

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help The Land

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Connecticut

May/June 2012

From the State Conservationist ...



Jay T. Mar

Long Island Sound Day ...

In Connecticut, May was the *Month of Conservation* ...

It began with the approval of the Long Island Sound Multi-State Watershed Partnership. This formalized the prioritization of NRCS resources to plan and implement conservation throughout the 11.4 million acre watershed that drains into Long Island Sound.

The partnership involves conservation leaders from six states (CT, NY, RI, MA, VT, and NH).

Toward the middle of the month, Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar dedicated the Connecticut River Watershed as the First National Blueways System (under the America's Great Outdoors Initiative) resulting in a focusing of resources to promote conservation, recreation, and trails. This designation effort was lead by the Friends of Silvio O. Conte National Refuge.

At and between both monumental events, I was fortunate to spend time not only with supportive conservation groups, but also some of our state's producers in the upper watershed, and aquaculture producers in the Sound who will benefit from the efforts – aquaculture producers such as Norm Bloom and Bren Smith, who make their living on the oysters and clams they harvest from the sea floor of this productive estuary.



Bren Smith bringing in the day's catch.

dependent on each other to be the best stewards we can will only benefit resources downstream. Perfect timing seeing as how we just celebrated Long Island Sound Day!

It is pretty amazing when you think of the hundreds of miles of streams and rivers that link the stewards of the land to the stewards of the sea. Between them are the many homeowners who also have a responsibility to learn about backyard conservation management, and urban leaders whose responsibility it is to develop wisely so as to respect natural ecosystems and drainage patterns. Being part of the watershed and



That's a LOT of oysters!

75
Years

A Legacy of Conservation
Helping People Help the Land

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NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS

If you are a woman or Hispanic farmer and believe you were improperly denied farm loan benefits by USDA between 1981 and 2000. You may be eligible for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov



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Mar Attends National Blueway Event

State Conservationist Jay Mar recently served as representative of not only NRCS but all of USDA when he attended the Connecticut River Watershed Blueway event in Hartford. Mar was on hand to welcome U. S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar who was in Connecticut to designate the 410 mile-long Connecticut River as America's first National Blueway.

Efforts to reverse pollution problems on the Connecticut began more than 50 years ago, and by 1980 produced considerable progress, which led to an increase in recreational use of the river. Salazar said restoration and preservation efforts on the river were a model for other American rivers. "Most people didn't awake to the possibilities of the restoration of rivers and what they meant to the environment and to the economy and young people and health until very recently," Salazar told reporters. "The people who live along the Connecticut River Watershed started waking up to this possibility half a century ago. There still is a lot of work to do, but it is a great example," he said.

The term *blueway* has emerged recently in many states including Connecticut to describe canoe and kayak routes along rivers and other waterways, similar to greenways for biking and hiking. However, the National Blueways Initiative as envisioned by the Obama administration is significantly larger in scale –to focus federal, state, and private resources on entire river systems.

According to Salazar, the effort is part of the administration's effort to promote community-driven conservation and recreation. A blueway designation is intended to support existing local and regional conservation, recreation and restoration efforts, and does not establish a new protective status or regulations for a river. However, within the Department of Interior, the Connecticut River and future designated rivers will be given priority for conservation and restoration programs the agency administers, such as funding for fisheries restoration or water conservation. "The Connecticut River Blueway will have a priority for these funding streams, which even in these tough fiscal times are there and I expect that they will continue to exist," he said.



U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar addresses audience. Mar pictured 2nd from left behind Salazar.

Salazar told participants enormous job losses that occurred in the first months of the Obama administration had been reversed, with hiring now increasing. "We are comfortable we are moving in the right direction," he said, noting that conservation work and outdoor recreation, encouraged under the new initiative, creates jobs and can help further improve the employment statistics. "Our own independent estimates indicate approximately 7-9 million jobs a year are created through outdoor recreation," he said.

The Connecticut River is also one of 14 federally designated American Heritage Rivers; the estuary at its mouth near Long Island Sound was named one of the Nature Conservancy's Last Great Places as well as a globally significant wetland under the international Ramsar Convention.



Salazar presents David Govatski with the 2012 Refuge System Volunteer of the Year Award.

Mar Represents Agency at Sasco Signing Ceremony

Contact Carol Donzella 203.287.8038, Ext. 100

On a picture-perfect day, in a picture-perfect setting, State Conservationist Jay Mar represented NRCS while celebrating Earth Day at the Sasco Brook Watershed Plan Signing Ceremony.

The Sasco Brook Pollution Abatement Committee took advantage of the timing of Earth Day that coincided with the completion of their Watershed Management Plan and held a signing ceremony in the Town of Fairfield, followed by a reception in Westport.



Mar signs the Sasco Brook Watershed Management Plan for NRCS.

The Sasco Brook Watershed Management Plan outlines the committee's future goals and a road map as to how they can achieve them. The committee says the most important part of the plan is a guidance document that is volunteer-based and will build on what has already been accomplished, and; therefore, not be a burden on their municipal budget.

The Sasco Brook Pollution Abatement Committee was formed over 20 years ago to identify and solve the sources of pollution causing the closure of shellfish beds at the mouth of the brook. It is comprised of representatives from federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as local property owners. The committee is proud of the successes it has achieved over the years which have lead to improved water quality in the brook.



Mar addresses the group.

The Sasco Brook watershed covers 6,600 acres that encompass portions of Westport, Fairfield, and Easton. It is six miles long beginning in northwest Fairfield and forms part of the boundary between Westport and Fairfield before flowing into Long Island Sound.

NRCS Staff Attends Career Fairs across the State

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018, or Ben Smith 860.871.4027

Each fall Connecticut NRCS staff attend the University of Connecticut's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) Career Fair. Doing this has helped recruit and been rewarding as an increasing number of students have been interested in becoming Earth Team Volunteers. In order to meet our diversity requirements though, it was suggested we try attending a wider variety of career fairs – so this year we did!

With news of our Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) beginning this summer, the Connecticut Civil Rights Advisory Committee and other NRCS employees helped to send out information about our two full-time STEP positions. In the process, most of the college and university career resources departments in Connecticut were contacted, and several responded with offers to attend their spring career fairs. In keeping with the effort to expand communication and cooperation with other institutions these offers were accepted, and they yielded a busy career fair attendance schedule for NRCS staff.

Thus began the outreach needed to find which schools have programs that provide relevant education and to reach qualified, interested students for our employment and volunteer opportunities. By branching out to the different universities across the state, we spread our message of conservation to more culturally diverse groups and hopefully planted the seeds for promising careers with NRCS.

We hope to continue contact with the schools and be able to attend next year's events with more available STEP and volunteer opportunities.

School	Date	NRCS Staff
Fairfield University	2/9/2012	Nazy Fayaz
University of Hartford	4/3/2012	Lisa Krall, Ben Smith, Marissa Theve, and Debbie Surabian
Southern Connecticut State University	4/3/2012	Marissa Theve and Debbie Surabian
Western Connecticut State University	4/4/2012	Adam Maikshilo and Seth Lerman
University of Bridgeport	4/4/2012	Ben Smith and Joe Kavan



(l to r) Engineers Joe Kavan and Ben Smith attend the University of Bridgeport Career Fair.



Soil Conservationist Adam Maikshilo (L) attends the Western CT State University Career Fair while Soil Scientist Marissa Theve (R) participates in the one at Southern CT State University.

Cromwell Growers Installs Energy Efficient Double Thermal Screen

Contact Tim Pindell 860.887.3604 Ext. 302

Taking steps to reduce their energy usage, Cromwell Growers has taken advantage of the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to install 166,000 sq. ft. of state-of-the-art double thermal screen in their greenhouse.



Under construction: A new 166,000 sq. ft. greenhouse will provide energy-efficient, state-of-the-art growing space for this large, diversified wholesale operation.

The Dutch-style gutter-connected greenhouse replaces 19 individual greenhouses destroyed by the heavy snow of 2010/2011.

The double layer thermal-screens reduce energy use, and emissions. Other energy efficient features installed as part of the greenhouse design (at owner expense) include computerized environment controls for ridge vents, ventilation fans, irrigation – including flooded floor irrigation, multiple natural gas boilers, insulated pipes and sidewalls, energy efficient lighting, and pumps.



Double layer of energy-efficient curtains provide shade and solar reflection during the hot summer months. Curtains are controlled by sensors leading to the computer command center, and open/retract using fine cables. Space was left for a future third curtain – which could improve energy efficiency up to 88%.

Energy and Emissions Evaluation:

- Annual fuel use without thermal curtains: **233,560,000,000 Btu's**
- Annual Fuel use with double thermal curtains: **92,891,000,000 Btu's**
- Total Btu's Saved (60%): **140,699,000,000 Btu's**
(Equivalent of 137.9 million cubic feet of natural gas)
- Thermal Curtain installation reduced CO₂ emissions by 1.7 Million lbs.

News You Can Use Bulletin Board

USDA Bans Texting While Driving

In September 2010, Department Regulation 5400-007, Text Messaging While Driving was released. It bans any and all text messaging when driving a Government owned, leased, or rented vehicle (GOV); driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) while on official business; and using electronic equipment supplied by the government while driving any vehicle (even while off-duty). Supervisors are directed to take appropriate disciplinary action for violation – with punishment up to and including removal from federal service. For more information, visit <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR5400-007%20Text%20while%20driving.htm>.

REMINDER: A jurisdiction-wide ban on driving while talking on a hand-held cell phone is in place in 10 states, including Connecticut.

Lyme Disease Prevention

Lyme disease is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected blacklegged tick (or deer tick). Ticks can attach to any part of the human body, but are often found in hard-to-see areas such as groin, armpits, and scalp. In most cases, the tick must be attached for 36-48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacterium can be transmitted.

Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash. If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

For more information on Lyme Disease and its prevention, visit the Centers for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov/lyme/transmission/index.html

Tornado Safety ...

Last year throughout the U.S., tornadoes were very active. This year has started out strong, as well. Every state is at some risk from this hazard.

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms. Spawned from powerful thunderstorms, tornadoes can cause fatalities and devastate a neighborhood in seconds. A tornado appears as a rotating, funnel-shaped cloud that extends from a thunderstorm to the ground with whirling winds that can reach 300 mph. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long.

Some tornadoes are clearly visible, while rain or nearby low hanging clouds obscure others. Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that little, if any, advance warning is possible.

Before a tornado hits, the wind may die down and the air may become very still. Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm, and it's not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind one.

To know what you should do before, during, and after, visit www.ready.gov.

National Soil Ecology Team Visits Connecticut

Contact Jacob Isleib 860.871.4037

Three NRCS national leaders in soil ecology recently traveled to the State Office to collaborate with area staff on developing Ecological Site Descriptions (ESDs) for southern New England and the lower Hudson River valley. Agromist Mike Kucera, and Forester Craig Busskohl are both members of the National Soil Quality and Ecosystems Branch of the National Soil Survey Center in Lincoln, Nebraska; Forester Tom Ward is with the East National Technology Support Center in Greensboro, North Carolina. In addition to national representatives, the group was joined by leadership and staff from Maine, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, the Tolland soil survey office staff, and a project team from the University of Rhode Island.

Kucera began the 2-day meeting by briefing Connecticut State Conservationist Jay Mar, State Resource Conservationist Nancy Ferlow, and Acting State Soil Scientist Lisa Krall on the applications of ESD's for programs. Kucera was previously the State Resource Conservationist in Wyoming and was able to communicate where ESDs fit into the rangeland work there. Ward and Busskohl were able to lend a forestry perspective, which is most applicable to the Northeast. The rest of the day was spent in the conference room working on a general site key (to group soils and site characteristics into like-groups that host similar suites of vegetation) and drafting an ESD representing one of those sites.

ESDs are a land classification model that represents ecological potential and ecosystem dynamics of land areas. A simplified representation of an ESD is the state and transition model (STM) (an example drafted at the meeting is shown in Figure 1). Where potential programs participants look to manage for wildlife habitat or certain forestry practices, ESDs provide a framework for demonstrating what state their land is presently within the model and where the land would need to be for a given program practice. Substituting photos for the boxed text within the model can be used to great effect.

The second day was spent entirely in the field with the goal of showing the level of diversity and disturbance in southern New England forests and fields. Three locations in Rhode Island were used to demonstrate outwash sites while Goodwin State Forest in Chaplin, Connecticut, was used as a till analog. The sites proved useful for demonstrating

the need for refinement in our site key and ESD drafted the previous day. Further,



a good tour of the Connecticut and Rhode Island countryside was eye-opening for the visitors from Nebraska and North Carolina, who had little or no field experience in the glacial landforms of New England. We will not be reinventing the wheel when it comes to developing ESDs in the Northeast, but it will be far from business as usual as these concepts originated in the rangelands and forests of the American west.

Moving forward, Tolland soil scientists will be working with Biologist Nels Barrett and others on developing ESDs in tandem with previously-prioritized soil survey project work. This initial effort includes wetlands in the Connecticut Valley and tidal marsh areas near Long Island Sound. The visitors advised that Ecological Site Inventory should be need-driven serving agency field staff, Technical Service Providers, and other cooperators who look to NRCS for inventory needs.

Field staff with questions about or interest in ESDs should get in contact with the soil survey staff to discuss collaboration. If you see an opportunity for ESDs to support your projects, we can and will prioritize our efforts in that area.

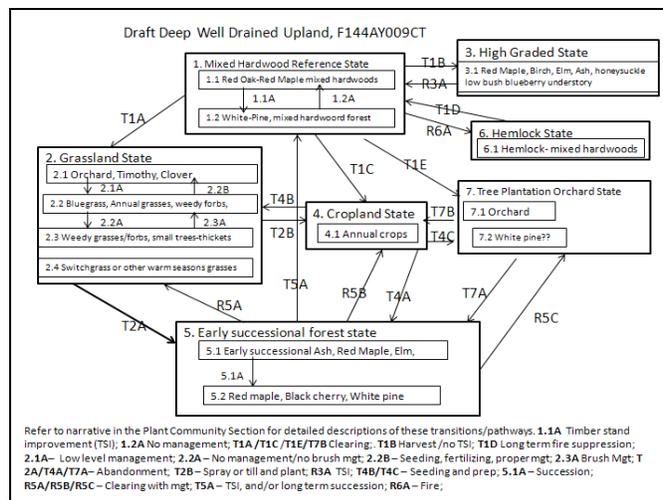


Figure 1. A draft STM for Deep Well Drained Upland sites in Southern New England.

Forest Service's Chief Visits Hamden Field Office

Contact Diane Blais 203.287.8038, Ext. 101

USDA Forest Service Chief Thomas Tidwell paid a visit to Connecticut last month – spending part of his time at the Hamden Forest Service/NRCS Office in Hamden. Tidwell participated in a tour of the Hamden Research Facility with Dr. Melody Keena and her staff, then made his way upstairs to meet the NRCS staff. Everyone then assembled in the conference room for lunch and a Q&A session.



(l to r) Forest Service Chief Thomas Tidwell spends a moment with Mario Sapia.

District Conservationist Diane Blais had a chance to speak with the Chief about the Forestry Legacy Program. He felt there was a good chance of getting additional funding for the program as most monies would come from oil and gas royalties, not taxes. He is interested in using NRCS's connections with private landowners and community groups to generate interest, as well as maintaining forests. A big concern is with the realty companies buying up large blocks of land as investments with no forest maintenance (especially true in Maine).

Chief Tidwell talked with the group about cultural transformation and inadequate hiring practices. He spoke about the importance of reaching out to students at the high school level and below to get the best and brightest kids interested in pursuing careers in natural resources, and the cultural stigmatism associated with agriculture and forestry.



Chief Tidwell (L) gets a chance to talk to some of the staff, including Ultima Nazy Fayaz (R).

As he was leaving, Tidwell told the staffs when he returned to Washington he would give their regards to NRCS Chief Dave White.

Celebrating Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day was held on Thursday, April 26th, and offered the opportunity for children to accompany their parents to their workplace throughout the country. The event was created by 20 years ago, so it is appropriate that this year's theme was "Build Opportunity: 20 Years of Education, Empowerment, and Experience". The day is designed to encourage success for not only employees' children, but also other youths such as those in homeless shelters and mentoring programs that may benefit from some insight into our working world. NRCS employees throughout the country were encouraged to bring their children to work and introduce them to the vital public services that their parents provide in support of USDA's mission and to encourage them to consider careers with the Federal government in the future. Connecticut NRCS employee Mike Rosado participated by bringing in his daughter Misha. Her accounts of the exciting day are detailed below. More information about the organization as well as forms and activities can be found at: www.daughtersandsonstowork.org

Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day 4/26/12

By Misha Rosado, 12 years old

Today I went to work with my Dad (Mike Rosado). He works for the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tolland CT. My Dad is a construction specialist in the engineering department.

We started off by going to his office at 9:00 a.m. I had the opportunity to meet some of my Dad's co-workers. First I met the staffs in the soils department, who were kind enough to talk to me about their type of work. Donald Parizek explained and showed me the different types of Connecticut soils that they have with soil monoliths on display. Jacob Isleib showed me the wonders of looking through a stereoscope, and demonstrated the increase of land use on Manhattan Island on his computer.

Marissa Theve allowed me to have the privilege of working in a real soil lab with my very own garden soil sample. I tested the pH count from our garden which tested at 7.43, and color coded it at 10YR2/1, "Black." I also tested the EC, which is 100 MS (Micro Siemen) @ 21.4 C or 70.5 F. I learned a lot about different types of soil and their color classifications from Marissa. This information has not been covered during any of my middle school science classes, so the information was actually twice as useful. I would like to thank Marissa for taking the time to work with me throughout the morning.



Michael Rosado

Construction Specialist, with the
Natural Resources Conservation Service, NRCS

This is my dad

Designed to be more than a career day, the Take Our Daughters And Sons To Work[®] program goes beyond the average "shadow" an adult. Exposing girls and boys to what a parent or mentor does during the work day is important, but showing them the value of their education, helping them discover the power and possibilities associated with a balanced work and family life, and providing them an opportunity to share how they envision the future and begin steps toward their end goals in a hands-on and interactive environment is key to their achieving success.

*-Carolyn McKecuen, President
Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation*



Marissa Theve showing me how to classify and color code different soil types.

Other people in the office I met were:

- Jule Dybdahl, Office Automation Assistant
- Rosanna Reynolds, Administrative Assistant
- Michelle Hendricks, S.A.O.
- Carolyn Miller, Visual Information Specialist
- Deb Surabian, MLRA Soil Survey Party Leader
- Jay Mar, State Conservationist
- Arde Ramthun, State Conservation Engineer
- Dan DePietro, Civil Engineer

At around 12:30 I had the opportunity to talk with Jay Mar (State Conservationist). I shared my experiences in the morning with him and I had a photo opportunity with him.

Then, my Dad and I had lunch break before heading out into the field to do some civil engineering site work. We went to a cattle farm and set grades for level ground. I used a calculation to figure out elevations and I used a level laser to record the grades. We reviewed areal plans and took measurements for a planned access road and rock lined waterway. I got to meet the farmer who was very polite and seemed to be happy that we were working on his project.

The day was long and fun. I got to learn what a few people in NRCS do and I look forward to next year!

I would like to thank Jay for allowing children to come to work with their parent at the NRCS. Also Marissa, Jacob, and Donald for educating me further in the soils department.



Jacob Isleib showing me the amazing way to view Manhattan in 3D using a nifty tool called a stereoscope.



Picture of me testing the color of my soil sample



This is a picture of Marissa Theve, soil scientist.



Donald Parizek explaining and showing the different types of Connecticut soils using soil monoliths.



A picture of me talking with Jay Mar, State Conservationist.

Native Plant Workshop Held

Contact Charlotte Pyle 860.871.4056

NRCS Landscape Ecologist Charlotte Pyle recently presented a native plant seminar as part of the North Central Conservation District's Spring 2012 Workshop Series. The workshop, held at the Tolland Agricultural Center (TAC), began with a look at the rain garden previously installed at that location. The rain garden corrected the problem of erosion caused by storm water runoff from the building's roof.

As Pyle explained, this particular rain garden is one of the plantings in the TAC's ecological landscaping demonstration (part of which NRCS contributed technical assistance). The rain garden is interesting because the plantings in and around it are primarily shrubs. Pyle pointed out shrub identification features including leaf-off characteristics for the deciduous species and discussed the importance of matching plants to the soil and sunlight conditions of the site. While looking at the rain garden depression, the group was able to see an example of an exception to the rule and that just because a plant is native to Connecticut does not mean it can be grown successfully statewide on all types of sites.

Pyle asked the participants four questions: *What shrub grows really well in the woods and will make a layer of green in early spring?* (Answer: invasive Japanese Barberry). *What is that white-flowered rose that smells so good in June?* (Answer: invasive Multiflora Rose). *What is that vine in the treetops with the red berries that pop out of their yellow coverings in the fall?* (Answer: invasive Asiatic [Oriental] Bittersweet). *How hard have you had to work lately to help these plants grow well compared to the care you have given to your native plants?* The point of these questions was to illustrate that native plants are not always the most *successful* or *easy-to-grow* plants on a site.

Native plants are the most *desirable* when your goal is to have plants that interact best in natural ecosystems. For example, Doug Tallamy's work has shown that native plants provide food for the native insect larvae that are eaten by songbirds

RAIN GARDENS are plantings in depressions in the ground dug to a particular size based on soil texture and the expected amount of inflowing water. Its purpose is to control where the storm water goes and prevents erosion. This also keeps runoff from exiting the property to flow from sidewalks and roads to drains where, ultimately, the water may bring in road surface pollutants and contribute to stream flooding.

and other native animals. Insect larvae are somewhat particular about what food they eat – which is why the leaves of many non-native plants are seldom eaten. Research shows that people's eyes will overlook up to about 20% defoliation, so in most situations it is easy for gardeners to share the plants with native insects. Most native insect larvae do not destroy food plants. And, the gardener's reward for sharing is many more birds in the garden.

In a garden situation, native plants do not take care of themselves. They may need water to get established and grow vigorously. They may need pruning or removal of dried flowers to look attractive.

The same native plants that need attention in a garden will do fine without care in a natural setting where they are being planted for other values that do not require a manicured appearance. For example, plants for wildlife or pollinator food and shelter, erosion control, or maintenance of native habitat diversity do not need a manicured appearance. And, as long as they can survive well enough to do the job asked for and reproduce themselves, they are successful.

Pyle used a set of photos of butterfly nectar plants to discuss the suitability of various Connecticut native plants in gardens and in habitat restoration projects. Many plants used in gardens and restoration also were traditionally used by Native Americans in Connecticut for food, utilitarian purposes (fiber, tools, basketry, utensils, shelter, etc.), and medicine (physical and spiritual health). The connection of traditional uses of specific plants with their use in home landscaping and habitat restoration was a new idea for many people in the room.

The indoor portion of the workshop included a display of native, perennial plant seedlings set up by TAC Board Member Ellen Bender, who described what the plants would look like in maturity and answered questions about their use.

Meet the National Safety Officer

from the NRCS National Safety Newsletter



Hello! My name is Angela Stowes and I would like to introduce myself as the National Safety Officer (NSO) for NRCS. I am excited to introduce myself as the person responsible for helping ensure your safety while you are at work. I also think it is important to occasionally provide you with safety tips to ensure your general safety.

The NRCS Safety and Health program's mission is to provide a safe and healthful work environment for all employees, free of recognized hazards and unsafe conditions. Safety must be a cooperative effort between management and employees at all levels, recognizing that good stewardship of a safe and healthful working environment is paramount and is in the forefront of our employees' success in their efforts of "Helping People Help the Land." My vision to accomplish this mission is to start with the basics—education. Through online training and newsletters, I hope each of you will gain the skills and understanding needed to safely and successfully perform your duties. Each state has a Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO) who will be your link to the NSO; however, all of you are welcome to contact me directly. *[Connecticut's CDSO is Michelle Hendricks.]*

Over the past 18 months, I have reestablished our CDSO program; wrote an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Policy and a Border Safety Policy that should be released during the 3rd quarter; and wrote several newsletters and summer safety articles. This year, I hope to begin the online training and implement the new online accident reporting system that will eventually be used by all of USDA.

Curious about my background? I have over 24 years of federal service, 20 of which have been in Safety and Occupational Health. I have a BS in Management Studies from the University of Maryland University College and I am currently working on a MS in Cybersecurity/Policy.

In addition to serving as a Safety Officer/Manager, I have also served as a Safety Technician and Safety Specialist, which helps me to better understand the actual hazards associated with the many duties being performed by NRCS employees. Having worked at various levels of safety and health gives me an advantage in understanding what is needed to build and manage a successful Safety and Health Program.

I look forward to working with all of you. I encourage your input for safety topics you would like to see covered in the monthly newsletters and other ideas you may have to help build our Safety and Health Program.

News From Partners ...

Farmington Land Trust Holds *Outdoor Experiences*

Contact Suzan Scott 860.674.8545 farmingtonland.trust@snet.net

The Farmington Land Trust is pleased to begin a series of outdoor experiences called *A Stroll on the Land* for young and old. These outings will be held on the 4th Thursday of the months of May, June, July, and September. The programs will run about an hour each and are free and open to the public.

The 1st *Stroll on the Land* is scheduled for May 24, at 6:00 PM and led by renowned birder Milan Bull, Senior Director of Science and Conservation for the Connecticut Audubon Society. We will walk the Land Trust's Cowles Parcel, off Meadow Road and have the chance to see eagles, kestrels, rare ducks, and many small species. Bring your binoculars and bird identification books! The trail is level and an easy stroll along a very beautiful part of the Farmington River. **This event is free and open to the public. No reservation required. All ages are welcome. No pets please. In the event of rain, event will be cancelled.**

History*

The Cowles parcel, consisting of 3.4 acres, was donated to the Farmington Land Trust in 1974. For centuries, Farmington people drove their cows down to the river and into the fields for pasturage, bringing them back at evening for milking or keeping them in *summer quarters* for the season. One could cross by bridge, or ford the river near the gristmill to reach Indian Neck. Others would cross the old stone bridge over the Pequabuck to reach fields south of the river. The bridge, a classical span dating from 1835, was considered for demolition but spared in the 1970's when a new span was built. Today, the ancient bridge, the river, and the lovely Cowles parcel to the west form a small and charming environment just right for dog walking, bird watching or cross-country skiing. The land was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Sheffield Cowles. It had been purchased from the Root family, who were successors to colonial-era Cowles family. It adjoins land originally granted to Farmington's first minister Roger Newton and passed down through the Hooker and Cowles families. The home of one of Farmington's early Italian [Lenolese] immigrants stands adjacent to the ancient bed of the Farmington Canal a few yards to the east. The Pequabuck River wraps around the northern boundary beneath the ample Georgian mansion of playwright Winchell Smith. The setting reflects many aspects of our history: early settlement, immigration, industry, dairying, our literary past, and 365 years of farming. It was probably a campsite of Comte de Rochambeau and his troops on their way through from Yorktown in 1781/82. The field is kept open by cuttings twice-a-year, avoiding nesting times of resident birds. The area positively reeks of history; one has only to amble along the Conklin Nature Trail look around and breathe the air!

**History courtesy of Farmington Land Trust Board Member Dr. Charles Leach*



Natural Resource Conservation Service Grant Helps with Composting

Grants have a positive impact on what we are able to accomplish. This time around we have Natural Resource Conservation Service to thank for all their assistance with our Nutrient Management Facility (aka the Composting Shed). Their talented staff devoted many months to this project. Initially we had meetings with representatives from DEEP, UConn's Cooperative Extension Service, biologists, and soil specialists; they assessed our need to handle our manure in a more environmentally friendly manner and calculated the amount of manure and bedding that would need to be composted from week to week. Their engineers took time to design what they feel is a model facility, the first of its kind in the State, that can now be replicated by other interested farmers across Connecticut and even across the country. We are very proud to serve as a shining example to other farms. Our sincere thanks to the NRCS staff and to the USDA's EQIP Program (Environmental Quality Improvement Program), for their generous grant of \$30,000. ■

From *Down to Earth*
Spring 2012 Edition
Redding, CT

Worthley Receives Award for Excellence in Land Conservation



University of Connecticut Assistant Extension Professor Tom Worthley and his collaborators recently received the 2012 Award for Excellence in Land Conservation.

The group received the award for *Community Engagement for Forest Stewardship through School System Collaboration*. The project was nominated by the Chair of the Haddam Conservation Commission.



The Award Committee recognized the many ways the “management plan, conservation practice (forest improvement) demonstration, use of low-impact techniques, and example of locally grown, harvested, and utilized wood products” project has been able to engage multiple academic and adult audiences for educational purposes at all stages of the process, provide service learning opportunities, demonstrate local benefits, and create a project that can be self-sustaining over time.



Worthley cited the role everyone played in helping make the project happen – from the inventory and planning stage to the implementation of the stand treatment, to the delivery of lumber to the RSD-17 woodshop. He



expressed his appreciation to the team for their commitment to the project.



The Naturalist's Niche

Following the Trail of the Birdsfoot Violet

Contact Charlotte Pyle 860.871.4066

Birdsfoot Violet, an unusual native violet, lacks the roundish leaf shape of most violets. The name *Birdsfoot* comes from the deeply-forked leaves (similar to the crowfoot type of Buttercup leaves) that vaguely resemble the talons of a many-toed bird. Birdsfoot Violet (*Viola pedata*) does well in dry, infertile soil. So we went looking for it in a sunny, place where, long ago, melting glaciers left extremely well-drained, sandy soil.

Following a leader who had seen the plants before, we walked through a grassy area lacking spring color other than some crabapples and profusely-blooming Autumn-Olive (a nitrogen-fixing, invasive shrub that does particularly well on dry, infertile soils). And, suddenly, right alongside the trail, there it was, a dining room-sized Persian carpet composed of dramatic splotches of blue-purple Birdsfoot Violet flowers, each with a spot of orange pollen in the center, coupled with the subtle green of not fully-opened leaves on a mottled tan and black background of light-colored, bare, sandy soil and a fragile, dark-colored soil crust.

As a species, Birdsfoot Violet is variable in color. The flowers in our patch were shades of periwinkle blue (a light colored, but rich [as opposed to washed out] shade of blue-purple). Enjoying the pattern of blue-purple across the floral carpet, we then spotted an inconsistent group of Violets with their bright orange centers of pollen surrounded by completely white petals. What were these interlopers doing there— and, what other species of Violet could take the harsh conditions? A check of the leaves indicated we had unusual Birdsfoot Violets.

Farther along, where the trail dipped down into moister soil, we stopped for a patch of

Woolly Blue Violets (*Viola sororia*). Again, our eyes were caught by a patch of purple color, this time flowers of a deep violet (darker and more reddish than the Birdsfoot Violets) and leaves with heart-shaped bases. And, once again, upon looking closely, we spotted two plants with white flowers intermingled in the patch.

Woolly Blue Violet is identified by a characteristic best seen with a handlens. With the flower held so that two petals grow upwards and three downwards, you will see a dense covering of hairs at the base of the three petals. And, (importantly) those hairs are *not* thickened at their tips. Definitely a handlens operation to see all this! And, though our eyes rejected the white ones as not fitting in, in fact, other than color, those white-flowered plants had exactly the same flower and leaf characteristics as their neighbors. So, it turns out that Woolly Blue Violets can come in white (not to mention sometimes have smoothish, not woolly, flower stalks and sometimes lack hair on the central one of the three petals(!)).

Another sandy soil plant known from the vicinity is Sundial Lupine (*Lupinus perennis* subspecies *perennis*). It blooms in late Spring/early Summer. Although we saw none, if we had found them, we probably would have seen some white flowered plants among the typical blue-purple flower spikes.

Out of the ordinary, white-flowered individuals often are hard to figure out in flower books organized by flower color. Yet, while the presence of the odd one in a group can make things more difficult, the presence of variety also might just add a little spice to the job at hand.

NRCS 2012 Program Update

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) –AMA provides payments to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation practices into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures, and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - CRP reduces soil erosion and sedimentation in streams and lakes, improves water quality, establishes wildlife habitat, and enhances forest and wetland resources. It encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover such as tame or native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filterstrips, or riparian buffers. Farmers receive an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. Cost sharing is provided to establish the vegetative cover practices. *CRP is administered by the Farm Service Agency, with NRCS providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning, and practice implementation.*

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) –A voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial incentives to producers to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals, optimize environmental benefits, and help farmers and ranchers meet federal, state, Tribal, and local environmental regulations.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) –A voluntary program that helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. The program provides matching funds to state, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations with existing farm and ranch land protection programs to purchase conservation easements.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) - A voluntary program for landowners and operators to protect, restore, and enhance grassland. The program emphasizes support for working grazing operations; enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity; and protection of grassland and land containing shrubs and forbs under threat of conversion.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) –A voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring eligible land from agriculture. Includes 30-year and permanent easement options and funding for restoration.

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) –WHIP is a voluntary program for private landowners to develop and improve high quality habitat that supports wildlife populations of national, state, Tribal, and local significance.

Office Locations

Danielson Field Office
71 Westcott Road
Danielson, CT 06238
860.779.0557
Raymond Covino
District Conservationist

Norwich Field Office
Yantic River Plaza
238 West Town St.
Norwich, CT 06360
860.887.3604
Javier Cruz
District Conservationist

Torrington Field Office
1185 New Litchfield St.
Torrington, CT 06790
860.626.8258
Kathleen Johnson
District Conservationist

Hamden Field Office
51 Mill Pond Road
Hamden, CT 06514-1703
(203) 287-8038
Diane Blais
District Conservationist

Windsor Field Office
100 Northfield Dr. 4th Floor
Windsor, CT 06095
860.688.7725
James Hyde
District Conservationist

Tolland State Office
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084
860.871.4011
Jay T. Mar
State Conservationist

Calendar of Events

June

- April 14-
June 16** **SPRING BIRDWALKS** – Hammonasset State Park, Madison – 8-10:30 AM – See migratory shorebirds, songbirds, and birds of prey at Connecticut's premiere birding site. Level, easy terrain; dress for weather; bring binoculars. Visit www.theaudubonshop.com. Admission \$4. Contact 203.245-9056
- Saturdays**
- 2** **TRAILS DAY EDUCATIONAL WALK** – Sessions Woods, Burlington – 1:30-3 PM - Visit Sessions Woods for a hike (2 miles roundtrip) to a beaver marsh and learn about wildlife, habitat, and wildlife management areas. Pre-registration required. Contact *Laura Rogers-Castro-860.675.8130*
- 2** **TRAILS DAY NITE HIKE** – Sessions Woods, Burlington – 8-10 PM - Join Master Wildlife Conservationist Shirley Sutton on a moonlight night hike at Sessions Woods. . Pre-registration required. Contact *Laura Rogers-Castro-860.675.8130*
- 2** **RIVER CLEAN-UP** – Sullivan Senior Center, Torrington – 9 AM – 3 PM. Contact Northwest Conservation District 860.626.7222
- 2** **NATURE WALK ON FARMINGTON LAND TRUST PARCEL** - Farmington – 9-11 AM – Join in the fun, fresh air, exercise, and education with a 1.5 mile hike. Start at the Carey Parcel (Mountain Spring Road). Trail is moderate with a level start and some steep spots, rising to a sweeping overlook of the Farmington/Pequabuck River Valley. Free/open to the public. Pre-registration appreciated. Rain or shine. No pets. Contact Suzan Scott 860.674.8545 visit www.ctwoodlands.org
- 2** **NAUGATUCK RIVER CLEAN-UP** – Sullivan Senior Center, Torrington – 9 AM – 1 PM – Capable hands are needed to help out with some clearing of the river due to Hurricane Irene and Winter Storm Alfred. DEEP will be on hand to sample fish from the river and help monitor health. Trout Unlimited provides a cookout for volunteers after the cleanup. Contact *Kim Barbieri 860.489.2221* kim_barbieri@torringtonct.org
- 2** **STEELE BROOK GREENWAY GUIDED WALK** – Siemon Company, Watertown – 1-5 PM – Celebrate National Trails Day and Connecticut Trails Day. See the progress being made on the Steele Brook Greenway and learn about improvements being made to restore the quality of fish, plants, and wildlife. Dress for weather and wear shoes suitable for walking on uneven ground. Contact steelebrookgreenway@hotmail.com
- 2-3** **CONNECTICUT TRAILS DAY** – Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, Hampton –Native plant sale throughout the day. **Saturday, June 2** - Ecology & Geology 9:30-11 AM; Identify different tree & shrub species; why different types of forests grow where they do, and how soils, sun, geologic history, and human history all play a role in deciding what's in the woods. Rain or shine. Wetland Plant Identification & Ecology 1-2:30 PM; Common wetland plants, including emergent plants rooted in the lake and underwater. Basic identification pointers and natural history of each will be discussed. Rain or shine. Small Scale Wood Harvesting Demonstration & Forest Management Walk – 3-4:30 PM; Walk through a young white pine forest in the midst of a thinning operation to see small scale tree harvesting equipment in action, including an RTV with a power winch, wood splitter, powered walk-behind wagon and a portable sawmill. Heavy rain cancels. Forest Fantasy Walk – 9-11 AM; Keep your eyes open for fairies and their houses on our youth discovery trail! You'll find them tucked among many species of fern, moss and pines. Heavy rain cancels. Freeze Frame Native Plant Garden Walk 11-11:30 AM; How to design and maintain a native plant garden that balances cultural and natural forces. Rain or shine. Canoe Paddles Every hour (10 AM–1 PM); a guided canoe paddle on the scenic, 130-acre Pine Acres Pond. Watch wildlife and learn about aquatic plants and pond ecology. Canoes, paddles, life vests and paddling instruction for novices all provided. Heavy rain cancels **Sunday June 3** - Trail Bike Rides 9:30 AM – 12 Noon; Beginner or intermediate mountain bike rides on rolling terrain. Helmets and mountain bikes required. Heavy rain cancels
- 3-22** **PLIGHT OF THE POLLINATORS Art Show** – Horse Art Studio, Watertown – 11 AM – 5 PM –One third of the food we eat is directly the result of the habits of pollinators within our ecosystems. These creatures, winged and scaled, are on the decline due to habitat loss, chemical use, invasive species, and disease. This *Art of the Earth* series will be open to the local and online community in an effort to raise awareness of the vital importance of the role of pollinators in maintaining the health of our food and ecosystems. Partial proceeds will be donated to Flanders Nature Center and Land Trust's environmental educational programming. Visit <http://bluehorsearts.blogspot.com/p/studio.html>
- 7-10** **CHELSEA BOTANICAL GARDENS BUTTERFLY PAVILLION** – Harts Greenhouse and Florist, Norwich – 10 AM – 5 PM - Stroll among 1,000 butterflies in this tented and flower-filled greenhouse, and study the stages of development of these beautiful creatures. Hosted by Chelsea Botanical Gardens – 80 acres of prime, native land in Norwich's historic 400-acre Mohegan Park. \$6/adults; \$4/under 12. Visit www.chelseabotanicalgardens.org
- 8** **SECRET GARDENS TOUR** – New Canaan – 10 AM – 4 PM – Showcasing the grounds and gardens of New Canaan's premiere properties. Be prepared to walk. No children, strollers, cameras, or cell phones. Tour and gourmet boxed lunch \$75; tour only \$50 in advance, \$60 day of tour. Visit www.newcanaannature.org Contact 203.966.9577
- 9** **SATURDAY MORNING BIRDWALK** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 8 AM - Come observe birds in the wild, sharpen your bird identification skills, or enjoy a morning hike through the grounds of the Kellogg Environmental Center and Osbornedale State Park. Contact *Donna Kingston 203.734.2513*

June *(continued)*

- 9 **OPEN FARM TOUR AND AG DAY** – Hastings Farm, Suffield – 10 AM – 1 PM – Meet people that produce your food, provide local fresh milk, yogurt, and cheese. Find out how a farm is run on a day-to-day basis. Farm equipment, animals, honey bees, local vendors. Celebrate Connecticut agriculture! *Contact Hartford County Farm Bureau 860.844.8444*
- 9 **DINOSAUR STATE PARK OPEN HOUSE DAY** – Rocky Hill – Admission free all day. *Contact Meg Enkler – 860.529.5816*
- 9 **PADDLE OUT TO NORWALK ISLANDS** – Calf Pasture Beach boat landing, Norwalk – 1 PM – A unique opportunity to paddle out to the Norwalk Islands with David Park, author of "Kayaking in and around the Norwalk Islands." Paddle out to the Norwalk Islands with guide David Park, where you will learn about the history and ecology of the islands. Mountain Workshop will provide kayaks, canoes, paddles and PFD's for the event, though you are welcome to bring your own. Fee: \$25 will go directly to the Norwalk River Watershed Assoc., plus \$5 gate charge for non-Norwalk residents. *Contact Mark at 203.797.1435 or visit <http://goo.gl/Uybbu>*
- 9 **8TH ANNUAL CONNECTICUT OPEN HOUSE DAY** - Event is designed to showcase Connecticut's diverse world of history, art, film and agritourism to residents. Visit <http://www.ctvisit.com/dontmiss/details/211> for details. *Contact Rosemary.Bove@ct.gov or Jean.Hebert@ct.gov*
- 14 **WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER ENVIRONMENTAL CHARETTE – SOUTHERN New England Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society Summer Meeting** – Olneyville Housing Corporation, Providence, RI – Keynote speakers include Alicia Lehrer, Executive Director, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council; David Everett, Principle Planner, City of Providence; Jason Normadin, Sales Associate, E.J. Prescott. An interactive walking tour will also be held. *Visit www.swcssnec.org*
- 16 **YEAR OF THE LIZARD** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 10:30 AM - Enjoy a program featuring live reptiles from Beardsley Park Zoo which will highlight facts about reptiles - especially lizards! Registration requested. *Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513*
- 20 **POMOLOGICAL TWILIGHT MEETING** – Rogers Orchard, Southington – 5-9 PM – *Contact Rick Macsuga 860.713.2544 or richad.macsuga@ct.gov*
- 23 **GREAT AMERICAN CAMP OUT** – www.backyardcampout.org
- 23 **TAI-CHI BY THE SEA** – Meigs Point Nature Center at Hammonasset Beach State Park Madison – 10-11 AM - Improve fitness, promote flexibility, and reduce stress in a tranquil natural setting. For all skill levels. *Contact Russ Miller 203.245.8743 or 860.462.9643*
- 23 **NOFA TURNS 30 BLOCK PARTY ON THE FARM – The Hickories, Ridgefield – 6-9 PM** - Celebrate the next 30 years! Come meet local farmers and organic land care professionals with a farm tour, wine tasting, live music, and talk by Executive Director Bill Duesing. We are holding block parties on four farms across Connecticut throughout the summer, so don't miss this opportunity to participate. \$40. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 23 **COCKTAILS AND CLAMS – AN EVENING DEDICATED TO CLEAN WATER** – Edgewater Place, Norwalk Harbor – 5-7 PM - An evening dedicated to clean water, will thank those who joined the Friends of Harbor Watch campaign. Live music, door prizes and an award presentation. Menu will include cocktail, wines, and a raw bar, a selection of gourmet burgers, and a make your own ice cream station. \$50/person. *Contact Heidi Hanson at h.hanson@earthplace.org or 203.227.7253, ext. 102*
- 24 **CONNECTICUT HISTORIC GARDEN DAY** – Osborne Homestead Museum, Derby – 12-4 PM – One of 14 historic gardens across Connecticut celebrating the 9th Annual Connecticut Historic Gardens Day. *Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513*
- 25 **EASTERN CONNECTICUT RC&D AREA ANNUAL MEETING** - Stonington Vineyards - 11 AM – 3 PM – This year's theme is Energy on the Connecticut Farm. The event is being hosted by Nick and Happy Smith, owners of one of the oldest wineries in Connecticut. In 2010 they began working with the Connecticut Farm Energy Program to secure a REAP Grant for an energy efficiency project at the winery. Fee: \$20. Visit www.easternrcd-ct.org
- 28 **A STROLL ON THE LAND** – Wadsworth Memorial parcel, Farmington – 6-8 PM – Second in a series of four. Led by Land Trust Board Member Bill Novoa. Hike up Rattlesnake Mountain to the notorious den of the legendary Will Warren. Two-mile round trip includes a strenuous climb with some rock scrambling at the top. *Contact Suzan Scott 860.674.8545*
- 28 **TRACTOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP** – Nonnewaug High School, Woodbury – 4-7 PM - Intro to tractor repair with a focus on preventable maintenance. This includes fluid checks, oil changes, basic hydraulics, and routine pre operational checks. Led by Nonnewaug High School's Agricultural Mechanics Teacher Edward Belinsky and Riverbank Farm's David Blyn. \$25/members; \$35/non-members. *Contact 203.888.5146*

July

- 4 **HOLIDAY – 4TH OF JULY**
- 7 **TAI-CHI BY THE SEA** – Meigs Point Nature Center at Hammonasset Beach State Park Madison – 10-11 AM - Improve fitness, promote flexibility, and reduce stress in a tranquil natural setting. For all skill levels. *Contact Russ Miller 203.245.8743 or 860.462.9643*
- 11 **CONNECTICUT NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION SUMMER FIELD DAY** – Lockwood Farm, Hamden – 8 AM – 3 PM - \$45/member; \$55/non-member includes breakfast and lunch.
- 11 **BUTTERFLIES AT SESSIONS WOODS** – Burlington – Visit the flowers and fields to identify the local butterfly fauna during this popular program. Pre-registration required. *Contact Laura Rogers-Castro 860.675.8130*
- 11 **MARKET GARDENING SERIES – Managing Pests & Disease** – Common Ground High School, New Haven – 5-7 PM – *Contact 203.389.4333, Ext. 217*
- 14 **INTO THE NIGHT** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – Families are invited to participate in an evening program to explore nocturnal animals habits. *Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513*
- 14 **LONG ISLAND SOUND MARINE ANIMALS** – Earthplace, Westport – 2:30 PM – Sherwood Island Nature Center brings a touch tank for participants to learn about local aquatic animals (and touch some of them) that inhabit Long Island Sound. *Contact 203.227.7253*
- 21 **KAYAK FOR A CAUSE** – Calf Pasture Beach, Norwalk - For the 12th year, avid kayakers will paddle from Long Island across the Sound to Calf Pasture Beach to raise money for charity. Visit kayakforacause.com or call 203.807.5322.
- 28 **CONNECTICUT WINE FESTIVAL** – Goshen Fairgrounds – Saturday 12-7 PM; Sunday 12-6 PM - Featuring fine wines, specialty food vendors, artisans, and live music, perfect summer activity for amateur and sophisticated wine connoisseur. Visit www.ctwine.com. \$25 in advance, \$30 at door. *Contact 860.677.5467*

August

- 3 **PLANT SCIENCE DAY** – Agricultural Experiment Station, Lockwood Farm, Hamden – 10 AM – 4 PM – Admission Free. Barn displays, exhibits, technical demonstrations, plant diagnosis, insect ID. More. Visit <http://www.ct.gov/CAES>
- 4 **PASTURED POULTRY WORKSHOP** – Terra Firma Farm, Stonington – 2-5 PM –Brienne Casadei will talk about poultry farming and show her 1,000 pasture-raised layer hens (in movable coops). After the workshop, there will be a beginning farmer lunch and gathering. Co-sponsored by CT NOFA, UConn & RMA. \$25/members and beginning farmers; \$35/non-members. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 6 **BUTTERFLIES!** - Simpaug Turnpike, Redding – 10 AM – 12 Noon - Lepidopterist Victor DeMasi will introduce area butterflies and moths, discuss their food and habitats, and show his remarkable collection. Rain date August 7th. *Contact Vic DeMasi 203.938.9016; victormonarch@yahoo.com*
- 10-12 **NOFA SUMMER CONFERENCE** – University of Massachusetts, Amherst – Keynote speakers include Representative Chellie Pingree and Jeffrey Smith. Visit www.nofasummerconference.org
- 14 **REMEDATION ROUNDTABLE** – DEEP Headquarters, Hartford – 1:30-3:30 PM - An open forum for the exchange of ideas and information on the various site cleanup programs in Connecticut and to solicit opinions, advice and information from those outside sources on a routine and established basis. *Contact Camille Fontanella 860.424.3705*
- 18 **DINOSAUR STATE PARK DAY** – Rocky Hill – 10 AM – 3 PM - The annual celebration of the discovery of the dinosaur tracks. All outside activities are free (except food vendors/mining activity). Fees to enter Center: \$6/13+, \$2/6-12, free/5 and under. *Contact Meg Enkler 860.529.5816*

September

- 10 **CHEESE MAKING WORKSHOP** – Beltane Farm, Lebanon – 4-7 PM - Join dairy farmer and cheese making professional Paul Trubey for a hands-on workshop that will teach you how to produce your own fresh seasonal goats-milk cheeses. This workshop is a great opportunity for farmers and food lovers to learn the technical details of cheese making from a well established and knowledgeable instructor. Registration limited to 20 people. After the workshop there will be a beginning farmer dinner and gathering. \$45/members and beginning farmers; \$55/non-members. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 22 **CONNECTICUT HUNTING/FISHING APPRECIATION DAY** – Sessions Woods, Burlington – 10 AM – 4 PM - Family-oriented atmosphere for individuals to learn about the state's natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities. Visit www.ct.gov/deep/HuntFishDay. *Contact Peter Good 860.675.8130*