



Connections



The newsletter of Cold Hollow to Canada Forest Link: Summer 2010



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Special points of interest:

- If you'd like to be more involved with CHC, consider representing your town on our Steering Committee
- Wildlife trackers wanted! See p. 2
- If you'd like more information or to be added to our email list, please email us at <info@coldhollowto canada.org>



Edits and layout by
Corrie Miller

Cold Hollow to Canada's First Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of Cold Hollow to Canada's quarterly newsletter, *Connections*. We're pleased to be able to bring these articles to all of you who have attended our programs or otherwise shared our interest in stewarding this region's forests for present and future generations of human, plant, and wild animal life.



The Cold Hollow Mountains

Cold Hollow to Canada Forest Link (CHC) is a partnership of community members working together toward the common goal of positive land stewardship and wildlife habitat conservation through education and outreach and coordination among local conservation and planning commissions, public entities, and non-profit organizations. CHC grew from a gathering of community members representing seven towns in the Northern Green Mountains in the fall of 2008. The meeting was the start of a discussion about the place where we live, what it means to us, and how we might be able to protect the parts of it that we love.

Since this initial gathering we have organized a steering committee with representation from five of seven towns in our project area, assisted Bakersfield and Richford in developing conservation commissions, organized the Keeping Track Monitoring Program that is sending its first teams of citizen scientists into the woods this summer, and hosted a

handful of educational presentations. We're excited to report that this past spring the steering committee elected Charlie Hancock, a private consulting forester from Montgomery, as our first official chairperson and began creation of this newsletter and a website (both are now published!).

The newsletter title refers to the core of our mission—connecting people to the landscape and connecting forests and habitat for wildlife and people. Furthermore, our hope for this newsletter is that it keeps all of us connected to one another as stewards of this place we love.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter, visit our website (www.coldhollowtocanada.org) and stay involved in our communities – the future of this special place is up to us!

Thank you,

CHC Steering Committee



Keeping Track of Wildlife

Five Tracking Teams Embark

Last October seventeen people from our region began a mammal tracking training course through Keeping Track, a non-profit organization in Huntington whose mission is to inspire community participation in the long-term stewardship of wildlife habitat. Sponsored by Cold Hollow to Canada, this in-depth training prepares local citizens to become "citizen scientists" as they learn to observe and document sign and tracks of focal mammals. This year's group has successfully completed six field training days (exploring our forests and those in Jericho) and two evening classes. They embark this summer on monitoring ventures in their own backyards across Bakersfield, Enosburgh, Montgomery and Richford.

CHC has learned about the value of Keeping Track programs from our partners across the border in Canada who have been offering annual trainings for the past seven years as part of an ongoing monitoring project. Taught by Susan Morse, an internationally recognized ecologist, tracker, and hunter, the Keeping Track Monitoring Program educates and engages people about wildlife species and the habitat they need to be healthy. The scientific training allows local people to collect data that can be a vital indicator of the ecological health of the whole landscape and can be used by local planning commissions as well as land trusts. Furthermore, learning about the animals with whom we share our forests connects us to the landscape in a special way.

CHC trackers huddled around Sue...and the fire—photo by Annette Goyne



CHC trackers following tracks that followed a stream—photo by JoAnne Wazny

SEEKING MAMMAL TRACKERS!

You too can become a skilled tracker. Cold Hollow to Canada is sponsoring a second year of mammal tracking training through Keeping Track and is **now seeking interested trackers for the 2010-2011 training group**. The training includes six field days and two evening classes and the full cost is \$395 (CHC has a grant from Patagonia that can defray some of the costs for individuals who need assistance). The field dates are Oct 10, Dec 11, 2010 and Jan 8, 29, Feb 13, April 10, 2011 while the evening classes are Dec 13, 2010 and April 11, 2011 (Note: it is possible to make up a class if there is a conflict). This upcoming year four Canadian trackers will be joining our group, and we look forward to getting to know one another and explore future cooperative efforts and data sharing.

Because you only see what you know to look for, this training is a great opportunity to open your eyes to the world of wildlife around you. Sue Morse's knowledge and insight will amaze you, and even the most experienced woods-person will see the forest through a new lens. Just ask anyone from the first class! If you'd like more information or to register, contact Nancy Patch at nancpatch@earthlink.net.

CHC Steering Committee:

Bakersfield	Dorothy Allard
Enosburgh	Nancy Patch
Fletcher	Ed Lidster
Montgomery	Charlie Hancock, chair
Richford	Bill McGroarty Lenny Tamulonis



Purple Boxes and Green Beetles: the Emerald Ash Borer

by Charlie Hancock—CHC Steering Committee, Montgomery

By now most of us have seen those purple boxes that line our highways and byways, tucked up in roadside trees like awkward bird houses or bat boxes. These boxes are being deployed as part of a national survey by the US Dept of Agriculture in partnership with state organizations like Vermont's Dept of Forest, Parks and Recreation as a detection tool to monitor Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestations and locate potential beetle populations. Approximately 75,000 traps are being deployed in 49 states, with 480 in Vermont spread across 11 counties. The traps are hung from ash trees and baited, with oils naturally produced by stressed trees, to lure EAB to boxes lined with a sticky material that traps them in place. The trap is not the *solution* to this potential problem, but a tool for *detection*. These traps will be up until fall, with survey crews making sample-collecting rounds starting mid-summer.



EAB larva, exit hole and adult beetle photos from Pennsylvania Dept of Conservation & Natural Resources

landowners and municipalities. Adult beetles are metallic green, and about 1/2" long. They lay their eggs in ash tree bark and larvae bore their way through the bark and cambium, disrupting water and nutrient flow. Larvae overwinter in the tree and emerge the following June. Although difficult to see, the beetle leaves a "D" shaped exit hole in the bark, about 1/8" in diameter. This attack causes crown dieback in the tree, and sometimes heavy sprouting of suckers while the tree struggles to survive. The end result is almost always mortality.

To slow the spread of the pest, we can't modify the EAB behavior, but we can modify *HUMAN* behavior. A single EAB can fly up to 1/2 mile, which isn't really that far. Humans—however—can cover a much greater distance when we travel to go camping or to the cabin. This is the most common dispersal method for EAB—the transportation of firewood with

So what's the problem with EAB? The beetle is a non-native insect discovered in Michigan in 2002, which has since been documented in 11 states, as well as Ontario and Quebec. Since its arrival in the US it has killed tens of millions of ash trees and caused millions of dollars of economic damage to

the larvae or adult present under the bark. If you must transport firewood, limit it to within a 50 mile radius. The last thing you want is to pick up little green hitchhikers that won't even throw in for gas. **To be on the safe side pack hot dogs, not firewood.**

To learn more about the Emerald Ash Borer, attend the July 17 workshop at the library in Richford (see Calendar, p. 7)



Reflections on "Favorite" Animals

by Bill McGroarty—CHC Steering Committee, Richford

While trying to come up with an appropriate topic to write about in this – our first edition of the CHC newsletter – I came across an article in the Summer 2010 edition of *Tricycle* magazine written by Rick Bass. Bass, the author of some 25 books, lives in northern Montana where he has long been active in efforts to protect the last roadless lands in the Yaak Valley. Bass's article, entitled "Totem Animals," has to do with every child's challenge – deciding their favorite animal. His answer to this question touches on what we – the CHC group – are all about. He describes this youthful interest in animals as "those childhood days of talismanic fervor, and the security to be gotten by holding in one's heart an emblem of something brave, fierce, powerful and free – something as invulnerable as the child is vulnerable." I can't help but think that this vulnerability he speaks of, and the need for "emblems of bravery, power and freedom" extends well past childhood.

We who are fortunate enough to live in Vermont know that the animals we share our beautiful state with represent much more than the number of hunting licenses sold or tourist dollars they may attract. At some very deep level they help define us and the place in which we live. How would the disappearance of many of these animals and much of the habitat needed for their existence affect us and the perception we have of ourselves as Vermonters? Bass addresses this question thusly:

Considering the current wave of world-wide species extinction – which is occurring at an even greater pace than the post-asteroid die-off of the dino-

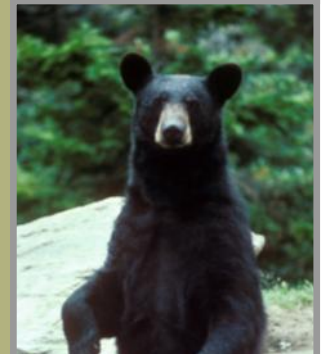
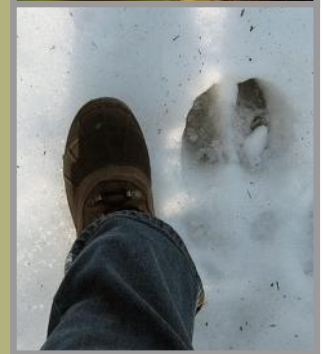
saur – can be a cause of depression. Estimates are that in the coming century, one species in four will vanish...This world-vanishing, then, can be another thing to worry about, beyond the individual's ability to control. The best that any of us can do in this regard, I think, is to celebrate the integrity of species other than our own while they are here, and to demand the protection of the habitats that formed them, the clay from which they were all sculpted.

The article ends by returning to answer the initial question: what is your favorite animal? His response is "I don't have a favorite animal anymore, but I have a favorite landscape – the Yaak Valley of northwest Montana...It's a place where not a single species has gone extinct – where every animal that was present at the end of the last Ice Age is still here." Although we can't quite make that claim here in our "favorite landscape," CHC does believe that our home range – the Cold Hollow Mountains to the Canadian border – can contribute to slowing, and possibly stopping the extinction calamity that is forecast by many worldwide.

Bass concludes by saying of a favorite animal:

I can't choose...They are all interconnected, each has shaped and helped sculpt the other, each is a part of all the others, and I love them all. Each carries a part of the other, each and all are interdependent upon all the others.

Throw us into that equation and it tells you why we at CHC are doing what we are doing.



Conservation Commission Corner: Bakersfield

by Dorothy J. Allard—CHC Steering Committee & Bakersfield Conservation Commission

Conservation Commission Seeks Funds for Town Park

The Bakersfield Conservation Commission (BCC) was formed in March of 2009. One of its first projects has been the acquisition of a parcel of land in the center of the village for a town park.

A four-acre parcel that once held the local doctor's residence was for sale. Larry Krygier, a member of the Conservation Commission and long-time town resident, recognized its potential: the land was centrally located, there was easy access from the elementary school, and it had a number of interesting natural habitats that could be explored. Not only that, it contained a circa 1890s barn with historical significance--all that remained after the doctor's house burned late in the 20th century.

With no money in its coffers, the BCC acted quickly to form the Bakersfield Community Conservation Corporation, a 501(c)3 organiza-

tion with the express mandate to raise funds to purchase the property. A few donations and loans from townspeople made it possible for the purchase to go through at the end of 2009, with the BCCC making a down payment to the former landowner who now holds the mortgage.

the land acquisition. Merchants Bank Foundation also made a donation. A quarter-acre piece of the property will be sold to an adjoining landowner; the proceeds will go toward the rest of the parcel. Many townspeople have donated to the cause. Funds are being sought from several other foundations and

we are scheduling several fundraising events. An additional loan from a local trust fund may give us a little more time to find the rest of the money.

What's next for the Bakersfield Town Park project? Our Town Park Committee is currently working on a management plan for the property. Eventually we hope to have a recreational trail with links to other trails in town, a visitor's center and meeting

space in the barn, and a gazebo for musical happenings. On May 1, we organized a park clean-up day. About 30 people came to pick up trash, clip brush, and rake leaves (see photo). Everyone is excited about the project and looking forward to their new town park!



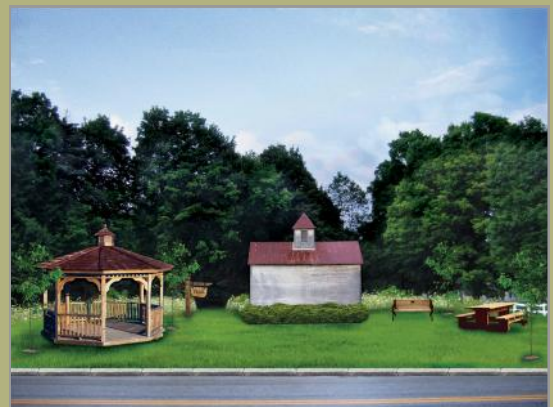
Bakersfield citizens clean up the Town Park on May 1

Since the first of the year, we have been scrambling to find the rest of the funds before the end of 2010, when we must repay the original property owner. A grant request to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board was successful and will provide two-thirds the cost of



Brownie Scouts enjoy hot dogs after helping clean up Park on May 1 (left)

Artist impression of future Bakersfield Town Park by Forrest Dunnivant (right)



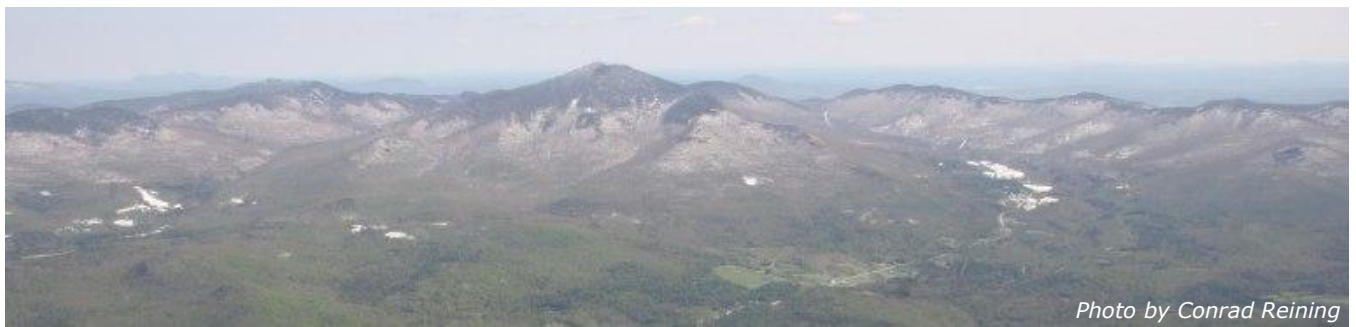


Photo by Conrad Reining

Did you know you live in an important wildlife corridor?

by Corrie Miller—*Staying Connected Initiative*

It sounds funny when you think about the vast seven-town region that comprises Cold Hollow to Canada's focal area as a wildlife corridor. I think that's because, for most of us, "wildlife corridor" brings to mind the image of a single, one-lane pathway funneling animals between one place and another. While this understanding is useful when considering populated areas that offer few options for wildlife movement, it's less useful to us in the Cold Hollow to Canada region where we are fortunate to have acre upon acre of forested habitat. Here, then, when contemplating corridors, you generally can zoom out the focus of your image, as if it's a Google Map, and think about a *network* of large blocks of un-interrupted forest *as well as* the lands connecting the blocks (like small forest patches, wetlands or waterways). This habitat network helps large animals move freely across the landscape. At this *zoomed-out* scale, the swath of forestland flanking the Northern Green Mountains is an important wildlife corridor between the Southern Greens and the Sutton Mountains in Québec. Our region is one of only six important linkages that, together, connect wildlife habitat across the entire Northern Forest – from western New York to Canada and Maine.

Why is it important for wildlife to have connected habitat? For starters, many animals have different needs during summer and winter months. Moose, for example, use lowland wetlands during the summer and upland forests in winter and must travel between the two in spring and fall. Connected habitat also allows genetic flow, ensuring that inbreeding

doesn't become a problem and that healthy populations persist. And furthermore, when food, shelter, and mates are difficult to find in one place, animals must roam elsewhere to meet their needs.

Of course, wildlife are not the only inhabitants in our area; we live here, too. Nevertheless, in Vermont, our communities are heavily influenced by the natural landscape. In addition to feeling at home surrounded by forests and enjoying activities like hunting, hiking, and snowmobiling, the Vermont economy is strengthened by intact forests, particularly the forest products and tourism industries.

As part of the *Staying Connected Initiative*, I am working with communities in the Cold Hollow to Canada region to find ways of maintaining existing habitat connectivity while also protecting other values (hiking, hunting, forestry, land access, etc...) that you identify. I've been teaming with local municipalities, citizens and partner organizations (like CHC) to help raise awareness about wildlife needs and movement patterns, assist landowners in protecting or managing their land for the benefit of wildlife, and provide technical assistance to municipalities interested in maintaining landscape connections.

If you are interested in wildlife and maintaining this important habitat corridor, or you simply want to learn more about Staying Connected, please feel free to contact me at corrie.e.miller@gmail.com.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Photo by JoAnne Wazny



Bakersfield Conservation Commission

Meets the last Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Building, 40 East Bakersfield Road, Bakersfield.

Enosburg Conservation Commission

Meets the fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Emergency Services Building, 83 Sampsonville Road (Rte 105), Enosburg Falls.

Richford Conservation Committee

Meets the first Thursday of the month in the upstairs conference room of the Arvin A. Brown Public Library, 88 Main Street, Richford.

Wild and Scenic River Study Committee

Meets the third Thursday of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Locations vary so contact 802-393-0076 or visit www.vtwsr.org for more information. Next meeting is July 15 in Lowell.

Paddle the Missisquoi—from Richford to East Berkshire

June 26, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM with the Wild and Scenic River Study Committee. To learn more, call Shana Stewart at 802-393-0076.

Walk in the Woods: Forest Bird Habitat Assessment

July 10, 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM at Clover Hill Tree Farm, South Strafford. Sponsored by Vermont Woodlands Association, Audubon Vermont, and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation. More information at www.vermontwoodlands.org.

Bird Banding Demonstration

July 16 and July 23, 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM at the Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Road, Huntington. Sponsored by Audubon Vermont. Donations accepted. More information at 802-434-3068.

July and August Bird Monitoring Walks

July 10 and August 14, 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM at the Green Mountain Audubon Center, 255 Sherman Hollow Road, Huntington. No charge, donations accepted. More information at 802-434-3068.

Invasive Insect Workshop and Visual Survey – Asian Longhorned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer

July 17, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at Arvin A. Brown Public Library, 88 Main St., Richford. Sponsored by the Richford Conservation Commission. For more information contact Rhonda Mace at 802-505-0200 or rhonda.mace@state.vt.us.

Conservation and Wildlife Corridors in the NE Kingdom, The Staying Connected Initiative: Worcester-NE Kingdom

July 29, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the NorthWoods Stewardship Center, East Charleston. Sponsored by the National Wildlife Federation, Vermont Land Trust, and NorthWoods Stewardship Center. There is a \$5 fee. More information from www.northwoodscenter.org.

Elysian Hills: A Woodlot for Life

July 31, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at Elysian Hills Farm, 209 Knapp Road, Dummerston. Bill and Mary Lou Schmidt discuss forest management, invasive species, and their wildlife management plan. Sponsored by Vermont Coverts and the Vermont Land Trust. For more information see www.elysianhillsfarm.com.



Photo by Annette Goyne

