** A story in the Autumn 2010 Oak Log, "Land Protection and Natural Areas," incorrectly characterized the family foundation that provided funding for the Helen W. Buckner Memorial Preserve at Bald Mountain in 1992. The Buckner family group that gave the gift was not renamed Sweet Water Trust. Sweet Water is a private foundation established by Walker Buckner to protect wild nature, and he is its sole trustee. Our apologies for the error.

With the holidays nearly upon us, the glories of last summer are quickly receding. The cold has an edge, but who can forget that long stretch of warm days and generous sunny weather just passed? Gardeners will remember the summer of 2010 as one of the most friendly and bug-free growing seasons in a long time. Staff at the Conservancy's Vermont Chapter will long remember it as the summer of our 50th Anniversary.

Without interrupting our core work of land conservation and stewardship, we marked our 50th by sponsoring two art shows, publishing a stunning preserve guide, and holding a fabulous Annual Gathering on the shores of Lake Champlain. A capacity crowd of nearly 400 people joined us to celebrate the Vermont Chapter's 50th anniversary at Shelburne Farms. The weather was perfect for our many field



Toasting the Vermont Chapter's 50th anniversary at the Annual Gathering at Shelburne Farms are, left to right, Gerry Jones, Warren King, Bob Klein, Hub Vogelmann and Dave Marvin.

Hub ran the chapter for much of our first 20 years out of his UVM Botany Department office, and he recalled an earlier chapter annual meeting when the entire membership came — all 17 people. Well, quite a few more members were on hand for our 50th annual meeting, spirits ran high, and a good time was had by all.

Peter Forbes of The Center for Whole Communities in Waitsfield gave a memorable and energetic keynote presentation that challenged us to work more inclusively with communities, and to be prepared for inevitable (and possibly profound) demographic and cultural shifts coming to Vermont. It left us with a lot to think about. I gave a short speech to share my perspective on the chapter's future.

I'm a big believer in continuity of purpose, so I'm not proposing a radical turn away from the path we've taken. We've been building a preserve system here, the essence of tangible, "place based" conservation. Technically, our mission has to do with science, biodiversity, habitat, and nature. Fine, but it also behooves us to understand that conservation is as much about people as anything else, and that for many Vermonters, conservation is more about quality of life than biodiversity.

So we need to keep people in the loop by partnering with communities and social institutions of all kinds. Though it's sometimes a complication, we should continue to make the beautiful, ecologically rich places we own available to the public, by building trails, publishing trail guides, encouraging research and education, and investing in volunteers. Basically, we should continue to help people reconnect with nature, both for their sakes and ours.

Vermont is a "two degrees of separation" kind of place, one large community where trust spreads by word of mouth. Reputation and relationships are critical in this tiny state. Our membership here is large and supportive because we've always given something tangible back to Vermont. Everyone knows it, and we are valued for this. We are trusted partners. If the same can be said 50 years from now, we will have succeeded brilliantly.

*Bob Klein*

Cover photo: Emily Boedecker / TNC



# Annual Gathering

**Snapshots of the  
Vermont Chapter's  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Annual Gathering –  
Shelburne Farms,  
Saturday, Aug. 28, 2010**

Thank you to everyone  
who celebrated with us  
and made this such a  
momentous day!

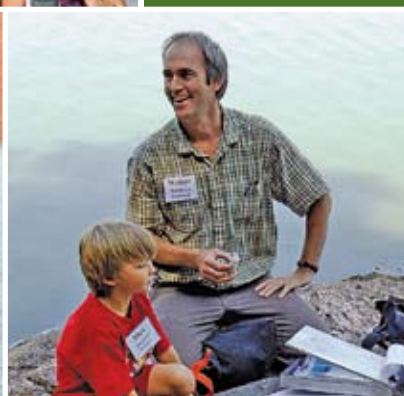
Brett Engstrom did a super job of presenting Camp Johnson as unique with several rare/endangered plants. Bob Klein's photographs were inspirational and the keynote speaker, Peter Forbes, was excellent. The dinner was scrumptious and the setting was out of this world.

Dean and Susan Greenberg, Hartland  
Eshqua Bog Natural Area  
volunteer stewards



I want to thank you for one of the best days of my life  
on Saturday... I enjoyed it up to the eyeballs!  
Linda M. Maloney, Enosburg Falls  
Interim Pastor at Calvary Episcopal Church, Underhill

Saturday's event was truly memorable. The staff deserves  
hearty congratulations for bringing it off so smoothly.  
Clive Gray, Greensboro  
Vermont Chapter Trustee





# Lessons from the Forest

## WHAT THE ATLAS TIMBERLANDS PARTNERSHIP TEACHES US

The Nature Conservancy and the Vermont Land Trust took ownership of 26,000 acres of working forest in the Green Mountains in 1997.

Thirteen years ago, The Nature Conservancy and the Vermont Land Trust completed one of the largest conservation projects in the eastern United States, becoming joint owners of thousands of acres of timberland across the northern Green Mountains.

The Atlas Timberlands Partnership was a huge leap for both organizations. On Dec. 29, 1997, the two nonprofit conservation groups took ownership of more than 26,000 acres of undeveloped working forest.

The partnership was born out of concern for the future of the northern forest. Vast swaths of timberland from Vermont to Maine were being sold off in the 1980s and '90s. With the Atlas lands, the missions of The Nature Conservancy and Vermont Land Trust (VLT) intersected as they sought to protect the natural world and the working landscape.

Conservancy State Director Bob Klein noted that historically, the Conservancy protected biological resources, and VLT focused on the economic use of the forest. “We realize these are not separate directions if we are to maintain the integrity of Vermont’s forests in the future,” Klein said at the time.

Recently recalling the early conversations about taking over one of the largest timber holdings in the state, Klein remembered both urgency and hesitancy. “We were worried that the land might get chopped up and then chopped up again into multiple ownerships,” Klein said. “We had a chance to keep it as a working forest.

“I remember when it first came up, we wondered, ‘What should we do with this?’ It was a great conservation opportunity, but we weren’t in the timber business,” he said, adding

that the lands weren’t ecologically valuable and therefore not a typical Conservancy acquisition. And, he wondered, “how would we ever pay for it?”

Ultimately, it was a Freeman Foundation grant of \$5 million that moved the project forward and covered the bulk of the purchase price. Without that, Atlas would never have been realized, Klein said.

Today, the Atlas Timberlands continue to both challenge and gratify the people who are responsible for managing them. David McMath, the forester who has been shepherding the project from its infancy, said he appreciates being able to practice sustainable forestry, a silvicultural approach that involves tending and managing the trees to ensure their long-term health, with less concern about the immediate bottom line.

“The beauty of Atlas,” McMath said, “is whatever work we started will continue on after we’re gone.”

For a forester, he said, the Atlas Timberlands are “a dream come true.”

**When it first came up, we wondered, ‘What should we do with this?’ It was a great conservation opportunity, but we weren’t in the timber business.**

**Bob Klein**  
State Director,  
The Nature Conservancy



## COVER STORY: ATLAS TIMBERLANDS

That is not to say that the work is easy or that there aren't frustrations. Trees grow very slowly, and the Atlas lands had been pretty much "picked over," so there is a lot of growing that needs to take place before valuable timber and healthy trees return to these woods. Above all, for the handful of loggers, truckers and foresters who harvest the Atlas trees in winter, "this is hard, dangerous work," McMath said. In an attempt to make operations as low-impact as possible, the work is done in winter when the ground is frozen to avoid tearing up the forest floor.

"The Atlas Timberlands in their non-special way have a diversity, a wild and rugged feel and uniqueness that I haven't experienced in other parts of the country," McMath said. "This also adds to the challenge. They are some of the toughest lands I have ever worked. Nothing — and I mean nothing — is ever easy or straightforward on these properties."

The Conservancy's Jon Binhammer, Director of Land Protection, agrees. "The terrain is steep and difficult. There are a lot of streams, and we have to be careful to protect them

The history of these woodlands suggests anything but balance — they were depleted over time as they were increasingly used as a resource, starting nearly two centuries ago with European settlers and proceeding through years of aggressive timber extraction by private industry. The Atlas Timberlands Partnership is working to reverse that.

In 2003, Atlas reached a significant milestone when the property was "green certified" by the Forest Stewardship Council, a designation that potentially could add value to the forest products. In the past few years however, the wood market has been so poor that McMath has been focusing more on management plans and property lines, and backing off on harvesting until the market returns. The Conservancy and VLT are also working on updating their memorandum of understanding to refine the goals for Atlas.

At the time of the purchase, the Atlas Timberlands were scattered in 23 separate parcels across 16 towns. In an attempt to consolidate and make the lands more manageable, the partners have sold four parcels with conservation easements,



Forester David McMath, above, follows a low-impact silviculture approach so any logging on the Atlas lands is scheduled for winter when the ground is frozen.

**Nothing — and I mean nothing — is ever easy or straightforward on these properties.**

**David McMath, Atlas Timberlands Partnership forester**

from erosion. Atlas has really opened my eyes to the complicated world of timber management"

That was one of the reasons behind the Atlas purchase, and Carl Powden, VLT's Regional Director for Central Vermont, said it has been "a huge learning opportunity for both organizations.

"It's given us the ability to talk to owners of large tracts of forestland and understand the economic pressures they're up against in the balancing of healthy forests and economic realities," Powden said.

Balance is critical with the Atlas project, Klein said, to gain a better understanding of timber management and appreciate the complexity of the business while also demonstrating a viable model for increasing timber value. The basic idea is to harvest responsibly while protecting ecologically sensitive areas, stream buffers, critical wildlife habitat and species diversity. Ultimately, the hope is to show that forestry and conservation can work together rather than against each other.

leaving about 24,000 acres. The profit from the sales provides working capital for the project, and has also been used to purchase land for better access to the Atlas forests.

For The Nature Conservancy, nationally and internationally, the Vermont timber deal was the first of this scale. Two years later, in 1999, the Vermont Chapter joined a multi-party effort to protect the biggest land holding in the state, 130,000 acres of Champion International's timberlands in the Northeast Kingdom. Other Conservancy chapters in Maine and Montana later became involved in working forest deals of substantial size. "Bit by bit, conserving working forest lands grew as a conservation strategy for The Nature Conservancy," Klein said.

Atlas is a long-term commitment. It's difficult work. But for the partners, and for the man in charge of the day-to-day tending of these timberlands, it is a worthwhile investment.

"Sustainable forestry does work," McMath said. "It can be part of the working landscape."

Far left: John Roe; middle: Emily Boedecker / TNC; right: TNC file

# Land Protection

## Black Mountain Natural Area

Dummerston

When Caitlin Cusack took the lead to rehabilitate the trail at the Black Mountain Natural Area, the AmeriCorps stewardship assistant expected challenges, but she could not have foreseen the twists and turns the project took at the end. Although only with the chapter for a year, Caitlin confidently



Caitlin Cusack

took charge of the trail re-route from the start — managing the complexities of the Act 250 permit process, working with a trail designer and Vermont Youth Conservation Corps crews, building trust with local land-owners and even successfully attaining a \$20,000 grant. But one day last summer, with everything seemingly in place for the trail work to begin and just days before her AmeriCorps term was to expire, Caitlin was scouting the proposed re-route one last time to be sure she had avoided certain rare plants that were known to grow on Black Mountain in small numbers. What she found that day was a dense carpet of the plants in flower exactly in the location where the new trail was to have gone.

It took Caitlin a moment to register that this dazzling display of nature would seriously alter her re-route project. And she admits it took her breath away. But once she collected herself, the graduate of the Yale University forestry program and a committed outdoorswoman was able to appreciate the wonder and abundance of the plants that are only seen in a handful of places in Vermont. Caitlin came to understand what “adaptive management” means and concluded that the plentiful plants were a cause for celebration. She quickly revised the project with the expertise of Josh Ryan of Timber and Stone, LLC., developing an alternate plan to improve the old, steep trail. “Caitlin skillfully and cheerfully handled the many complexities of this project,” said Stewardship Manager Emily Seifert. “We couldn’t have done it without her!”

Bob Klein / TNC



## Great Guildhall Swamp Natural Area

Guildhall

In the third project to protect the Great Guildhall Swamp, the Vermont Chapter of the Conservancy has bought a 61.5-acre tract of land that will allow public access into this magical natural area. A pull-off for three to four cars has been added at the entrance to the swamp along North Road just a couple of miles from the Northeast Kingdom village of Guildhall. “It’s not really like a swamp,” said Jon Binhammer, the chapter’s Director of Land Protection. “It is a wetland, but you aren’t slogging through deep water. Visitors will tread on a beautiful bed of sphagnum moss just a little more than a stone’s throw from the Connecticut River.” With the recent purchase, the chapter has conserved 375.5 acres of this spruce-fir-tamarack swamp, which is one of the best examples of this natural community in the state, and provides habitat for moose, white-tailed deer, snowshoe hare and boreal birds. The purchase was made possible largely through the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, which provided \$50,000, more than half the cost of the project. The chapter is hoping to raise all necessary funds.

## Trustee Notes

### Looking Beyond Our Borders

By Larry Hamilton

Of more than passing interest to Oak Log readers are current efforts of our northern neighbor and sister organization, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). Sutton Mountain in southern Québec is in the center of a largely wild area, a few minutes’ drive from North Troy or Richford, Vermont. The Mount Sutton Ski Area is there, but also 12,000 acres of wildlands that are home to bobcat, fisher, black bear, moose, and at times rare Bicknell’s thrush and red-shouldered hawk as well as Blackburnian warbler.

This area has recently been protected through a landmark deal between NCC-Quebec and pulp and paper giant Domtar. This is NCC’s largest acquisition east of Saskatchewan. It bears the name of Reserve Naturelle des Montagnes-Vertes (Green Mountains Nature Reserve). Ultimately NCC



hopes to preserve some 25,000 acres, with the Domtar purchase as the core, and another 74,000 acres of conserved buffer zone around it. It could also be linked north to Mount Orford National

Mundy Hackett / TNC



## Welcome our new Trustees

### Richard Heilemann Manchester

Richard has been a practicing dentist in Manchester for 36 years and is also a visiting faculty member of the Pankey Institute in Key Biscayne, Florida. He has been a member of The Nature Conservancy for 26 years and became more involved through the Equinox Highlands and through his association with the Equinox Preservation Trust.

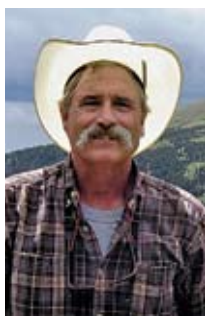


His favorite Conservancy natural area is the land on Equinox Mountain. "Through the help of The Nature Conservancy staff and others, I have developed a deeper appreciation of the value of an area that is in my backyard," he said.

Richard and his wife Martha, who recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary, enjoy being outside and exploring new areas, hiking, cross-country skiing and snow-shoeing. Their son Adam, who lives in Boston with his wife Elaine, "is still looking for that perfect piece of Vermont property to be able to return to."

### Bryan McCarthy Woodstock

Starting with the Colorado Chapter, Bryan McCarthy has been affiliated with The Nature Conservancy for about 12 years. Bryan is a builder and public water systems consultant. He is a life-long outdoorsman, amateur naturalist and sportsman, an avid fisherman, waterfowler and elk hunting guide.



He and his wife Helen and their children who are both students at the University of Vermont — son Alex, 21, and daughter Nina, 18 — are sailors, skiers and hikers.

"The Nature Conservancy's ability to apply hard science toward the preservation and restoration of unique areas of biodiversity is what drives me to support the mission. I believe that we must all learn to become responsible stewards of our natural resources, and the Conservancy provides educational opportunities for the public."

## ...And our new AmeriCorps members

Joseph Forsyth is our Stewardship Assistant, relocating to Montpelier from St. Louis, Missouri. He graduated in 2009 from Bard College with a B.A. in literature and has extensive experience leading volunteer trail and invasive plant crews for the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and the Forest Service.

Alison Herrell serves as the Volunteer Coordinator and Field Assistant in our West Haven office. Alison received her B.A. in biology, with a minor in dance, last spring from Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN. She spent last summer working as a forest research technician for Purdue University.



The Vermont Chapter's new AmeriCorps members are, left to right, Joseph Forsyth, Alison Herrell and Donia Prince.

Susan Reid / TNC

Donia Prince serves as Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator in Montpelier. Donia holds a B.A. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, and graduated this spring with a B.A. in biology; field naturalist from Johnson State College. Donia has a wide range of skills that come from her experience as a political and community organizer, business owner, dairy farmer, choral music director, elder caregiver and naturalist.

Park, and other conserved lands nearby. NCC is advancing this vision in collaboration with many partners, including an emerging regional non-profit called Appalachian Corridor Appalachian (ACA).

This area of southern Québec is part of the great Appalachian range that includes Vermont's Green Mountains, and figures prominently in conservation planning and action for the vast and vitally important Northern Appalachian-Acadian Ecoregion. It is also linked to the Chapter's work in the "Staying Connected" initiative, a broad public-private partnership focused on conserving key habitat linkages across the Northern Appalachians.

The dual threats of climate change and habitat fragmentation are mandating a shift from conserving individual parcels

of sometimes small size, to planning and acting to provide pathways for movement of fauna and flora on a much larger landscape scale. In this work, the Conservancy is collaborating with partners such as Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Wildlands Network, Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Natural Resources Council, National Wildlife Federation and NCC. Stay tuned.

Larry Hamilton is a trustee of the Vermont Chapter and Emeritus Professor of Natural Resources of Cornell University where he taught and researched from 1951-1980 and served as Senior Fellow at the East-West Center from 1980-93. He is now Senior Advisor, Mountain Biome, of the World Commission on Protected Areas/IUCN. He is also town forester for his hometown of Charlotte where he lives with his wife Linda.

# Thank You!

The Nature Conservancy is a global organization with programs in all 50 states and 30 countries. The Vermont Chapter raises all its own funds and relies on the generosity of our members to do its conservation work in Vermont. We also raise funds to support select conservation projects abroad. We wish to thank all of our Vermont Chapter donors during the period of July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. All of our members are important to us and we wish space limitations did not prevent us from listing every one of you! The Nature Conservancy regrets any errors or omissions. We are always grateful for any corrections or updates. Please email them to [Vermont@tnc.org](mailto:Vermont@tnc.org) or call (802) 229-4425.

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## CONNECTING WITH NATURE

Nancy Howe Russell, a Vermont Chapter trustee from East Dorset, and her husband Jim Russell spotted this bobcat in their back pasture in September while having lunch on their patio. Nancy has a special bond with bobcats as her painting, "Of a Secret Nature," shows. The painting of a bobcat at the chapter's newest natural area, Raven Ridge, was exhibited in the Inspired by Nature art show this past summer and autumn at the Bennington Center for the Arts and the Bryan Memorial Gallery in Jeffersonville as part of the chapter's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Photos by Jim Russell and Christine Glade



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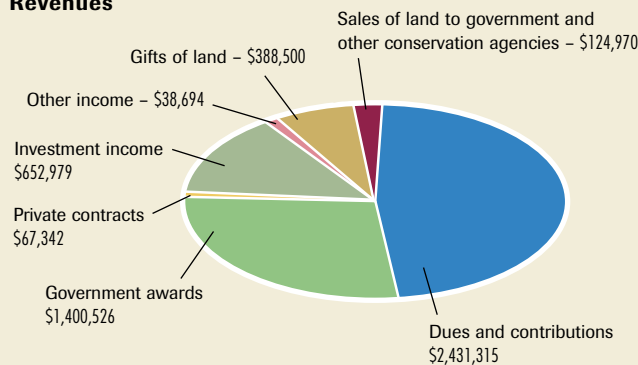
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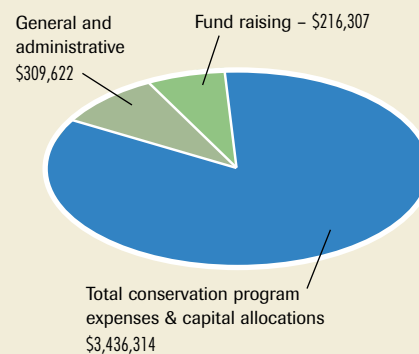
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JULY 1, 2009 TO JUNE 30, 2010

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### Expenses







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The Scarlet Macaw is one of the most symbolic birds of the Amazon. Its size and striking red color make it almost instantly recognizable. But the macaw's habitat is threatened, especially in the municipality of São Felix de Xingu, where 19 percent of original forest cover has already been lost. The Nature Conservancy is helping to ensure that deforestation in this municipality comes to an end by working with farmers and ranchers to register their lands and help them comply with Brazil's Forest Code, which requires that all Amazon landowners keep 80 percent of their land in native vegetation.



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The Legacy Club is The Nature Conservancy's way of honoring the many generous and forward-thinking people who have notified us that they intend to give a gift to the Conservancy through their will, trust, retirement plan or insurance policy. It also includes those who have made life income gifts through Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Gift Annuities, and other deferred or planned gifts. Membership is voluntary. We thank our Legacy Club members for making such a remarkable commitment to protect nature and preserve life in Vermont and around the world. If you are interested in leaving a Legacy, please contact Emily Boedecker at (802) 229-4425 ext 112 or email at [eboedecker@tnc.org](mailto:eboedecker@tnc.org). All inquiries are confidential.

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## LEGACY MEMBER RUTH PAGE

As a committed environmentalist, Ruth Page supports several groups that work to preserve the environment, but she wanted to do “something special” with The Nature Conservancy, so she became a member of the Legacy Club.

“I feel that The Nature Conservancy is really an outstanding organization,” she said. “They seem to understand that you can’t just help one animal species or one plant, you’ve got to take care of the surrounding area. You need large areas preserved to protect those animals and species.”



For many years, Ruth has shared her insights about the environment as well as her passion for gardening with radio listeners in Vermont. Her well-researched and thoughtful commentaries, less frequent in recent years but no less informative, can still be heard on Vermont Public Radio.

Ruth has lived most of her adult life in Vermont, arriving in 1945 as a young bride with her fifth-

generation Vermont husband Proctor, whom she met while they both lived in New York City. Ruth and Proctor built their careers and raised their family here. For 20 years, until 1977, the Pages published The Suburban List in Essex Junction, where Ruth, an English and history graduate from Swarthmore College, was able to pursue her love of writing and editing. Oldest daughter Candace followed in her parents’ footsteps as a journalist and writes for The Burlington Free Press. Daughter Patti is a lawyer and lives in Colchester, and son Bob is a geologist in Toronto.

Ruth recalls fondly that she and her late husband tended three large gardens at their home on Appletree Point in Colchester while raising the family and running the newspaper. She keeps a smaller garden at her home in Shelburne now, but she is proud to say that she produces the “most beautiful tomatoes and Brussels sprouts.”

Ruth’s love of Vermont and the natural environment are a big part of her life, and it matters to her that The Nature Conservancy works with a similar vision and commitment.

“I approve of the way The Nature Conservancy looks at things,” she said.

## Volunteers

We would like to thank the hundreds of volunteers who donated thousands of hours of time to help protect Vermont’s natural heritage. Special thanks to the volunteers who gave more than 20 hours of time:

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# A Place I Love

## Lynn McNamara

Conservation Assistant, Montpelier office

Visiting Bond Island in summer can be torture. This “island” in the Otter Creek Swamp complex in Whiting can be swarming with mosquitoes, but in the winter, it is truly a wonderful place.

Once the swamp is firmly frozen, from Route 30 it is just a short, half-mile snowshoe up the old driveway to the top of the island, which was a former homestead site.

Snowshoeing through the Red Maple-Northern White Cedar swamp allows for a perspective that is not possible in the warmer months.

Wandering amongst the trees, you’re likely to see lots of animal tracks, just watch your step in case you come across a seep or area where the ice is thin!

## Mary Droege

Director of Ecological Management and Restoration, West Haven office

One of my favorite outings is to the Poultney River in the spring when the floodplain forest is flooded so you can canoe through the trees. If the water is high enough, you can canoe into Schoolhouse Marsh, which is fully protected by The Nature Conservancy, a deep emergent marsh nestled up against the steep side slopes of the Bald Mountain ridgeline.



© Heather Ruggiero

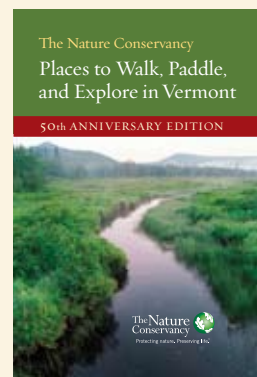
Canoeing to the furthest corner of the marsh will reveal a beautiful little waterfall. If you have the luck to hit it right, it is an ephemeral moment and it is unlike anywhere else in Vermont. The high water allows access into a world that is otherwise mostly hidden from our view. Visiting by silent canoe lets you move quietly and at eye level with the wildlife — turtles sunning on logs and herons in the reeds. You’ll experience the bursting forth of spring, the stately silver maples lining the banks of the river are flowering, all the shrubs and trees are leafing out, and migratory song birds flit about feeding on newly hatched insects. It is a place so full of life, it can’t help but renew your spirit.

Bob Klein / TNC



## Do you have your copy of our new guide?

Free copies of the guide to The Nature Conservancy’s natural areas, *Places to Walk, Paddle and Explore in Vermont*, are available at our offices in Montpelier. Or to receive a copy in the mail, please send a check for \$5.95 for shipping and handling to: The Nature Conservancy, 27 State St., Suite 4, Montpelier, VT 05602.



## Seen and heard at the 2010 Annual Gathering field trips

**Kim Ward**, Office Manager, Restoring Raptors: Did you know raptors need to eat every bit of their prey to satisfy all their nutrient requirements, such as the bones for calcium? This is one of the facts we learned from Craig Newman, Director of Outreach for Earth Stewardship, who also urged support for organizations like The Nature Conservancy that protect habitat — the biggest factor in a healthy raptor population.

**Rose Paul**, Director of Science and Stewardship, Williams Woods: Someone noticed scattered little shaggy green things in the trail. Everyone started picking them up and examining them. Is it the cap from an acorn, someone asked. Sure enough, those shaggy looking caps are from

the mossy cup oak, also called bur oak, a Champlain Valley specialty. This exquisite little piece of nature made mossy cup oaks unforgettable for the people on our trip.



Dan Farrell/TNC

Brett Engstrom captivates his audience during the field trip to Camp Johnson in Colchester at the Annual Gathering.





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# The Oak Log

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