



# The Warren Conservator

Summer 2020

**WARREN  
LAND TRUST**



## Important Safety Tips to Stay Safe Outdoors during the Covid-19 Pandemic

(Thanks to CT Forest & Parks  
for these helpful tips.)

- Use appropriate social distancing by staying at least 6 feet from others (when you are passing someone on a trail, make sure to yield and allow for plenty of space);
- Go outdoors as a solitary activity or in a very small group (and if you get to a place that is already crowded, find another place to go);
- Keep your germs to yourself (cough or sneeze into your sleeve, wear a mask for extra protection for yourself and others, and if you are not feeling well, stay at home);
- Be careful about what you touch (and don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth);
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as often as possible (at least before and after you go outdoors);
- "Go before you go" and limit the length of your trip (since restroom facilities are closed); and
- Take out what you take in (this is always good to do, but especially important now since you put others in jeopardy if you leave infected trash behind).

## President's Letter



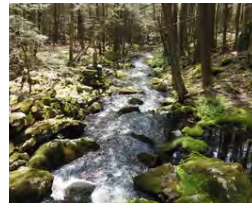
Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I hope that you and yours are healthy and hanging in there during these unprecedented and challenging times. And I hope that Warren's great outdoors is providing as much peace of mind as physical activity.



Town clean up

Restrictions on public gatherings in the era of COVID-19 have led us to cancel our spring and summer events. Fortunately, however, much of what we had planned for this spring and summer can still be enjoyed on a do-it-yourself, socially distanced basis. Read on to learn how!



Scenic stream on  
The Mattatuck Trail

Many thanks to those who joined us to celebrate **Earth Day's 50th Anniversary** and #WalkWithPurpose for our DIY Town Clean-Up. Thanks to you, Warren's roadsides got a great Spring cleaning! But litterbugs only multiply as the weather gets warmer, so please continue to stuff a trash bag in your pocket as you head out for your walk, and make good use of it. If you come across items too heavy or unwieldy to pick up on your own, email us at [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org), and we will see if we can dispose of it. And look for news of our Eel Pond Preserve viewing platform "open house" with WLT Director and experienced naturalist Roberta "BK" Stafford sometime this Fall.

Our **CT Trails Day** hike, originally scheduled for June 6, also looked different this year. We'd been planning an epic "**Warren Mattatuck Trail Trek**" - either all 7-or-so miles from Flat Rocks Road near Cornwall Bridge to Valley Road near Washington...or stop about halfway through after lunch and WLT trail cookies at the Hardscrabble Road entrance. Obviously, we couldn't host that guided group event this year. But instead, suddenly, #EveryDaysTrailsDay - take on our Trails Day hike as a DIY adventure! See [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org) for more information and a preview video (we may even have to post the cookie recipe), and check out the CT Forest & Park Association's website [www.ctwoodlands.org](http://www.ctwoodlands.org) for information about CT Trails Day Hikes state-wide, as well as an interactive map of the Mattatuck Trail.

The **Angevine Farm Trail Half Marathon**, scheduled for July 5 and run partly on our Coords Preserve, was cancelled. But Steep Endurance, who organized that event in conjunction with Angevine Farm, has pivoted to create some great virtual challenges for you avid trail runners. For example, how about the **Hearts Around CT Virtual Challenge?** Run the equivalent of the CT border - around 500K, or 310 miles, to be exact. That's 3.4 miles a day on average, and you have all summer to do it! A portion of proceeds will benefit the CT Food Bank. And as it just so happens, we have some great trails here in Warren to run on! For more information, see [www.steependurance.com](http://www.steependurance.com).



Stay tuned for updates on Fall events. We care about the health and safety of our community. Even if our events are canceled, the beauty, peace, and serenity of our preserves are there for your enjoyment.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca*

## Get Away From It All...Right Here In Warren!

In these troubled times, wondering where to go for a social-distancing hike or quiet outdoor moment? There are great options right here in Warren. From peaceful and easy to wilder and more challenging, enjoy the great outdoors without leaving your neighborhood! See below and check out [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org) for more details on our preserves and trails. Email [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org) with questions. Please exercise social-distancing trail etiquette and leave only footprints.



Left: Viewing Platform at the Eel Pond Preserve  
Right: View of the Eel Pond Preserve

**WLT Eel Pond Preserve:** Just west of the center of town on Kent Road, our wheelchair-accessible viewing platform allows you to take in waterfowl and other wildlife at this scenic wetland preserve. The perfect spot for a quiet, contemplative coffee break (please take your trash with you). *Continued on page 4*

## Trail Maintenance Tips

We love our trails, but it takes work to keep them clear and enjoyable. You don't have to be an experienced trail crew member with a big pack and a chain saw to help keep our trails maintained and tidy. Here are some tips and tricks on how to help out on our preserves when you're out on a hike:

### Get Dirty

After snowmelt or wet spells, those muddy or waterlogged trails can prove hard to travel – but sometimes getting a little muddy can be half the fun! Come prepared with shoes appropriate for the trail conditions, and then be sure you're walking through any water or mud, not around. This helps preserve the plants on the side of the trails, and helps maintain the trail's integrity for drier times to come.

### Clear the Path

Coming in after a storm or adverse weather? Is the path clear, but littered with branches and other debris? Help us keep the trail clear by setting twigs and branches that you can safely move off to the side of the trail. For natural obstacles that are too big to safely move, make sure you stay on the trail by going over, under, or through them, rather than going off trail to avoid them.

Tired of seeing trash along your favorite trails? Turn collecting trash with friends and youngsters into a game! Bring a small trash bag along on your hike, and give yourself a point for every piece of trash you pick up. Play competitively, and see who's collected the most trash by the end of the hike. Wager a snack or a pint to make the game more interesting!

### Each of these actions helps out WLT trail crews, so they can focus on larger projects – and making new trails!

Even the best trails deteriorate a little over time, but routine maintenance can keep them in top shape -- and limit the amount of time and resources we'll need to dedicate to them. A well-maintained trail is also a much safer trail. So, we establish a monitoring and maintenance plan, and educate our community to spot problems early.

## Warren Land Trust Board Members

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### Ex Officio Board Member

Tim Angevine

## Warren Land Trust Mission Statement

The Warren Land Trust is a conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the rural character of Warren. Its mission is to preserve farmland, open space, natural and endangered resources such as wetlands, forests and wildlife habitats, to encourage outright gifting of land for permanent protection and the use of conservation easements to preserve open space.

### Common trail problems

- Widening – the width of the trail increases, scarring the landscape.
- Short Cuts – short, side trails develop that are often steep and prone to erosion.
- Tripping Hazards - tree roots and rocks become exposed.
- Deep Trenching – the tread wears down creating a trench.
- Wet spots – swampy or muddy patches form.

### Whenever you walk your trails, look for:

- Missing, damaged or unclear trail markers
- Indications of trespassers that can include trash, graffiti, fire rings or ATV tracks
- Bridges, boardwalks, or steps that might need repairs
- Large branches or trees that would need to be cleared with special equipment like a chain saw
- Areas that might need improvement due to soil erosion or water pooling up

Mark down the location of these issues, and then contact us at [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org) to let us know what you've discovered.

The WLT currently holds over 750 acres under permanent protection.

## IF YOU AREN'T A MEMBER OF THE WARREN LAND TRUST, WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN NOW!!

Becoming a Member of The Warren Land Trust is easy. Simply cut off this page and send it to our mailing address below, along with your check. We will send you a receipt along with our thanks for your generous, 100% tax deductible contribution. Please include your name, address and email so that we may include you in our email updates. Choose the type of membership you would like:

<input type="checkbox"/> Land Guardian	\$5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Caretaker	\$ 300
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Grantor	\$2,500	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Protector	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Steward	\$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership	\$ 25
<input type="checkbox"/> Land Conservator	\$ 500	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$ _____

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.

MAIL THIS FORM AND CHECK TO: The Warren Land Trust, Inc.

50 Cemetery Road, Warren, CT 06754

To join or donate online, visit [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org)

Please make any necessary corrections to your name and address on the mailing panel and submit to the WLT.

## Give Local 2020 Raises Funds for Information Kiosks

We all know that economic uncertainty and hardship have been among the consequences of the response to COVID-19. So when we at the Warren Land Trust opted to go ahead and participate in the Connecticut Community Foundation's Give Local 2020 online fundraising campaign, our expectations were modest indeed. Much to our surprise and immense gratitude, your support was more generous than ever! After adding in bonus funds received from the CT Community Foundation, we raised over \$7000 – a new campaign record for us.

Funds will be channeled immediately into a project that will benefit our donors and the community at large: we will use them to install information kiosks at our preserve trail-heads and at the Eel Pond viewing platform. Kiosks will feature trail maps, information about the preserves' history and its flora and fauna, and the latest Warren Land Trust news and events. At a time when people are seeking to be out in nature more than ever, we look forward to making your visit to the Strong, Eel Pond, Coords, Maier, and Tanner Preserves even more enjoyable. We truly appreciate your support!



WARREN LAND TRUST PRESERVE KIOSK SPRING 2020



**A Reminder About Invasive Plants in Warren**

We live in a beautiful town. Warren is surrounded by forests, fields and wetlands...but take a walk anywhere in our town and you will see the scourge of invasive plants. These aggressive plants are growing in areas where in years past we would have seen native flowering shrubs and wildflowers. They have taken over our roadways and crept into our forests and wetlands.

So what, you might ask? Why should we care about an invasion of non-native plants? The problem is that invasive plants have different flowering and fruiting times and growth cycles that do not support our native pollinators. Without native flowering plants our populations of pollinators - birds, bees, butterflies, other insects and animals - will continue their steep decline. Without native plants there is little food for these species, and eventually for us! There has been a recent surge of interest in pollinator gardens and pathways to combat declines in pollinators but we must also battle with their competition: invasives. The first step is to be able to identify these plants...then decide what to do about them.

The Connecticut Native Plant Council lists ninety-seven invasive plants that travel across our state [https://cipwg.uconn.edu/invasive\\_plant\\_list/](https://cipwg.uconn.edu/invasive_plant_list/). In the past our town and some community groups have made substantial efforts to reduce the spread of some of these plants, but it takes constant effort. If we look at our properties and common areas and each of us remove a few of these offenders, we can make a dent in this problem. The Warren Land Trust has begun to track invasive plants on our preserves in this way.



**Japanese Barberry**

*Berberis thunbergii*

**Common barberry**

*Berberis vulgaris*

Barberry harbors deer ticks which carry Lyme disease.

Warren is filled with experienced gardeners, land stewards and agriculturists who probably know many of these plants. For those new to plant identification, below are some excellent resources.

**A Few Recommended Resources:**

Photos of invasives and information <https://cipwg.uconn.edu/>

**On replacing invasives:**

*Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants*  
Brooklyn Botanical Garden.

**Current thoughts on conservation close to home:**

*Nature's Best Hope*, Douglas W. Tallamy

Linda Levin  
lindarebecca@lewin@gmail.com



**Oriental Bittersweet**

*Celastrus orbiculatus*

Strangles trees.



**Garlic Mustard**

*Alliaria petiolata*

Smothers forest floor eliminating native ground cover.



**Multiflora Rose**

*Rosa multiflora*

Chokes out native shrubs.



**Winged Euonymus**

*Euonymus alatus*

Easily identifiable and incredibly invasive.



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50 Cemetery Road  
Warren, CT 06754

Email: [info@warrenlandtrust.org](mailto:info@warrenlandtrust.org)

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## WLT Fall 2020 Events

The following fall events remain on our calendar for the time being, but are subject to change due to public health concerns around Covid-19. Please check our website [www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org) for updates.

- 9/12 Housatonic Heritage Walk
- 10/10-10/11 Warren Fall Festival
- 10/26 Cider Run 5K
- 11/21 Annual Meeting and Program
- 12/5 Holiday on the Hill

As events approach, check our website for the most up-to-date information

[www.warrenlandtrust.org](http://www.warrenlandtrust.org)

*Continued from page 1*

**Dorothy Maier Preserve:** Named after one of the Warren Land Trust's founding members and longtime president, the Dorothy Maier Preserve trail was recently expanded. The 1.5-mile loop, located near the Warren School on Sackett Hill Road, features moderate terrain with attractive seasonal water bodies and a beautiful stand of mountain laurel at the summit of the trail. Look for the old saw embedded in the tree on the way down!

**WLT Strong Preserve:** This trail is an easy-to-moderate 1-mile loop on land donated by the Strong Family. There is a chimney ruin off the trail on the property, and nearby is Above All State Park - the (undeveloped and not maintained) site of a Cold War military radar installation.

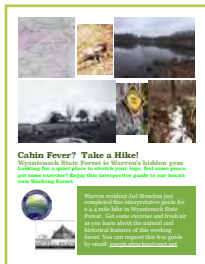
**WLT Coords Preserve:** This preserve off of Angevine Road was part of the former City Hill Road. The trail connects to Wyantenock State Forest trails and the blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail (see below for more info on both of these). Natural features include a wild grape arbor, beaver ponds, and (in season) abundant trailside wildflowers. There are former homesites off the trails. NB, some areas can be wet.



L: Hiking the Dorothy Maier Preserve is fun in any kind of weather!  
R: Stream and pool on the new Dorothy Maier Preserve trail extension



L: Chimney ruin on the Strong Preserve  
R: Trailhead at the Strong Preserve



**Cabin Fever? Take a Hike!**  
Wyantenock State Forest in Waterbury includes some of the best places to stretch your legs. Get some exercise! Help this interpretive guide to our scenic state hiking areas.

And for more great hiking and exploring in Warren, check out these two options. They are not Warren Land Trust properties (although they do abut them), but we think you'll find them of interest!

**Wyantenock State Forest:** For information, visit trail [https://www.stateparks.com/wyantenock\\_state\\_forest\\_in\\_connecticut.html](https://www.stateparks.com/wyantenock_state_forest_in_connecticut.html). To learn about a terrific self-guided hike, contact Jed Struckus at [Joseph.struckus@snet.net](mailto:Joseph.struckus@snet.net) and tell him WLT sent you!

**The Blue-blazed Mattatuck Trail:** Maintained by the CT Forest & Park Association, the Warren branch of the Mattatuck Trail traverses WLT land, state forest, and Shepaug Reservoir property held by the City of Waterbury. It's scenic, historic, and you can hike for miles to your heart's content! For more information, visit <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/blue-blazed-hiking-trails/mattatuck->

Top: Jed Struckus' guide to Wyantenock State Forest Hikes  
Bottom: Mattatuck Trail marker



L: Beaver pond on the Coords Preserve  
R: Lady's Slipper on the Coords Preserve

