

# Attleboro Land Trust News

## October 2019



By the Education and Outreach Committee and Attleboro High School

## In This Issue

**Let Your Imagination Soar:  
Explore Hike Attleboro**

**Losing Biodiversity May  
Mean Losing the Cure for  
Cancer**

**What's Happening on the  
Barrows' Farm in 1719**

**Summersweet**

**Updates, Comments, and  
Interesting Reading**

**Audubon "Norma's Woods"  
Acquisition**

**Attleboro Community  
Garden News**

## What's Going on at the Land Trust

Imagine a more beautiful, healthy, and energetic Attleboro. That is what the City, the Audubon Society and the Land Trust are working to achieve. Even if you do not hike, you should come to the **Land Trust Community Wide Event** at the **Murray Unitarian Universalist Church** on **October 22** to learn how **Hike Attleboro** will improve the city and your life. Listen to **Don Burn**, the creator of the **Charm Bracelet** sequence of trails in Westborough, explain how setting up a trail system and managing "open space" benefits the entire community. It starts at 7:00 PM with socializing and refreshments and the talk at 7:30. All are welcome to attend.

On September 14, Phil Boucher held a guided walk at the Richardson Preserve on **Beholding the Beauty of Trees**. Phil talked about various invasive, native, and alien species of trees and plants. Despite the fact that the talk ran an hour long, no one was interested in leaving and there were many questions during and after the walk. Phil's knowledge and storytelling is expansive and enlightening.

## Upcoming Events

**"Fairy House Exhibit" 10:00 til noon Oct 5  
Richardson Preserve, Rain Date: Oct6**

**"Hike Attleboro" 7:30pm Oct 22 Murray  
Unitarian Universalist Church**

**"Community Dialogue on Energy and the  
Environment" 7:00 - 8:30 pm Oct 29,  
Murray Unitarian Universalist Church**

**"Community Garden Closing and Cleanup  
Day" 9:30 til noon, Nov 2, Rain Date: Nov  
9**

**"Introduction to Geocaching" for kids,  
Nov 2, 11:00 to 1:00 Richardson Preserve**



M. Riley

# Let Your Imagination Soar: Explore Hike Attleboro!

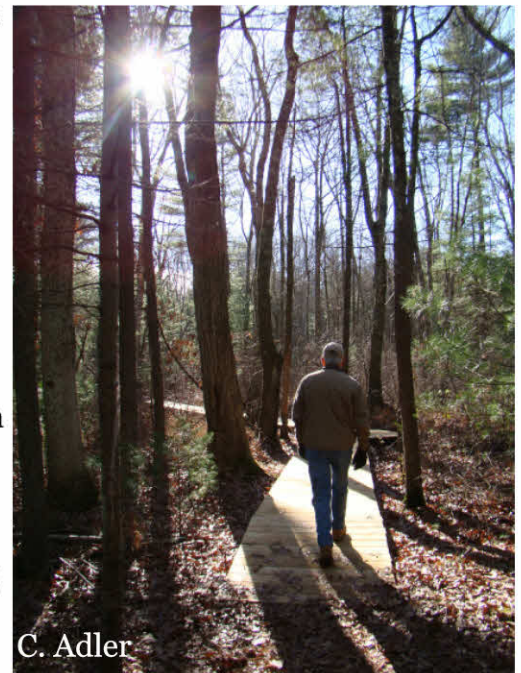
## HIKE ATTLEBORO



**Hike Attleboro** will soon make Attleboro known as a place to go to explore and appreciate the benefits of open space! Property becomes more attractive and quality of life improves when residents have access to open space and hiking trails near where they live or work. Health care providers are always looking for ways to direct their patients to places where a more active lifestyle includes walking and hiking. Good publicity about a city, which prides itself on being a great place to enjoy nature, makes it a more vibrant community, and will attract new residents, visitors and businesses!

“Open space” creates cleaner air and water, while preserving the city’s environment and visual appeal. Sponsoring businesses welcome the opportunity to emphasize their community involvement in such a positive project. Hike Attleboro is a win-win for everyone!

Do you want to hear how Hike Attleboro can make a public trail system a great feature of a city that is making open space a priority? Then come to the **Land Trust Community Wide Event on October 22**, featuring an accomplished speaker who made the Westborough, Massachusetts “Charm Bracelet” trail system a highly successful connecting trail network. It could be a model for Hike Attleboro! **Don Burn**, the innovator of the "Charm Bracelet", will make a presentation at the **Murray Unitarian Universalist Church** at 505 North Main Street, Attleboro at **7:30pm**. He will draw parallels between the development of that system and making the ongoing Hike Attleboro project become a reality.



C. Adler

Hike Attleboro is a campaign that has been in the planning stages for some time. It will combine open space and trails now owned and/or managed by the Land Trust, the City of Attleboro, and the Audubon Society into a prominent part of the City landscape. Great concept, right? Recognizing that there are existing trails, which could be connected in historic downtown areas, such as along the Ten Mile River from the Judy Robbins Park to Highland Park, and ones highlighted in our colorful brochure detailing Attleboro Area Walkable Woods and Fields, Hike Attleboro has great building blocks already in place. Design and placement proposals for Hike Attleboro signs and kiosks have already been evaluated by members of a committee including representatives from the Land Trust, the City and Audubon. Getting some expert advice from the “spark” behind Westborough’s innovation will be a great plus to getting plans to the final stages.



C. Adler

Don developed the Westborough Charm Bracelet initiative starting in 2000. It now includes a 28-mile loop trail connecting open spaces around Westborough with trail maps displayed at 18 locations and links to other towns’ trail systems. He reviewed maps of the area and the possibilities for Hike Attleboro. He has some great ideas about how to make Hike Attleboro a treasured feature of the city, to be enjoyed by all residents and visitors who appreciate the benefits of nature, hiking and open space.

A featured speaker for Mass Trails, Don has specialized in building a trail network so that all types of hikers, (con't)

(con't) including those not usually familiar with wilderness hiking, can enjoy trails in both developed and undeveloped areas of a city. Parts of his presentations have included how to develop volunteers to build and maintain trails, working with city entities and conservation groups to promote the trail system, and finding resources and surmounting obstacles while laying out a trail network.

Community support and volunteers are always key to the development of a successful interconnected trail system



Richardson Preserve

like Hike Attleboro. The campaign is still in the stages of welcoming input from everyone in the area who has ideas about how to make such an important endeavor a reality. So come to our October 22 event to hear how the Hike Attleboro project is going to become a valuable feature of the City and its future! Brian Hatch

## Losing Biodiversity May Mean Losing the Cure for Cancer

In the 1992 movie, **Medicine Man**, they had the cure for cancer but lost it when a fire, caused by the expansion of farming in the Amazon, wiped out the organism from which it was derived. That was just a story you say, but, according to the **National Institutes of Health**, of the 175 small molecules used to treat cancer, developed from 1940 to today, 49% of them were developed from plants. Up to 50% of all approved drugs in the last 30 years came from plants. It is not just the Amazon that produces these plants. Many others, from here and all around the world, have



C. Adler

helped provide the chemical precursors for modern medicines. Scientists are studying organisms from all around us, including natural medicines, to find new compounds that can be utilized as medicine.

Our biodiversity in the world is decreasing all the time with trees, plants and other organisms going extinct because of selective culling or development. **Harvard Medical School** warns that the organism that no longer exists may have contained the cure for cancer or heart disease or be the more nutritious food to feed the world. I have seen whole areas of forest, with multiple species, in Oregon, be clear-cut and replanted with one profitable species of fir tree. Down south, it is one species of fast growing pine tree. The pines grow so fast that they are structurally weaker and the building Strength Tables have had to be changed to compensate. The other plants may not be as profitable but they have their own very special place in the environment.

The **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations** warns we are even losing the biodiversity in our foods. There are over 1,000 species of potatoes in the world. How many do you find in the store? Only the most profitable varieties. Others may be more nutritious but grow too slowly or have smaller yields so they are pushed aside. Wheat, rice, and corn (maize), the most produced foods, are now mostly GMO. (con't)

(con't) GM seeds are produced to require more pesticides, which is also sold by the seed companies. Non-GMO seeds require 20% less pesticides than GMO's. They can cope with weeds, insects, and disease naturally without the added pesticides. Natural nonGMO winter rye as a cover crop or cereal crop has its own natural herbicide to keep weeds down, but it is not as profitable as wheat or corn.

To top it off, many crop seeds now require coating with herbicides that kill any plants near them, including beneficial ones, in order for them to grow. In addition, insecticides built into a seed or coating a seed leads to the loss of important pollinators such as butterflies and moths that are needed for other plants. These pesticides leach into the ground water, rivers, and streams killing aquatic life as well. **Nature, International Journal of Science** warns that



Winter Rye

pesticides are causing a great loss of biodiversity on our planet.

We need biodiversity to survive. We need to protect our open space and natural areas to preserve plants, animals, and microorganisms on which our lives depend. By maintaining biodiversity we may be saving the one that later feeds us or gives us a cure or just keeps our world functioning.

## What's Happening on the Barrows' Farm in 1719

In October, it is getting colder. Work is being done on harvesting the last of the crops before the frost. Even the unripe vegetables are harvested right after the first frost. They are used soon, usually in pickling or soups and stews. Hence, different green vegetables are used in relishes. Fried Green Tomatoes anyone?

Preservation is going on in earnest. Corn and beans, the staples of their diet, are dried. Vegetables could be dried, pickled, brined, fermented, jellied or placed in cool storage in the "root cellar". Meats could be salted, smoked, concentrated, dried, brined, or pickled and once it was cold enough, packed in snow or ice. Hay and fodder are put up and the last of the grasses allowed to dry in the fields, becoming straw as bedding for the animals.

Other preparations for the house are being made such as the walls and roof made tight, shutters fixed, and firewood and kindling stacked. Since they had a sawmill, most of the firewood they used was the scraps from the mill. Since it was smaller than regular logs, it burned faster and more was needed to sustain them. The typical colonist would use the wood from one to one and a half acres to heat and cook each year. It would take a "wood lot" of 20 to 30 acres with continuous replanting to keep a household supplied. The Barrows' house had three fireplaces and one wood stove. They only kept the ones going that were necessary. At night, they banked the coals to maintain the heat. The stove was more efficient than the fireplaces that lost most of their heat up the chimney.



**The Attleboro Land Trust is looking for Supporters either by making a Tax-Deductible Contribution and/or as a Conservation Volunteer. Contributions or Sign-ups as a volunteer can be made securely at [Attleborolandtrust.org](http://Attleborolandtrust.org) or by mail at Attleboro Land Trust, P.O. Box 453, Attleboro, MA 02703. Thank you for your support.**

# SUMMERSWEET



*Swamp Pink Azalea* C. Adler

If you have been lucky enough to venture out and trail walk through the woodlands of our several maintained properties this year, it seemed to be a banner year for beauty. The cool wet spring jammed up flowering and the usual timely arrival of birds, that now have normalized, and our late summer to fall season is upon us. Soon the changing colors will be the main attraction before the colder winds make walks a little shorter.

Mid-to-late summer does bring on a few more insects or a bit more humidity,

but the chance of seeing the gathering of birds or the late flowering low wetland plants are worth the effort. Beyond the colorful display of numerous berries and fruit on assorted small trees and shrubs, there are still a few flowering attractions at this time. There may be a few chance encounters of Swamp Pink Azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*) to be found in our woods, but the star of a July-August summer is the Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*). Sometimes, other common names may appear such as Sweet Pepperbush or White Alder but the visual of this plant's flowering display is unmistakable.

The sweet floral fragrance fills the air as you walk by the profuse flowering, at nearly head or shoulder height, that makes all else seem to just disappear from your mind. A closer look- and you will stop to look- shows a white to pink upright spike of two to four inches long that will flower from four to six weeks. While in bloom, *Clethra* attracts numerous pollinators, honeybees, wasps and butterflies that seem not to resist its nectar.

As a woodland plant, it grows as a densely rounded mass and often suckers, creating a large colony. In fall, the pleasing green foliage turns a yellow to gold color that can simply light up an understory along a pathway. As it turns out, this same plant is available as a landscape plant for the home garden. It is amazingly adaptable, and provided with moist well-drained soil in sun or light shade, it will perform just as you remember in the woodland. There are selections that can be purchased which are a little more compact in habit, such as **Hummingbird** or a strong rose-colored flower called **Ruby Spice** as excellent garden plants.

Even if you decide to create a little of your own nature experience at home, please do not forget the woodland trails. There is more to see and new plants or trees to enjoy in all four seasons. It is less work than a garden, with no leaves to rake or worrying about watering. Enjoy. P. Boucher



*Summersweet Clethra Alnifolia* R. Lewis

## Updates, Comments, and Interesting Reading

Pediatric studies show that almost 8% of children in the US now have **food allergies**, triple from 30 years ago. Possible causes are less breastfeeding, which passes on parents immunities and children not being out in sunlight enough, causing a deficiency in **vitamin D**. Get your children and grandchildren into the outdoors. The Land Trust has many great recreational areas.



Northern Cardinal

**Whole Foods** CEO John Mackey says plant based meat is not good for your health because it is using "overly processed" ingredients.

The journals of **Science and Biological Conservation** published a study showing that there are **3 billion** less birds in the US and Canada than there were in 1970. That is a 29% loss.

When waterfowl numbers decreased, duck hunters set up a program to preserve wetlands to bring back the populations. We need to do the same now with "open space" for the other birds. **Land Trusts** preserve "Open Space". Are you going to help? She wants to know!

On September 20, there was a worldwide **Climate Change Strike**. At the age of sixteen, **Greta Thunberg** brought the world together with the simple mission of saving our planet. The **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** recent report states the years 2014-2019 are the warmest on record. We can see how it is affecting us here and elsewhere in the US. Climate Change needs to be addressed NOW to preserve our health and environment.

The **Trillion Tree Campaign** says that the reforestation of the earth by planting one trillion trees would capture 25% of the annual emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. Every tree counts.

**Bee Vectoring Technologies** has an EPA approval to release an organic pesticide Vectorite, that is delivered by bees, this fall. It helps prevent bee loss from the use of chemical pesticides.

**Warming Signs** podcast with Kait Parker of the **Weather Channel** tackles pressing environmental issues. They are interesting podcasts.



Great Barrier Reef Australia

Australia's **Great Barrier Reef** survival rating has gone from poor to very poor due to warming of the waters from **Climate Change**. If you want to see it, it would probably be best to do it soon before it is gone.

The **Guided Walks** went over very well this summer. There was good attendance and much interest. We are looking for someone to put together more Guided Walks and informative talks through out the entire year.



Lauren Gordon Director of Oak Knoll

## Contact Us

Email:  
[Attleborolandtrust@gmail.com](mailto:Attleborolandtrust@gmail.com)

Phone: 508-223- 3060 EXT 3604

Address:

Attleboro Land Trust  
P.O. Box 453  
Attleboro, MA 02703

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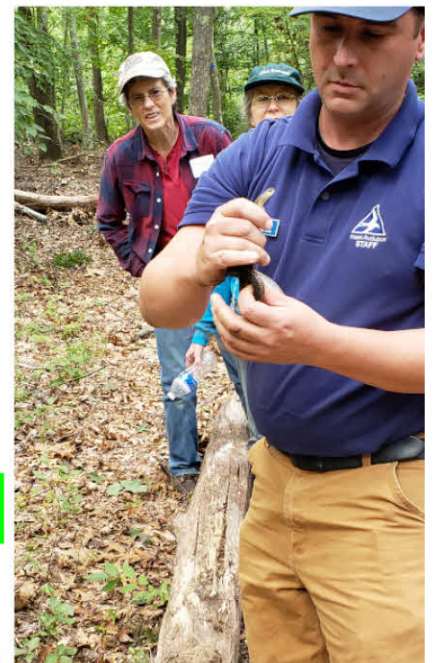
### Audubon “Norma’s Woods” Acquisition

On Saturday September 7, about 100 persons gathered at the MA Audubon’s Oak Knoll Wildlife Sanctuary to celebrate the acquisition of additional land. Twenty-five acres were purchased from Norma Dorrance whose wish, and that of her late husband Mitt, was to have their land become part of the Oak Knoll Wildlife Sanctuary.

Oak Knoll Sanctuary Director, Lauren Gordon, provided an overview of the acquisition process and how the Sanctuary is planning to use the land in the future. “We want to expand our educational component at the Sanctuary to include informational displays and kiosks and to provide nature-based education to community members who use the property.”

Those in attendance were introduced to Gary Clayton, President of Mass Audubon and Bob Wilber, Director of Land Conservation. They talked about how this acquisition not only increases the size of Oak Knoll by 50%, but that it enhances the ultimate goal of meeting Mass Audubon’s values, vision and mission.

Following the informative meeting, guests were provided a guided tour of the new property and completed an enjoyable walk along the trails of “Norma’s Woods”. Mike D. Gaudet



Chris Hitchener  
Education Director Oak Knoll

### Attleboro Community Garden News

It has been a great season this year at the **Attleboro Community Garden**. There were many good crops and beautiful flowers. Donations were made to the Hebron Food Bank.

The **Garden Closing and Clean-up Day** is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 2 with a rain date of Nov. 9. The time is from 9:30am til noon. All gardeners are expected to help out on closing day even if you have put your plot to bed early. Thank you.

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