

UConn Butterfly Expert To Speak At Trust's Annual Meeting April 17

Jane O'Donnell, one of the authors of a recent survey of butterflies, will speak at the 2008 annual dinner, slated for April 17.

Jane, a scientific collection manager in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut, will get us primed for the arrival of these colorful creatures.

The Hole-in-the-Wall Gang Camp, Paul Newman's frontier-style camp for seriously ill children, will once again host the dinner. If you have not been to one of the annual dinners yet, we hope you will come this year. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet like-minded conservationists.

A new feature this year will be a silent auction to be held during the social hour, starting at 5:30 p.m. Details

on the auction can be found on Page 3 and more will be posted on our website. Also starting at 5:30 will be tours of the camp. The buffet dinner at 6:30 will be followed by the business meeting, awards, and speaker. The cost remains a modest \$20 per person.

Last year's dinner was over-subscribed, and we will have to stick to our guns about the registration deadline this year. Please mail your reservation by the April 5 deadline to avoid being disappointed.

Directions: The camp is located in Ashford, and the entrance is on Route 44, about 2.7 miles east of the junction with Route 89 and .5 miles east of the blinking yellow light at the intersection of Route 44 and North Road. Over the driveway is a high wooden arch. Signs will direct you to the dining hall.

Once Farm, Robinson Easement Now Protects Land And Water

The 42 acres in Tolland that Ivan Robinson has protected with a conservation easement was once a farm that grew hay, corn and potatoes.

"Probably just above subsistence level, since the arable land is virtually a small island hemmed in by wetlands," he explained.

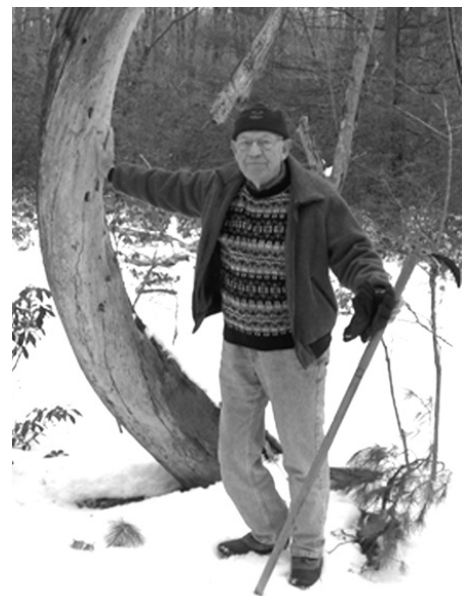
He spoke while walking along a dike created by a water power company in the 1830s. It holds more water in the Bolton Lakes lapping at the dike's southern edge.

Rain on that side goes into the lakes. Rain falling on the north side, just 20 feet or so away, ends up in the Skungamaug River to the east. The

dike also provided a bridge for farmers of old to get to the back fields.

Although woods now cover what once was meadow, Ivan and his late wife, Joyce, kept clear a network of trails. They ramble past a small pond, a laurel grove, blueberry bushes, and cranberry bogs – a varied habitat that supports a diverse wildlife population. Placing a conservation easement on the land protects it forever: No pesticide runoff from the lawns of housing developments, no agricultural or industrial pollution, no disturbance of the soil, no disruption of the wildlife habitat.

Ivan Robinson >>





Joshua's Tract Conservation And Historic Trust, Inc.

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MANSFIELD CENTER, CT 06250

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Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust was formed in 1966 to receive gifts of money and land, or to buy land of historic, aesthetic, or scientific value, for the benefit of future generations.

It is designed to supplement the open space efforts of federal, state and local governments. The Trust protects over 3,000 acres in the region, maintains trails which are open to the public, and publishes *The Joshua's Tract Walk Book*.

The office is located in the historic Eagleville Schoolhouse, South Eagleville Rd., in Mansfield. Office hours: Thurs. 1:30-3:30 pm.
Phone: 860-429-9023

Conserving The White Cedar Bog Will Take Our Perpetual Vigilance

The Windham White Cedar Bog is one of our most valuable -- but probably the most environmentally sensitive -- property we own. Acquired in 1995, the 50-plus acre bog is home to an unusual number of unique birds and butterflies.

The health of the bog is very susceptible to the effects of ground water and excessive

nutrients. At the time we purchased the bog, many of the cedars were dying or diseased, most probably because of a high water table caused by beaver activity in a culvert beneath the railroad bed on the south side of the bog. The bog was also being impacted by nutrient-containing effluents from Route 6 construction, as well as other commercial and residential activities.

At the present time the beavers have left, and the bog seems to be making a recovery except for the edge next to Route 6. Evidence of recovery is judged by the influx of healthy young cedars. Unfortunately, this is not the end of the story. We need to be persistently vigilant because much of

the open land around the bog is zoned commercial, and the wrong type of development could be detrimental.

During the past year, a developer has proposed to place a tractor supply business on a four-acre lot adjacent to

the bog. The initial plans look ominous, and based on the recommendation of a subcommittee, the Board has

voted to hire an expert consultant. He will conduct an extensive study of the bog and the likely impact of the proposed development. This information will be presented to the permitting agencies in Windham to help insure that impacts will be minimal. The consultant will also advise us in our long term management of the bog.

The cost of a fully professional report will be considerable; however, we can use funds left over from the Home Depot settlement.

You can visit the bog from the old railroad bed off of Route 203 in North Windham. In the future you may be able to actually traverse the Bog itself via a board walk which being planned.

Warren's Word

By Warren Church
Joshua's Trust President



Nature Reading Group Meets First Thursdays

A book discussion on the first Thursday evening of the month is held at the Mansfield Community Center. Discussion leaders Jean Haskell and Madge Manfred welcome those who are interested in books about nature and conservation. No registration or fee. Just come on over.

April 3: *The Same Ax, Twice* by Howard Mansfield, a New Englander who writes movingly about conservation. *Cape Wind*, by Wendy Williams and Robert Whitcomb. As clean energy technology develops, so will the battles about the environment and aesthetics. In a deliciously readable way, this book examines the ongoing conflict about wind power in Nantucket Sound.

May 1: *Solitary Goose*, by Sydney Landon Plum. A local author writes about her hikes through Mansfield's Schoolhouse Brook Park.

Silent Auction Will Add Excitement To Annual Fete

What could be more fun than the Trust's annual dinner at the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang Camp?

This year attendees will have the added excitement of a silent auction, featuring a limited number of very attractive offerings. Among them: a night's stay at the historic Fitch House Bed and Breakfast in Mansfield Center; a tea for 20 in the restored Burchell house; a four-night stay over Labor Day weekend at a three-bedroom lakefront cottage in Maine.

According to organizer Corine Norgaard, most of the items will be highly desirable services rather than the typical auction items. "Most people have too many things already," Corine explained. "But they are interested in services and entertainment."

The proceeds will go toward building a stewardship endowment.

"We are realizing just how serious a commitment we have when we say that we will protect a property forever," said Madge Manfred, past president. "Major land trusts require a stewardship donation when they accept a property," she added. "Without that requirement, Joshua's Trust has the obligation to build its stewardship fund through donations and fundraising activities."

All items in the auction will be listed on the Trust website, along with directions for making a bid if you will not be at the dinner.

The auction will take place prior to dinner. Payment will be by check only.

Celebrate Mom and Mother Nature On One Of These Springtime Walks

Amphibians & Vernal Pool Exploration.

April 5, 9 a.m. Co-sponsored with the Columbia Trails Committee. A 9 a.m. screening of a short film "Between Land and Water" at the Columbia Library (319 Route 87). At 10:30, Juan Sanchez will lead a one-hour vernal pool exploration at the Rail Trail crossing of Hop River Road on the Columbia/Coventry town line. Please call Joan Hill at 228-2849 to sign up for the vernal pool walk so that we can contact you should the meeting location change.

Mother's Day Walks

May 11, 9-11 a.m. Birding at Hubbard Sanctuary, Chaplin: Celebrate Mother's Day by taking a walk with naturalist Juan Sanchez. All ages are welcome to take a leisurely stroll around a loop trail. Co-sponsored with the Chaplin Conservation Commission

Directions: The sanctuary, which is adjacent to the town hall and Garrison Park, is on Route 198, 2.2 miles north of the intersection with Route 6.

May 11, 8-10 a.m. at Dunhamtown Forest (White Oak Road Entrance), Mansfield.

Join Naturalist Sue Harrington for a peaceful, stroll at Dunhamtown Forest and learn some basic bird identification tips as we listen for each species' characteristic song. After the walk, we gather at the parking lot for muffins and juice and to discuss what we saw. Families with children encouraged! Co-sponsored with Friends of Mansfield Parks. Call 429-3915 for registration info.

Fee: Mansfield Residents \$7 per person, \$15/family max; Non-residents \$9 per person, \$25/family max

Tinkerville Brook Walk

June 7, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Tinkerville Brook, Ashford. The walk will feature a variety of plant and animal resources along Tinkerville Brook, an old mill site, a massive stone bridge abutment and glimpses of Bissonnette Pond. Gary Griffin and John Barclay, stewards of the property, will lead. Total length: 1.4 miles over rolling terrain that is easy/moderate to traverse. Bring beverage and, if desired, box lunch. Rain date is Sunday, June 8.

Directions: From the intersection of Routes 44 and 89 in Ashford, go north on Route 89. At 5.2 miles, where Route 89 makes a 90-degree right turn, go straight ahead on Turnpike Rd. After .6 miles, turn right on to Armitage Rd. and follow it for .7 miles to a small dirt road on the left. The preserve entrance is just before the road crosses Tinkerville Brook.

Wildflower Encounter

June 7, 1-3 p.m. at Fifty-foot Cliff Preserve (Mansfield Historical Society Entrance. Search for Wildflowers with Naturalist, Sue Harrington

We will identify them, learn about their historical uses and give those walkers who bring cameras an opportunity to photograph them. Along the way we will also get to enjoy one of the best views in town as we pause to enjoy Fifty-Foot Cliff. Co-sponsored with Friends of Mansfield Parks.



Recent Contributors to Joshua's Trust

We thank all who made special donations to Joshua's Trust during 2007. Without your additional support, the Trust would not be able to carry out its mission. Please let us know if your name was inadvertently omitted or misspelled.

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Bells Offer Donation

The Gardens at Bassetts Bridge have once again agreed to donate 20 percent of the purchase price of plants bought by Trust members.

If you need plants or shrubs this spring, consider the offer. You must complete a donation card so that the Trust will receive the money. The cards are available at the annual meeting, or in the Trust office, or can be requested by calling the office. They can be used only during May. Many thanks to owners Wesley and Jean Bell.

Join us for this year's annual meeting... ...at The Hole-In-The-Wall Gang Camp

This year's annual meeting and dinner will begin with tours of Paul Newman's Hole-in-the-Wall Gang Camp in Ashford and includes wine, appetizers, dinner and a silent auction. New members are encouraged to attend!

Joshua's Trust annual dinner reservation form

Please submit by April 5.

Name _____

Telephone _____

Please make reservations for _____ people (\$20 per person)

2008 dues if not yet paid: _____ Total enclosed \$_____

Make check payable to: Joshua's Trust

Mail to: Joshua's Trust, P.O. Box 4, Mansfield Center, CT 06250-0004.

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