



Vinalhaven Land Trust

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Taking Time for Nature

I am late way too often. It's not that I underestimate how long it will take me to get from A to B; I am very good at that. I am not good at remembering that if I want to be walking out the door at 7:45, I need to start locating glasses, water bottle, pad, pen and keys, and evicting the cats by 7:30. As a result, I am often rushed, hurried, and harried as I approach my destination, and not in the right frame of mind to give my full, focused attention to the meeting or task ahead.

But then I turn off onto one of Vinalhaven's infamous dirt driveways, and am forced to slow down. And that's when I often take a moment or two to stop, turn off the engine, and roll down the windows to listen to the sounds of birds and wind, and to smell the air. Whether it be woodlands, wetlands, or meadow, my heart rate drops and my spirits rise as nature surrounds me. Sure, I may be a few minutes late, but letting the natural world cradle me, even if just for a few minutes, is worth the apologies I will cheerfully offer.

Nature heals. It has the power to heal because it is where we are from, and it is where we belong. So many studies have proven this time and again. It heals our body, our mind, and our soul. Breaking away from today's often sedentary lifestyle to be outdoors, even if only for fifteen minutes a day, can be more energizing than that cup of coffee. Time in nature, away from the stimulation of demanding devices and other man-made distractions, allows your attention system to

replenish. That same fifteen minutes spent outside relieves stress and anxiety, by causing stress hormone levels to drop, as well as blood pressure and heart rate. Time in nature increases our appreciation of beauty.



*"Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher."
—William Wordsworth. Photo by Kerry Hardy.*

Outside, one can focus with each of the five senses. Look for wildflowers, get down to their level to observe the details of their bloom. Smell the damp moss, feel the texture of different tree bark, listen to the raucous screech of a gull or the "teacher, teacher!" of the oven bird. Taste wild berries throughout the season, from the intense sweetness of the tiny wild strawberries in late June, to blueberries, raspberries, huckleberries, and the blackberries of late summer.

But if we want nature to heal us, we need to be aware of her needs and do our part to take care of her. The wellbeing of people and the wellbeing of the environment are inextricably linked. Increasingly, our air, water,

and lands are threatened by development and environmental degradation. Threatened species may be losing protections; beautiful lands sacred to native Americans are at risk of mining and pipelines. Mighty rivers are being sucked dry to supply water to sprawling cities miles away. The daunting list goes on; I know we are all doing what we can at the local, state and national level to try to stay—or better, reverse! the pace of insults to our natural world.

Vinalhaven is just a small speck in the ocean, but here at VLT, we work to make sure we all have places where the forests can replenish our souls; that the watersheds that help ensure the quality of our municipal drinking water are protected; that there are large, contiguous blocks of habitat where species

can roam and plants can flourish, as well as protected islands where seabirds can nest. We are mindful of where the salt marshes—so important to protect shores, nurture marine life, and provide that transition between fresh and salt water—might migrate as sea levels rise, and of habitats that are "climate resilient" as climate changes. We strive for conservation that recognizes the interdependence of the health of nature and the health of people. For many of us, and I hope to you as well, the "nature of Vinalhaven" adds immeasurably to our quality of life.

-Linnell Mather, Executive Director

Connecting the Next Generation

All grade levels have exciting environmental education activities planned for this school year. Already this fall, there have been a number of hikes and field trips. For the younger kids, there was a habitat walk with Kerry Hardy, hikes with Tanglewood Learning Center (with another planned for spring), and an overnight camping trip at Tanglewood's Camden Hills State Park campus. Fourth and fifth graders went on a mushroom hike with Kirk Gentalen at the Granite Island Preserve and are in the process of putting together a book of photographs from this fun day.

Middle school students have been busy too. Educators from Hurricane Island Center for Science and Leadership (HICS&L) have been to the classroom to start a unit on kelp aquaculture, and 8th graders, accompanied by high school student leaders and other chaperones, experienced a very successful trip to Mount Katahdin in September. Events in October included tide-pooling at Lane's Island, a geology field trip with George Kendrick, and an excursion to HICS&L's campus on Hurricane Island to learn about their work and research, which will further enhance classroom studies.

High school has also had classes with HICS&L, and this year, Robin (HICS&L's lead science teacher) is working with students taking Earth Science. They will be learning about the sun's impact on the earth, and taking a field trip to Hurricane Island to study the island's solar energy system and geologic history. The following unit will be on the earth and its physical changes, both globally and on Vinalhaven.

Check our website and visit us on Facebook and Instagram for events and information.

-Sherry Rega, Programs Coordinator



Clockwise, left to right: High school field trip to Hurricane Island; 4-H volunteer Kate Ritz planted a garden with students from Perspectives After School (photo by Alice Bissell); boys discovering seaweed at VLT's summer camp, Island Explorers (photo by Sarah Barrett).



If you shop on Amazon.com, you can simultaneously support VLT. Just visit smile.amazon.com and select Vinalhaven Land Trust as the charitable organization to receive donations of .5% on your eligible purchases. There is no charge to you, and your existing account, wish lists, and wedding or baby registry will remain unchanged. It's an easy way to help VLT every time you shop!



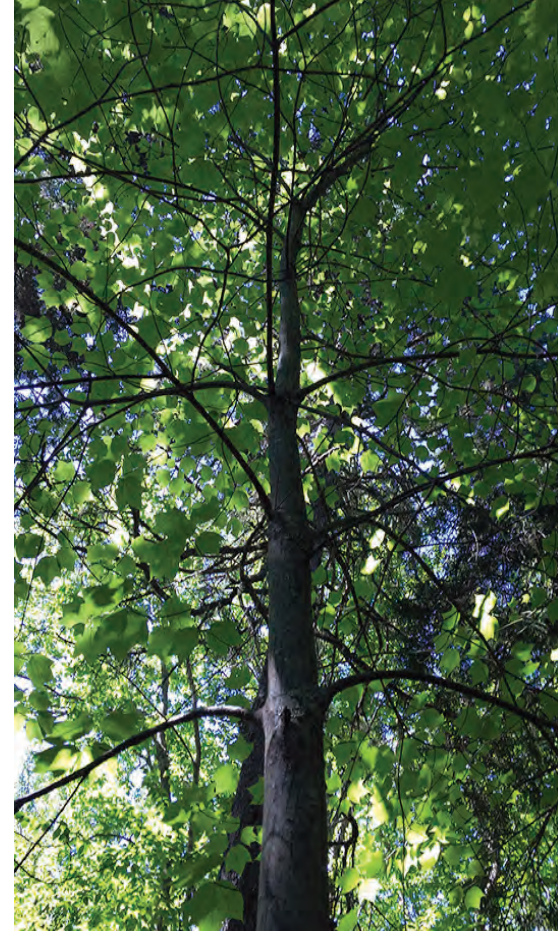
Gifts of Stock

VLT encourages you to consider making a gift of appreciated securities in response to our year end appeal before the end of the 2018 tax year. Why? Because stock gifts cost you less. In addition to being able to claim a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the shares, you also avoid paying a capital gains tax on appreciation.

Please contact Linnell Mather at linnell.mather@vinalhavenlandtrust.org or 207-863-2543 for more information. Thank you!



This summer was a great season for bird watching. Vinalhaven birders got a glimpse of over 70 species. The photo (directly above) of a semipalmated plover and a semipalmated sandpiper is just a small sampling. At the top of the page, two terns share a rock at The Basin. Photos by Rick Morgan.



YEAR-END GIVING

The Season of Giving

Through our ever-expanding environmental education program, VLT inspires the next generation to become better stewards of the island we all love. Our walks and talks program provides opportunities for all to learn more about the nature of Vinalhaven. Our conservation efforts focus on protecting those significant plant and wildlife habitats, water resources, and traditionally valued spaces that nourish our lives and our souls.

VLT operates on a calendar year basis. Your gifts by December 31, 2018 ensure that all programs and expenses will be fully funded in the year ahead. Gifts of all sizes are important and welcome. We are especially appreciative of gifts of \$250 or more, which traditionally represent 80% of all funds raised. You may donate by mail or securely online at vinalhavenlandtrust.org/donate, or by phone at 207-863-2543. Thank you!

Giving Thanks for our Volunteers

VLT would like to thank all the amazing people who gave their time and energy in the past year. Now more than ever, it is critical to work together, and we are overwhelmed by the support of our volunteers. Last year, more than 130 people volunteered over 300 hours, and that does not include the many hours our board gives to VLT! Please accept our apologies if we have inadvertently left out your name.

Annual Meeting

We thank Skip and Carol Thompson and Diane and John Cochran, fearless co-chairs who ensured the event went smoothly. Addison Ames Jr. set up VLT's small tent; David Lawrence and Bill Alcorn tended bar; Mike Mesko and Steve Rosen provided ice; the fire department loaned us their chairs and tables; Bob Candage and Steve Gang along with a whole "gang" of board and staff helped set up chairs; Jan Lichtenwalter made sandwiches.

Committee Members

In addition to our dedicated board members,



Happy Trail Volunteers. Photo by Marjorie Smith.

other year-round and seasonal community members serve on a variety of committees. Louisa Ives and Charlie Lowrey lend their skills to the Investments Subcommittee. Elise Stockly brings her expertise to the Development Committee, as does Sarah Forbes to the Communications Committee. Former board member Lucy Quimby remains an active member of VLT's Easements and Acquisitions Committee. High school science teacher Emma Baker brings her insight to the Environmental Education Committee. We also thank Merry Boone, Janet Gohres, Allan Hayes, Jeff Kilbreth, Rick Morgan, Arlene Rodenbeck, and Sally Wylie for their support of the Walks and Talks Program. Thanks also to Skip Thompson for his help on the Skoog Park Committee and finally, to Javier Peñalosa for his work on the Preserve and Conservation Easement Management Committee.

Mailings and Office Help

What would we do without those who heed our call? Nancy Campbell, Amy and David Calkins, Colleen Conlan, Adriana Harp, Beth Gilford, Pam Grumbach, Suzanne Heller, Ed Hirst, Stevie Kaimmer, Penelope Lord, Arlene and Julie Rodenbeck, Carol and Skip Thompson, and May Lou Upton: thank you! Additional thanks to Carol and Skip Thompson and Sarah Forbes for reviewing and editing our mailings. Thanks to Andrew Quinlan for pest management.

Transportation to Hurricane and North Haven

Thanks to George Fosque, George Kendrick, David Lawrence, Norbert Leser, Hugh Martin, and Fiona Robins for using their boats to transport people for VLT Walks.

Trail work

Anne Barrett, Jim Boone, Jeff Kilbreth, Don and Valerie McQuillan, Aaron, Fiona, and Iris Morehouse, Rick Morgan, Hugh Roth, Marjorie Smith, Marjorie Stratton, Carol Thompson, and Cindy



Volunteers ferry hikers to North Haven. Photo by N

Vohringer all volunteered their time to help maintain our trails. A great group of incoming freshmen from Bowdoin College helped clean up the hard-to-get trash below Tip Toe Mountain, as well as the shores of the Granite Island Preserve. Sue Dempster and Kelly Richards update and maintain the stories on the Story Trail. Niall Conlan lent his snowplow expertise to clear trail heads all over the island after every storm, enabling our winter hikers access to the trails they love. Thank you all!





Norbert Leser.

Coastal Clean-ups

Volunteers at our annual Basin clean-up in April included Elaine Crossman, Munch Grogan, Ed Hirst, Pam Johnson, George Kendrick, Shelby Smith, Carol and Skip Thompson, Joe and Mary Lou Upton, and Allie Wood, as well as many board and staff members. The coastal clean-up in September included volunteers Gail Eierweiss, Pam and Jim Grumbach, Pam Johnson, Jeff Kilbreth, Sylvia Lacey, Rick Morgan, Debbie Pixley, and Carol Thompson.



As always, thanks to the Transfer Station staff for allowing us to dump several truckloads of collected debris free of charge.

Graphic Design and Tech Support

We salute Taina Litwak for her stunning preserve brochures and maps and Cay Kendrick for donating her time and expertise on graphic design, as well as very generously donating a computer.

Monitoring

For their crucial efforts in surveilling and protecting our conservation easements and preserves, thank you to Pam Alley, Colleen

tiful images of our preserves.

Walks and Talks

Gratitude to Pete Jaques and Rick Morgan for leading bird walks and assisting at bird walks throughout the summer with their scopes.

Board of Directors

Finally, we could not do this without the support of the board of directors. They, too, volunteered their time and skills for many of the opportunities above, as well as leading walks, monitoring properties, proofreading and editing, and sharing their wisdom and insights through their work on VLT's many committees.



Above: Coastal Clean-up crew. Photo by Norbert Leser. Left: Javier Peñalosa leading a walk on Marcuse Wetland Preserve. Photo by Norbert Leser. Below: Steve Rosen and Bill Alcorn share a laugh at the annual meeting. Photo by Sheri Romer-Day.

Conlan, Niall Conlan, Josh Eckels, Munch Grogan, Pam and Jim Grumbach, Adriana Harp, Charlie Lowrey, Jameson Lowrey, Audrey Nichols, Herb Parsons, Anna Poe, Susie Rodriguez, Ross Tabor, Marthena Webster, and Sheri Romer-Day.

Photos

Thank you Alice Bissell, Colleen Conlan, Sarah Crossman, Kirk Gentalen, Norbert Leser, and Heather White for providing such beau-



News from the Trails



Bench on Tip Toe Mountain, overlooking the Fox Island Thorofare. Photo by Kerry Hardy.

Even though November means my attention will shift to the monitoring that remains to be done, I'm still checking the trails after big rains or wind events. I've been happy to hear, from an assortment of hikers, that people are enjoying some of 2018's accomplishments at our preserves.

The biggest news of the year was opening the Marcuse Wetland Preserve to the public, complete with a half-mile loop trail, boardwalks, benches, kiosk, preserve brochure, and a parking lot for visitors. We had two very well-attended programs there this summer with Nat Wheelwright and Javier Peñalosa as presenters. Special thanks to David "Tiny" Arey, who did a bang-up job on the parking lot there, as well as an enlargement of the parking lot at our Whitmore Pond Sanctuary.

I was especially happy to meet a deer hunter there last week who was using the trail to access his nearby treestand. Hikers should bear in mind that the forest and swamp here have long been popular spots for island hunters, and that's a tradition VLT wants to see continue. So, put on your orange vest and hat before you venture out on the trails this fall.

Benches were an especially big item this year. We now have benches at fifteen different scenic locations around the island, if you count the picnic table at Skoog Park (which the public is always welcome to use, by the way). Whether you're just looking to take a load off your feet and enjoy the view for a minute, or planning to sit for half an hour with a book or binoculars, the benches can add a lot to your hiking experience.

We also keep trying to make the trails safer. This includes widening them slightly to reduce the chances of hikers getting ticks, but also addressing things like steep grades and water crossings. We've rebuilt a set of steps at Granite Island Preserve, and we've also heard many thank-you's regarding the set of timber steps at the steep pitch on Tip Toe Mountain's loop trail. We've cut a new section of trail that allows hikers easier and safer access to the summit of Big Tip Toe, with a bench near the top where one can sit and enjoy the view of the Fox Island Thorofare and the Camden Hills beyond.

At the Andrew Smith (Fox Rocks) Preserve, landowner Louisa Ives has graciously allowed us to install two benches as well. One is at the high point of the property and offers gorgeous panoramic views of the colorful fall foliage; the other looks down on Perry Creek from high ledges, and is a great place to sit and watch the ospreys and eagles at work.

These are the high points of this year's trail work, but it's good to also remember the basics—old bridging has been replaced, signs and on-site maps have been freshened, and as always, friends of VLT have been great about volunteering to help us keep the brush back and the fallen branches picked up. I always smile when I see that some conscientious hiker has been trampling the rogue bracken ferns along a trail's edge, so that they don't spread their fronds out over the trail; or breaking back balsam fir tips that are crowding in on a trail. We welcome, and really appreciate, everyone's help in this regard.

-Kerry Hardy, Stewardship Coordinator

President's Message

There is an unusual situation that I recently discovered and it is a good one as situations go. Our land trust staff has two masters: we have a master of gardening and a master landscape architect. When fifty percent of your staff are masters in relevant skill sets, that is unusual. What is really interesting is that the master of gardening is our Executive Director and the master landscape architect is our stewardship coordinator; one is now the keeper of VLT's "garden" and the other is the keeper of our lands and trails.

Linnell has been working for VLT for over twenty years and knows the inner workings of VLT better than anyone. She knows when a piece of land was acquired; she knows the trails and who has been generous to give an easement that allows us to see interesting places and sights. She oversees the finances of VLT and manages the budget with a strong hand.

Kerry Hardy, our landscape master, loves being on the land and it shows. He builds benches at key spots for us to rest and enjoy the views, works with teams of volunteers to maintain the trails, and in some cases to create new trails for a different perspective.

As President of the Board, I am very grateful for the talent and care with which they manage their respective skills and responsibilities. It makes us stronger as a land trust and also gives me the comfort to know that we are in good hands; masters' hands.

-David Hyde, President

Vibrant chanterelle mushrooms on Tip Toe Mountain. Photo by Kerry Hardy.



Our Leadership

Board of Directors

Carol Baker	Sean Mahoney
Jim Boone	Lucy McCarthy
Dick Byrd	<i>Vice-President</i>
Lee Campbell, Jr.	Meagan Miller
Emily Cohn	<i>Secretary</i>
Eric Davis	Kevin Moore
Chuck Gadzik	Blake Reidy
David Hyde	Steve Rosen
<i>President</i>	Elizabeth Swain
Bill Jaques	Mark Tolette
Cay Kendrick	Pam Wetherbee
Pam Kittredge	<i>Treasurer</i>
Susie Lawrence	

Staff

Linnell Mather, Executive Director
 Kerry Hardy, Stewardship Coordinator
 Sherry Rega, Programs Coordinator
 Sheri Romer-Day, Office Assistant and
 Monitoring Oversight



Help Conserve the Nature of Vinalhaven

Join us in protecting Vinalhaven's natural beauty with your membership or additional contribution. Use this form or donate online at www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org. Annual dues (for each calendar year) are \$20 per person. Thank you!

\$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$ _____

Check enclosed.

Please charge my Visa or Mastercard # _____

Signature _____ exp. _____ CCV _____

Name _____

Address _____

Town/City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____


All donations, including dues, are tax deductible and will ensure that you receive VLT's newsletter and notice of special events. Contributions at all levels are greatly appreciated.

www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org • 207.863.2543 • PO Box 268 • Vinalhaven, Maine • 04863

Vinalhaven Land Trust promotes the conservation and appreciation of our island's significant plant and wildlife habitat, our water resources, and scenic or traditionally valued spaces in order to preserve the character of the community for generations to come.



Photo: Kerry Hardy



Vinalhaven Land Trust



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