

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help The Land

www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov

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Connecticut

January 2012

From the State Conservationist ...



Jay T. Mar

Conservation Accomplishments

Looking back at 2011, I could not be more proud of what the USDA family and the Connecticut Conservation Partnership has accomplished.

Through the effective delivery of the Farm Bill, \$21 million of financial and technical assistance was provided to the state to protect natural resources, promote sustainable farming practices, and protect the state's agricultural heritage utilizing programs such as EQIP, WHIP, AMA, CSP, FRPP, WRP, and GRP. Through EWP, over \$1.1 million in emergency assistance was provided for emergency damage caused by Hurricane Irene.

To ensure accountability and improve efficiency, a statewide electronic format (called electronic review) has been created. Through this technology and support protocols program payments, contract applications, and contract modifications are now being processed faster while additional protocols and procedures have been implemented to ensure accountability for conservation dollars invested.

Through our public outreach initiative monthly newsletters, websites, bulk mail, brochures, publications, and public meetings were revitalized and improved to make sure word gets out about available conservation opportunities, how to apply, and the innovative ways producers have been utilizing programs to improve the natural resources of Connecticut. A Marketing Committee was established to gain creative input and implement new ideas to get the conservation message out, including using social media strategies such as YouTube to reach a broader public audience.

We introduced six new conservation practices this year to address energy conservation and water quality, and invasive species control in aquaculture. We also successfully piloted mobile computing – conservation planning performed in the field using computers to download and print maps and support information such as cost tables, engineering designs, and program contracting tools. All of this can be done prior to leaving a farm.

Twelve Conservation Partnership agreements were entered into which ensure a cooperating approach among the members to effectively deliver conservation programs, provide public outreach and training, and plan and implement conservation practices throughout 2012 and beyond.

These were just a few high points of our many achievements in 2011. Stay tuned ... 2012 will be even better!

Jay

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



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

Soil Science Comes to the Forefront at an Elementary School Career Day Event

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018

NRCS Soil Scientist Marissa Theve recently brought a not-often-seen career choice to students at the Mohegan Elementary School. It happened at the school's 5th Grade Career Day Event, held in Uncasville recently.

Presenters explained to about 50 students what is required to get into their respective fields and the general concepts behind their careers. Students rotated in small groups to each presenter for a brief talk followed by questions. Besides Theve, other

presenters included Chef Keith Caron, Hairstylist Missy Knowlton, Photographer Katie Kowal, and Coast Guard Commander Nunes.



(l to r) Chef Caron, Missy Knowlton, Marissa Theve, Katie Kowal, Commander Nunes.

The event was a highlight to a larger library science project in which students are expected to choose a career to research. Aspects include schooling/training requirements and costs, expected pay levels following graduation, and the predicted job demand. The project will culminate in a PowerPoint presentation on how each student will achieve their dream job. The experience will no doubt better prepare students for decision making down the road when they begin thinking about college and other further education prospects.

According to the school's library staff and program coordinator's Brenda Hankard and Susan Theve, many students have switched career topics since the beginning of the assignment after becoming aware of additional career paths that are not very obvious to children in the 5th grade. Not only is this experience helping students to expand their ability to carry out research, they are also becoming more aware of the world in which they live. For NRCS, this is a perfect chance to begin more extensive outreach – especially within underrepresented demographics. Hopefully, introducing young people in Connecticut to the idea of a career in the sciences will help to foster interest in future NRCS Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP) and Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) opportunities.

More Emergency Work in Bristol

Contact Dan DePietro 860.871.4059 or Mike Rosado 860.871.4024

Additional Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) sites that were the result of Hurricane Irene have been identified in Bristol, and agreements made for assistance. The two projects were identified as exigencies due to the severe erosion and potential future loss of life and/or property. The first is located at Memorial Boulevard and Downs Street, the second on Broad Street. Both sites, located adjacent to the Pequabuck River, require stream bank restoration, sediment removal, and debris removal. Because these projects are exigencies, the time period for completion is very short (typically 10 days).

NRCS provided the project design, as well as shared inspection coverage with the City of Bristol. Civil Engineer Dan DePietro and Construction Specialist Mike Rosado oversaw the projects from start to finish. These before and after photos tell the success story ...

MEMORIAL BOULEVARD AND DOWNS STREET



BEFORE



AFTER

BROAD STREET



BEFORE



AFTER

NRCS Provides Assistance to Conservation Academy

Contact Margie Faber 860.871.4040

University of Connecticut | Department of Natural Resources and the Environment
Natural Resources Conservation Academy

Home • For Students • For Teachers • For Community Partners • For Parents • Contact Us

Natural Resources Conservation
Academy | About | Field Experience | Community Project | Schedule | Apply | FAQs

About the Academy

The Natural Resources Conservation (NRC) Academy is a new program in conservation and land use planning targeted toward Connecticut high school students. Students participating in the NRC Academy will be educated in a wide range of topics related to natural resources and the environment, including units on climate, water, wetlands, wildlife, landscape ecology

For Students

For Teachers

For Community Partners

For Parents

Who Should Apply?

Junior and Sophomore High School students in Connecticut.

How Do I Apply?

Contact

Charlotte Rand
Program Coordinator
Department of Natural Resources and the Environment

1376 Storrs Rd., Unit 4087
Storrs, CT 06269-4087

Phone:
860-486-4917

Fax:
860-486-5408

Internet

The December newsletter contained an article about the new Natural Resources Conservation Academy at the University of Connecticut (an exciting new summer program for high school students).

Acting State Soil Scientist Margie Faber has been on the Academy's Steering Committee for the past year and will be leading the soils activities next summer.

Faber says the hope is that this opportunity will provide 20 high school sophomores and juniors from various parts of the state with diverse and varied environmental experiences. Students may be Envirothon veterans or kids who have barely been outdoors in a natural setting before.

Should you want additional information, Faber says she has some copies of the program brochure available (and can get more if needed).

Please feel free to either contact Margie with questions, or visit the Academy's website at www.nrca.uconn.edu/.

Employees Attend Civil Rights/ Cultural Resources Training

Contact Charlotte Pyle 860.871.4066

Connecticut NRCS employees met at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in December for a day of Civil Rights/Cultural Resources training. Technical talks in the morning were followed by museum tours in the afternoon.

Using historical pictures and the words of witnesses where available, Leah Hopkins, Renee Guerra, and Candyce Testa presented slide-talks on the lives of three women, providing a framework to outline the history of Native Americans in southern New England after the arrival of Europeans. Weetamoo, a Pocasset Wampanoag, was raised to be a sachem and was an influential leader whose life ended in 1676 during King Phillip's War. Hannah Ocuish, child of a Pequot woman, was hanged at the age of 12, in 1786, following a likely coerced confession. Writings from the time period portray the way in which Indians and people of mixed ancestry were viewed. Martha "Matt" Langevin, who taught many people during her lifetime, also was instrumental as one of three elderly women holding onto Pequot traditions on the tribal land during the 1960s when the State of Connecticut was thinking about turning the reservation into a state park.

Pequot Archaeologist, Dr. Kevin McBride, gave a different view of Native American history looking at how modern archaeological techniques tell us about ways Pequot people interacted with the land (what they ate and where they lived) both pre- and post-European arrival.

During the afternoon, Museum Tour Guide Fran Plotnick modified her tour (normally for school children) to encompass the natural resource interests of her adult audience. The tour covered both historical and current components of Pequot lives. The program concluded with the traveling Smithsonian Exhibition titled, *IndiVisible: African-Native American Lives in the Americas*, introduced by Denise Page.

It was an information-packed day. The mixture of Connecticut cultural resources and the ways and lives of people of different races have intertwined in defining the history of Native Americans in Connecticut (and elsewhere) offered many different take-home messages.



State Conservationist Jay Mar presents a copy of the 2011 NRCS American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month poster to Kimberly Hatcher-White, Director of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, and Kathleen Knowles, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and tribal elder, of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

February is Black History Month

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018

When Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926, he realized the importance of providing a theme to focus the attention of the public. The intention has never been to dictate or limit the exploration of the Black experience, but to bring to the public's attention important developments that merit emphasis.

For those interested in the study of identity and ideology, an exploration of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) Black History themes is itself instructive. Over the years, the themes reflect changes in how people of African descent in the United States have viewed themselves, the influence of social movements on racial ideologies, and the aspirations of the black community.

Changes notwithstanding, the list reveals an overarching continuity in ASALH--our dedication to exploring historical issues of importance to people of African descent and race relations in America.

--Daryl Michael Scott, Howard University

2012 National Black History Theme: Black Women in American Culture and History



Future Themes

- 2012 Black Women in American Culture and History
- 2013 The 150th Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. We also commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington
- 2014 The Golden Jubilee of the Civil Rights Act
- 2015 A Century of Black Life, History and Culture

News From the Partners ...



Commissioner of Agriculture Announces Pilot Program for Community Farms Preservation –

*\$2 million allocated for cooperative state/
municipal farmland preservation projects*

Connecticut Agriculture Commissioner Steven Reviczky recently announced \$2 million in funding for farmland preservation through the Department of Agriculture's new Community Farms Preservation Program. The pilot program, authorized by Connecticut General Statutes 22-26nn, allocates Community Investment Act funds for cooperative state-local farmland preservation projects in qualifying municipalities.

Reviczky explained that the purpose of the program is to encourage locally supported farmland preservation. "One of the most exciting aspects of this is it's an especially good fit for smaller farms that have excellent agricultural soils and contribute to local economic activity, but which may not be eligible for other protection programs. Now we are able to provide an opportunity for them to ensure their land is not converted to non-agricultural uses and for Connecticut to ensure its best agricultural soils remain available for production."

The program will be implemented in two phases: prequalification and application/evaluation. During prequalification, interested municipalities must complete the following steps by May 31, 2012:

1. Recognize farmland preservation in the plan of conservation and development or interim town plan for local farmland preservation
2. Establish an agricultural commission and/or program for farmland preservation
3. Inventory its local farmland resources
4. Prioritize farms for preservation using a criteria scoring or ranking system
5. Designate a fund for farmland preservation; have a method of funding
6. Request identification of locally important farmland soils through USDA-NRCS

Municipalities meeting the above eligibility criteria may enter into a cooperative agreement with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture no later than May 31, 2012.

Prequalified municipalities that have entered into such agreements must complete the application package and submit it to the commissioner on or before July 31, 2012.

Continued on next page.

Commissioner of Agriculture Announces Pilot Program for Community Farms Preservation – \$2 million allocated for cooperative state/municipal farmland preservation projects *(continued)*

The agency will review/evaluate applications using scoring criteria established with input from its Farmland Preservation Advisory Board. Preference will be given to food-producing farms too small to qualify for the existing Farmland Preservation Program.

“We put a great deal of care and consideration into developing the evaluation criteria after legislation enabling this program was passed,” said Commissioner Reviczky. “This program is something we see as a valuable component of the state’s long-term plan to cultivate sustainable agriculture and food production. As a result, we spent considerable time and effort on the details.”

By October 1, 2012, the department expects to complete application evaluation and determine projects that will become part of the pilot program.

The Community Farms Preservation Program is voluntary. Interested farmers and municipalities are encouraged to contact the Connecticut Department of Agriculture to discuss eligibility. For more information, contact Program Director Dippel or Property Agent Katherine Winslow at 860-713-2511 or in writing to:

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Farmland Preservation Program
165 Capitol Avenue, G8A
Hartford, CT 06106

DO YOU KNOW AN OUTSTANDING FARMER?

The Connecticut Agricultural Information Council is accepting nominations for the 2012 Connecticut **Outstanding Young Farmer**. Nationally sponsored by the U.S. Jaycees, the purpose of the program is to bring about a greater interest in farming, foster better urban-rural relations through the understanding of agriculture's challenges, develop an appreciation of the farmer’s contributions and achievements, and inform the agribusiness community of the growing urban awareness of the importance and impact on the American economy.

Applications must be postmarked by February 17, 2012.

The winner will be notified early March; the award will be presented at Ag Day at the Capitol, **March 21, 2012**.

The application can be found on the Connecticut Agricultural Education Foundation website (www.ctaef.org).

News You Can Use:

What's going on ...



On January 12, 2012, Secretary Vilsack will recognize and celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday by declaring a National Service Day for all USDA employees. All USDA employees are encouraged to spend time volunteering in their communities. We believe that encouraging service to others is an important way to celebrate Dr. King's lasting legacy for all Americans.

We are extending the invitation to all agencies, offices, and employees to participate in this event and volunteer for a community organization on the afternoon of Thursday, January 12, 2012. Volunteer as a group, office, division, or individually. We encourage you to use this as an opportunity for both service and team building.

Get in touch with organizations in your community. Conservation organizations, food banks and pantries, social service organizations, and other non-profits are all possibilities. To coordinate a volunteer activity for you and your colleagues, **we strongly encourage you to contact prospective volunteer sites now** to ensure they can accommodate your group.

National Headquarters employees are invited to attend a ceremony honoring Dr. King's Birthday and the National Service Day. Prior to that event, other NRCS employees will receive a web link to watch the ceremony on their computers.

Acting State Soil Scientist

The retirement of Kip Kolesinskas has left the State Soil Scientist position vacant. Effective immediately, and until further notice, Marjorie Faber will be acting State Soil Scientist for Connecticut. Following is her contact information:

Marjorie Faber, Acting State Soil Scientist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084-3917
(860) 871-4040
margie.faber.@ct.usda.gov

LOOK Who Retired in 2011



State Soil Scientist Kip Kolesinskas displays the Oxyaquic UdiKipent soil cake made in his honor.



Members of the engineering staff bid Water Quality Specialist Joe Neafsey a final farewell as he heads through the doors to retirement. ...



State Conservationist Jay Mar with Kip, wife Lesley, and son Ian.

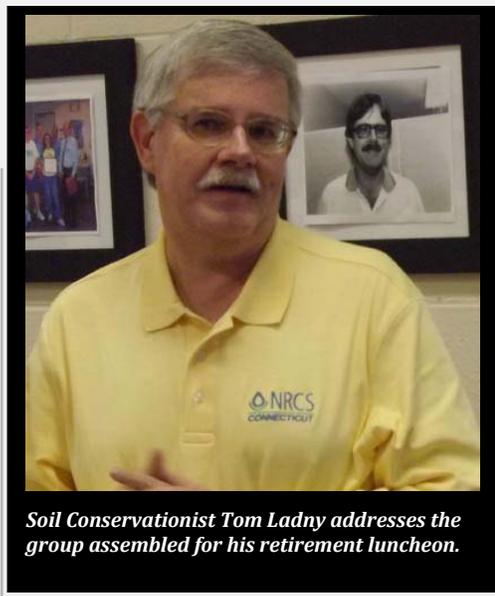


(l to r) State Conservationist Jay Mar, Joe Neafsey and his wife, P.J.

LOOK Who Retired in 2011 *(continued)*



State Conservationist Jay Mar congratulates Tom on his retirement.



Soil Conservationist Tom Ladny addresses the group assembled for his retirement luncheon.



Mark Cummings



RC&D Coordinator Mark Cummings (right). Also pictured are Jay Mar, State Conservationist (left) and Mark's wife, Debbie.

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

January

- 1** **NEW YEARS DAY HIKE** – Sleeping Giant State Park – Hamden – 1:30 PM – Group may break into two smaller groups – one walk will be shorter. Involves uneven, rocky terrain, possibly with a degree of rock scrambling. Hikers should be in good physical condition. Dress warmly and wear comfortable, supportive shoes with good traction. Bring snacks and water. Free/open to the public. Minors must be accompanied by adult and have signed permission slip. *Contact Lori Lindquist 203.287.5658*
- 7** **HISTORY OF NATIVE PEOPLE IN THE NAUGATUCK RIVER VALLEY** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 12 Noon – 2 PM - Dr. Nick Bellantoni, State Archeologist, and Michael Bouchard will present a program for families on the cultural history of Native Tribes that once lived in the valley. *Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513*
- 7** **TRACKS AND SIGNS INTERPRETIVE WALK** - Goodwin Forest Conservation Education Center, Hampton – 10 AM – 12 Noon - Goodwin Forest is home to a large variety of mammals, birds, and insects. Many of these organisms are still active even in the winter months. We will learn how to read the signs of winter-active wildlife. Even without snow, many tell-tale clues should be available. *Contact Juan Sanchez at 860.455.9534*
- 9** **BOOK DISCUSSION: KAYAKING IN AND AROUND THE NORWALK ISLANDS** – Westport Public Library – 7:30 PM – Join Norwalk River Watershed Association board member and avid kayaker David Park for a book signing and discussion – includes information on kayaking between Westport and Darien. An 18-foot sea kayak and gear will be on display. Free
- 9** **CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – UConn Extension, Tolland Ag Center, Vernon – 10 AM – 12 Noon - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. *Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com*
- 10-14** **OUR NATURAL WORLD: 16TH ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST** – Audubon Center, Glastonbury – Calling all amateur photographers to enter as many as three nature photographs. Photos must fit into one of seven categories: Plants, Animals, Birds, Butterflies and Bugs, Landscapes, Nature's Miracles, People in Relationship with Nature. Entry fee \$15/photo for first two; \$20 for third. Professional judges will choose winning photographs just prior to the reception on January 27, 2012 from 4:00 - 7:00 pm. Photos will be on exhibit January 27 through March 3, 2012. *Contact (860) 633-8402*
- 11** **CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – USDA Field Office, Hamden – 4-6 PM - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. *Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com*
- 21** **SEAL SEARCH WALK –Meigs Point Nature Center, Madison – 1 PM** - Stroll the beautiful trails of Hammonasset and see if you can spot the seals offshore! A guided walk for all skill levels. *Contact Russ Miller 203.245.8743 or 860.462.9643*
- 21** **SATURDAY MORNING BIRDWALK** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 9 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*
- 22** **TURKEY TRAILS & HORSES' HOOVES** - Sessions Woods, Burlington – 1:30-3:00 PM - Join MWC Jack Nelson for an indoors and outdoors program focusing on fungi and their interesting natural history. *Contact Laura Rogers-Castro 860.675.8130*
- 28** **GETTING STARTED IN ORGANIC FARMING** – Connecticut Forest & Park Association, Rockfall – 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM – Speakers and topics include: *Dina Brewster, The Hickories, Ridgefield: Planning for Profits – The Basics of a Farm Business; Bryan O'Hara, Tobacco Road Farm, Lebanon: Soil Management Techniques; Duncan Cox, Baystate Organic Certifiers: Organic Certification; Shannon Raider, Common Ground High School: Greenhouses; Jiff Martin & Jennifer McTiernan, UConn Extension: Land Access and Leasing.* \$30/members; \$40/non-members. Sponsored by CT NOFA, UConn, and RMA. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 29** **WINTER TREK** - Allanach-Wolf Woodlands, Windham - 1 PM (instruction for show-shoe novices begins at 12:30) - Join naturalist Ken Metzler for an informative tour of the winter world. Space limited; registration required. *Contact Richard Bunce 860.647.1455*

February

- TBD SNOWSHOE HIKE AT LAKE WINDWING** – Ridgefield – Weather permitting. Check website for date. Contact NRWA 1.877.NRWA.INFO
- 4 NO CHILD LEFT INSIDE WINTER FESTIVAL** – Black Rock State Park, Watertown – 9 AM – 3 PM - Activities will include ice fishing, fish stocking, snowshoeing, marshmallow roasting and much more! Contact Rachael Sunny (860) 418-5981
- 4 ICE FOR SALE** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 10:30 AM – 12 Noon – Join Bob McClellan from the Great Burnside Ice Co. for a special look at the history of ice harvesting and trade in Connecticut. Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513
- 4 WINTER TRAILS WORKSHOP** – Connecticut Forest & Park, Rockfall – 9 AM – 3 PM - The workshop provides new trail maintainers and managers a comprehensive introduction to CFWP's trails program, trail techniques, signage and blazing, trail tools and volunteer management. Open to the public. Bring your own lunch. Space is limited – RSVP to tpeters@ctwoodlands.org.
- 6 CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – Rural Development, Windsor – 2-4 PM - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com
- 8 CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – UConn Extension, Haddam – 6-8 PM - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com
- 9 EXPLORE EXPORTING: THE WORLD IS WAITING** (a seminar on why to export) – Northeast Utilities, Berlin - Have you considered exporting? Are you wondering if it's something your business should consider. Join us on February 9th for this free seminar to learn the benefits of exporting and the services available to assist you with the process. One-on-one meetings with services providers will be available after lunch to answer questions or help you determine if exporting is right for your business. Contact Jaime Smith 860.713.2559 or jaime.smith@ct.gov
- 15-17, 21-22 THE ACCREDITATION COURSE IN ORGANIC LAND CARE** – Connecticut Ag Experiment Station, New Haven – Course for professionals will provide the education needed for an understanding of organic land care design and maintenance. Based on NOFA's Standards for Land Care: Practices for Design and Maintenance of Ecological Landscapes. Contact Deb Legge 203.888.5146 deb@ctnofa.org
snowdate
23
- 18 HOW TO PLAN FOR A BOUNTIFUL VEGETABLE GARDEN** – Common Ground High School, New Haven – 10 AM – 1 PM – Basic principles of planning for organic vegetable and flower gardens. Choosing the site and style, soil testing, and improvements, choosing the right vegetables for the season, crop rotation, and companion planting will be covered. Sponsored by CT NOFA. \$10/person. Contact 203.888.5146
- 18 SATURDAY MORNING BIRDWALK** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 9 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
- 23 BIRDS OF PREY** – Dinosaur State Park, Rocky Hill – 1 PM - Sharon Audubon bird program featuring live Hawks and Owls. Contact Margaret Enkler at 860-529-5816
- 25 BLUEBIRD PROGRAM AND HOUSE BUILDING** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 10:30 AM – 12 Noon - Learn the status of bluebirds and the ways you can help monitor not only them, but also fellow native cavity nesters. Bluebird natural history will be provided and followed by an opportunity to build a bluebird nest box. Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513
- 26 BLUEBIRDS WITH MASTER WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST FRED LOWMAN** – Sessions Woods, Burlington – 1:30-2:30 PM - Join Fred Lowman for an informative discussion on bluebirds. Hear Fred's success stories on attracting bluebirds to his property. Contact Laura E. Rogers-Castro 860.675.8130
- 26-28 2013 HARVEST NEW ENGLAND AG MARKETING CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW** - Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA – Conference will focus on marketing your farm and farm products. Contact Jaime Smith 860.713.2559 or jaime.smith@ct.gov; or visit www.harvestnewengland.org

March

- TBD** **SPRING AMPHIBIAN WALK** – St. Luke’s School, New Canaan – March is a magical time to search for frogs and salamanders! Dave Havens of Norwalk River Watershed Association will give a short introduction on amphibians and how to spot them; followed by a woodland walk to visit vernal ponds coming to life with salamanders, newts, frogs, and toads. Search for eggs, learn about seasonal habitats, life history, and some of the many species that live in the area. Check website for date. *Contact 1.877.NRWA.INFO*
- 1** **NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION ACADEMY** – University of Connecticut – Application deadline for this week-long training in land use stewardship for sophomore and junior high school students in Connecticut. Contact Charlotte Rand 860.486.4917, nrca@uconn.edu, or visit www.nrca.uconn.edu
- 3** **CONNECTICUT NORTHEAST ORGANIC FARMER’S ASSOCIATION (NOFA) 30th ANNUAL WINTER CONFERENCE** – Manchester Community College – 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM – Keynote speaker – international bestselling author Jeffrey M. Smith. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 5** **CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – UConn Extension, Torrington – 10 AM – 12 Noon - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. *Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com*
- 7** **CONNECTICUT FARM ENERGY & ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP** – RD Office, Norwich – 4-6 PM - Topics include Connecticut Farm Energy Program; USDA-RD – REAP Grants; USDA-NRCS – EQIP Program; Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund; Clean Energy Finance & Investment Authority; Connecticut Farm Bureau Association; Professional Energy Installers. Some workshops may not have presentations from each of the groups listed above, but information will be available about each program. Please register at least one week before workshop. *Contact (860) 345-3977 or ctfarmenergy@aol.com*
- 10** **STARTING SEEDLINGS** – Common Ground High School, New Haven – 10 AM – 12 PM – We invite you to learn about starting your own vegetables and flowers from seed. Demonstrations for both planting and transplanting, plus a list of which plants are set out by seedlings and which ones are directly sown by seed into the ground. Sponsored by CT NOFA. \$10/person. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 17** **SOILS AND COMPOST WORKSHOP** – Common Ground High School, New Haven – 10 AM – 1 PM – The basics of building great soil in gardens and in the compost pile. Demonstrations of composting skills, as well as great handouts will be available. Sponsored by CT NOFA. \$10/person. *Contact 203.888.5146*
- 17** **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*

April

- 12** **BIRDS OF PREY** – Dinosaur State Park, Rocky Hill – 1 PM - Massachusetts Birds of Prey program featuring live hawks, owls and an eagle. *Contact Margaret Enkler at 860-529-5816*
- 14** **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*
- 19** **LIVE REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS SHOW** – Dinosaur State Park, Rocky Hill – 11 AM – 12:30 PM - A program with a variety of live reptiles and amphibians. *Contact Margaret Enkler 860.529.5816*

May

- 5** **ORGANIC GARDENING WORKSHOP** – Common Ground High School, New Haven – 10 A – 12 PM – Instructions and seasonal tips on what can be planted in your garden now and what must wait for warmer weather. Learn how to prep your garden beds, plan your plantings, deal with early garden pests, and improve soil fertility using organic methods. Sponsored by CT NOFA. \$10/person. *Contact 203.888.5146*

June

- 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*