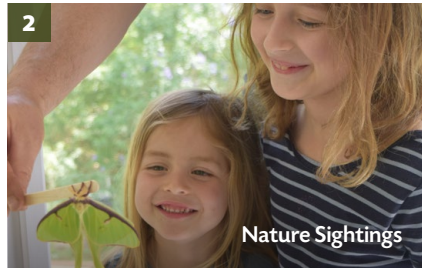




# THE WREN

August 2021



Nature Sightings



Laying the Groundwork for the Future



Find Volunteer Opportunities



Take a Hike

## Inspiring the Next Generation

SVT and other land trusts use the phrase *in perpetuity* a lot. Our goal is to protect healthy open spaces and farmland *forever*, so future generations—our children, our grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren—can enjoy and explore the same woodlands, meadows, and scenic vistas that enrich our lives today.

In every action we take, we strive to permanently protect the spaces that we love.

By conserving a forest that supports a threatened turtle, we set the stage for a healthy habitat that can support generations of turtles to come. When we protect a patch of agricultural land, we protect a source of fresh produce both for today's farmers markets and for farmers markets far into the future.

It quickly becomes clear that to succeed "in perpetuity" we need to make enduring connections with more people from throughout the region. Land conservation requires the efforts of many people pulling together, passing legislation to protect the environment, raising funds to buy land, and volunteering to restore wildlife habitats.

SVT enjoys wonderful support from thousands of members and volunteers, but we need to broaden these connections to reach new audiences. And we especially need to inspire younger conservationists to carry this work forward to future generations of supporters.



Michael Cassie (left) worked with landowner Charlie McColough (right) to install a welcoming kiosk at the O'Brien Farm trailhead in Westford. Making trails friendly to new visitors is one of the many ways SVT works to reach a wider audience to support conservation into the future.

Kim Cassie

SVT engages people in numerous ways: by maintaining trail networks, by enlisting volunteers to help us manage habitats, by leading a tremendous variety of nature hikes, and by giving presentations about the natural wonders found in our forests, fields, streams, and vernal pools.

To inspire the youth of our region, we take a more targeted approach. We work one-on-one with Boy Scouts designing their Eagle Projects; we coordinate service days for local high schools; we sponsor AmeriCorps members seeking experience in conservation; and we solicit input from local youth groups so we can better

design programs that speak to their interests. These and other examples are illustrated on pages 4 and 5 of this issue.

Seeing the look in the eye of a young visitor crouching on a bridge to watch fish in a stream, or hearing the sense of accomplishment in the voice of a Boy Scout as he describes his successful Eagle Project, leaves us with hope that we are making a vital connection with future generations of supporters and stewards.

And we know you share our hope for the future. We were astounded by your support of our Imagine 2050 Gala in March. It's clear that you, too, want to inspire more people to protect nature *forever*. We're looking forward to carrying on this work together, and enjoying all the new places and people we'll meet along the way.



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### Looking for Something to Do?

The Trail Maps page of the SVT website includes an interactive map with "pins" that help you find nearby trails. Click on a pin to learn the name and address of a property and also get a link to its trail map. [www.svtweb.org/maps](http://www.svtweb.org/maps)

### Sudbury Valley Trustees

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## Launching a Career

*Lisa Vernegaard, Executive Director*

In the summer of 1978, I was a junior in high school and raised my hand to join the Forest Service's Youth Conservation Corps. The gig sounded fun: I'd get to live at a ski "lodge" (a glamorous name for a dormitory) in the mountains of Utah, and I'd get to work outside.

That job changed my life. I dug ditches, I cleaned out latrines, I built picnic areas, and I planted trees on fire-scarred land. Most important, I deepened my passion for nature, and the crew leaders instilled in me an appreciation for the importance of stewardship that has stayed with me ever since. My career path was launched.

Many years later and thousands of miles away from the Wasatch National Forest, I celebrate that I get to be a part of SVT's efforts to connect young people to the work of caring for natural areas. Thanks to your support, SVT hosts AmeriCorps members, works with local scouts, and offers volunteer opportunities that help teenagers and young adults learn the ins and outs of land conservation.

Whether they clear a trail, pull invasive plants, or assist with outreach, it's my hope that these experiences will launch the next generation of stewards.

Who knows, maybe one of our recent AmeriCorps members or youth stewards will one day be penning this column. . .and inspiring another generation to stand up for nature!

Happy summer!

*Lisa*



### NATURE SIGHTINGS:

**Luna moth.** Favoring deciduous forests, the gorgeous coloration of the luna moth serves the species well, as it helps to camouflage itself amongst broad green leaves.

This image was shared by a member in Maynard, who wrote, "Last summer, a friend rescued several luna moth caterpillars she found floating on a lake and generously gave us two. They lived on our back porch, cozy in their brown cocoons, until today, when one of them emerged and knocked our socks off all afternoon. Now it has flown off for its short week-long life, when it will (hopefully) mate and lay eggs, and then it will die. Feeling gratitude for the beauty and joy this creature brought us and the lessons it has to teach."



Emily Schadler



## 119 More Acres Protected—and Growing!

Thanks to three projects that wrapped up in June, SVT and our partners have added 119 acres to the protected lands in our region. SVT now owns 91 reservations and holds 93 conservation restrictions (CRs). Plus, as July wound down, we were poised to protect an additional 51 acres. Thank you to everyone who donated to these projects and helped protect these beautiful lands.



**In Framingham**, SVT purchased the 19-acre **Chickatawbut Woods**, with support from the City of Framingham, a state grant, and many private donors. This beautiful property sits just north of Edmands Road and creates a link between two City-owned parcels. Together, these three lands connect to 500 additional acres of conserved land and are part of a lengthy trail network near the Framingham-Sudbury line.



**In Upton**, SVT raised funds to help Metacomet Land Trust purchase 25 acres of the **Kelly Property**, and the Town of Upton used Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to purchase the remaining 42 acres. The property—which hosts forests, wetlands, streams, rocky outcrops, and a stunning view—is being added to the adjacent **Peppercorn Hill Conservation Area**. SVT holds or co-holds CRs on all 67 acres.



Dany Pelletier

Just a few miles west of Chickatawbut, SVT joined the successful effort to protect the 33-acre **O'Donnell Property in Marlborough** and add it to the adjacent **Callahan State Park**. The Massachusetts Division of Conservation and Recreation purchased the land in June with \$1.25 million in state funds, a \$150,000 contribution from the City of Marlborough, and \$100,000 that SVT raised through private grants and crowdfunding. By protecting the property, we have ensured that the public will enjoy full access to the popular Beebe Pond Loop Trail that cuts across the land and connects two portions of the Callahan State Park trail system.



**In Acton**, the effort to protect 51-acre **Stonefield Farm**, which spans woods, wetlands, and farmland, was expected to close on July 30. Boston Area Gleaners (BAG), a nonprofit hunger relief organization, recently purchased the farm and agreed to sell an agricultural preservation restriction (APR) on it, valued at \$1.9 million. The Town contributed \$1.2 million in CPA funds, SVT and Acton Conservation Trust raised \$50,000, and foundation grants are providing the remainder. The Town and SVT will co-hold the APR to permanently protect the property as open space and agricultural land.



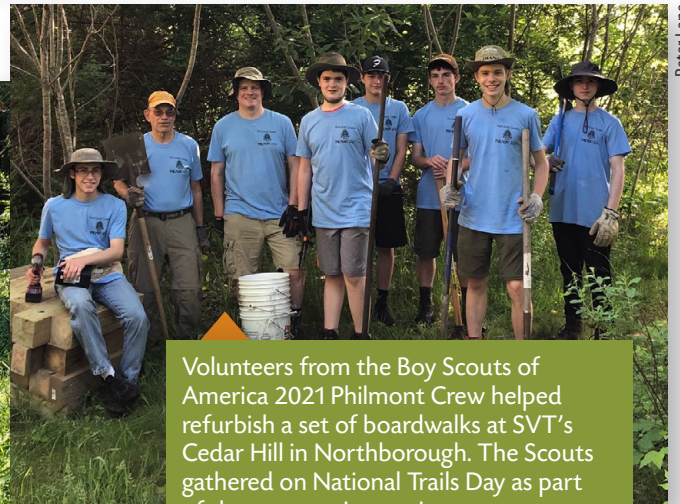
# LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE FUTURE

As SVT strives to protect thousands of additional acres by 2050, we must inspire a new generation to carry on the work of conservation. We enjoy helping teenagers and young adults learn how to care for natural areas and wildlife habitats, and we hope they will carry these lessons forward and remain committed to conservation, whatever career paths they choose.

## SCOUT PROJECTS

SVT offers many opportunities for Scouts who wish to support the region's natural areas.

Ben Dugan of Wayland, and a crew of his volunteers, built two sets of boardwalks at SVT's Greenways Conservation Area in Wayland on National Trails Day in June. Ben organized the work as part of his Eagle Scout project, which involved more than just hands-on carpentry. Ben led the effort to design the structures, acquire the necessary permit, raise funds, and recruit volunteers.



Volunteers from the Boy Scouts of America 2021 Philmont Crew helped refurbish a set of boardwalks at SVT's Cedar Hill in Northborough. The Scouts gathered on National Trails Day as part of the community service component of their upcoming trip to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

## SCHOOL CLEANUP DAYS

During Earth Week 2021, self-motivated students from Algonquin Regional and Westborough High volunteered to clean up some fields at SVT's Sawink Farm in Westborough. The work was spearheaded by a student-created and -led organization called Verity, which "aims to create opportunities for the community to find and contribute to the good that is being done here in Massachusetts. We aim to promote unity and dedication in improving our communities for the better."



Graduating seniors from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School often volunteer at SVT during their Senior Service Day. This year, SVT worked with 35 students who helped with trail maintenance and invasives management at properties in Sudbury. While providing much-needed assistance, they also learned about good stewardship practices.



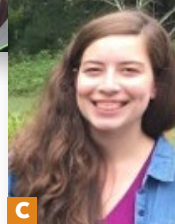
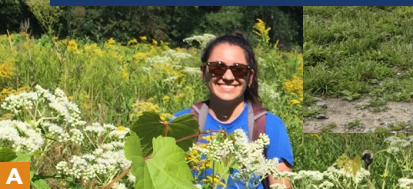


## AMERICORPS

SVT is a host site for the TerraCorps-AmeriCorps program that helps emerging environmental leaders gain invaluable experience before embarking on conservation careers. **A** Paige Dolce (far left), who helped establish a pollinator garden in Framingham as one of her many projects, is currently the Climate Resilience Coordinator at Mass Audubon. **B** Jesse Koyen served for two terms and worked on habitat restoration and citizen science; he is now the Director of Stewardship at Door County Land Trust in Wisconsin. **C** Matt Morris, who recently completed two terms of service in which he worked on habitat connectivity and also played a key role on the Native Pollinator Task Force of the Metrowest Conservation Alliance, is now a Land Steward with the Lakes Region Land Trust in New Hampshire.

## SUMMER ASSISTANTS

SVT regularly hires Summer Stewardship Assistants, who mow fields, maintain trails, and clear invasive plants—important work that serves as a building-block for a conservation career. **A** Kristin O'Brien worked as a Stewardship Assistant in 2017. Soon after, she joined SVT as our full-time Land Steward. **B** Baylor Ashe is our current Summer Field Assistant; he is also a student in natural resources conservation at UMass Amherst.



## INTERNSHIPS

SVT interns gain experience (and often school credit) while working in our office and on our properties. **A** While a student at Framingham State, Ivini Barbosa helped SVT with marketing and outreach. **B** High school student Robert Pease, who was interested in a career in forestry, developed and installed a series of interpretive trail markers at Wolbach Farm. **C** Michelle Duffy researched and marked property boundaries with our Stewardship staff; she later earned a master's degree in wildlife conservation.

## YOUTH STEWARDS

Our Volunteer Preserve Stewards are responsible for much of the maintenance of SVT trails. Tucker Reinhard is one of two high school students who volunteer as Preserve Stewards at Gray Reservation in Sudbury. "We're the next generation," said Tucker. "At some point, what happens in the world is going to come down to us. . . . We have to realize the importance of things like these trails and nature."



## YOUTH ENGAGING YOUTH

AmeriCorps Member Jonathan Haarstick laid the groundwork for an outreach program to help SVT engage more young adults and teenagers. Jonathan, who just wrapped up his term of service at SVT, reached out to high school environmental clubs and youth volunteers to learn what drives them to perform community service. SVT will use this information to better engage this group of emerging decision makers and leaders in our mission in the coming years.







## Teenager Making a Difference

Emily Pan is a rising senior at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, where she is also a member of the L-S Environmental Club. A dedicated SVT office volunteer, Emily resumed her duties as soon as the state of emergency ended in June.



When we asked Emily how she became interested in environmental issues, she replied, "Since I was young, I have wanted to do my part. I don't want my children and the future generation to grow up in a polluted environment."

True to her word, Emily is doing her part. Through her participation in the Environmental Club, she has worked on many projects, including a successful carpool initiative to reduce the horrible traffic students encounter before and after school each day. The traffic is not only inconvenient, but the idling cars waste a lot of gas and pollute the air.

Under the new plan, if at least two students from different households carpool, they will get a 50% discount off the cost of parking passes. Said Emily, "Even though it will probably start small, we hope the program expands as the years progress and carpooling will get as many cars off the road as possible."

For Earth Day 2021, Emily helped to coordinate a group cleanup day at an SVT trail. "We got club members and other students who were eager to help our community, and we picked up trash at the Memorial Forest Desert Loop," she explained. "Everyone who participated agreed it was a fun and rewarding way to help the environment, get away from a screen, and enjoy nature."

We thank Emily for her commitment to the environment, and we are confident she will continue to stand up for nature in the years ahead. As she said, "I truly believe that our environment is the biggest issue the Earth is currently facing and it is important to fight for a better future."

## Find Volunteer Opportunities

If you would like to help take care of a local natural area, check out [NatureGroupie.org](http://NatureGroupie.org), a website that lists outdoor volunteer opportunities throughout New England.

SVT is one of more than 200 organizations that post volunteer projects on Nature Groupie. You can search for opportunities based on location or topic and immediately register to help out.

In the fall, SVT will be seeking volunteers to help with invasive plant removal; we'll post these projects on our website as well as on Nature Groupie.

Plus, we always welcome volunteers to join our Weed Warrior program. We'll train you to identify invasive plants and certify you to visit our properties to fight invasives on your own schedule. [www.svtweb.org/WeedWarriors](http://www.svtweb.org/WeedWarriors).



In June, several SVT volunteers and Summer Field Assistant Baylor Ashe removed glossy buckthorn from our Gowing's Swamp Reservation in Concord.

## Voice of the Volunteer

*For the past two years, Kevin McLaughlin has been a Preserve Steward at SVT's Sawink Farm Reservation in Westborough, where he maintains the hiking trails and fights invasive plants. We asked him to explain why this work is important.*



Too many people never consider the work that goes into conservation. People are very unaware of the effort it takes to keep trails clear, and keep invasive species at bay . . . and hey, that's ok! That's what Preserve Stewards are for! I believe it is a Preserve Steward's job to protect the natural world of a property so people can access and enjoy it.

The model SVT is built on is the most effective way to make an impact on the natural world on a large scale. By having a network of passionate volunteers, SVT is able to combat invasive species by pulling them in large numbers. Plus, the organization is a great way to meet people from all walks of life. You never know who you are going to meet!





Wild lupine: Ginny Hutchison

## Wild Lupine Restoration Showing Signs of Success!

Volunteers Nan Burke and Don Burn are helping SVT and our partners rejuvenate wild lupine plants at the Desert Natural Area in Sudbury and Marlborough, which includes SVT's Memorial Forest. Wild lupine is a native, yet uncommon, plant that provides food for pollinators and birds. Unfortunately, the sole population of plants at the Desert is threatened by the imminent construction of an Eversource underground utility line.

In Summer 2020, Nan collected seeds from those plants to store over the winter. This past April, she and Don planted the seeds at two new locations in Memorial Forest, and by May 1, they spotted seedlings during a regular watering visit! In June, Nan and Don collected another batch of seeds from the original site (pictured) for planting in spring 2022.

Nan tells us that wild lupine plants don't bloom until their second or third year, so we are eagerly watching the growth of the seedlings and hope to see their beautiful blooms next year. Stay tuned.

## Take a Hike: Memorial Forest and the Desert Natural Area



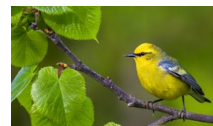
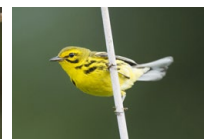
SVT's largest reservation, the General Federation of Women's Clubs of Massachusetts Memorial Forest in Sudbury, is also part of one of the largest blocks of conservation land in our region. Stretching into Marlborough and Hudson, the remarkable Desert Natural Area spans 900 acres of open space. It hosts a lengthy trail network and a globally rare habitat—pitch pine-scrub oak barrens—that supports a suite of rare and declining species of plants, insects, turtles, and birds.

The trail network provides an up-close look at these special areas and the cold-water streams that flow through them. If you bring your pet, please also bring a leash. This past spring, the managers of the "Desert" lands established a dog-leashing policy to protect their waterways, plants, and wildlife.

Learn more about the special habitat and these rules at [www.svtweb.org/desert](http://www.svtweb.org/desert), and download a map at [www.svtweb.org/memorialforest](http://www.svtweb.org/memorialforest).



On June 8, volunteer Laura Lane helped out with a bird survey at our Cedar Hill Reservation in Northborough, where we maintain a shrub habitat that supports numerous species. Highlights included sightings of indigo buntings, blue-winged warblers, prairie warblers, and eastern towhees, all of which are focal species for our habitat work. We also heard black-and-white warblers, American redstart, and many veeries!



Clockwise from top left: Indigo bunting, prairie warbler, eastern towhee, and blue-winged warbler. We focused our restoration efforts at Cedar Hill on improving habitat for species such as these.





THE  
WREN

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## *Save the Date!*

### Annual Meeting Planned for September 26

SVT invites our members to join us  
in person for our 2021 Annual Meeting.

**Sunday, September 26**  
**4:00 to 6:00 p.m.**  
**Wolbach Farm, Sudbury**

Highlights will include the presentation of our  
**Annual Conservation Awards** and a recap of our  
**conservation successes** from the past year. Despite  
the pandemic, it has been a busy year for SVT!

Look for more details in our Fall Program Calendar (coming in late August), and in our September Monthly E-News.

**RSVP:** [www.svtweb.org/AM2021](http://www.svtweb.org/AM2021)



During SVT's 2019 Annual Meeting, the recipients of our Annual Conservation Awards posed for this group photo. We are thrilled to be able to gather in person again this year, after holding the 2020 meeting as a virtual event.

Dany Pelletier