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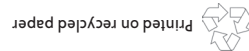
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All donations, including dues, are tax deductible and will ensure that you receive VLT's newsletter and notice of special events. Contributions at all levels are greatly appreciated.

Questions? Please call us at (207) 863-2543. Thank you! www.vinalhavenlandtrust.org
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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.



Round Pond. Photo by Kerry Hardy.



CONSERVING THE NATURE OF VINALHAVEN

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Vinalhaven Land Trust
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Vinalhaven Land Trust

CONSERVING THE NATURE OF VINALHAVEN

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2014 • Vol. 27, No. 2

"Saltwater Forestry": An Update

In VLT's spring newsletter, we announced that our proposal to publish a booklet about forest management for coastal landowners had just been awarded a \$6,850 "Project Canopy" grant from the Maine Forest Service (MFS). In our proposal, we pointed out that the growing conditions, species mix, average lot size, harvest economics, and aesthetic parameters are all very different along the coast of Maine from those in the forested interior of the state. "Saltwater Forestry" is the working title for this project, and the goal is to produce a booklet that gives landowners the basic information they need: how to assess their forest, determine their personal goals, and choose the management approach that best meets their goals. VLT's steward, Kerry Hardy has this update:

I've just returned from 2,000 miles of bicycling in the Pacific Northwest, which certainly has plenty of big trees and spectacular scenery—but I have to say, it feels great to see my familiar Maine forests again, especially with late season color still on the trees, and a few late season mushrooms still waiting to be picked. I'll soon be back at work on VLT's Project Canopy proj-

ect to produce a booklet on "Saltwater Forestry", and I'm realizing that one important piece of that document might be a discussion about emotional attachment to forest.

That word, "forestry," tends to focus our thoughts on isolated features like economy, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics—all good things to consider—but it's worth keeping sight of a larger truth: people simply tend to really, really like the forest. There can be all sorts of reasons why people love forests, and Peter Forbes touched on this when he spoke at our annual meeting. Humans, he believes, are hard-wired to love the landscape that feels like "home" to them. I agree wholeheartedly, and would add that it's easier to love a healthy forest than an unhealthy one. Jared Diamond put it even more simply in his book, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed. Societies that take care of their forests tend to endure; those that don't tend to fail. Our houses and neighborhoods may form the smaller frames of our lives, but our forests provide the larger enclosure.

Being blessed with extensive forests in Maine, it's easy to take everything they give us for granted, easy

to assume that they'll always be there to keep providing for us. Deep inside, however, we know better. The big lesson of our generation is that this planet is both a finite and a threatened resource, that we cannot take it for granted, that it cannot sustain itself and its creatures unless we take care to manage it. Forests can break down, and island forests—low in diversity, growing in thin soils, buffeted by strong salty winds, overbrowsed by deer, and broken into small blocks with many different owners—can break down more easily than most.

We expect to complete our "Saltwater Forestry" booklet next summer, and we hope it will help coastal residents have a deeper understanding of the forested lands they control, and of the things we can all do—as individuals, as neighbors, and as townspeople—to ensure that our coastal forests can remain a healthy and beautiful setting for our lives. Peter Forbes is right: it is in our nature to love the place we call home. The challenge ahead is to acknowledge this, and to actively take care of what we love.

-Kerry Hardy, Stewardship Coordinator



All granite and virtually no topsoil makes Vinalhaven a challenging place for trees. Some trees, like this red spruce, can handle it—but overall, a forest's diversity suffers as a result of thin soil. Photo by Kerry Hardy.

PLEASE AND THANK YOU

To sustain our education and conservation efforts, we depend on steadfast support from our members. Though the 25th Anniversary Campaign greatly bolstered our stewardship capabilities, we still need annual giving to support our day to day operations and all the great programs we offer in the school and the community. Please give as generously as you can to VLT's year end appeal. If you did not receive an appeal in the mail, you can use the coupon in this newsletter or you can always donate from the "Join Us" page on our website: vinalhavenlandtrust.org. Take a moment to do so today; VLT needs and appreciates your support in order to "conserve the nature of Vinalhaven." Thank you!

Our Volunteers Make It All Happen

Volunteering is a great way to help Vinalhaven Land Trust achieve its mission. There are tasks for all ages and abilities, from outdoor work on our preserves to office tasks such as folding trail guides or helping with a mailing. Call or stop by the office if you are interested, or send us an email at info@vinalhavenlandtrust.org.

VLT especially wants to thank the following, 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'African for organizing this meeting and keeping us all on track for another year; to Sue and Josef for bartending; to Alison Thibault, Andy Dorr and the Town Office, and the Pleasant River Chapel for the loan of chairs; to Island Spirits for discounted beverages; to Addison Ames Jr. and family for setting up VLT's small tent; to the Lions for the use of their wonderful large tent with sides; and to all those who stepped in to help fold chairs and clean up at the close of the meeting.

Basin Clean-Up: Merry Boone, Emily Cohn, Jim and Pam Grumbach, Bob and Jackie Hege, and Pat Lundholm

Trail Guide Design: A huge shout out to Taina Litwak! Our beautiful new trail guides reflect her expertise and artistic eye.

Easements & Acquisitions Committee: Ed Hoyt and Lucy Quimby

Investments Sub-Committee: Ed Hoyt, Charles Lowrey, and Hugh Martin

Mailings: Liz Carver, Jennifer Clements, Carly Giffin, Kay Giffin, Suzanne Heller, Stevie Kaimmer, Sue L'African, Lucy McCarthy, Carol Petillo, Anna Poe, and Arlene Rodenbeck

Management Plan Committee: Javier Peñalosa, whose botanical knowledge and wisdom informs so many of our management plans.

Office Help: Penelope Lord and Arlene Rodenbeck volunteered to come in weekly during the summer and help with office coverage. They printed and folded trail brochures, replenished the kiosk, clipped newspaper articles, and helped visitors. Fred Granger ran errands "ashore." Charlotte Henderson stopped by for information and stayed to help fold trail guides.

Newsletter Proofreading: Stevie Kaimmer and Mia Mather

Stewardship: Ed Hirst and Pam Johnson have "adopted" the trail to Starboard Rock and monitor it frequently to make sure it is in good shape for visitors. Tom and Suzette Jones, Susie Lawrence, and Rick Morgan helped our steward with work on the preserves.

Technical Support: Nevins Bartolomeo and Pat Lundholm

Walks: VLT had a fascinating season of Walks and Talks this year, thanks to the efforts of Merry Boone, Elaine Crossman, John Drury, George Fosque, Kirk Gentelen, Beth Gilford, Janet Gohres, Alan Hayes, Susie Lawrence, Lucy McCarthy, Gabe McPhail, Don and Valerie McQuillan, North Haven Conservation Partners, Rick Morgan, Jim McAvoy, Erica Reitmayer, Arlene Rodenbeck, Sally and David Wylie, Christine and Len Yanielli, and many others who helped in so many ways, but we didn't get your names.

None of what we do would happen without our dedicated and hard working board of directors. Thank you, trustees of VLT!

Update on Winter Moth: Parasitic Fly Release!

Attendees at this year's annual meeting were treated to a wonderful presentation from The Vital Signs Club, led by Environmental Education Coordinator, Amy Palmer. Amy introduced us to Vital Signs, a program of the Gulf of Maine Research Institute that unites Maine students, citizen scientists, and species experts in the effort to track and understand invasive species. Participants explore local habitats, collect evidence, and share their observations via the Vital Signs website. She then turned the discussion over to Vital Signs members Gabe Day, Deja Doughty, and Jordan Radley. They presented a slide show about their efforts to study and monitor the winter moth infestation first noticed on the island in 2012.

Deja spoke about banding hardwood trees to trap the female moths. They monitored and mapped the locations around the island where the moths were found. Gabe talked about contacting scientist Dr. Joe Elkinton, an entomologist and researcher at University of Massachusetts, and how the community of Vinalhaven wrote letters of concern to government representatives, asking that our town be one of those to benefit from a release of parasitic flies. Jordan told us how they set pheromone traps to lure and capture the male moths, with the traps and moths being sent for analysis to Dr. Elkinton, who found that 80% of the moths were indeed winter moths, and the other 20% were spruce span worm moths.

On May 21, 2014, the Vital Signs group assisted Dr. Elkinton and state entomologist Charlene Donahue in releasing 2,000 parasitic flies on the property of VLT members Ed Hirst and Pam Johnson, a site termed "ground zero" due to the heavy infestation noted there. The flies will prey on the winter moths and reduce their population spread over time, although it can take 5-10 years to notice a significant difference. The flies, *Cyzenis albicans*, are specialized parasites which only attack winter moths.

The group expressed thanks to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, VLT, the town of Vinalhaven, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, and Tanglewood 4-H Center for help and support, and gave affectionate thanks to Leif Gentelen, the young de facto member of the Vital Signs team. The audience applauded the "citizen science" the students participated in, noting that it will have lasting effects for our community.

-Colleen Conlan, Office Assistant and Amy Palmer, Environmental Education Coordinator



Above: Members of the Vital Signs Crew helped release parasitic flies on May 21, 2014.



Far Left: UMass professor of entomology Dr. Joe Elkinton releases flies on Vinalhaven. Left: Linnell Mather and State entomologist Charlene Donahue also release flies.

Below: 2000 parasitic flies roll off the ferry, escorted by Donahue and Elkinton.



The best part of island monitoring: A boat ride around Penobscot Bay on a perfect September day with Jim Boone! Photo by Kerry Hardy.

Meet Our New Office Assistant

In May of this year, Colleen Conlan joined VLT as our new Office Assistant. Colleen and her husband have lived on Vinalhaven for more than 25 years and have raised two children here. Colleen is an avid gardener and loves to walk in the woods. She was out walking on the new Round Pond trail near her house when we called to offer her the job.

Colleen is widely skilled, with extensive training and experience as a writer, editor, bookkeeper, workplace manager, and business owner. She is a long-time VLT member and volunteer and we are lucky to have her join the team.

If you have not yet met her, please stop into the office any Monday or Wednesday and introduce yourself.



Katahdin Adventure

The 8th graders have once again had the incredible opportunity to learn about Maine's natural resources through a trip to Katahdin! Students researched how loggers, the Wabanaki, and Donn Fendler have been impacted by the landscape of Katahdin, and then we got to go see it for ourselves. (For those who never read *Lost on a Mountain in Maine*, Donn Fendler was 12 years old in 1939 when he was separated from his family and lost on Mt. Katahdin for 9 days before following a stream and telephone line out of the woods to safety.)

Along the way, we stopped at Penobscot Narrows Observatory and Fort



Knox, just down from Bucksport, to view the watershed from the only bridge observatory in the United States. We enjoyed seeing Vinalhaven in one direction, and could just barely make out Katahdin in the distance. Then we went to the Logger's Museum in Patten to learn how Maine's landscape has changed over time. Finally, we arrived at Roaring Brook campground after one car was greeted by a moose on the park road! By the campfire we made the meals that we had jointly planned, played games, and got rested for the big hike the next day.

We had clear blue sky for hiking, so after packing our bags and filling our water bottles, we started up the trail to Chimney Pond. Along the way we passed AmeriCorps members who were repairing the trail. We all noticed how friendly our fellow hikers were and we felt safer knowing that people were looking out for us. We arrived at Chimney Pond, rested our feet, filled up our water bottles using a water filter (super-cool!), and some folks went ahead to the summit, while others explored different trails and stopped to enjoy the glacial ponds and views on the way down.

When we arrived safely back at the campsite that evening, we traded stories of our adventures over a campfire and s'mores.

We were proud of challenging ourselves and pushing our comfort zones in an incredible natural setting. It was clear that going to Katahdin had a deep impact on who we are and our respect for the natural world. We thank Vinalhaven Land Trust for giving us the opportunity to see one of Maine's most unique and exciting natural resources!

-Emily Cohn, Middle School Science Teacher

Tanglewood Exploration

In mid-October, environmental educators from Tanglewood Learning Center came out to the island to lead a program with first- and second-grade students at Perry Creek. First grade teacher Samantha Thompson reports, "We had a great day hiking! The kids and adults were really put through their paces. We stopped along the trails to do activities related to our surroundings: noticing examples of camouflage, making nature 'museums,' and finding some real wild life (frogs and snakes) were a few of the highlights."



Variety in 2014 Walks & Talks

Another wonderful year of programming was put on by the Walks and Talks Committee. There were 37 programs and over 800 participants who listened to talks on alewives, rising sea levels, ocean pollution, fungi, and the green crab problem, as well as the history of the Poor Farm. Many participants enjoyed weekly bird walks as well as specialty walks to see warblers, hawks, and woodcocks. Nature walks had children and adults looking at wildflowers, critters at low tide, and great views from Tip Toe Mountain. Folks took part in trips to farms on North Haven and Vinalhaven, hikes to VLT preserves and to some North Haven Conservation Partners properties. A walk focused on Native American foraging and a talk on children's

book author Robert McCloskey were added treats. Workshops on photography, mat-making, writing, and flower pressing gave participants hands on experiences. With so many different offerings, there was something for all ages, abilities, and interests.

Walks and Talks attendees were pleased that many groups were smaller than in other years, which allowed for easier listening and participating.

The committee has already started planning for next year. Please send any suggestions or ideas to jimboone@hotmail.com and plan on joining us next year!

-Jim Boone, Chair of Walks and Talks Committee

Island Explorers Camp a Success, Naturally

We had another successful summer of Island Exploring this year! During the first two sessions, twenty-seven 5- and 6-year-old participants explored the forest, pond, and marine ecosystems. We added a twist this year for older children. The third week was for kids 8-11 years old, and we explored the forest, mud flats, fouling community, and Fox Rocks! The fouling community is the assembly of organisms that attach to docks and other underwater structures. The town dock at the Eagle gets pulled out every winter, so the fouling community there is not so rich, but ever since it was decided to leave the dock by the ferry in all year, it has been a boon to anyone looking for cool marine animals at high tide.

It was so much fun to explore Vinalhaven's beautiful places with such curious, observant, fun-loving children from both "here" and "away." Thank you, VLT, for coordinating this!



-Amy Palmer, Environmental Education Coordinator Salamanders were a rare and exciting find on the forest floor this summer. Photo by Amy Palmer.

Changes to the Board of Directors

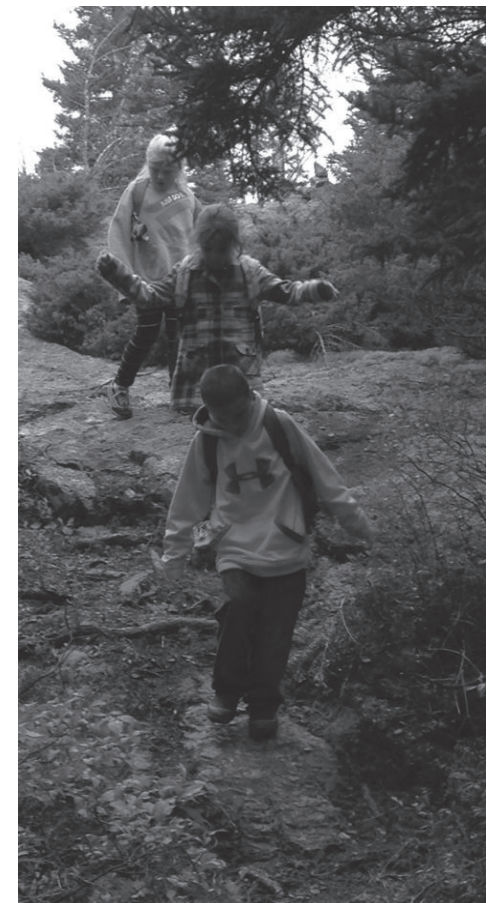
VLT is delighted to welcome Levin Campbell Jr. to the board. Lee is a middle school history teacher and administrator and has been a summer resident of Vinalhaven all his life, living up at the north end of the island on the Thorofare. He has spent much time in Perry's Creek and has been interested in land conservation for many years and in the work of the Land Trust Alliance in helping land trusts become accredited. His mother, Eleanor, gave VLT the preserve in her name around Polly's Cove and the old swimming pool. His principle recreation and passion has been sailing locally and along the Maine coast, as well as in the Canadian Maritimes and offshore along the East coast. He has served on the board of the North Haven Historical Society, and has been President of the North Haven Casino, and looks forward to serving on the VLT board.

Board members Edward Hoyt and Susie Lawrence have termed off the board, Ed after nine years of service, many of them as treasurer, and Susie after ten, having served an extra year to help wrap up the 25th Anniver-

sary Campaign, which was launched during her presidency.

Comptroller Linnell Mather honored Ed at VLT's annual meeting, speaking of his ability to see the big picture, which often helped move a conversation or project along that threatened to become mired in details. Under his leadership, VLT's dedicated funds are now invested with two well regarded Maine firms, and our investment policy has been updated and streamlined. She thanked him for his ready humor and for being a pleasure to work with.

Also at annual meeting, President Jonathan Labaree spoke of Susie's many accomplishments, and confessed that those same accomplishments make it both a great pleasure and somewhat daunting to succeed her as president. Among those accomplishments were guiding the land trust through accreditation, an executive leadership change, and an enormously successful capital campaign. The land trust is on a secure footing due to Susie and the hard work she shepherded among her fellow board members.



First and second grade students from Vinalhaven School learn about the wonders of VLT's preserve at Perry Creek as part of our ongoing environmental education programs.

President's Message

For our family, Columbus Day marks the official end of our Vinalhaven year. The long weekend is a flurry of activity, punctuated by as many excursions out on the water, in the woods, and along the shore as possible. In between the high tides, which are reserved for hauling boats and floats, we get to experience our favorite place during its transition to winter.

Out on Seal Bay, we watch our neighbor return again and again with his gear, which piles ever higher around his shop. Ospreys have left and the sky feels empty without their screeching calls and energetic hovering. Fallen leaves create new views along our well-loved paths. The sun sets over the windmills, not the small bump of Mt. Megunticook that peeps over the Penobscot Island.

One of our excursions was to Starboard Rock with our visiting friends. As I watched them revel

in the magic of that beautiful place, I marveled at how our very ability to be there reflects how a community has come together to protect—and share—what it holds dear. As kids, we would land our skiff under the awe-inspiring cliff and scramble up a now-forbidden path (with the owner's tacit consent). We could see our house from the top and could peak beyond the mysterious horizon – a view reminiscent of a Robert McCloskey painting in *Time of Wonder*.

Now, we can share that experience with friends because one family, who are here but for the summer, gave the Rock to the land trust, while another, whose roots stretch back generations, has granted all of us real (not tacit) access over their land to get there. There is no better illustration of why the land trust is so important than that.

-Jonathan Labaree, President



Lane's Island was a great place for our youngest Island Explorers to find mud-burrowing invertebrates and zillions of green crabs this summer. Photo by Amy Palmer.

Annual Meeting 2014

The tents were up, the wine was chilling, and VLT members were milling about in small groups, the mood festive and summery. Meanwhile, behind the scenes: panic. The slide projector bulb had blown, and we had two programs that relied on some visuals to go with the audio. A flurry of phone calls ensued...could we find another bulb, another projector? Finally, Kerry reached Robb Warren, principal at Vinalhaven School. Yes, we could use their projector. Crisis averted. Reaching out to the wider community saved the day. And that emerged as an underlying theme as VLT's Annual Meeting commenced, although a little later than we'd planned.

President Jonathan Labaree greeted the VLT membership, thanking all those who had helped with the myriad details necessary to bring off the gathering, especially Sue L'Africain, who steers us smoothly toward

this date each year. Board members, committee chairs, and staff conveyed the good news and goings-on over the past year, gave sincere appreciation to Ed Hoyt and Susie Lawrence, board directors who had fulfilled their terms, and welcomed incoming director Lee Campbell.

We had the special treat of a presentation from the Vital Signs club. Environmental Education Coordinator Amy Palmer spoke about the genesis of Vital Signs, a program that was initiated by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI), and that is sponsored as a school program here by VLT. (Please see the accompanying Winter Moth article for the latest news on the efforts to combat this invasive species on Vinalhaven.)

Our guest speaker was Peter Forbes, from the Center for Whole Communities in Fayston, Vermont. He spoke about our human connection to land and place, and challenged us to think about how we can

move beyond traditional conservation to strengthen that connection for our community. He talked about *querencia*, a Mestizo word of North African origins that means, among other things, the tendency of humans to return to where they were born, or the place of one's memories, or affection and responsibility to community and place. He said, "The land and nature welcomes everyone: banker and farmer, rich and poor, white and brown, seasonal and year-round," (this last raising a chuckle from the audience). He talked about conservation of scenery and biodiversity as the challenges of land trusts from the beginning, and that this generation's challenges are toward growing food, heating homes, and encouraging a "maker culture." He concluded by asking, "What is courageous in VLT's past? What courageous thing will be next?"

-Colleen Conlan, Office Assistant



Conservation and Community

Vinalhaven is uniquely blessed in the diversity of the people who love her. Our island may be a small place, as the world looks at these things, but it is not a simple one. Here, the reality of community is as complicated as anywhere else in America.

If we consider the members of a community to be those that care about its welfare, that can be hurt by its tragedies, that commit resources to its survival, or that work to promote its success, then the community of Vinalhaven spans a pretty broad range of people—people of all ages, full-timers and part-timers, from old island families and new ones, and more than a few whose hearts are still here, though their bodies have fetched up somewhere else.

We are united by a common feeling about our various relationships to this place—not just this spot, but also this collection of human beings—and united by the various ways we come together to keep those relationships alive.

Recently, the town did a survey to help update the comprehensive plan. The survey went to both the year-round and summer communities, and one of the questions it asked was, "Why are you glad you live on Vinalhaven?" The top answers—for both groups—were "scenic beauty" and "sense of community".

Perhaps one way to think about this message is that beauty brings value to the community, but that the community is what gives meaning to the beauty.

When we think about the land trust, we tend to focus on the "land" part. Perhaps we should be homing in more on the word, "trust", for without the community, in whose interest the land is held in trust, there would be little point to the work we do.

What are the interests of our community? Opinions occasionally differ. Little of worth is done without sparking some difference of opinion. It is for this very reason that the land

trust board of directors is made up of both year-round islanders and seasonal residents.

This deliberate structure, created 28 years ago when VLT was born and maintained ever since, reflects the investment year-rounders and seasonal residents share in "Conserving the Nature of Vinalhaven". It also reflects their differing perspectives on how that conservation can serve the community.

By understanding and honoring both the common principles that bind us together and the different approaches by which we might seek to accomplish our goals, we increase our chances of marking out a true path for VLT: one that will serve the community's well-being throughout the time we plan to be a part of life on this island. Perpetuity.

-Tuck Godfrey, Executive Director

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