

# CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COLD HOLLOW TO CANADA FOREST LINK



SUMMER 2014

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## EXPLORING THE PLACE WE CALL HOME

*By Charlie Hancock*

Greetings friends and welcome to the Summer 2014 edition of *Connections*, the quarterly newsletter from Cold Hollow to Canada. We hope this edition finds you've been able to get outside lately to enjoy the beautiful spring weather.

With this edition we're happy to update that CHC is still going strong with the first phase of our Landowner Cooperative project. Working with the pilot group in Enosburgh, recent efforts have looked at climate change adaptation at the local level, and assessing the resiliency of our forested landscape. At a recent meeting the group discussed assessments done on each parcel in the cooperative, and then headed to the woods to do some apple tree pruning and release work on one of the member properties. At our next meeting, coming later this summer, we'll continue the discussion on adaptation as we review a recently completed timber sale which centered on a large wind event in 2010. With global climate change large natural disturbance events like this will become more common in the future, and as stewards of our forests we must develop strategies to maintain beautiful, productive forests which take these changes into account.

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### CHC STEERING COMMITTEE

Bakersfield:  
Mary Schwartz and  
Forrest Dunnivant

Enosburgh:  
Nancy Patch and  
Ward Heneveld

Fletcher:  
Corey Brink

Montgomery:  
Charlie Hancock,  
Chair

Richford:  
Bill McGroarty and  
Lenny Tamulonis

PHOTOS: JOANNE WAZNY



We're happy to report that CHC hosted its regional celebration, *Exploring the Place we Call Home*, on Saturday May 17th, which featured a number of field workshops in the morning and indoor sessions in the afternoon followed by a delicious potluck dinner. The rain cleared just as folks were headed to the field and we ended up with a beautiful morning. In Enosburgh, a group with Jim Andrews (herpetologist from Middlebury College) sought out ponds, beaver impoundments and vernal pools to discover the herps that populate our region. The group found a few garter snakes, an Eastern newt (in the eft stage), a spring peeper, and a Dusky Salamander, which was a new record for Enosburgh! In Montgomery, another group led by Bridget Butler (the Bird Diva herself!) scouted Black-throated blue warblers, White-throated sparrows, Chestnut-sided warblers and Eastern wood-pewees on North Hill, while discussing management techniques to enhance the habitats for these jewels of the north woods. And in Richford, a third group led by Dave McMath, consulting forester, Sandy Wilmot (VTFPR forest health specialist) and Maria Janowiak (Climate

Change Adaptation and Carbon Management Specialist with the USFS) discussed resilient forest management and conservation while reviewing a recently completed timber sale on the Atlas Timber Lands partnership (conserved and owned by the Nature Conservancy and the Vermont Land Trust). Afternoon sessions at the Montgomery Grange Hall focused on Amphibians and Reptiles in the CHC region, Forest Resiliency and Climate Change, and an update on the work being done by CHC in our region. Thanks to all who participated! Plans are already underway for the next annual event in 2015.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter. Enclosed we'd also like to share a fantastic article on Bobolinks in one of our member towns, an article on climate change at the local level—looking at the CHC project in Enosburgh around landscape level forest management—and offer book recommendations on the conservation movement across the globe. Thanks, and enjoy.

– The CHC Steering Committee



JOANNE WAZNY



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM COLD HOLLOW TO CANADA'S REGIONAL CELEBRATION IN MAY

SUMMER  
2014

## C N N E C T I O N S

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Cynthia Scott and Cheryl Neneveld pruning apple trees in Enosburgh

CHARLIE HANCOCK



Bird watching in Montgomery at the Summer 2014 CHC gathering

CHARLIE HANCOCK

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# CONNECTIONS



Jim Andrews, Herpetologist from Middlebury College

STEVE BOEL



STEVE BOEL



STEVE BOEL

# OUR ROWDY FRIENDS IN RICHFORD

By Lenny Tamulonis



Male Bobolink

LENNY TAMULONIS

*The Bobolink is gone —*

*The Rowdy of the Meadow —*

—EMILY DICKINSON

Those words from an Emily Dickinson poem pretty much sum up what's been happening with Bobolinks and other grassland birds in Vermont. It's not yet an endangered species, but since 1970 the Vermont Bobolink population has declined by 70% and continues to fall by about 3% every year. Interestingly enough, Bobolinks really thrived during the 19th century when most of Vermont was cleared for agriculture and they migrated to the northeast from the prairies and grasslands of the Midwest. But reforestation, development, and intense farming have taken their toll on grassland habitat.

We first spotted Bobolinks (or meadow-winks as they've been called) several years ago in our hayfield when we couldn't make a first harvest because of the constant bad weather. It was bad for us but good for the Bobolinks who took advantage of the delay because their nesting season starts in

early June right at the beginning of the haying season. Harvest machinery will absolutely destroy the small hidden nests and eggs in the tall grass and mortality is 100%. Normally Bobolinks will return to the same fields to raise families and it's fascinating to watch them and realize they may be the same birds or a new generation of the same families that have returned to our field.

Bobolinks are about the size of a robin and have very distinctive coloration; the male is black with white shoulders and lower back, and has a startling yellow patch on the back of its head. Females are well camouflaged with drab colors and are about the same size as the male. When the breeding season is finished, the male's colors fade and he becomes somewhat drab like the female and his loud, cheerful, bubbling, complex call is reduced to one single note.

One of the things helping to mitigate the loss of Bobolinks and grassland birds is The Bobolink Project, a non-profit program jointly based out of the University of Connecticut and the University of Vermont. Depending solely on public

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contributions, The Bobolink Project basically pays farmers to not cut their fields during the nesting season. Farmers submit bids based on what they feel it will cost to set aside acres of hayfields and the available funds will go to the lowest bidders. In 2013 the Project was able to conserve 200 acres and 70 pairs of Bobolinks in Vermont.

Recently we spoke to Allan Strong, an Associate Dean at the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at UVM and a leader of The Bobolink Project and he gave us plenty of good advice about our Richford Bobolinks. He suggested that we try to determine where they are in the nesting cycle and see if they are carrying food back to the nests. When they do, they have nestlings and usually are not careful about revealing where the nests are located. Generally, they nest away from the edges of fields and he noted that he's almost never found a nest within 50 meters (about 160 feet) of the edge. If we had to harvest some hay during the breeding season this would give us a good rule of thumb to follow and we could mow around the perimeter. He also suggested that we wait 3–4 weeks after we see Bobolinks taking food back to the nests to insure that the nestlings are developed and able to move on.

The female prepares the nest by gathering material in the immediate area and it takes her about two days. First, she makes a depression in the soil and uses dead grass and weeds to build an outer wall. She lines the nest with finer grasses before laying the first egg. The nest can be up to four inches across and two inches deep.



Juvenile Bobolink

LENNY TAMULONIS



Female Bobolink

LENNY TAMULONIS

So, once more, we decided to hold off on hay cutting until August when we're sure that all the Bobolinks have grown and they've moved away to a marshy area to prepare for their migration to South America. We fully expect to welcome our noisy, rowdy friends again next year.

*The Bobolink is gone —  
The Rowdy of the Meadow —  
And no one swaggers now but me —  
The Presbyterian Birds  
Can now resume the Meeting  
He boldly interrupted that overflowing Day  
When supplicating mercy  
In a portentous way  
He swung upon the Decalogue  
And shouted let us pray —*

—EMILY DICKINSON

*Note: The Bobolink Project website can be found at  
<http://www.bobolinkproject.com/index.php>*

## A CASE STUDY: COLD HOLLOW WOODLOTS— PEER TO PEER LANDSCAPE LEVEL MANAGEMENT

By Nancy Patch

<http://www.forestadaptation.org/node/360>

The project is located in Enosburgh, Vermont, in the Northern Green Mountains, which is one of five priority habitat linkages identified by Two Countries, One Forest as critical in maintaining the integrity of the entire Northern Forest which stretches from The Tugill Plateau, west of the Adirondacks to Cape Breton. This project is a pilot project highlighted by the US Forest Service Climate Change Institute and in the first year of development involving 13 landowners in the CHC region with a combined acreage of over 2,000 acres. Private land accounts for 70% of the forested landscape in Vermont and it is generally held in relatively small size parcels. **If we are to implement climate change strategies and approaches in an effective way we need to engage small private landowners.**

Project partners include Cold Hollow to Canada, a regional conservation partnership, The land-owners, the VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, North Woods Forestry Consulting, and Redstart Forestry Consulting.

One component of this broad management project is to incorporate specific planning for climate change strategies for developing resilient forests and employing approaches to mitigate for a changing climate and the potential “novel” forest. The project will use Adaptation Strategies and Approaches as provided in the Adaptation workbook; *Forest Adaptation Resources: Climate Change Tools and Approaches for Land Managers*, to assess what strategies and approaches are currently being employed in existing management plans (though not identified as specifically addressing climate

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NANCY PATCH

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change). More importantly the project will raise the awareness of climate change effects by highlighting and making intentional those strategies in the context of climate change. Also identified are those actions already happening on the ground that help develop a more resilient forest. Finally, the project will assess what elements of climate change mitigation are not currently employed and could be considered for further action.

Major issues include operations, infrastructure, forest structure and complexity, and the ability to respond to disturbance. We will be using the following climate change strategies and approaches for the assessment and future planning for resistance, resilience and response.

*Strategy 1*

**Sustain Fundamental Ecological functions**

*Strategy 2*

**Reduce the impact of existing biological stressors**

*Strategy 3*

**Protect forests from severe fire and wind disturbance**

*Strategy 4*

**Maintain or create Refugia**

*Strategy 5*

**Maintain and enhance species diversity and structural diversity**

*Strategy 6*

**Increase ecosystem redundancy across the landscape**

*Strategy 7*

**Promote landscape connectivity**

*Strategy 8*

**Enhance genetic diversity**

*Strategy 9*

**Facilitate community adjustments through species transitions**

*Strategy 10*

**Plan for and respond to disturbance**

Assessments for each forest management plan have been completed. The next step is to develop a landscape level assessment over the entire 2,000 acres based on the individual plans. Further next steps will be to discuss the strategies being implemented now within the neighborhood group, and further discussion about which strategies and approaches can be modified, amplified, and initiated.



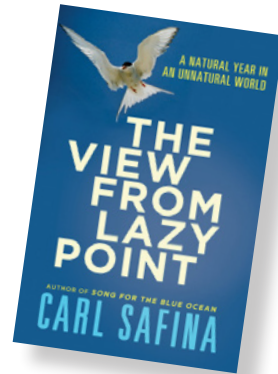
# RECOMMENDED BOOKS

By Nancy Patch

I would like to take some of the space in this quarterly newsletter to recommend some great books I have read most recently. If others have good books to recommend we would love to have you send us the titles, author and a hook to get us to read the book.

**Here is my list.**

Nancy



## ONE

This is my book of the decade. I have read it twice and will do so again soon. Carl Safina provides us with hard hitting science but done in a way that is so beautiful to read. I have recommended this book to many people who in turn have also passed it along.

*The View From Lazy Point: A Natural Year in an Unnatural World*

by Carl Safina

A quote from Carl “I have come to see that the geometry of human progress is an expanding circle of compassion and if the word sacred means anything at all—the world exists as the one truly sacred place.”

## TWO

I was reading this book with such enthusiasm for the great leaders of our conservation movement that my husband caught the fever and we conserved our land with the Vermont land Trust. Kevin knew this is what I had wanted to do for years, but just seeing my face as I read this book was more effective than any of the arguments I had offered up over the years.

*The Quiet World: Saving Alaska's Wilderness Kingdom 1879–1960*

by Douglas Brinkley

John Muir, Teddy Roosevelt, Charles Sheldon, William T. Hornaday, Aldo Leopold, Rockwell Kent, F.D.R., Ansel Adams, Mardy Murie, Robert Marshall, William O. Douglas and more.

## THREE

This book has many saying it is this generation's “Silent spring”. Its basic premise is that we are now living in what some call the Anthropocene or human dominated epoch.

*The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*  
by Elizabeth Kolbert

“Right now, in the amazing moment that to us counts as the present, we are deciding, without quite meaning to, which evolutionary pathways will be open and which will be closed forever. No creature has ever managed this, and it will, unfortunately, be our most enduring legacy.”

## FOUR

*The Living Shore: Rediscovering a Lost World*  
by Rowan Jacobsen

“The local field of being that we call the ecosystem must experience a period of adjustment when one of its organisms has disappeared. When people, accidentally or purposefully, experience engagement with these fields of being, the direct, ineffable sense of the ghosts of lost creatures may come visiting. Some ancient part of you is thinking, This used to mean much more. It's the shifting-baseline phenomenon. We believe that what we experienced when we were kids is how it has always been. We have no way of knowing that we are growing up in a diminished world.”

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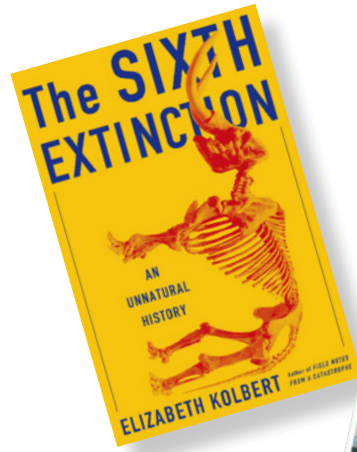
## FIVE

This one I am still reading, but written by a UVM prof it provides us with the history and critical power of the Endangered species Act. It is filled with hope as well as reality checks.

*Listed: Dispatches from America's Endangered Species Act*

by Joe Roman

"In the eyes of the true-cost economists, nature is the provider of goods, food and fiber, and services—cycling nutrients, forming soils, supplying water, cleaning the air, controlling erosion, and capturing carbon. When we lose ecological structure we lose function—including those ecological services we need to survive."



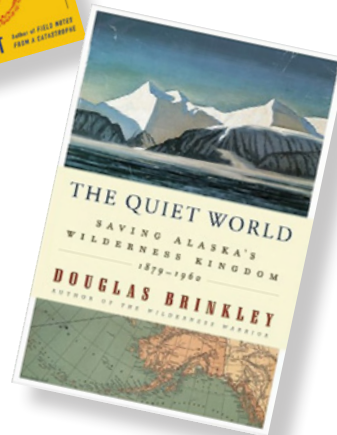
## SIX

*Hope on Earth: A Conversation*

by Paul Ehrlich and Michael Charles Tobias

"For Humanity's continued health and prosperity we all must work hard to solve these five global problems; starting today:

Climate Change, Extinctions, Loss of Ecosystem Diversity, Pollution and Human Population Growth and Resource Consumption."





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 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 every month from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at the Montgomery Town Office, 98 Main St (VT Route 118), Montgomery Center.

## RICHFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY COMMITTEE

Meets the third Thursday of every month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Locations vary so visit [www.vtwsr.org](http://www.vtwsr.org) for up-to-date information.

## 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.

Pollinators on Your Farm  
Sponsored by Vermont Land Trust  
**June 30th (rain date July 2nd)**  
**Cost: \$20**  
**River Berry Farm, Fairfax and the Farm Between, Jeffersonville**  
[vlt.org/events](http://vlt.org/events) or 802-262-1241

Vermont Coverts Cooperator Training  
**September 5-7**  
**Kehoe Conservation Camp, Hydeville, VT**  
Do you care about wildlife? Do you want to learn how to improve habitat on your woodlot while providing recreational and timber benefits? Attend VT Coverts 3-day Cooperator Training to learn this and more. The program highlights how to improve your woodlands for wildlife, while connecting you with resource professionals and other landowners just like you. One landowner notes, "it is an empowering weekend chock-full of information, totally worth my time." All that is required is a \$100 deposit to hold your spot (this is available for refund upon completion of the weekend). For an application or more information contact Lisa Sausville at [lisa@vtcoverts.org](mailto:lisa@vtcoverts.org) or 802-388-3880.

Creating a Pollinator Enhancement Plan  
**November 8**  
**9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**  
**Cost: \$35, lunch provided**  
**Shelburne Farms, Shelburne**  
[vlt.org/events](http://vlt.org/events) or 802-262-1241

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

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