



# CONSERVATION MATTERS

HUNTERDON LAND TRUST

SUMMER 2013

## “Do What You Can, With What You Have, Where You Are.”

These words from Theodore Roosevelt, our nation’s first conservationist president, are as relevant today as they were when he first made them part of our history.

Land stewardship is a vital component in our efforts to protect and preserve the places we love, improve the quality of our drinking water, and help native plants and wildlife thrive. We monitor every property we preserve, and with the help of volunteers, remove invasive species that choke off native plants and pose environmental and economic harm. We plant trees to prevent soil erosion, improve wildlife habitat, sequester carbon and filter pollutants. And, we make sure trails for biking, hiking and horseback riding are marked and passable.

*Here are updates on the progress we’ve made with stewardship on several preserved properties:*

### **Tom Saeger Land Preserve Shire Road, Holland Township**

This 42-acre preserve consists of farm fields, forested areas, slopes and stunning scenic vistas. The farm fields sat unattended for many years before the Land Trust took title to the property, allowing invasive species to grow. Conditions were so bad that when Land Steward Tom Thorsen visited the site with contractors, they had to crawl beneath the arching branches of the invasive species to assess the property.

A Forest Stewardship plan was created to prioritize work efforts, set a timeline and help obtain grants. To quickly



Janssen Pharmaceuticals volunteers at Saeger Land Preserve

clear the invasive plants, a contractor roared through several acres with a hydro axe. Later, 20 employees from Janssen Pharmaceuticals braved the heat to rip out more invasive plants along the property’s periphery. Next spring, we will plant native trees.

### **Quakertown Preserve Croton Road, Franklin Township**

During a recent assessment, we were pleased to discover native plants flourishing in a meadow. The once farmed field, too wet to cultivate, was allowed to naturally succeed to meadow over the past few years. Letting farmland revert to meadow is normally a problematic process,

*continued on page 6*

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 From the Executive Director  
Preservation Victories
- 3 Celebrating the Farmers’ Market
- 4 Supporting the Things We Love Doing
- 6 How You Can Help
- 7 Treasure Hunterdon
- 8 Farm to Table Dinner



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## From the Executive Director

Treasure Hunterdon? I do and have greatly enjoyed my initiation into the Hunterdon Land Trust community over the past year. I am inspired by the dedicated people that are working with us to build a better community and feel deeply fulfilled by the many accomplishments highlighted throughout this issue that reflect how we're transforming our shared vision of clean drinking water, productive family farms, diverse wildlife, beautiful landscapes, and abundant recreational opportunities into reality.

The Hunterdon Land Trust is the quintessential community organization working for you. Whether you are a birder, a biker, a hiker, a horseback

rider, a kayaker, a cyclist, a motorcyclist, a landowner, a local business owner, a tourist, a farmer, a photographer, a geocacher, a foodie, a gardener, a runner, or another enthusiast altogether, we offer something for everyone.

We are your friends and neighbors that have come together to create a legacy worthy of our children by preserving all that we value most —the critical natural and cultural resources that create a distinctive sense of place, provide a healthy environment, and make us proud to call Hunterdon home. In this vein, our recent Treasure Hunterdon event highlighted special places that represent this unique character and way of life. By preserving



threads of the past and weaving them into our children's future, we build connected communities that enrich this heritage.

Our ties to the community are essential to our success. Thank

you for continuing to invest in the Hunterdon Land Trust to build a legacy of which we can all be proud.

*Patricia Ruby*

## Preserving The Land We Love

We care about preserving land because we care about the quality of our lives. We understand the importance of having clean drinking water, and fresh and delicious local food. We have an innate appreciation for beautiful vistas that make our jaws drop in awe — as though we've been magically transported into a landscape portrait.

The Hunterdon Land Trust has played a vital role helping to preserve more than 6,500 acres of land. We work with landowners and numerous public and private partners to protect large unbroken expanses of farms, forests and fields. Most of the properties include hiking, biking and horseback-

Preserving the land provides wildlife habitat and protects the water quality of the Assiscong Creek, which runs across the property.

Helping the Land Trust and the county with this preservation effort were Raritan Township, the Raritan Headwaters Association and the New Jersey Green Acres program.

**Maplewood Farm:** For more than 60 years, the Makatura family has worked this 113-acre farm in Kingwood Township's Lockatong Creek Preservation Priority Area, a region known for its forested and agricultural lands, and for high quality drinking water. Protecting the Lockatong helps pro-



A scenic view at Mapelewood Farm

riding trails for all to enjoy. Some, protected forever from development, continue operating as privately held farms.

*Here are several recent preservation victories:*

**Ewing Farm:** Earlier this year, the Land Trust entered into a contract with Barry Ewing for the purchase of this farm land and then worked with Hunterdon County to preserve it. The 58-acre Ewing Farm consists of farm fields and a wooded stream with stunning views of eastern Hunterdon County.



Woods on the Trstensky property

tect our drinking water. The land will remain as farmland for generations to come, thanks to a partnership between the Land Trust and Kingwood Township, Hunterdon County, the Federal Farm and Ranchland Program, and the State Agricultural Development Committee.

**Trstensky Property:** This 30-acre tract of fields and forest in Kingwood Township serves two vital roles: protecting the water quality of the Lockatong Creek watershed and main-

# Our Farmers' Market: Redefining the Sunday Drive

As your Sunday drive brings you to the Dvoor Farm, and you fall into step with other families heading across the open field toward canvas tents fluttering softly in the breeze, music wafts in the air. Your canvas shopping bag — the one you almost left home — taps against your thigh as you stroll toward the farm stands.

When you arrive, you pause, amazed because you never realized so many shades of green existed! You scan the tables for the perfect spinach for your quiche and that ideal carton of ripe berries or peaches for tonight's pie. Maybe then you'll head toward the farm stand selling fresh cuts of beef, or reach for that crusty loaf of bread to accompany the soup that will bubble on your stove-top tonight.

Our Farmers' Market lets you catch up with old friends and make new ones. It's where you can race your daughter across the soft green grass to the Tassot Apiaries stand for a Honeystyx. (*I'll bet you lose!*) Or where you can sample the smooth ricotta from Fulper Farms, where five generations of family farmers have milked cows for longer than a century.

When the Hunterdon Land Trust began its producers-only Farmers' Market in 2007, the goals were simple: create a unique venue and a special place that directly benefits farmers and producers, a place where farmers and area residents can connect.

Farmers who sell directly to the community can focus on growing and harvesting food when its flavor and nutritional

value peaks, instead of worrying about packing or shipping crops across the country.

But what happens at the Sunday Farmers' Market transcends the modern notion of shopping. Beneath the warm sunshine and shade trees of the Dvoor farm, the feeling of community is nurtured. We tighten the bonds of our community

when we chat with Marc from Purely Farm about the best way to grill pork or prepare a pork cutlet, or Alex from Sandbrook Meadow Farms about preparing the carrots or kale nestled in your canvas bag. We learn together, and we grow together.

We feel more connected to the land and the people around us in mind, body and spirit.

This year we celebrated the seventh anniversary of our Farmers' Market. During that time, we focused on connecting to a timeless tradition, one that involves tending the earth, sowing its crops, and reaping its harvests. For seven years, our farmers have helped you nourish body and soul with foods grown naturally, the way our grandparents grew them: harvested in the morning to be shared later that day with family and friends around the dinner table.

It's how we're redefining the Sunday drive.



Photo collage by John Gattuso, Gattuso Media Design

**The Hunterdon Land Trust Farmers' Market is open every Sunday from 9 AM to 1 PM through November 24.**

**The Winter Farmers' Market is open 11 AM to 1 PM the third Sunday of the month from December to April.**

## FARMERS' MARKET UPCOMING EVENTS

- AUG 11** Peach Party! Pie/cobbler baking contest to be judged by Leslie McEachern of Angelica Kitchen. Peach salad demo by Amy Coss of Milford Oyster House. *Pie contest starts at noon.*
- AUG 18** Herbal walk with Ralph Celebre of the Basil Bandwagon. Come learn about local herbs on a pleasant stroll. *Starts 10 a.m.*
- AUG 25** Heritage Conservancy President Jeffrey Marshall discusses "How to Look at Old Barns and 'Read' the Stories They Tell." *From 10 a.m. to noon; Admission \$5; reservations advised*
- SEPT 8** Chef demonstration with Peggy Fagan of The Flying Avocado Whole Foods
- SEPT 22** Historic talk by Dennis Bertland, historic planner of Dennis Bertland Associates

For more information on our events, please: call us at 908-237-4582, visit our website at [www.hunterdonlandtrust.org](http://www.hunterdonlandtrust.org) or "like" us on Facebook.

## Spin Your Wheels - In a Good Way

If you're a cyclist, you'd be hard pressed to find a better place in New Jersey to spin your wheels than in the verdant rolling hills of Hunterdon County.

Michael Heffler is the author of *Climbing Through Life - a Collection of Hilly Vignettes* and is working on programs to align cycling clubs with land preservation groups. He says the connection between the two groups is obvious. But sometimes getting cyclists to appreciate that connection can be difficult.

"I'm not sure that ignorance is bliss but I am sure that knowledge provides the ability to appreciate our blessings and act wisely," Heffler said. "I have never heard a cyclist say: 'If only there was more traffic where we cycle!' More open space creates better cycling."

To highlight that relationship, the Land Trust features several bike-related events annually. Last month, the Farmers' Market held its annual cycling event with HART, a nonprofit group dedicated to promoting sustainable transportation in Hunterdon County. The event featured a ride from the market that explored some of our county's prettiest places, bike safety checks and more. Also, our first-ever Treasure Hunterdon fundraiser offered two routes for cyclists.

"I've cycled in France, Italy, the Berkshires and Oregon the last few years. Each time I came home, I realized our area is just as beautiful," Heffler said.



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- Land preservation touches many groups, some obvious, some not. We hope this page helps you see the connections.
- We also hope the stories here remind you to enjoy the outdoors, find ways to share your knowledge of our cultural history and the places you come to love, rekindle connections to the past while building a better future for children and grandchildren.

## Helping Creatures Great and Small

Butterflies may be free, but they also serve several key environmental roles. That's part of the reason why the Land Trust plans to create a butterfly meadow at the Quakertown Preserve. The meadow would be established in an area where milkweed is prominent. Monarch butterflies are drawn to milkweed faster than dogs to a box of cookies dropped on a kitchen floor. The Monarchs stop at the preserve, feed on the milkweed flowers, and lay their eggs.

Another butterfly rather fond of the Quakertown Preserve is the Spicebush Swallowtail, a large dark butterfly found typically in the eastern half of the United States. In fact, the Spicebush Swallowtail seemingly enjoys it so much it stays there year round. This butterfly feeds on the native spicebush shrub found at the preserve that makes berries that birds feed on.



While bees are considered the most efficient pollinators, butterflies play a key role in this process too. Butterflies travel longer distances than bees, ensuring coverage of equal amounts of flowering plants in a larger area.

Besides helping as pollinators, butterflies are amazing indicators of a region's environmental health. Butterflies react swiftly to weather or habitat changes environmental changes making them excellent biodiversity indicators. By keeping track of the health of butterfly populations, we can better monitor local environmental conditions. That's why the Land Trust recently participated in the North American Butterfly Association's annual butterfly count.





## Healthy Eating for a Healthy Life

These days, there's an increasing awareness of living a healthy lifestyle that focuses on eating fresh, nutrient-rich produce and meats. Here's one easy suggestion to help you develop healthier eating habits, discover new dinner ideas or just find fresh, delicious food to share with your family: Make sure your Sunday drive includes a stop at our Farmers' Market.

We feature the freshest vegetables, fruits and meats you can find anywhere, locally grown or raised. Chat with your local farmers for tips on preparing everything from English beans to yak burgers. If you love spending time in the kitchen, our market hosts food-related events, including cooking demonstrations, the second Sunday of every month with local chefs like Lonnie Lippert from the Ship Inn Restaurant & Brewery in Milford (*right*).

And, if you prefer dining out to cooking at home, our annual Farm to Table dinner, which offers a unique dining experience with fresh local foods, is a culinary must this fall.

Join us Sunday, Sept. 29, at Matt's Red Rooster Grill in Flemington for an unforgettable evening as Chef Matt McPherson creates a palate pleasing four-course dinner. Call the Land Trust offices at 908-237-4582 for details.



## Supporting the Things You Love To Do

These diverse activities are others not quite so. The photos illustrate that point.

As we've shared with you before, the beauty around us is an innate moment with nature, through the places we visit, and the connections we make. Preserve your connections and create a legacy your children will cherish.

## Honoring Our Past

Historic preservation may not be the first thing that comes to mind when considering the tasks performed by the Land Trust. Nevertheless, land preservation and historic preservation are often intertwined, and all one has to do to confirm that is visit the Land Trust's headquarters: the Dvoor farm house, a two-story, five-bay, stone Georgian-style structure built in 1798. From the basement, where the brick shelves that cooled cheeses still remain, to the attic, where early 19th-century graffiti can be spotted, the Dvoor farm house is an historic treasure. We continue to ensure the historical integrity of the farm house by actively seeking grants for the building's upkeep. A new slate roof was installed on the building recently, thanks to a grant received from the New Jersey State Historic Trust. The grant will also help us tackle other needed repair work at the farm house.

If you wish to travel where history and nature meet, visit Kugler Woods. This preserve is almost entirely wooded with mature hardwoods and large sugar maples. Back in the 1700s, trees from these woods were used to build the Durham boats that helped carry General George Washington across the Delaware River for the surprise attack on the Hessians encamped in Trenton.

Of note: The Land Trust offers tours of the historic Dvoor farm house several times a year.



## DO WHAT YOU CAN - cont. from page 1

but abundant beneficial plants native to the area are steadily fighting off invasives. The property abounds with native black cherry, black locust and cedar trees, wildflowers and other assorted pollinators. The discovery of milkweed, which monarch butterflies use for nesting and migrating, inspired the plan to convert a section of preserve into a butterfly meadow. The Land Trust also received a grant earlier this year to clear downed trees and repair other damage caused by Hurricane Sandy.

### Zega Lockatong Preserve

#### Ravens Rock-Rosemont Road, Delaware Twp

Recently, the Land Trust received a \$7,000 Franklin Parker Small Grant for the Zega Lockatong Preserve to fund a Forest Management Plan, which will help set such priorities as an overall stewardship strategy, protecting wildlife and controlling pollution. Future stewardship efforts include controlling erosion where water is rolling down a hillside and damaging a section of the hiking trail. We are also continually working with groups to fend off the invasive autumn olive on the property. The preserve is a charming place to hike and picnic.

**A few other projects worth noting:** We recently held a trail day at the Urbach Preserve to clearly mark the hiking trail there, and we plan to install additional riparian buffers at the Muddy Run preserve. A **riparian buffer** is land near a stream that often contains native grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees. Riparian buffers improve water quality, help protect fish and wildlife, and prevent stream bank erosion.

## PRESERVING THE LAND - cont. from page 2

taining the scenic vistas of the area. This tract creates 63 acres of contiguous preserved open space, owned by the Land Trust and open for public recreation such as hiking, birding and cross country skiing. The land belonged to the Trstensky family, who farmed it for more than 30 years. Moving forward, the Land Trust will work to improve the existing farm trails and create new hiking trails on the property. We'll also focus on improving the site's hydrology so water filters through the soil better.

The Hunterdon Land Trust secured funding for this project from numerous sources, including the New Jersey Water Supply Authority, New Jersey Green Acres program, Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund, Kingwood Township, and Conservation Resources, Inc.

## Options To Help Protect the Places You Love!

You can help protect the places you love in Hunterdon County several ways:

**Matching Gifts:** Here's an easy way to make the most of your gift to the Hunterdon Land Trust. Many companies will match the charitable gifts of their employees. Check with your employer to see if it has a matching gift program. Most corporate procedures are simple: Just request a Matching Form from your company and submit it to the Hunterdon Land Trust along with your gift.

**Planned Giving:** Want to create a lasting legacy? Consider including Hunterdon Land Trust in your estate plans. Bequests to the Land Trust through your will or through charitable gifts can provide you with income for life and lower your taxes. Help ensure that future generations will continue to enjoy the beauty and special character of Hunterdon County by considering Planned Giving.

If you have already designated a planned gift to the Hunterdon Land Trust, please let us know so that we can thank you for your generosity. **For more information, contact Caryn Tomljanovich at [caryn@hunterdonlandtrust.org](mailto:caryn@hunterdonlandtrust.org) or 908-237-4582.**

***To find out more about donating to help protect the places you love, please visit the "Get Involved" section of our website.***



# Treasure Hunterdon: Exploring Our County's Beautiful Places

Bucolic and beautiful. Historical and lyrical.

When you climb the trail that leads to the splashing waterfall in Kugler Woods, or wander the private premises of stone buildings, some of which date back to the 1730s, at Headquarters Farm in Delaware Township, you know you're exploring someplace special. Someplace authentic.

The enthusiastic explorers who participated in our Treasure Hunterdon fundraiser toured nearly a dozen of the natural and historic wonders of Hunterdon County on Saturday, June 29. By enticing participants to get up close and personal with the county's treasure trove of gems, we hoped to remind people why they love Hunterdon and why it's imperative to protect it.

Participants began their day at either the Dvoor farm house (home to the Hunterdon Land Trust) or up at the Voorhees High School. They were handed a packet with a "treasure map" (directions for the northern and southern portions of the county), road rules, coupons for lunch discounts, and a task list.

Then they set out under warm, sunny skies to the following sites: Headquarters Farm in Delaware Twp., Quakertown Meetinghouse in Franklin Twp., Kugler Woods and Horseshoe Bend Preserve in Kingwood Twp., Bobolink Farm and Phillips Farms in Milford, the Readington River Buffalo Farm, the Califon Train Station and the Paul Robinson Observatory in Voorhees State Park. Along the way, they spied windmills; drove through one of the few remaining covered bridges in New Jersey and a double-arched bridge; and viewed the lush, verdant hills and valleys of our county.

Some enjoyed the day by focusing on a few places they especially wished to see. Others accepted the challenge of the task list, visiting all or most of the public and private sites on the map, and completing the task list with the fervor of initiates. (See below for a few sample questions.)

As the sun began slipping past the trees, everyone gathered back at the Dvoor farm house for sandwiches, drinks, snacks and dessert. They shared stories about their day, the places they visited, and the people they met along the way.

They polished their love for our county by rediscovering what makes it so. And why we should all Treasure Hunterdon.



## Treasure Hunterdon Trivia Questions

1. Voorhees Observatory: *Where and when was Pluto discovered?*
2. Readington River Buffalo Farm: *How much does a fully grown, adult male buffalo weigh?*
3. Quakertown Meeting House: *What four languages appear on the greeting post in the parking lot?*
4. Phillips Farms: *How long has the farm been in the Phillips family?*
5. Califon Historic Train Station: *In what year and where did the historic train wreck occur?*

## Answers

1. In 1930 at the Lowell Observatory in Arizona
2. Around 2,000 pounds
3. Japanese, Arabic, Spanish, English
4. Since approximately 1850
5. On April 18, 1885, the rail bridge in the Ken Lockwood Gorge on the Califon to High Bridge railway collapsed and the train plunged into the river.

# Join Us for Our Annual Farm to Table Dinner Sept. 29



Matt McPherson of Matt's Red Rooster Grill will be your host at the Annual Farm to Table Fundraiser

Mark your calendars for our delicious Farm to Table dinner on Sunday, September 29 at *Matt's Red Rooster Grill*, 22 Bloomfield Ave. in Flemington. Restaurant owner Matt McPherson is putting together an amazing four-course gourmet meal, consisting of an appetizer, soup or salad, entrée and dessert, *all featuring locally sourced food to support our farmers*. A complimentary glass of wine will also be served. Matt is graciously donating his staff and culinary expertise for the event. The evening's festivities will include a tricky tray auction. Tickets are \$125 each. Seating reservations will begin at 4 PM and end at 7:30 PM. Call Caryn Tomljanovich at the Land Trust office at 908-237-4582 to reserve a seat. All proceeds from this event benefit the Hunterdon Land Trust's efforts to protect the places you love.

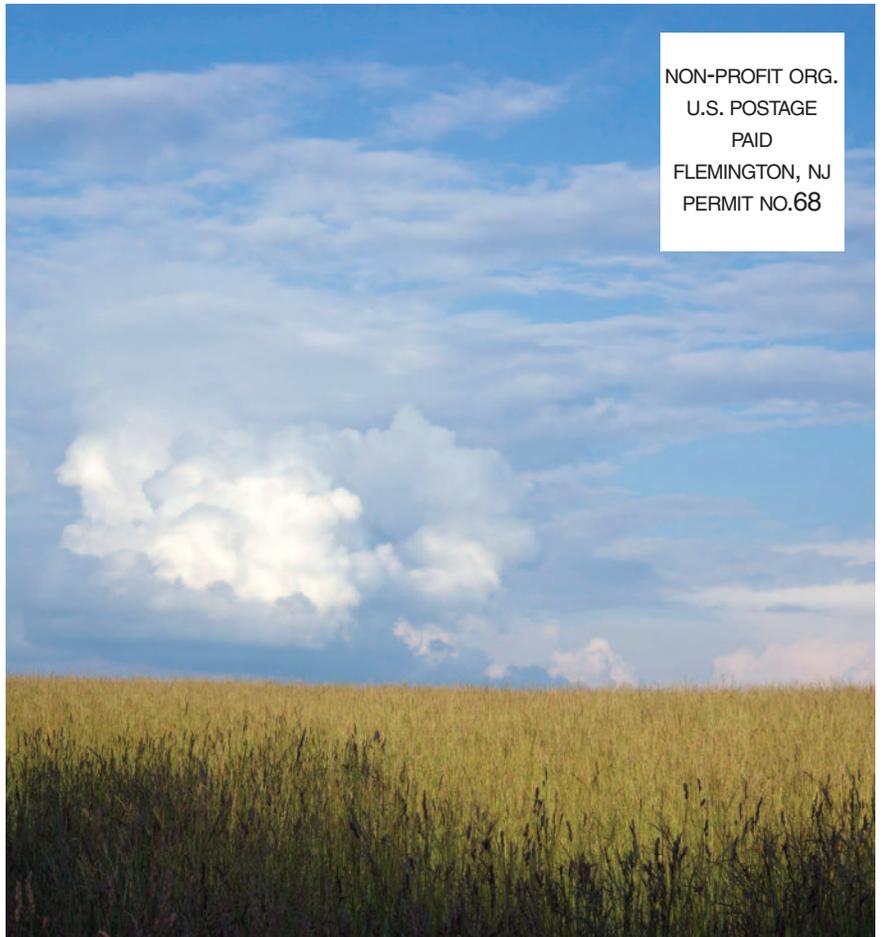


**HUNTERDON LAND TRUST**  
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## CONTACT US

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