

Nashoba Conservation Trust Summer 2019 News

Conservation Corner

Ken Hartlage

Early one evening I was walking in Nissitissit Meadow when I heard the unmistakable high-pitched whine of a mosquito near my head. Just as I reflexively started to reach up and swat it away, I heard another sound, a lower-pitched buzz coming toward me at considerable speed. Suddenly, and just as quickly, the buzzing sound was moving away, and the high-pitched whine was gone. I had just been saved from a mosquito bite by a dragonfly.



If you've spent any time outdoors this summer, you have probably noticed them swarming by the dozens in the fields or zipping back and forth along the shore of a pond, lake, or river in seemingly random patterns. But, according to fellow NCT Board Director and dragonfly expert Michael Veit, there is a method to this apparent madness: they are likely either hunting for food or defending their breeding territories.

Mosquitos are a favorite meal of adult dragonflies, reportedly eating over 100 per day. But it's not just adults that gobble them up; dragonfly nymphs, which live underwater for up to two years depending on the species, eat mosquito larvae as well. Deerflies and flying ants are also on the dragonfly menu, so you would not be wrong to think of dragonflies as nature's pest control. Of course, dragonflies are not just predators, they are also prey for fish, birds and frogs to name a few – in other words, they are an important part of the food chain.

As you might expect, a healthy population of dragonflies is directly related to the abundance and health of our ponds and rivers. The Xerces Society, the non-profit dedicated to the conservation of invertebrates and their habitats, notes that the destruction and degradation of aquatic habitats, as well as pollutants and introduced species, are leading factors in the loss and imperilment of dragonflies. Although Massachusetts and Pepperell have buffer zones that limit and prohibit certain activities closer to rivers, streams and wetlands, we can all do our part to protect dragonflies by limiting or eliminating the use of pesticides and herbicides on our lawns.

NCT continues development of Seminatore Woods

Paul Peavey

As many of you are aware, NCT launched activity last year to create a 2 acre Pollinator Meadow on the Seminatore property. The meadow project is a multiyear endeavor and we want to ensure there is access when it is ready for the public. Seminatore Woods is a primarily wooded parcel which has a few old trails that are not really suited to show off the beauty of the area, or provide access to the area where the meadow is located. The first trail was cleared over the past two months and provides access to the meadow.

Michael Veit, NCT Board member and project manager for the meadow project, is leading the effort to develop the trails. The initial trail provides access from the Pond Circle entrance. The trail is approximately .5 miles long and winds through beautiful mixed species forest. Two bridges were built to traverse and protect wetland areas along the way by updating antiquated crossings that could impact stream flow. Seminatore Woods comprises a total of 42 acres donated to NCT in part by John Seminatore in 2009 and by Al Patenaude in 2003.



A view of the large Pines along the trail in Seminatore woods.



NCT's intrepid Rob Rand putting the finishing touches on one of the bridges on the new trail. That used to be white shirt.

Independence Day Parade

Pat Peavey

Another year of scorching July temperatures did not deter NCT marchers from stepping up and out at the 4th of July parade. Led by Shane McDermott, 9, who dressed as a colonial drummer, along with his dad, Sean, they enthusiastically set the pace for the group. They were followed by a swarm of bees carrying signs such as “Save the Bees” and “No Bees, No Food.” Intermingled with Mother Nature (Sarah Strait) were the rest of the group dressed as butterflies, ladybugs and flowers. Many compliments were received on the costumes, signs and overall theme from people along the parade route. Maegan Carrasquillo and butterfly, Esme, remarked “This is our second year marching in the parade. We love getting to dress up and it’s something we look forward to each year...We just hope next year is a bit cooler!”



A Swarm Of Friendly Bees: Ken Hartlage, Andrea Frase, Paul Peavey, Jane and Albert Capabianco and Chris Boeing



Diana Blauvelt, Holly Connolly and Sara Strait



“It was a blast! I had so much fun! I can’t wait until next year’s parade.” Shane McDermott



NCT 4th of July Marchers

Upcoming Events

Ice Cream Social

Another year of scorching July temperatures did not deter NCT marchers from stepping up and out at the 4th of July parade. Led by Shane McDermott, 9, who dressed as a colonial drummer, along with his dad, Sean, they enthusiastically set the pace for the group. They were followed by a swarm of bees carrying signs such as “Save the Bees” and “No Bees, No Food.” Intermingled with Mother Nature (Sarah Strait) were the rest of the group dressed as butterflies, ladybugs and flowers. Many compliments were received on the costumes, signs and overall theme from people along the parade route. Maegan Carrasquillo and butterfly, Esme, remarked “This is our second year marching in the parade. We love getting to dress up and it’s something we look forward to each year...We just hope next year is a bit cooler!”

If you haven’t attended one of these concerts, the last one for this year will be Tuesday, August 13th at 6:30. It is such a wonderful small town event that brings everyone together, thanks to PBA.



Pat Swain Natural History Walks Schedule

There are still two more natural history walks with Pat Swain Rice scheduled for this year:

September 22, 2019: Keyes Parker
October 6, 2019: Blood Brook Ravine from Jewett Street

For more information on these walks please visit the Nashoba Conservation Trust website at nashobatrust.org

Walks are 10:00 a.m. - noon, rain or shine



Pepperell Fall Festival

Saturday September 14, 2019
(rain date: Sunday September 15, 2019)

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Thank You!

Special thanks to all the people who donated items for us to sell at the Town Wide Yard Sale on the Town Field Saturday, May 4th. We brought in \$557 for NCT! This would not have been possible if not for my group of negotiators: Sara Butturini, Kathie and Dave Strait, Sarah Strait, Meagan Carrasquillo, Gerry Kempfske and Paul Peavey!

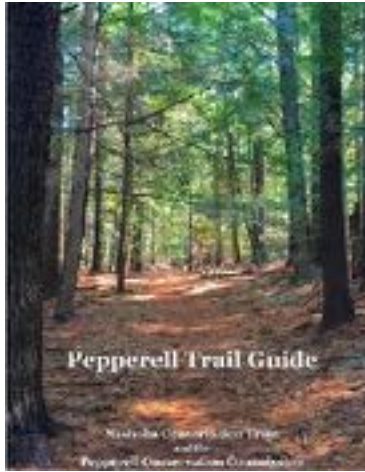
NCT has a brand new blog!

Check out our new blog at www.nashobatrust.org/blog/ where you'll find all the latest news and information on NCT initiatives and activities. At the bottom of each blog post you'll find a place where you can leave your comments, suggestions and feedback. You can get NCT blog posts delivered directly to your inbox so you never miss an update - just put your email address in the subscribe box that you'll find on the upper right hand corner of the blog and you'll never miss a blog post.

You'll also find a link directly to the blog on the NCT website in the upper right hand corner.

Pepperell Trail Guide

The Pepperell Trail Guide describes sixteen conservation area and almost 20 miles of trails, some of which pass through or alongside some of Pepperell's most stunning natural areas, including the Nashua and Nissitissit Rivers, Heald Pond and Gulf Brook Ravine. Visit the NCT website at www.nashobatrust.org to download a copy.



Support NCT with your donations

The NCT offers the following levels of membership:
Individual - \$35
Family - \$50
Sponsor - \$100
Patron - \$250
Benefactor - \$1000

All memberships include subscription to the NCT Quarterly Newsletter. Visit the website at nashobatrust.org to donate or mail your check to:

Nashoba Conservation Trust
PO Box 188
Pepperell, MA 01463

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NCT Gear

Our new website makes it easier than ever to order NCT tshirts and window decals. Visit the NCT website at nashobatrust.org and get an NCT tshirt or window decal delivered right to your mailbox!

