

New Challenge Grant Received

The Edward J. Urban Foundation presented the East Quabbin Land Trust with a \$10,000 challenge grant for permanent conservation of the Frohloff Farm. **We need your help to reach this challenge and match the Urban Foundation grant.**

We will all benefit when the Frohloff Farm is permanently conserved. The many tangible benefits include: protection of town well water supply, enhanced wildlife habitat along the river, opportunity to expand the Mass Central Rail Trail and create other hiking trails, maintain forested connections with other conservation lands, and promote local farming that benefits the community.

The Town of Ware has requested state grant funds to permanently protect the Frohloff Farm by purchasing a conservation restriction. The local contribution of \$60,000 needs to be raised by next spring

to receive the state grant funds. Your contribution towards this challenge goes directly to the permanent protection of the Frohloff Farm. Please make a generous contribution today.

The Edward J. Urban Foundation was created with great foresight by Mr. Urban to be utilized upon his death in 1999 to promote the quality of life for the residents of the Ware community. Mr. Edward Urban was the President of American Athletic Shoe Co., Inc. in Ware, MA, a nationally recognized sporting goods manufacturer which he founded in 1959.

Unique fundraising art project to benefit the Frohloff Farm!

Local artist, Ann Hicks, will paint two oil paintings of the farm. One scene will be of the barn, the other of the Ware River. *You can participate directly in the final appearance of the painting by commissioning the native plant or animal of your choice to be included.* The artist will find a spot in the landscape to paint each person's chosen species.

Prices range from \$20--\$75 per species, depending on the size and complexity of the plant or animal. A list of suggested species is available at our website, www.eqlt.org. Alternatively, the artist will include any native species that could be found in farm or river habitat during late summer. Time is limited, so download the form and get your commission in today. Half of the available commissions are already committed.

Proceeds from your commission price will go towards conservation of the Frohloff Farm.



Visitors to the Frohloff Farm during the September 19th open house.

MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director

Cynthia Henshaw



In the last edition of the newsletter we asked for your feedback about our programs and facilities. The overwhelming response is that your level of satisfaction with the East Quabbin Land Trust is **Excellent**. That's great to hear.

Responses came from a wide variety of supporters: those new to the organization and others with many years of membership; representatives from our eight town region and beyond; and people involved in community groups, singing groups, church groups and town Boards. The quarterly newsletters continue to be the best way to share information, with newspaper articles, email announcements and direct conversations of equally moderate importance. Every single respondent stated that they are member because "Conservation of the land is so important to preserving our quality of life."

We are most interested to know how we can do a better job inviting people onto the land and encourage learning about the connection between land and our quality of life. It is clear that hosting programs on birds, wildlife or large mammals, and invasive species management are of the greatest interest. Later this winter we anticipate hosting a program on Moose or Deer. In addition we expect to invite more participation in practical aspects of controlling invasive plant species.

One area that we clearly need to focus is making our property maps readily available at our website and on site. Many members are familiar with Mandell Hill, with the property brochure on the website and kiosk with parking on a major access way to the Hardwick common. The Forest Stewardship Plan maps of the Moose Brook Preserve and Patrill Hollow Preserve are now available on our website. Both properties have trail loops and visitor parking. We encourage you to go exploring. Other maps will be added to the website as they become available with a focus on the Dougal Range properties including the Frohloff Farm, and the Hyde and Baker properties.

Thank you to all who responded to the survey. If you didn't get a chance to send back the survey, but have specific suggestions or ideas, please send them along to me at chenshaw@eqlt.org. ■

THE EAST QUABBIN LAND TRUST

works to foster the sustainable use of our natural and historic resources for the benefit of all generations through the conservation and stewardship of the farmlands, woodlands and waters in our region of Massachusetts.

As a non profit organization the East Quabbin Land Trust envisions a regional community that continues to care for its natural environment and supports a sustainable local economy, ensuring a high quality of life for generations to come.

We welcome your thoughts, articles, and photographs on events in our area. For more information about the trust, to become a member, or request a change of address, please contact our office at:

East Quabbin Land Trust

120 Ridge Road, PO Box 5
Hardwick, MA 01037-0005
413.477.8229 (tel & fax)
email: eqlt@comcast.net

Visit our website at www.eqlt.org

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE... A Word with Rick Romano

EQLT ■ How did you get involved in the land trust?

RR ■ Well, preconception, actually. I remember considering getting a committee together to write the Hardwick Open space plan with Huck Truesdell and we theorized that we need a local land trust to act when the town or state can't.

EQLT ■ Tell me more about that time period?

RR ■ Early nineties, a large boom in real estate had left a lot of land unexpectedly developed. We got some like minded folks together to write the open space plan; Stan White, Lucinda Childs, Bill Cole and about 20 others – that was a road map into the future. One of the conclusions was indeed the need for a local land trust. Well, the rest is history; Don and Kaye Boothman started hosting organizational meetings at their home and additional folks like Bob Paquet and Genevieve Stillman and Gerry Reilly were there to make it happen; very exciting times actually; Lots of laughs and hopes. When we did our first project up on Spring Hill Road, the Stelmokas Farm, man we were flying! We were just so elated-like we just saved the world!

EQLT ■ What inspires you to keep involved in conservation?

RR ■ Well, I've always said that saving land is not unlike saving lives in the Emergency Room, which is my day job. One gets a deep sense of satisfaction in making a difference. It is a spiritual inspiration of sorts; biological life is so infinitely magical that saving the land, and the life that depends on it, is so profound. And of course, unlike us, the land lives on.

EQLT ■ Since you've been around since the beginning, what are some of the conservation initiatives you are most proud of?

RR ■ Certainly the first one; the Stelmokas farm. I used to admire that farm with beautiful views and the 3 brothers and sister that arrived there by sleigh in 1906. They kept that farm and stone walls immaculate, farming those little postage stamp-sized fields in the traditional manner. I had just moved from California, was living in Barre and used to stop to talk for hours with them. Lisa and I would go up to Indian Rock in the full moon and play guitar and just fell in love with the land and the entire east Quabbin area. We decided to make it our home. Helping to conserve that property in perpetuity while keeping it actively farmed and getting those siblings money to live out their last years together on the farm was such an inspiration; I was forever hooked on land conservation.

EQLT ■ So you grew up in California. How does the East Quabbin area differ from there or other places you've lived?

RR ■ My years in California were instrumental in developing an appreciation for conservation. I went to college in the seventies in the Redwood belt of far northern California. I was a Botany major with a minor in Native American Studies. There were huge protests around the clear cutting of the last Old Growth redwoods -magnificent trees beyond compare anywhere in the world. There

were ugly confrontations to say the least; the Indians and the hippies against the local loggers. Eventually Redwood National Park was designated and the loggers cut all the rest right up to the park borders causing those trees inside the park to topple like dominos. Likewise, the local economy collapsed as well. I was primed for a better way of doing things as I think EQLT is doing here. I like our conservation approach that is sensitive to the local economy and community. I think we strike that effective balance which is so important to EQLT being accepted and trusted.

EQLT ■ Where do you see EQLT going in the future?

RR ■ We have come so far—really an amazing journey for all of us—yet there is much to do. I would like to see us get our endowments together so that there will always be someone to look out for the land and act on its behalf. Also, the steps we are taking preparing for national Accreditation are critical for our success. But most importantly, we need to continue to foster a land ethic that encourages respect for the land and an appreciation for responsibilities land owners have as stewards of the land. Developing a healthy land ethic is probably EQLT's most important mission.

EQLT ■ Any final thoughts?

RR ■ Absolutely. No success is single handed. There have been so many folks that have made EQLT the successful organization it is today and every one has their particular role in making it happen; The membership, the anonymous supporters/"angels", volunteers, new and past board members. I have derived such inspiration and feel so privileged to have over the years been around people like Stan White or Cynthia Henshaw or Martha and Brian Klassanos or Chris Buelow or Gerry Reilly or Bill Cole or...well you get the idea; way too many to mention here. But it gives my life here in the East Quabbin area meaning and connection, that's for sure. I am forever grateful for being a part of this organization and having it a part of me.



Rick Romano ready to help conserve more land.

Welcoming Sarah Mildren

The East Quabbin Land Trust welcomes Sarah Mildren as a Service Learning Coordinator. The East Quabbin Land Trust is one of sixteen organizations participating in *MassLIFT*, which is a program with 20 AmeriCorps service positions in land protection, land stewardship, conservation outreach and service learning opportunities covering more than 200 towns throughout Massachusetts. Sarah will reach out to the schools, youth groups, scout groups and others to complete projects that foster a conservation and community service ethic in young people.

EQLT ■ Have you had much experience doing Service Learning projects?

SM ■ I first experienced service learning when I was in college. The first project I did was for a human ecology class. I co-taught an after school science club called S.T.E.M R.A.Y.S at the Swift River School in New Salem. Stem Rays is a program funded by the National Science Foundation in which groups of 4th, 5th, and 6th graders participated in an ongoing science project. We tested for arsenic around the schoolyard. It was a lot of fun, and I was successful in getting some of the uninterested kids very much involved in the project. In a second service learning project I was a volunteer trail steward at the Bear's Den in New Salem for the Trustees of Reservations. This was rewarding because I was able to help maintain one of my favorite areas that I visited frequently as a child. Two years ago I worked as a Service Learning Coordinator at Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust through the Commonwealth Corps program.

EQLT ■ What is it about young people that makes you interested in getting them involved in the natural world?

SM ■ In this day and age young people seem to be forgetting about the natural world. With modern technology the way it is, kids no longer go outside to entertain themselves. I believe that it is essential to be in touch with nature, no matter what age you are. But taking this position, I believe I can get children interested in



Sarah Mildren beside a brook

the outside world that they may have forgotten about.

EQLT ■ Are there things that make you particularly excited to volunteer at EQLT?

SM ■ I am excited to be volunteering for the EQLT because Hardwick and Ware are areas that I grew up near, but never explored. I am also quite excited to have a stuffed bird collection to use as a teaching tool. One project I would like to propose doing is creating owl habitat, and building owl houses. The bird collection will come in handy if this project gets approved. You can contact Sarah at servicelearning@eqlt.org to share your ideas for service learning projects or get more involved. Please join us in welcoming Sarah. ■



Renewable Energy
A Reiki Practice



413-477-9912
Cell: 508-344-4593

Katie J. Tyler
Practitioner
katiejtyler@gmail.com

Renewable Energy: A Reiki Practice

On November 6, 2010 to benefit EQLT

Come relax, renew yourself and your energy centers, and get in touch with the Inner You. Reiki is a Japanese form of stress reduction and relaxation that is lightly hands-on, requiring no massage.

A one-hour treatment provides a period of total relaxation, with pleasing music, incense if you wish, plenty of fresh water to drink, some crystal therapy and Reiki drumming if desired.

The cost for your session is \$50 and the entire fee will be donated to the East Quabbin Land Trust. In this way you will be supporting the organization you care so much about and receiving a wonderful gift at the same time.

Let us work together to provide an oasis of peace and healing for yourself. Call 413-477-9912 or email at katiejtyler@gmail.com.

Katie J. Tyler
Reiki Level II Practitioner

Rewilding the World: Dispatches from the Conservation Revolution

By Caroline Fraser (Metropolitan Books, 400 pages, hardback \$28.50; paperback \$18.00, available November 23, 2010)

Reviewed by Harbour Fraser Hodder



Caroline Fraser on site.

The East Quabbin Land Trust has protected over 3,200 acres of wildlife habitat and farmland from development, including 51 acres of wetlands along the Quaboag River in West Brookfield that are critical for the endangered American bittern. These successes contribute to worldwide efforts to stem the loss of biodiversity, yet it's hard not to feel hopeless when faced with the magnitude of global environmental threats.

Biologist E. O. Wilson warns that we could lose *half* the world's species in this century, and scientists believe we're in the midst of a "demographic winter" that could become the Earth's Sixth Great Extinction. Is there any way to stop this cosmic train wreck? That's the question driving a brilliant new book by Caroline Fraser, *Rewilding the World: Dispatches from the Conservation Revolution*. And at every stop on her quest across six continents, to track down and investigate breathtakingly ambitious conservation projects from New Mexico to Nepal, Africa to Australia, the former Iron Curtain to the DMZ between North and South Korea, the answer is *Yes*.

The prescription is *rewilding*, a revolutionary approach to conservation that restores and connects habitats at previously unimaginable scales. Rewilding sounds utopian, but Fraser unpacks a toolkit of scientifically-proven strategies summed up by 3 Cs— *Cores, Corridors, and Carnivores*. *Cores* preserve entire ecosystems on a continental scale, while large linked *Corridors* allow "keystone" predators or *Carnivores* like wolves, elephants, and bears to migrate between cores for species survival and genetic strength, in turn regulating and maintaining the health of their ecosystems.

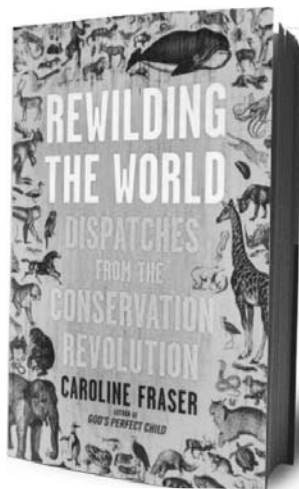
In the past, environmentalists emphasized national and state parks to save shrinking habitats. But as Fraser explains, "Parks are not enough. Not big enough, not connected enough, not always in the right places....The vast majority of the world's biodiversity occurs outside of parks. To save it, conservation has to protect entire ecosystems, reducing fragmentation and isolation, which inevitably means rewilding across landscapes dotted with human populations and private property." This fact is particularly daunting, but *Rewilding the World* is filled with inspiring collaborations on every continent.

In Europe, Fraser visited the former Iron Curtain, where con-

servationists have created a Green Belt cutting through a hundred key habitats from Germany through Europe: "Standing in this former death zone, where we would once have been shot, all we could hear was a deafening chorus of birdsong, crickets, and frogs." By expanding habitats near this "green backbone," discouraging intersecting roads, and encouraging biodiverse farming nearby, rewilding provides a wetlands-to-mountains corridor for predators like the European lynx and the *Wildkatze*, plus habitats for the endangered European kingfisher.

In Brazil, Fraser volunteered with married biologists whose mission is to create a "stepping stone" corridor between two protected areas too small to sustain jaguars, maned wolves, and pampas deer: the Pantanal, one of the world's largest wetlands, and tiny Emas National Park, one of the earth's last tropical savannahs. The duo successfully partners with local ranchers to set aside land, establishing compensation for cattle lost and educational and health care incentives for landowners and workers not to kill jaguars. To determine the best locales for wildlife "stepping stones," they track and collect data—with often dramatic results, as Fraser experienced firsthand:

One night out in the field, driving with the biologists, I was manning the spotlight in the back of the pickup when *Silveria* slammed on the breaks, leapt out of the driver's seat, and raced off into a dense tangle of grass and shrubs, shouting for me to follow him with the spotlight. After an intense struggle, he and his wife, wielding a huge net, dragged their booty back to the truck: a giant armadillo, sedated, its enormous five-inch-long digging claw waving feebly. The rare subterranean species is practically unknown to science and in grave danger of extinction owing to habitat loss. This was the first female ever caught.



In Africa, where conservation is stymied by poverty, poaching, war, and drought, Fraser found the most ambitious projects of all. The Peace Parks Foundation seeks an "Africa without fences" composed of "super-parks" straddling national boundaries to restore migratory corridors for elephant and wildlife. The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, for example, joins South Africa's famous Kruger Park with parks in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, surrounded by an even larger Transfrontier Conservation Area bringing the total 79 square miles. And Namibia is "the gold standard" for community-based conservancies: one in four rural Namibians participate, creating thousands of jobs and conserving 46,000 square miles—in addition to existing parks and reserves. Namibia now boasts the largest black rhino population in the world, and its cheetah population roams freely on private ranches.

Fraser begins her remarkable account by noting that we face nothing less than "the disappearance of nature itself." But this timely, vital book provides a cure for hopelessness. Read it, and tell everyone you know about it. As Fraser concludes, "We must look to what is left of our planet. In rewilding, we have dreamed up the ways and means to keep it alive. Now, we must only connect."

Conservation Buyer Needed



Looking at Mill Brook.

The East Quabbin Land Trust is seeking one or more individuals interested in purchasing conservation land in West Brookfield. The property includes over 324 acres of fields, woods and streams on Wickaboag Valley Road and the discontinued section of Madden Road. Future uses of the land will be restricted to agriculture, forestry and recreational uses with the Town of West Brookfield Conservation Commission holding the conservation restriction on the property. A three acre area on Wickaboag Valley Road is reserved for future housing, barn or other building needs for the conservation buyer.

Approximately twenty five acres of hay fields run between Wickaboag Valley Road and Mill Brook. The soils are prime agricultural soils, rich and stone free. The fields are an excellent area for vegetable and flower production, continued use as hay field or as pasture.

The woods are mixed in both tree species and size. There are mature white pine stands and other areas of mixed hardwoods. The current forest management plan calls for a thinning over part of the area to remove firewood. There are two

324 ACRES FOR SALE

Where: West Brookfield

What: A mixture of fields, woods and Mill Brook

When: Ideally by December 2010

For more information contact Cynthia at 413.477.8229 or chenshaw@eqlt.org

areas of former fields or pasture filling in with white pine and gray birch that could be readily cleared.

It is preferable to sell the land as one property, but it is possible to sell in three different parcels. The roads form the divisions: 1) 46-acre woodlot, 2) 147-acre fields, woods and Mill Brook, and 3) 130-acre woodlot.

To visit the property and discuss details of the prospective purchase of the property, please contact Cynthia Henshaw at chenshaw@eqlt.org or 413.477.8229.



Discontinued section of Madden Road.

Remembering Chris Ellison

by Lindsay Ellison

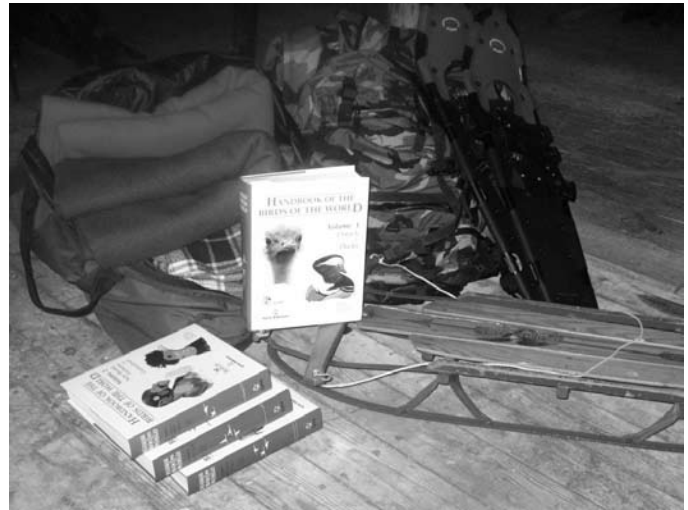
Chris (Christopher Ide Brackett) Ellison was born in Baltimore and grew up in the countryside outside the city. Atop that green deciduous hill overlooking cornfields and “marshy farmland”, at 11 years old, he had placed amongst the tall splitrail fenced grassline an old metal spring rocker he found in the barn. From there he would methodically peruse the skies for turkey vultures and red-tailed hawks riding the thermals above the expansive puddles or fallow rows of brown stalk stubble. The art of sitting and watching was one Chris perfected early on.

Patience was necessary for survival in his family. The youngest of four with three older sisters and two big dogs, he learned without complaint to defend himself with gentle aplomb and clownish humour. He was able to mimic like a mockingbird –unexcelled – a sister, a Monty Python character sketch, or a Gene Krupa drum riff with scary accuracy. He translated these skills through his love for observing, identifying and whistling the tones and rhythms of the eastern birds. He wasn't just whistling Dixie when he spoke of them at the dinner table. “After reading several articles dealing with the effects of the pesticide DOT upon the nesting cycles of various birds” he said he was “profoundly influenced.... Birdwatching led to my having a better understanding of how man should observe the results of his industrial development upon the environment....”

Before he had a nightscope, he would sequester himself in his room (or in our aunt's livingroom corner-armchair) with a good book – likely about birds or music – or with a manual Olympia typewriter and white out. He obviously enjoyed his alone time – in nature, and indoors: reading and writing. Still, his greatest love: Rising with the birds and heading out into dawn stars.... “Ears brimming with anticipation” he types in a 1985 piece, “two veeries began calling, emitting soft, heavenly notes like a muted interrogative whisper. The unearthly utterances permeated the hushed woods....Floating slowly on quivering, beating notes...the sheer buoyancy of the feathered predators actions appealed to me....”

Sitting in his neat, yellow bedroom with him, it always surprised me when in the evening he told me how far he had walked in the valley that day to witness the predator/prey dramas of nature. He was dedicated to them. “From the day I received my first pair of binoculars, my birdwatching addiction was firmly established.” Since then, he and his binoculars were inseparable. (Many remember his wearing them, tight to his chest, indoors at a birding meeting, trimming branches or plucking weeds from the Hardwick home garden).

Purposefully riding his bicycle in downtown Marblehead to work at Penny's, the local grocery store, then after, pedaling off to the rocks to watch the shore birds, or deftly using a couple of pencils to paradiddle an unparalleled paragraph on the rock music of Rush or Floyd or the '70's or a recording of Andre Segovia, performing with his own rock band or a scene from Red Green, or stealthily padding up a deciduous ridge, standing silently spotting a spotted owl... in all, that glint of serious or smiling reflection in his glass of scope or binocs was the one in his eye. So soon to be so missed.



Chris's items for auction include birding books, wool blankets, camouflage backpack, snow shoes, flexible flyer sled and more outdoor gear.

The Ellison family and East Quabbin Land Trust intend to memorialize Chris and his love of birds and the outdoors by placing a birding platform and stone bench at Mandell Hill. Chris's outdoor gear, books and antiques will be auctioned on-line and at the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction on February 19th earmarked for the Chriss Ellison Memorial Fund. We encourage you to bid generously and to come out next spring to watch the birds at Mandell Hill.

Spring challenge met! Frohloff stewardship activities continue

In May, we shared the news that an anonymous donor had challenged our supporters to raise a matching \$10,000 towards stewardship projects at the Frohloff Farm. Thanks to sixty five supporters we meet that challenge.

Before snow flies there should be a new roof on the barn, the main doors will be rehung and painted, and the chipper has reduced the amount of brush to burn this winter.

We've received many comments about the improved look and condition of the farm! We owe a big thank you to all the volunteers that spent time clearing, cutting, hauling and recycling! Please join us for future work days and events at the Frohloff Farm.

Conserving the land, Preserving our heritage

P.O. Box 5
120 Ridge Road
Hardwick, MA 01037
Phone/Fax 413.477.8229
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EQLT News | INSIDE...



**CONSERVATION
BUYER NEEDED**

FALL 2010 | VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 4

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER...

Saturday, October 16th, 9:00 AM

Fencing at the Mass Central Rail Trail – We will be joined by students from Quabbin Regional High School to install split rail fencing at the approaches of the bridges at the Mass Central Rail Trail. Please, bring post hold diggers, bars and shovels. Meet at the intersection of the rail trail and Creamery Road in Hardwick, just 200 feet from the turn off Lower Road.

Date and Time TBD

Guided Tour of the Frohloff Farm – For all those interested in visiting the land trust's newest conservation acquisition please join us for this guided tour. The group will explore the fields, river side and woods. This walk will be especially helpful to Ware residents in advance of Fall Town Meeting. Call 413-477-8229 or chenshaw@eqlt.org to be notified of the walk date and time.

NOVEMBER...

Saturday, November 6, 9:00 AM TO 4:30 PM

Reiki Sessions – Sign up for a one hour Reiki treatment with Katie J. Tyler, a Reiki Level II Practitioner. Cost is \$50 and the entire fee will be donated to benefit the land trust. The sessions will be held at the land trust office at 120 Ridge Road in Hardwick. Contact Katie to set up your appointment by calling 413-477-9912 or at katiejtyler@gmail.com.

SATURDAY WORK DAYS...

Join us at 9am on the first Saturday of the month and volunteer to help with the maintenance of EQLT properties. Please contact the office at 413-477-8229 to confirm which location will be the work site for each Saturday.

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Dinner and Silent Auction, Saturday, February 19, 2011

If you have an item you wish to donate to the auction, please contact the office at 413-477-8229 or eqlt@comcast.net. Items accepted through February 14th.