



Vinalhaven Land Trust

CONSERVING THE NATURE OF VINALHAVEN



NEWSLETTER
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A New Trail from Vinal Cove to Round Pond

Occasionally someone will come in to the office and ask, "Are there any new trails?" We hope that by next summer the answer will be "Yes!"

In September, Caroline and Charlie Pardoe gave VLT a conservation easement on a piece of woodland stretching from Vinal Cove to Round Pond. Their main concern was protecting the watershed for the pond, since it is the reservoir for the town water supply, but they also inserted a provision that allows VLT to construct and maintain a footpath running the length of the property, beginning at the cove and ending not far from the pond.

We are indebted to the Pardoes for inviting us all to share their land. Allowing a public trail on private property is something many landowners are not willing to risk. The only other VLT easement that includes this arrangement is the South Perry Creek trail, which

takes one up to Fox Rocks and around to connect to the North Perry Creek trail. It is partly because users of the South Perry Creek trail have been so respectful of the land, and of the rights of the owner, that the Pardoes have decided to take this step.

The new trail will be laid out, cleared, and marked with blazes and cairns by VLT staff with help from volunteers. (Please call 863-2543 and talk to Kerry if you're interested in helping with this effort). A small parking place will be constructed at the pond end when funds are found to pay for its construction.

We will provide an update in the Spring 2013 newsletter to let you know whether the trail will be ready for use by the summer. Thank you, Charlie and Caroline!

-Tuck Godfrey, Executive Director



VLT Executive Director Tuck Godfrey and President Susie Lawrence present Caroline and Charlie Pardoe with a certificate of appreciation, thanking them for the donation of an easement to VLT. Photo by Linnell Mather.

REMEMBER YOUR LAND TRUST

Vinalhaven Land Trust draws its strength and success from your support. In these challenging times, we rely on the generosity of your year end gift to help us meet our goals. Won't you please take a moment to make your gift now?



VLT Launches 25th Anniversary Campaign

VLT has announced an ambitious anniversary fundraising campaign with financial goals that will enable us to act on land protection opportunities and, just as importantly, fulfill our long-term stewardship responsibilities. The founding vision of Vinalhaven Land Trust—to preserve traditional uses of land and water resources for the island community—continues to be realized. Today, VLT conserves over 2,000 acres, as well as partnering with other organizations to protect Vinalhaven's most special and beloved places like the Basin, Perry Creek, and Seal Bay.

Continued on next page.

25th Anniversary Campaign (continued from cover)

While in our first 25 years we focused on acquiring properties for conservation, our next 25 years is likely to be defined by a greater emphasis on the stewardship of those properties, which is the means by which we protect the property in our care and manage public access. Increased use of our beautiful lands is a testament to the value of these properties to the Vinalhaven community. Part of the campaign is intended to strengthen our ability to carry out those stewardship responsibilities.

The other part is to help VLT acquire a signature property worthy of perpetual conservation. VLT has an option to purchase Big Tiptoe Mountain, a long-time favorite, particularly among

island young people, both year-round and seasonal. The property also includes extraordinarily diverse habitats and arresting views. For more on this exciting project, see the article on the next page.

To ensure our long term promises and responsibilities will be fulfilled, our goal is to raise \$1,760,000. Of that amount, \$875,000 will be dedicated to assuring that VLT has funds to undertake our stewardship responsibilities. The balance will be used for the purchase, acquisition costs, and ongoing stewardship needs of Big Tiptoe Mountain.

Last fall, we met with thirty or so VLT friends and supporters to confirm there was sufficient

interest in raising funds for stewardship and the future of our land trust. The message to us is that they care deeply about long-term land protection and the health of this organization. By summer's end over half of our goal was reached with \$900,000 promised. We are most grateful for the enormously positive response.

Now, after this very strong start of the campaign, we face the even greater challenge of achieving just as strong a finish. Raising the final \$860,000 in the next two years will require a lot of hard work by the board and staff of VLT and the support of many additional donors. We look forward to working with each VLT member and welcome any and all support.

ACCREDITATION ACCOLADES

Vinalhaven Land Trust recently received a letter from Congresswoman Chellie Pingree, congratulating us on becoming an accredited land trust. Representative Pingree wrote, in part:

I recently heard that Vinalhaven Land Trust has received accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. I wanted to pass on my congratulations and thank you for what your land trust is doing in your community.

Let me first acknowledge the important work land trusts do for our state. We are lucky to live in such a beautiful place, and even luckier to have so many land trusts to keep it that way. Thanks to these organizations, communities can protect their special places, landowners can leave a legacy, and parents can connect their children to nature....

It's important that land trusts use best practices to ensure the sustainability of their organizations. I am glad you have done this by going through the very rigorous accreditation process. It speaks to the strength of your ongoing commitment to serving our communities and future generations.

Thank you, Chellie, for these kind words and for reminding us all how important our work is.

Walks and Talks Wrap-Up

Some 1,200 stalwart and enthusiastic folks joined members of Vinalhaven Land Trust's Walks and Talks Committee this summer for the biggest and best walks and talks schedule in VLT's history. Forty-two events lured people to evening talks, week day walks, and weekly bird walks. Many aspects of the "Nature of Vinalhaven" were explored: its flora and fauna, its history and geology, its natural beauty, and many of its preserves. Attendees (both members and future members) joined together in small and large groups, met new friends, and learned about all the work of Vinalhaven Land Trust.

With his moving installation, "Hard Stone, Hard Choices," Scott Candage has interpreted the lives of ten islanders who lived here during the granite quarrying period (1850-1939, more or less). He has memorialized them on a series of ten handsome installations.

On an entirely different note, "Raconteur" is a double-duty word to describe one who counts and one who tells a good story. Phil Crossman was at his raconteur's best presenting his 3rd island perambulation program. Starting on October 9, 2009, from the Dyer's Island bridge, Phil set out on a series of walks around Vinalhaven's entire shoreline ("clockwise, of course"). Here's the count three years later: he walked 2-3 hours each time out; took 70 separate hikes; covered

over 300 miles of coastline; only really injured himself once; and his confession: he is still two walks short of getting back to that bridge. Phil's slides were glorious, showing seasons and sites few of us ever see, even on a small ("28 square miles") island. As for the stories: watch for the book!

Jim Boone's walks to various sites of historical significance are always a crowd pleaser. He led a walk to Maine author Margaret Wise Brown's former shorefront home, Only House, as she called it, where she had cherished the "huge silence of the island, gained the ears of a rabbit and the eyes of an eagle," and had plenty of fun with plenty of friends. In all the world, this was her favorite place. Brown died suddenly and young, half a world away. Her ashes were brought back to Only House here on Vinalhaven, to be scattered within sight of that evocative little island out in the bay.

Planning is under way for next year's programs and your ideas are always welcome. Please contact Jim Boone at jimboone@hotmail.com.

-Jim Boone and Sylvia Reiss

VLT Signs an Option to Buy Big Tiptoe Mountain

In September, VLT reached an agreement to purchase 40 spectacular acres with shorefront on Crockett Cove and the Thorofare, bold western views, and microscopic bryophytes, granite, basalt, and fresh and salt water wetlands. The property includes 3700± feet of frontage on Penobscot Bay and Marsh Cove, and 800± feet of shorefront on Crockett Cove.

Big Tiptoe is an ecological tapestry, with many of Vinalhaven's signature qualities woven together in this one place. Though locally renowned for the breathtaking sunsets to be seen from the mountain, the parcel also has the habitat diversity to support a remarkable array of species. From fresh water wetlands to an exemplary salt marsh, the lower elevations around Big Tiptoe are as ecologically exciting as the peak is scenic. The rocky intertidal zone, draped with bladder wrack, gives way to a brackish wetland, then a fresh water wetland, and finally a spruce-fir forest that closes in around a forested fen over Sphagnum peat. A lush stand of seaside goldenrods crowns the

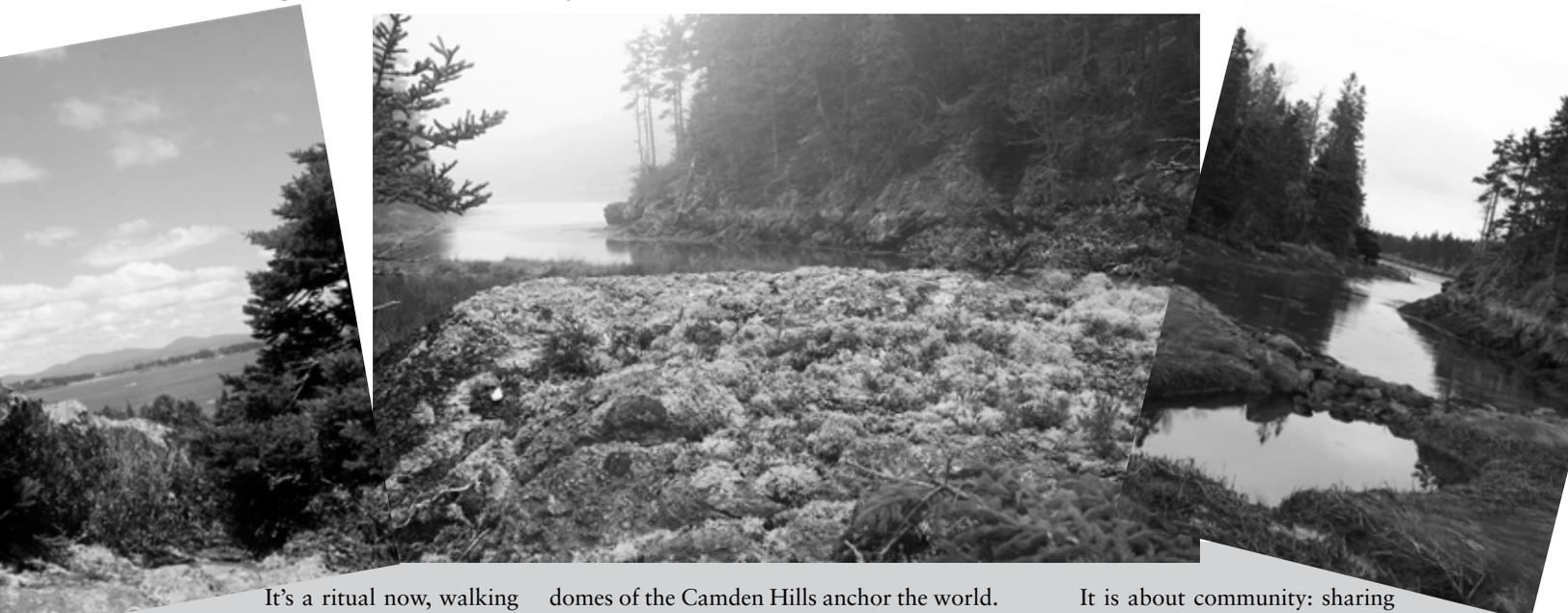
scene. Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department as well as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have documented the significance of this habitat.

VLT's resident retired botany professor, Javier Peñalosa, characterized the property as so rich in mosses and lichens that he could teach an entire semester's class on this spot alone. After years of doing botanical inventories on Vinalhaven and offshore islands, he said this property revealed a degree of biological diversity that was virtually unparalleled elsewhere on Vinalhaven. The extensive coastal wetlands have all the makings of a lobster nursery, especially important for fishermen.

For generations, Big Tiptoe Mountain, owned by a long-time, seasonal Vinalhaven family, has been the secret province of sure-footed youth and adults-in-the-know, scampering up to catch sweeping western views of Penobscot Bay from this high promontory above the Thorofare. The period of watching and waiting to see if the property would sell, since it was offered for sale two

years ago, is finally over. With the securing of an option to purchase, this will be the first acquisition on the Thorofare for Vinalhaven Land Trust, joining the interests of Vinalhaven and North Haven residents. Its conservation value and development potential make this a very consequential acquisition for both islands.

Once the purchase is complete, bird watchers—without fear of trespassing—will be able to come enjoy the thrill of looking down on the sharp shinned hawks during their migration, as they flap and glide just below the peak. Lovers of botany will have a field day exploring the multitude of species, and those prone to quiet contemplation will have new access to the serenity of Crockett Cove. Together with the town park at Little Tiptoe and VLT's Whitmore Pond Preserve and Perry Creek Conservation Area, Big Tiptoe would provide an important conservation connection at the western end of the island.



It's a ritual now, walking to Tiptoe—cranking up the body and loosening the mind to enter a magical zone of the senses: hearing the screech-tweet of an osprey, feeling the spongy softness of moss, smiling at silent tides in Crockett Cove, watching ferns dance like a troupe of Japanese fans, climbing up the ledge to Big Tiptoe, and gazing out over the blue-gray expanse of sea, over the humpbacks of the Sugar Loaves, beyond the ribbon of spruce on North Haven, to the edge of the horizon where the blue

domes of the Camden Hills anchor the world.

I carry this experience with me wherever I am.

It is about the ordinary turning spectacular: watching the sunrise from Little Tiptoe, sitting quietly on Big Tiptoe as sunsets paint and repaint the sky.

It is about science and discovery: wetlands, salt marsh, granite, basalt, birds...and, of course, bugs! Here students of science can investigate the complex evolution of land, sea and climate.

It is about community: sharing the site with family and friends. No wonder my friend proposed to his future wife on Big Tiptoe, securing the engagement ring in his blue jeans as he climbed the ledge to pop the question with the Camden Hills as witnesses.

It is about the past and the future. The old spruce by the shore, the familiar path up to the ledge, the perfect gorge on the road—they connect across time. And walking to Tiptoe connects us to each other.

-Abbie Trafford

Thank you, Volunteers!

Vinalhaven Land Trust relies on the many generous volunteers who give of their time and skills to help us accomplish a wide variety of tasks, from getting this newsletter in the mail to creating a new trail, to cleaning up a preserve, and a bit of everything in between. Give us a call or send us an email if you'd like to volunteer. We have something for every interest and ability.

VLT especially wants to thank the following people who have volunteered in the past year. If we have inadvertently left your name off this list, apologies!

Annual Meeting: A special thank you to Sue L'Africain for organizing this meeting and keeping us all on track for another year, to Pam Johnson for her beautiful sketch of Starboard Rock that graced the announcement, Sandy Lieber for bartending, Alex Day and Josef L'Africain for delivering folding chairs to Skoog Park, the ARC for the loan of the chairs, and to Charlie Pardoe for the use of his fish house for dinner after the meeting.

Basin Clean up: Merry Boone, Elaine Crossman, Andy Dorr, David Lawrence, Pat Lundholm, and Virginia Quick

Easements & Acquisitions committee: Lucy McCarthy, Lucy Quimby, and Didi Stockly

Environmental Education: Amy Palmer

Finance Committee: Charles Lowrey and Hugh

Martin

Fourth of July: Olivia Labaree and Sam Lawrence for riding on VLT's float in the parade, and to Del Webster for the use of his electric vehicle for that purpose.

Mailings: Anne Godfrey, Stevie Kaimmer, Penelope Lord, Lucy McCarthy, Carol Petillo, Susan and Addie Raven, Sylvia Reiss, and Carol Thompson

Management Plan Committee: Javier Peñalosa for sharing his knowledge of and enthusiasm for some of the special places on Vinalhaven.

Monitoring: Owen Bineau-Williams, Alex Day, and Lucy McCarthy

Office Help: Laura Hamilton, Penelope Lord, and Arlene Rodenbeck for writing thank you notes, Fred Granger, David Lawrence, and David and Sally Wylie for running errands "ashore", Penelope Lord for printing out many copies of trail maps for distribution this summer, and to Taina Litwak for her help in revising and updating those maps.

Newsletter Proofreading: Stevie Kaimmer and Mia Mather

Skoog Park: Bob Candage and Skip Thompson for rehangng a door, Lee Potter for weeding the plantings, and to Island Sail for the donation of a new picnic table, already well enjoyed!

Stewardship: Ed Hirst and Pam Johnson, Suzette Jones, and David and Sally Wylie for "adopting" a VLT trail, and to Rick Morgan for helping our steward with work on the preserves.

Technical Support: Nevins Bartolomeo and Pat Lundholm

Walks: Merry Boone, Phil Crossman, Tina Cohen, Dan Ferguson, George Fosque, Kirk Gentalen, Janet Gohres, David Lawrence, Lucy McCarthy, Rick Morgan, Ken and Sylvia Reiss, Patrick Trainor, David Wylie, and Christine and Len Yannielli. Thank you to Patricia Curtis and Ranny Miner of North Haven Conservation Partners for helping coordinate a walk on one of their preserves. And hats off to Gabe McPhail for all her help creating the beautiful walks posters and for helping organize the successful "Meet Your Local Farmer" series.

Maine Boats, Homes and Harbors Magazine (John Hanson) generously donated space for an ad promoting VLT in their Spring 2012 issue.

A special thank you goes to VLT's board of directors. None of this would happen without their hard work and generosity. VLT is lucky to have such dedicated and involved people on our team.

Winter Moth Identified on Vinalhaven

State officials have verified that winter moth has newly established itself on Vinalhaven. It feeds on the leaves of hardwood trees, including oak, apple, and maple, and shrubs such as blueberries. After three years of heavy defoliation, the trees may die.

Observations made on the island last spring by Charlene Donahue (Maine Forest Service entomologist), Pam Johnson, Linnell Mather, and Chuck Gadzik—when larvae were active—suggest that ours is a light to moderate infestation, confined to "the village". Concerned about this threat to our hardwood trees, the town is serving as a clearing house for information.

The moths are active in November and December, when temperatures are above freezing. After mating the flightless females crawl up hardwood trees to deposit their eggs in the loose bark crevices or lichens. Tree banding, a do-it-yourself job, is being done by individual

property owners to act as a barrier to climbing adults. Generally, heavy weight paper strips that are covered with a sticky substance are put on the tree to snare the climbing moth. A demonstration of banding has been set up in the meeting room at the town office.

Volunteers will be involved in mapping the locations of the moths found by tree banding to establish a baseline. Individuals can also help by reporting to the town office sightings of moth flights or clusters of moths on trees, most likely to be seen in early November through December.

From June until hatching, the cocoons are dormant in the soil, so it is important that no landscape materials should be moved out of the infested area ("the village") during that time, as that could help to spread the problem. Information on the life cycle and threat of winter moth, as well as some color photos, is available

on the land trust's website (www.vinalhaven-landtrust.org) as well as links to the Maine Forest Service.



Winter moth. © Entomart.

VLT has applied to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund for a grant to support an after-school Vital Signs club for 7th and 8th graders. The club will combine leadership training (courtesy of Tanglewood 4-H Camp and Leadership Center) with online identification and mapping tools (courtesy of the Gulf of Maine Research Center Vital Signs program) to enable club members to locate, map, and monitor selected invasive species on Vinalhaven. A likely candidate for study is the winter moth that has recently arrived on the island.

If the Vital Signs Club is fully funded (which won't be known until December), club members plan to create online maps locating invasive species on the island, develop a new nature trail adjacent to the school grounds, undertake a community service project dedicated to removing or containing an invasive species, and create an iMovie documenting the club's efforts.

Vinalhaven Middle School science teacher Amy Palmer, who is on leave this year from her classroom teaching responsibilities, will coordinate the club and its activities, working with VLT Executive Director Tuck Godfrey and Town Manager Marjorie Stratton.

-Marian Grogan,

Environmental Education Committee

Middle School Students Investigate Invasive Species



On their last day at Tanglewood Learning Center in Lincolnville, members of the Vital Signs Club went canoeing on Pitcher Pond. They looked for Hydrilla and Milfoil (both invasive aquatic plants), but thankfully, didn't find any. Photo by Rose Swan.

The Secret Weapon

As noted on the front page, VLT has been offered a chance this year to create a new hiking trail, through a provision in our latest conservation easement. This is going to be a lovely trail and will be our first new one in several years, so we are feeling very lucky. We're also excited because it's a rare chance to create a trail on private land.

The trails that are such an important part of our efforts to open doors to the wonders of Vinalhaven for all of us are almost all located on land that VLT owns—what we call our “preserves” and “sanctuaries”. In contrast, a property under easement remains in private hands and under the continuing stewardship of its owner.

When I was starting out in this work, I was inclined to think of a conservation easement as an arcane legal device for preserving land in cases where land trust ownership just wasn't an option for some reason. Clever, OK. Useful, for sure. But maybe not the best way to go if we had a choice. Well, it's not the

first time I've got hold of the wrong end of the stick.

In the beginning, I wasn't clued in to how important easements have proven to be for strengthening our ability to find and protect special places all over the island, and in particular, places that help form the backbone of our natural world. We encounter these places sometimes along the trails, and when we step through some door in our consciousness into their inner rooms, they can give us a fleeting sense that something fundamental and primeval is somehow personal. For a brief moment, even while we *know* it is universal, we *feel* it is ours alone.

The slippery truth, though, is that for any of us to be able to walk through that door, wherever we find it, that unique space must somehow—at the same time and always—exist everywhere. Mother Nature can't just hop from clump to clump like someone on stilts crossing a bog; she has to spread her wings over us all like a mother bird defending her chicks. She needs room.

How do we give her the room she needs? How do we contrive, we humans, with all our quirks, to use the space we need and still leave room for the web of natural life to remain intact? Easements can help, not only by creating connected spaces where the natural order can thrive, but also by giving each of these spaces its own care-taker and guardian.

Stewardship cannot be the province of a few volunteers. It must be happening always and everywhere. VLT's capacity to care for the web of natural spaces we must have, in order to keep Vinalhaven's ecosystem vital and alive, is founded on the fact that every property we protect with an easement has someone who watches over it with a kindly and vigilant eye. Our stewardship team is made up, not only of a coordinator and a cadre of trail stewards, but even more fundamentally of a community of easement donors, each of whom, whether they know it or not, keeps the doors open for all of us.

-Tuck Godfrey, Executive Director

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Support Vinalhaven Land Trust

Please join us in protecting Vinalhaven's natural beauty. To become a member, complete this coupon and return it to the address below or drop by our office in the cottage at Skoog Park. Annual dues (for each calendar year) are \$10 per person.

I would like to make an additional contribution to Vinalhaven Land Trust of:

\$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____

Check enclosed.

Please charge my Visa or Mastercard # _____

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

Questions? Please call us at (207) 863-2543. Thank you! www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org
Please mail to: Vinalhaven Land Trust • PO Box 268 • Vinalhaven, Maine • 04863

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



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CONSERVING THE NATURE OF VINALHAVEN



Participants enjoyed this summer's intertidal walk, led by retired botanist Javier Peñalosa. Photo by Sylvia Reiss.



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