

# CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COLD HOLLOW TO CANADA FOREST LINK



WINTER 2017

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## NOW MORE THAN EVER, THIS IS OUR TIME

*By Charlie Hancock, Board Chair*

As 2016 drew to a close, and our thoughts turned towards the holidays, to friends and family, to travel, or staying close by the wood stove and watching it snow, an e-mail dropped into the Cold Hollow to Canada inbox. With little fanfare, but immeasurable import, we learned that *over half a million dollars* was headed to the region in the coming years to advance the work of CHC.

**T**he funds come from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) *Regional Conservation Partnership Program* (RCPP). Their investment of **\$650,580** results from over two years of work by our board, staff, and partners to secure the resources we need to expand our organizations cross boundary management initiative—the Cold Hollow Woodlots Program (CHWP).

The Woodlots program, launched in 2013, engaged 12 landowners spanning over 2,000 acres in the town of Enosburg. This project, engaging landowners in a cooperative approach to forest stewardship, has become a vanguard program for CHC, and one that has gained interest and acclaim across New England as a model for advancing collaboration in conservation. With more than two-thirds of Vermont's forests privately owned, it falls to individual forest owners to manage wildlife habitat, to find solutions for the effects of climate change, and to develop ways to help forests adapt for the future.

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## BOARD & STAFF

### CHC BOARD

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Forrest Dunnivant - Newsletter

### CHC STAFF

Bridget Butler - Program Director

PHOTOS: JO ANNE WAZY



Innovative methods such as the landscape-based social network formed through the CHWP will provide a solution to this challenge. As the pilot project has shown, by coming together around a shared passion for their land and working with informed professionals around common interests, private landowners are galvanized to participation. Woodlots ownerships also become demonstration sites which can be leveraged to share the vision to the broader community and with other conservation organizations. CHC's approach to peer-to-peer woodlands management is unique because it engages landowners with contiguous properties in prioritized forest blocks. CHC then provides resources, technical assistance, and educational support to guide the discussion among the group. The Woodlots group then works together to develop a blueprint for a collaborative approach to future management actions, and a greater commitment to conservation.

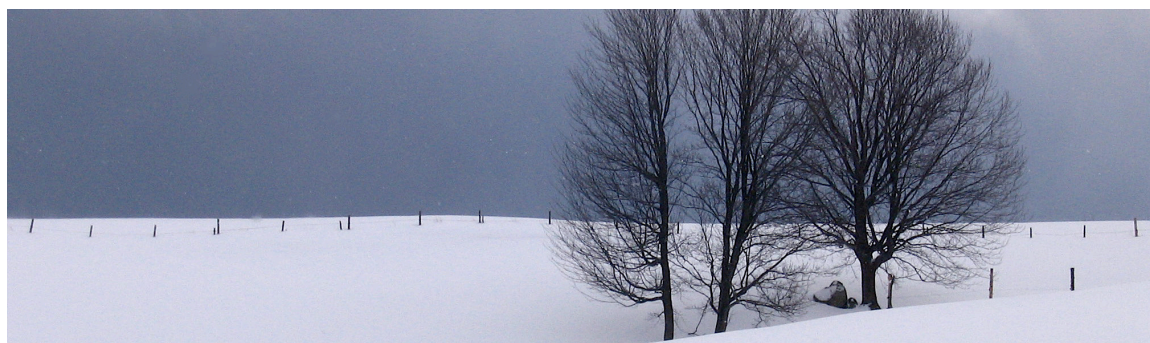
With these resources secured for practice implementation for the pilot group in Enosburg and expanding with two new Woodlots groups in the towns of Richford and Montgomery (adding close to 50 additional landowners spanning over 8,000 acres), CHC seeks to increase the base of engaged landowners in our region, furthering peer-to-peer engagement on these issues to increase the pace of conservation, and to foster the stewardship of our forests' health, integrity and resiliency into the future.

In addition to the funds provided by the NRCS (which will be directly invested on the participating properties in the project), the High Meadows Fund has generously awarded CHC \$20,000 to advance Woodlots program

work to support climate resilience, adding an additional pledge of \$10,000 in matching funds for 2017 towards the project. And with your support to help us advance our vision, we raised over \$5,000 locally in the past year to support the general capacity of CHC for its ongoing work on our region. These local dollars are the *most* crucial, as they're what provides the capacity to keep our internal gears turning forward. Thank you. Thank you. *Thank you.*

We've come farther than I ever imagined as an organization. With Woodlots just one of our many projects underway in the region the breadth of our reach, and impact of our work, is immense. Born from a small group of committed neighbors, Cold Hollow to Canada has grown to become a leader in Conservation. I am so incredibly proud of what we have accomplished, but I have to also warn us not to rest on our laurels. There are many challenges on the horizon that will have an impact on our vision of a resilient, healthy, and intact forest landscape for the future. So, as we look ahead to 2017 I'm reminded of a quote from an earlier generation. "Hear this, young men and women everywhere, and proclaim it far and wide. The earth is yours and the fullness thereof. Be kind, but be fierce. You are needed now more than ever before. Take up the mantle of change. For *this* is your time." While the context of his call may not have been conservation, Winston Churchill's words none the less inspire, and ring true to our mission. Conservation can't wait, and our time to act is now.

Happy New Year, and wishing you all the best in the days to come.



JO ANNE WAZNY



## SUMMARY OF JOHN ELDER'S TALK AT CHC'S ANNUAL GATHERING (27 OCTOBER 2016)

By Sue Taylor

John Elder combined geology, environmental science, ecology, literature, music, and human history in his inspirational talk which described his love for the Vermont forests and mountains. He emphasized how we must be connected to the land and how we need to act in community to appreciate and save the natural world. He explained the importance of stories at all levels of experience as maps with survival value. The Native Americans called this web of narratives "a bundle of stories."

The first story John shared was how the geological and historical records show dramatic reversals and recoveries in the landscape of the Northern forest. First the glaciers caused these changes. Then European settlers flooded Vermont between 1800 and 1850 and the rapid agricultural conversion led to decades of deforestation. The trees were burned for charcoal and then the land cleared for sheep farming. After almost 80% of the trees were removed the forests began to recover when the sheep boom cooled and many settlers moved west. It was at this time that George Perkins Marsh wrote the book "Man and Nature" advocating for sustainable forest management. By 1900 the recovering second growth forest was dominated by fast growing pines which were then cut down for a rapidly increasing population. And then the forests recovered once again so that today Vermont is 78% reforested. The present third growth forest is a mixed hardwood dominated by maples, beech, and oaks. So the story of the forest is one of loss and then recovery three different times in human history. This demonstrates the great resilience of the Northern forest.

John Elder's second story was about how climate change is affecting all aspects of the forest. The cherished sugar maples must germinate at 34 degrees so that the sugar maples and the maple sugar industry could be lost in Vermont if temperatures continue to rise. The relationship between the



John Elder

shrub Shadblow or Serviceberry and the fish Shad, demonstrates how the plants and animals are synchronized in their growth and reproduction so as to increase their chances of survival.

When the Shadblow bloomed then it was time for the Shad run which helped the survival of the settlers who were low on food after the hard Winter. The blooms also told the people that the ground had thawed so that they could bury their dead. Now dams stop the Shad runs and the Serviceberry blooms earlier so that the shrubs and the life cycles of the insects and birds who depend on them are out of kilter. If we want to save the forest we have to find a way to work in community in order to live more lightly on the planet and to find ways to mitigate climate change. As John said, "We have to be coworkers with Nature and do good work at a hard time."

The third story Elder told was about the fragmentation of the forest. **Today the biggest cause is ex-urban sprawl: the insidious single home being built without consideration of forest blocks and connectivity.** One house at a time without any forethought is eating away at our landscape, with a loss of 6,000 acres per year. Marsh described in his book "Man and Nature" how only fragments of forests remained in Europe. The defiance of the people of Ireland ("island woods"), is a good role model for not losing our love for the forest. The vanished forests still flourish in Irish memories and in their hearts. John played beautiful and haunting Irish music for us on his flute to demonstrate this point. He also suggested that perhaps we need to subsidize maple sugaring and sustainable farming to save the land

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from development. Vermont has tried to encourage responsible and sustainable development with Act 250. We also need to conserve large blocks of forest and contiguous corridors for wildlife in the Northern forest. This is one of the goals of the “Cold Hollow to Canada” organization.

The talk was concluded with suggestions for actions which will encourage love and respect for the natural world. Elder said that sometimes environmentalists can be too rigid and this makes the study of ecology less attractive. He talked about “invitational environmentalism” which will teach people to know and love the land. You must know and cherish something before you will fight to save it. He quoted Gary Snyder who suggests we need to stay together, know the flowers, assume loving hearts, remember what we share and live lightly. John suggests we take our children and grandchildren for walks in the woods, camp with them in the wilderness, and celebrate Nature’s seasons such as the solstice with a bonfire. He

also talked about the natural landscape as a place to escape from the stress, fast pace, and responsibilities of the modern world. Elder says we need to form a family, listen actively, and work in community to practice alternatives to mainstream consumerism in order to save the earth. However, patience is very important since this work may take years. Human population will continue to grow before it peaks in the next 100 years. It is this time frame that can be considered a bottleneck. John Elder believes that if we can get through the bottleneck in the next century then we will come out on the other side to a place where we can live. Nature is very resilient if we will only be partners in the healing of the Northern forest and the planet. At the end he referenced Wendell Berry’s poem “The Peace of Wild Things” which ends with the quote, “I rest in the grace of the world and am free”. We were all inspired by John Elder’s eloquence, his love for the natural world, and his call to action to save the planet!

## Amazon Smile Opportunity

**Support  
Cold Hollow To  
Canada Incorporated.**

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com),  
Amazon donates.

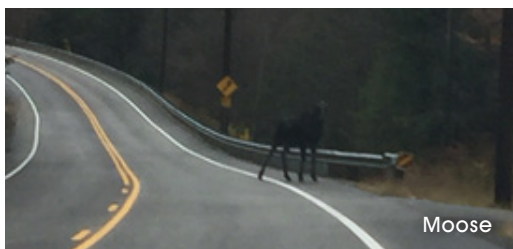
[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

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# WILDPATHS WILDLIFE OBSERVATIONS SUMMARY

By Jesse Littlefield, Cold Hollow to Canada Intern

Between April 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, 27 volunteers recorded 137 observations, which includes 232 individual animals recorded. Forty six percent of the observations were dead animals and 54% were live animals. Volunteers identified 61 different species.



## ANIMAL GROUPS OBSERVED

Mammals **58%**  
(40% Dead, 60% Live)

Birds **20%**  
(24% Dead, 76% Live)

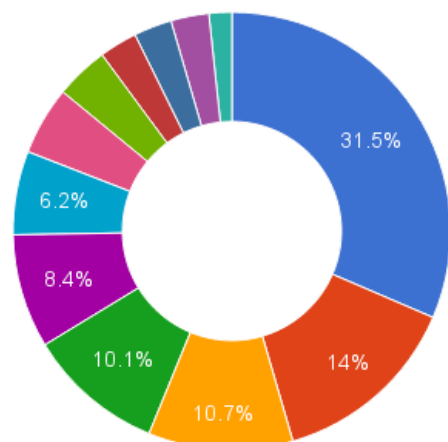
Amphibians **11%**  
(84% Dead, 16% Live)

Reptiles **12%**  
(81% Dead, 19% Live)



## MOST COMMON SPECIES OBSERVED

Number	Species
56	White-tailed Deer
25	Squirrel & Chipmunk
19	Turkey
18	Snake (Common Garter & Redbelly)
15	Raccoon
11	Frog & Toad
9	Turtle (Common Snapping & Painted)
7	Porcupine
5	Fox
5	Grouse
5	Canada Goose
3	Moose



JESSE LITTLEFIELD

- White-tailed Deer
- Squirrel & Chipmunk
- Turkey
- Snake (Common Garter & Redbelly)
- Raccoon
- Frog & Toad
- Turtle (Common Snapping & Paint...)
- Porcupine
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- Moose

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## ABOUT JESSE LITTLEFIELD



My name is Jesse Littlefield. I live in Swanton with my boyfriend, two dogs, and cat. I grew up in Richmond, Vermont and have lived in this beautiful state all but four years of my life. I was raised by parents who had great passion for nature and they instilled that love in me. Ever since I was a child I've found solace in Vermont's forests and, to this day, my greatest enjoyment comes from hiking through the woods, basking in the absence of human activity. As a longtime vegan,

a large part of my life is dedicated to the well-being of animals great and small. I'm currently studying Environmental Science at CCV. When my academic advisor suggested I pursue an internship with Cold Hollow to Canada as part of my studies, I immediately knew it would be a good fit, as it aligns perfectly with my passion for Vermont's forests and wildlife. Maintaining forest health and connectivity is critical to me, and I love the work I'm doing with Cold Hollow to Canada because I know it's making a real difference. I look forward to working with this great organization for many years to come!



JO ANNE WAZNY

## PEACE OF WILD THINGS

*By Wendell Berry*

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.



# WINTER FINCHES

By Bridget Butler

Winter can be quite a rollercoaster. From glorious days filled with sunlight glittering off of crystal white snow, to the January thaw that has us wondering if we'll ever see winter again. There are times when you can't wait to bundle up and dive into an adventure outside and others when you just want to stay cozy inside with a soft blanket and a hot cup of tea. What's most wonderful about watching for winter finches, is that they can beckon you to go in search of them outside or they can brighten up your morning cup of coffee when they drop in to feast at your bird feeders.

Winter finches are a group of birds that typically prefer boreal habitats found to the north of us, but will irrupt or disperse to other regions based on food availability. Many show up at feeder, and some can be found by looking around your neighborhood for their preferred food source. Let's get to know a few finches so you can watch for them whether you're inside or out!



JANE OGILVIE, GREEN MOUNTAIN PHOTOS

## The Purple Finch

Not really purple but more of a cranberry color, this finch really enjoys black sunflower seed at backyard feeders. When the seed crops are poor for both coniferous and deciduous trees up north,

these birds will head south. Watch for a streaky brown bird with a cone shaped bill and a cranberry red wash on the males. But don't be fooled by the similar looking House Finch that also hangs out at feeders. Bust out your bird book to help you clinch the id! Purple Finches have a more robust body silhouette compared to their slender friend the House Finch. And check out the tail, House Finches have a long tail compared to their body that is squared off, whereas, the Purple Finch has a short tail compared to their body with a distinct v-shaped notch in the tail.



CHARLOTTE BILL

GARY PRETASH

## The Pine Grosbeak

A plump bird, almost the size of a robin, this winter finch has dark wings with two white wingbars. Males are a cranberry red and gray, females are olive-yellow and gray. These birds use their large conical beak to masticate berries for the seeds, including mountain ash and crabapple. Look for these birds wherever there are ornamental crabapples in your community. Check back again and again, as they often frequent the same tree until it's bare of fruit. This is a rare winter irruptive bird, so get 'em while you can! This year they've been seen in St. Albans, Enosburg & Richford Village, and in Belvidere.

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Evening Grosbeak

JANE OGILVIE, GREEN MOUNTAIN PHOTOS

**The “Showstopper” AKA Evening Grosbeak**

Some may argue that the Pine Grosbeak is the showstopper, but this bird, I think, is more difficult to see and its plumage is seriously handsome. A bit smaller than the Pine Grosbeak, the Evening Grosbeak has the characteristic conical beak, a thick neck and short tail. The awesomeness of this bird is truly its colors; vibrant yellow, sharp black and crisp white. The humongous beak is capped by a fierce yellow eyebrow and the yellow body

and muddy black head give this bird a serious, yet dapper appearance. Evening Grosbeaks hang out in small flocks and will descend upon platform feeders stocked with black-oil sunflower seeds. These beauties have been seen in Montgomery this winter!

You can learn more about each of these winter finches by diving into the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s website All About Birds. Report your sightings of these birds in our community through Vermont eBird or join the Missisquoi Birders List-Serv to connect and communicate with birders in Franklin County! Links below:

All About Birds:  
[www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org)

Vermont eBird:  
<http://ebird.org/content/vt>

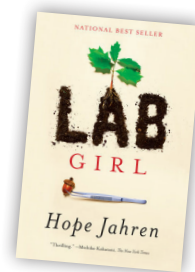
Missisquoi Birders List-Serv:  
<https://groups.google.com/d/forum/missisquoi-birders>

**BOOK REVIEW: *LAB GIRL* BY HOPE JAHREN***By Nancy Patch*

**T**his memoir by biologist Hope Jahren is a fantastic read in so many ways. Ms. Jahren has a beautiful writing style that links her work as a scientist to the complicated and often surprising events of a lifetime. In one chapter on roots and leaves she describes, “A tree’s wood is also its memoir: we can count the rings to learn the tree’s age, for every season of growth requires a new sheath from the cambium. There’s a lot of additional information written into tree rings, but it is coded in a language that scientists don’t speak fluently—yet. If you know how to listen, each ring describes how the rain fell and the wind blew and the sun appeared every day at dawn.” The following chapter describes how this scientist and her best friend and colleague moved on from an explosive failure, accompanied by

self-doubt to a new life, a new lab, and a new beginning, and an effort to love her new life, and to read the rings.

This book is about the beauty of science, the beauty of friendship, and the mind-boggling beauty of being different, thinking outside the box and making wonderful discoveries because or in spite of it all. In the process of reading this book, I learned a great deal about plants and trees, which are creatures I spend a lot of my time with both in my love of nature and as a professional forester. There is much to learn here about biology but never in a dull or scholarly way and there is even more to learn about life, dedication and curiosity.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## ANIMALS OF THE NORTH: WHAT WILL CLIMATE CHANGE MEAN FOR THEM?

Thursday, January 19th, 7:00 pm

Location: Montgomery Arts Center  
(intersection of RT 242 and RT 118)  
Montgomery Center VT

Suggested donation \$10.00

Sponsored by the Montgomery Conservation  
Commission and Cold Hollow to Canada

Join us for a spectacular journey to the North with Sue Morse's award winning photography and a discussion about how climate change is affecting our planet and its wild animal inhabitants. Canada lynx, moose, American marten, caribou, polar bears, arctic fox and arctic marine and waterfowl ecology are some of the species and subjects covered in this stunningly beautiful show. Sue inspires, young and old alike, to join in the vital crusade to change our fossil fuel-burning ways, conserve natural resources and share a healthy planet with all that lives.

## PLANTS IN WINTER WALK

Saturday, February 4th, 1:00–3:00 pm

Location: Shattuck Mountain Trails

Sponsored by the Bakersfield Conservation Commission

Contact: Dorothy Allard at [dallard@aol.com](mailto:dallard@aol.com)  
or Alice Foote at 827-3042

## SNOWSHOE OUTING IN ENOSBURG FALLS

Saturday, February 11th, 1:30–3:00 pm

Location: Brownway River Trail, Enosburg Falls VT

Sponsored by the Wild & Scenic Rivers Committee  
and the Enosburgh Conservation Commission

Contact: Wild & Scenic at [info@vtwsr.org](mailto:info@vtwsr.org)

Franklin County Forester Nancy Patch will lead a snowshoe walk on the Brownway River Trail followed by hot chocolate at the Flying Disc coffee shop. Meet at the Enosburgh Elementary School parking area on Dickinson Street. All welcome. This event is organized by the Wild & Scenic Rivers Committee and the Enosburgh Conservation Commission.

## SNOWSHOE WALK

Saturday, February 25th, 1:00–3:00 pm

Location: Bakersfield Tree Farm & Larry's Tree Farm

Sponsored by the Bakersfield Conservation Commission

Contact: Dorothy Allard at [dallard@aol.com](mailto:dallard@aol.com)  
or Alice Foote at 827-3042

## MISSISQUOI RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PUBLIC FORUM

Sunday, March 19th, 2:00–4:00 pm

Location: TBD

Sponsored by the Missisquoi River Basin Association

Contact: [mrba@pshift.com](mailto:mrba@pshift.com)

The Missisquoi River Basin Association will be hosting our annual public forum to discuss the results of the 2016 water quality monitoring program, how it compares to past years, and what that indicates about the overall health of the Missisquoi watershed.

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETINGS

### BAKERSFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meets the last Monday of every month  
at 1:00 PM in the Town Hall Building,  
40 East Bakersfield Rd, Bakersfield.

### ENOSBURGH CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meets the fourth Monday of every month  
at 7:30 PM at the Cold Hollow Career Center,  
184 Missisquoi St., Enosburg Falls.

### MONTGOMERY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meets the first Wednesday of the month from  
5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Public Safety Building/Library  
at 84 Mountain Road/Rt. 242, Montgomery Center.

### RICHFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:00 PM  
in the upstairs conference room of the Arvin A. Brown  
Public Library, 88 Main St, Richford.

### COLD HOLLOW TO CANADA STEERING COMMITTEE

Meets the third Monday of each month from  
6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Cold Hollow Career Center  
in Enosburg Falls or Bakersfield Library. We rotate  
the location, so please let us know if you'll be  
joining us. It'd be great to see you there.

*\*Don't forget to check [coldhollowtocanada.org](http://coldhollowtocanada.org)  
for updated Upcoming Events*

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