



NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
LEXINGTON MA  
PERMIT NO 3314

PO BOX 292, LEXINGTON MA 02420-0003  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Eileen Entin, Chair**

**April 2017**

**Elaine Quinlan, Editor**

## **IN THIS ISSUE**

	Page
CLC – The Early Years	3
CLC Annual Meeting	4
Spring Walks	5
Garlic Mustard	8
Celebrate Arbor Day at Cotton Farm	9
Shade Street Trail Easement Open	10
Conservation Restriction Update	12
In Memory of Rosemary Hines Green	13
Book Review	13
Bringing Nature Home	14
Goldfinches	15
Bike Walk Bus Week 2017	16

 Printed on Recycled Paper

## 2017 CLC Dues are Payable Now

The status of your dues payment is shown on the address label of snail-mailed newsletters or near the top of the e-mail announcing this issue. If it says Dues paid April 2016 (or earlier), it is time to renew your membership for 2017. If it says "Complimentary Copy," you are receiving a complimentary copy of our newsletter because you are a Town Meeting member or other public official in Lexington. We hope that those who receive complimentary copies will find our organization of value and will in time become dues-paying members. To join CLC or renew your membership, please send \$20.00 to Citizens for Lexington Conservation, P.O. Box 292, Lexington, MA 02420-0003. Dues can also be paid by credit card through PayPal from a link on our web site, <http://www.clclex.org>.

There is an electronic version of the CLC newsletter, sent as an email notice, with a link to the newsletter on the CLC web site. This version of the newsletter has illustrations in color and live links, it arrives much sooner than the snail mail version, it saves paper, and it costs CLC about \$1 less per copy. If you are currently receiving your newsletter by snail mail, you may convert to e-mail by contacting Judy Mello at [jmacmello@comcast.net](mailto:jmacmello@comcast.net).

### **But Please Note:**

CLC receives very low non-profit bulk mail postal rates as long as it follows the prescribed postal regulations. To keep these rates we must send at least 200 snail mail copies at each mailing. If everyone were to ask for the email version of the newsletter, then we wouldn't have the required 200 copies in the mailing, and it would cost us much more. For that reason, sometimes we send a paper copy to someone who expects the electronic one. If this should be the case for you, we can change you back, or you can just pick up your electronic version at [clclex.org](http://www.clclex.org)

## Expanding CLC's Board

As CLC celebrates its 50th anniversary, we are looking to expand our outreach and activities. To do this we are looking to expand our Board to include two new roles:

**Walks Publicity Coordinator:** Each spring and fall CLC sponsors a series of walks in conservation and open space. We are looking for someone to focus initially on walks publicity, and eventually to organize and broaden the types of walks we conduct.

**Events Coordinator:** Each year, CLC features a speaker on conservation, resource, or environmental issues. To deepen and enlarge our educational focus, we are seeking a new film/speaker coordinator to take on the tasks of identifying, scheduling, and publicizing videos and speakers. Our plans are to offer 3-4 events per year as an exciting new way for CLC to continue to raise public awareness regarding local, regional and national environmental issues.

**Conservation Restriction Monitors:** CLC is in the process of acquiring conservation restrictions (CRs) on five Town-owned properties that were acquired in whole or in part with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. We are seeking individuals who are interested in helping to complete the remaining CR applications for three of the five parcels and/or participating in the annual monitoring of the properties.

In addition to these three roles, CLC is also seeking an individual who will take on the role of **Recording Secretary**. This position involves taking minutes at Board meetings and filing any forms required to maintain our status as a nonprofit organization.

If you would like to know more about any of these positions, please contact Eileen Entin ([eileenhome@gmail.com](mailto:eileenhome@gmail.com), 781-862-6418).

## **Citizens for Lexington Conservation – The Early Years**

By Eileen Entin

Citizens for Lexington Conservation is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Achieving milestones in one's life or the life of an organization provide an opportunity to reflect. A reading of CLC's newsletters over the years – the earliest of which are now safely archived at the Lexington Historical Society - provides an informative and interesting overview of the evolution of CLC as an organization. In this article we reflect back on the organization's activities in its first decade. A review of the organization that looks at how its activities have evolved since its first years will appear in the September 2017 newsletter.

Eleven Lexingtonians, including long-time member Rosemary Green (see page 13) and current 50-year member Frank Sandy were signatories of CLC's original articles of organization. In the first decade of its existence the founding members of CLC were focused on establishing a conservation ethos in the Lexington community that touched on several important aspects of Town life that went beyond the conservation of open space. While as early as 1974 CLC was urging that the Town adopt a land acquisition program for conservation purposes, there were several other areas dealing with environmental issues that also engaged the efforts of the young organization.

One of the important activities of CLC's early board members was to interview prospective members of the Town's Conservation Commission prior to appointment in an effort to ensure that the Commission would develop a strong focus on land conservation principles. As the Town continued to acquire parcels for conservation as open space, it became apparent some years later that organized maintenance of the properties was becoming necessary. In response to this need, CLC took the lead in working with the Conservation Commission to form the Town's first Conservation Steward Program. This first effort has since evolved into today's group of dedicated volunteers working at the direction of the Conservation Commission and administered by what has become a full time staff position of Conservation Steward Coordinator.

Another now little known but at the time important contribution of CLC in its earliest years was concerted involvement with the Town's DPW department in the expansion of the Town's sanitary sewer system and protection of the watershed resources of the community. In the late 1960's and early 1970's there were still enough private septic systems in Town to create the potential for serious water quality issues, including one noted sanitary sewer line failure in the 1970's that caused significant discharge of raw sewage into Vine Brook. CLC was active throughout this period in advocating for enhanced environmental awareness on the part of DPW's management of the Town's water quality issues.

Perhaps the most well-known CLC activity regarding local environmental issues during the early period of its existence was the management of the sorting of recyclables from non-recyclable items at the Town dump prior to the establishment of curbside recycling. CLC members actively undertook not only publicizing of the rules and arranging for pickup but spent time every week at the Town dump sorting items into the proper bins, before turning this program over to the Town in 1972. In later years, prior to today's comprehensive curbside recycling program, CLC was active in supporting the unsuccessful attempt to establish a Pay As You Throw program in Lexington.

Publication of the CLC newsletter with the aim of raising citizen awareness of conservation and environmental-related issues and events began in the organization's earliest years. Editions appearing in the organization's first decade addressed what at the time were emerging but not yet widely known environmental concerns, including the removal of mature trees from the Town's tree canopy, dangers inherent in the use of insecticides and lawn chemicals, and the need for wetland zoning.

In our fall newsletter we will continue the story of CLC's evolution as an organization, building on the successful efforts of its early members in establishing both a strong program of land acquisition for conservation purposes and a strong environmental awareness within the Lexington community. We will look at how CLC's activities have evolved while preserving its continuity of values and purpose.

### **Come to CLC's Annual Meeting on April 13th**

Please join Citizens for Lexington Conservation for its annual meeting, to be held this year at the new Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road. Our featured speaker will be Tia Pinney, Senior Naturalist at Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary.

Tia has worked at Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary for over 20 years. She is involved in all aspects of the sanctuary's educational programming—developing curricula and interpretive materials, developing and implementing classroom teacher professional development, working on numerous grants in communities and schools, and developing and teaching natural history and food-based programming. One of the most exciting parts of Tia's work is developing and teaching professional development for school teachers to integrate new science standards into their curricula with emphasis on authentic nature-based field work.

Tia creates and leads birding and natural history tours all over the USA. In addition to her role as trip leader, Tia also serves as Drumlin Farm's ecological management coordinator, stewarding the health of the sanctuary and its habitats through sustainable practices. Since 1994, when she first started working at the farm, Tia has overseen efforts to maintain New England's wildlife on the Farm's 206-acre property, managing staff and volunteers in planting projects and citizen science.

Tia's topic at our annual meeting will be *Climate Change Impact on Native Habitats and Plants*. Our New England flora and fauna have evolved over millennia to thrive in our particular climate. As weather and climate patterns continue to change, these organisms will be challenged to adapt and survive. How can we help to mitigate the impact and help ensure a healthy biodiversity in our area? We will talk about changes, predictions, and common sense regarding our local habitats and what we as concerned individuals can do in our own yards and in our communities.

The meeting, which is open to the public, will be held on Thursday, April 13th from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in Room 242 of the Lexington Community Center, 39 Marrett Road, Lexington. Refreshments will be served. Please join us.

## **CITIZENS FOR LEXINGTON CONSERVATION 2017 SPRING WALKS**

*All walks are free and open to the public*

### **Birding Walks:**

#### **Saturday April 29, 7-9 am, Birding Dunback Meadow**

Dunback Meadow's variety of habitats include meadow, forest, and a brook, making this property an excellent place to look for spring migratory bird species. Possibilities include the early warblers, vireos, kinglets, and sparrows; not to mention our resident bird species including woodpeckers, nuthatches, and chickadees. Meet at the Allen St. entrance opposite 23 Allen Street. The walk will be cancelled in the event of rain.

Walk Leader: Bobbie Hodson (781-861-9421, [robertahodson@comcast.net](mailto:robertahodson@comcast.net))

#### **Monday May 1, 7:30-9 am, Early Spring Migrants at Arlington Reservoir**

The Arlington Reservoir and adjacent Busa Farm fields provide one of the best areas in the Lexington-Arlington area to observe a wide range of spring migratory bird species. Come see why Marj Rines of the Menotomy Bird Club considers this area "the best birding per square inch in the state." Meet at the Rindge Avenue playground opposite 24 Rindge Avenue. Heavy rain cancels.

Walk Leader: Chris Floyd (617-571-5841, [chrisf@mitre.org](mailto:chrisf@mitre.org))

#### **Wednesday May 10, 6:30-9 am, Birding the Western Greenway**

The Western Greenway consists of over 1200 acres of interconnected open space in Waltham, Lexington, and Belmont. There has been little documentation of migratory or breeding birds in many parts of the Greenway. We will choose a section in Lexington that most likely few Menotomy Birders know or bird. Meet at Cart Path Lane, off Walnut Street

in Lexington. (Co-sponsored with the Menotomy Bird Club)  
Leaders: Roger Wrubel ([rwrubel@massaudubon.org](mailto:rwrubel@massaudubon.org)),  
Keith Ohmart ([kohmart@verizon.net](mailto:kohmart@verizon.net))

### **Saturday May 13, 8-10 am, Warbler Walk in Lower Vine Brook**

Warblers are small, beautiful tropical birds that fly north to breed. Over 15 different species of warbler stop off in this sheltered area during their spring migration to the forests in northern New England and Canada. Depending on the weather and the foliage, you may see a dozen species in a morning. Children with adults are welcome. Wear boots if it's wet, and bring binoculars and a bird book. No dogs. More than light rain or lightning will cancel the event. If the weather is uncertain call the leader. Meet at the entrance to the Lower Vine Brook conservation area opposite 121 Vine Street.  
Walk Leader: Harry West (671-461-9500, [hwest2020@gmail.com](mailto:hwest2020@gmail.com))

## **Nature Walks and Activities:**

### **Saturday April 22, 1-3 pm, Garlic Mustard Pull at Lincoln Park**

Garlic mustard seeds can take up to 7 years to sprout, which requires repeated efforts to control and eradicate this aggressive invasive species. Come join CLC's multi-year effort to pull this year's progeny from along the pathways in Lincoln Park. Bring gardening gloves. Meet at the Fitness Path Trail entrance on Worthen Road across from the LHS playing fields.

Leaders: Judy Mello ([jmacmello@comcast.net](mailto:jmacmello@comcast.net)), Elaine Quinlan ([ejquinlan2@gmail.com](mailto:ejquinlan2@gmail.com))

### **Sunday May 14, 2-4 pm, ACROSS Lexington Bicycle Ride**

Explore ACROSS Lexington trails by bike! This easy-to-moderate 2-hour ride will take us through a number of Lexington's most scenic open spaces including Upper and Lower Vinebrook, Cotton Farm and Dunback Meadow, the Old Res, and Lincoln Park. We will travel via Town streets, paved bike paths and unpaved walking trails. Be prepared for somewhat rough trail conditions; a bike with sturdy tires for trail riding and a helmet are required. Bring water and a snack. Meet in the Town employee parking lot adjacent to the Minuteman Bikeway crossing at Fletcher Avenue. Bonus points for those who ride their bicycles to this event. Questions? Call Peggy at 617-308-8185.

Leaders: Peggy Enders (617-308-8185, [peggyenders@gmail.com](mailto:peggyenders@gmail.com)),  
Keith Ohmart (781-862-6216, [kohmart@verizon.net](mailto:kohmart@verizon.net))

### **Tuesday May 16, 10-11:30 am, Senior Sneaker Walk at Hayden Woods**

Join us on this leisurely walk as we explore the historic and scenic byways of Hayden Woods. During our travels we will walk one of the oldest colonial roads in the Commonwealth, take a side trip a short distance off trail to marvel at an unusual example of colonial stone working, and visit one of the most perfectly sited stone benches in Town. Walking will be on well-graded woods trails with one short steep section and the usual occasional rocks and roots under foot. Sneakers are fine. Don't forget your walking sticks if you rely on them for balance. Meet at the rear of 45 Hayden Avenue in the third parking lot on your left opposite the signed Conservation trail entrance.

Walk Leader: Keith Ohmart (781-862-6216, [kohmart@verizon.net](mailto:kohmart@verizon.net))

### **Sunday May 21, 2-5 pm, Extended ACROSS Lexington Walk**

In celebration of Bike Walk Bus Week (May 13-21) we are offering the longer distance hiker an extended traverse of ACROSS Lexington routes C&D. This 5+ mile hike passes through two of Lexington's largest parcels of open space, Whipple Hill Conservation area and Arlington's Great Meadow, owned by the Town of Arlington but wholly within Lexington; in addition to passing the Arlington Reservoir and the Busa Farm Fields now managed by LexFarm along the way. Don't forget to bring plenty of water. Meet at the Waldorf School parking lot on Massachusetts Avenue.

Walk Leader: Bob Hausslein (781-862-9102, [rhausslein@rcn.com](mailto:rhausslein@rcn.com))

### **Thursday May 25, 6-8 pm, Wild Edibles of Lincoln Park with Russ Cohen**

Lexington is home to over 70 species of edible wild plants, both native and non-native, including plants considered to be weedy or invasive. Some are more nutritious and/or flavorful than their cultivated counterparts. Join Russ Cohen, expert forager and author of *Wild Plants I Have Known...and Eaten*, on a two-hour ramble in and around Lincoln Park to learn about the dozen or more edible plant species that are common to this property. Russ will present information on identification tips, edible portions, seasonal availability and preparation methods, as well as general guidelines for safe and environmentally-responsible foraging. Meet at the Fitness Trail entrance at the crosswalk on Worthen Road across from the Lexington High playing fields.

Leader: Russ Cohen (781-646-7489, [eatwild@rcn.com](mailto:eatwild@rcn.com))

### **Sunday June 4, 1:30-4 pm, Exploring ACROSS Lexington Route B**

The goal of the ACROSS Lexington project is to connect Lexington open spaces with easy and enjoyable walkable routes through Lexington's neighborhoods. Route B, which connects the Minuteman Bikeway in Lexington Center with Lincoln Park, the Old Res, and the Dunback Meadow, Cotton Farm and Upper Vine Brook Conservation properties, will be the focus of this 4.5 mile walk. Walkers will encounter a combination of paved surfaces and natural woods trails with no steep grades. Ordinary walking shoes or sneakers are fine. Bring your own water and a snack. Meet behind at the Depot on the Bikeway in Lexington Center.

Walk Leader: Eileen Entin (781-862-6418, [eileenhome@gmail.com](mailto:eileenhome@gmail.com))

### **Saturday June 10, 1-2 pm, Family Nature Walk in Arlington Great Meadows**

Bring the kids and join us for an "in-and-out" walk through a portion of Arlington Great Meadows, complete with meadow, forest, and boardwalks over wetland habitats. We will explore our surroundings and investigate whatever we find. Inclement weather cancels. Meet in the parking lot behind the Excel Assisted Living Center at the end of Emerson Gardens Way.

Leader: Millie Webster (617-686-2750, [sethandmillie@gmail.com](mailto:sethandmillie@gmail.com))

### **Sunday June 25, 11 am-12:30 pm, Nature Photography at Dunback Meadow**

Meet naturalist and nature photographer Tom Whelan on a nature walk at Dunback Meadow. On the walk, we will find and identify flowers and insects and discuss techniques and equipment for taking close-up photographs of them. We will start at the Allen Street

entrance to Dunback Meadow. Children with adults are welcome. People attending are encouraged to bring cameras for photography. Severe weather will cancel the walk. Walk Leader: Tom Whelan (781-915-9988, [tom@whelanphoto.com](mailto:tom@whelanphoto.com))

## Thank You Walk Leaders

CLC's walk program is entirely dependent on our walk leaders, who are all volunteers, for its continuing success. We wish to express a sincere thank you to Bob Haussein, Alex Dohan, Millie Webster, Peggy Enders, Keith Ohmart, and Eileen Entin for their leadership of our Fall 2016 walks.

### Garlic Mustard

By Kate Fricker

Garlic Mustard ranks with Oriental Bittersweet as one of the most invasive plants in Lexington. It thrives in open woodlands, sunny gardens, and almost everywhere else as well, where it shades out desirable plants and poisons the soil for others. It produces hundreds of tiny seeds that get caught in animal fur, shoes, and clothing, and then drop off everywhere. It has no enemies, so we can only hope to control it and keep it from dominating the landscape.

The plant can be recognized by the many small flowers with only four white petals. Control starts with identifying the small second-year plants that sprout and flower in April. These are the plants that will produce the seeds for the next generation. Here one pull can do the most damage to the infestation, since you are preventing the hundreds of seeds from each plant from growing next year. Pull at the base of the plants to prevent them from breaking off, and bag them in black plastic bags. The bags can be disposed of as garbage, or seal the bags tightly and leave them for weeks in the hot sun to kill the seeds and plants.



For more information use google to look up "Garlic Mustard" on the Internet.

## **Celebrate Arbor Day at Cotton Farm**

By E. Ashley Rooney, Lexington Field & Garden Club

On Saturday, April 29, at Cotton Farm (121 Marrett Road, Lexington), The Conservation Stewards, Lexington Field & Garden Club, Parterre Garden Services, and Matthew R Foti Landscape Design & Construction Inc, and Bartlett Tree Experts will celebrate Arbor Day.

J. Sterling Morton initiated the first American Arbor Day in April 1872, when an estimated one million trees were planted in Nebraska. All states have an official Arbor Day, usually at a time of year that has the best weather conditions for planting trees.

This year, Lexington's first multi-sponsored Arbor Day celebration will be an event for families, children, and people who love nature and Lexington's beautiful open spaces. It will include an official Arbor Day ceremony and the planting of a tree, a guided nature and bird hike, free pollinator plant seeds and seedlings, a fruit tree pruning workshop, a demonstration of arborist equipment, a tour of the Lexington High School Beekeeping Club's Cotton Farm apiary, and ad hoc horticultural experts to respond to your gardening questions.

For decades the Lexington Field and Garden Club, the oldest garden club in America, has held an annual tree-planting ceremony to create community awareness and honor the memory of those club members who passed away during the year. The club's recognition of the importance of trees in the environment goes back to its 1876 constitution, which states "the object of this association shall be the care and protection of trees and shrubs in the streets and public places of Lexington and the improvement of the Town by the planting of additional trees and ornamental plants, the study and development of the natural resources ...." In April 1887, these early garden club leaders proposed that the Town appoint a Tree Warden. By 1889, they were talking about planting for Arbor Day. Our forebears were never behind the times!

Their care for the environment is part of the Lexington culture. Jordan McCarron, the, Conservation Stewardship Program Coordinator, says the Lexington Conservation Stewards are over 230 volunteers who work closely with the Conservation Division and its Directors to care for the Town's conservation land. The Stewards continually improve the quality of Lexington's conservation land through efforts such as building bridges and trails, controlling invasive species, maintaining habitat meadows, cleaning up waterways, and hosting conservation events.

For 29 years, Lexington has been a Tree City USA, which is a program run by the national Arbor Day Foundation to recognize communities that manage and expand the presence of public trees. To qualify, a community must maintain a tree board or department, have a community tree ordinance, spend at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and must celebrate Arbor Day.

Today, Lexington is one of only a few towns in eastern Massachusetts that has full-time conservation land management staff and a Tree Warden to care for its 1400 acres of conservation land and other open spaces.

### **SCHEDULED EVENTS:**

(all events at Cotton Farm except bird walk)

- 7-9 am: Bird walk at Dunback Meadow (Citizens for Lexington Conservation)
- 9:30 am: Arbor Day Dedication and Tree Ceremony (Lexington Field and Garden Club and Matthew R Foti Landscape Design & Construction Inc)
- 10 am: Tour of the Cotton Farm Apiary (Lexington High School Beekeeping Club)
- 10:30 am: Home orchard care and pruning workshop (Parterre Garden Services)
- 11:15 am: Arborist Demonstration; how to plant a tree! (Bartlett Tree Experts)

### **THROUGHOUT THE MORNING:**

- Ask an Expert: free landscape and tree care advice with staff from Parterre Garden Services and Bartlett Tree Experts
- Native Plants and Pollinators: gardening tips and advice from Lexington Field and Garden Club members
- Free Arbor Day tree seedlings from Bartlett Tree Experts
- Lexington Junior Ranger Workbooks: prizes available for completed guidebooks!

## **Shade Street Trail Easement Open**

By Keith Ohmart

November of this past year saw the completion of the long anticipated Shade Street Trail connecting Spring Street with the lower end of Shade Street via a Conservation easement granted to the Town of Lexington by Shire PLC. This largely wooded trail, just under a mile in length and wholly on Shire property, now provides a safe and relaxing alternative free of vehicular traffic for pedestrians and off road bicyclists to travel parallel to the entire length of Shade Street.

The construction of the trail was achieved over the course of last year by a combination of Lexington Conservation Steward volunteers and corporate volunteer work teams from Thermo-Fischer Scientific's Bedford location and Shire Pharmaceutical, who put in a combined total of over 190 hours on the project.

Beginning at the marked trail entrance on Spring Street adjacent to the locked Shire parking lot entrance, the trail meanders for just over half a mile before exiting at a rear parking lot on the Shire property. Skirting the edge of the parking lot (look for trail signs to guide you), it then merges with a gravel fire access road at the rear of the Shire property leading

to the lower end of Shade Street. The trail is well-graded throughout its length with a natural woods trail-walking surface before joining the gravel fire road.

In addition to the neighborhood benefit of providing a safe and pleasant walking trail resource, this trail will become part of ACROSS Lexington's newest route later this year. This route will create a loop linking Conservation's Hayden Woods and Idylwilde properties with existing ACROSS Route B, with connections at the Bridge School and where Route B crosses Valleyfield Street.

A wider regional trail connection will also be provided by this new trail for longer distance hikers and off-road bicyclists once planned future trail restoration work to the Hayden Woods trail network and a Colonial era cart path off Lincoln Street are completed. Trail users will then be able to travel from the Western Greenway Trail behind Brookhaven at Lexington to the trail network on the Town's Cranberry Hill property with an eventual connection to the Battle Road Trail in the Minuteman National Historical Park.

Best parking options to reach the newest ACROSS trail will be at the parking lot at the Middle Street entrance to the Idylwilde Conservation/Community Garden property. ACROSS Lexington trail signs will be installed later this spring to guide you to the fire road entrance of the trail.



## Conservation Restriction Update

By Alex Dohan

“Conservation restrictions are the most significant and fastest-growing means of protecting environmentally sensitive land, and Massachusetts has been a leader in their development. It is 44th among states in terms of land area, but 10th in terms of acres preserved for conservation.” —from the state website - to read more:

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/local-officials/dls-newsroom/ct/conservation-restrictions-and-real-property.html>

A Conservation Restriction (CR) is a legal agreement between a landowner and the holder of the restriction. In Massachusetts, the CR is approved and accepted by the state and recorded at the Registry of Deeds, which adds another level of strength to the agreement. The CR is a fairly simple way to protect the conservation values of a piece of property. A CR is typically designed to last forever, and stays with the land, regardless of ownership changes.

In an effort to preserve open space, a few members of Citizens for Lexington Conservation, in collaboration with the Town Conservation Division, have been diligently working on preparing CRs for several parcels of Town-owned land. The Cotton Farm on Marrett Road is a beautiful site, with its apple orchard and pond, and the CR application for that property is now in the hands of state officials, waiting for approval. Another parcel, known internally as the Leary property, is essentially part of the Lower Vine Brook conservation land, and runs from Vine Street to Vine Brook, reaching north and east out into the marshland as well.

The CR committee, presently consisting of Keith Ohmart, Eileen Entin, and Alex Dohan, working with Jordan McCarron of the Town Conservation Department, is in the process of finalizing the application for this property and anticipates sending it off to the state early this spring. Lastly, there are two parcels in the northwestern part of Lexington, known collectively as the Goodwin properties, that still need much work to finalize. These two are harder to access and will not be easily approachable by the public, but add benefit to the Town’s open space and wetland holdings. More visible is the Wright Farm, which will also eventually have a CR held by CLC.

Creating a CR takes time and sometimes hard work. There is paperwork that needs to be filled out, and a detailed conservation restriction document containing all the allowable and prohibited uses of the land must be created for each property. The boundaries of the property must be walked, and marked if that has not already been done. Sometimes this means tromping through swamps and among briars. A thorough description of the land, including topography, flora, and fauna must be written, and supported with photographs where appropriate. And after the CR has been officially accepted by the state and attached to the deed of the property, it must be upheld through annual monitoring, and enforcement of the CR against incursions should they arise.

The Town of Lexington holds many CRs on various properties, and those are the responsibility of the Conservation Division to monitor and maintain. The parcels described above that will have CRs held by CLC were purchased by the Town with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. Under CPA rules, the Town is not allowed to hold a CR on land that it owns. Land trusts typically hold CRs in a situation like this, but these parcels are too small to be of interest to a large organization such as Mass Audubon or the Trustees of Reservations. Lexington does not have its own land trust, nor is it party to a regional land trust like Sudbury Valley Trustees, so CLC has stepped up to act in that role. While this is a new activity for our organization, it fits well into our mission of education and advocacy as we attempt to preserve open space and make such spaces available to the public for passive recreation.

If you are interested in helping out with these or future CRs, please contact us at [citizens4lexingtonconservation@gmail.com](mailto:citizens4lexingtonconservation@gmail.com)

## **Remembering Rosemary Hines Green**

By Eileen Entin

Citizens for Lexington Conservation honors the memory of Rosemary Green, who passed away at age 89 on January 18th. Rosemary graduated from Stanford University and Simmons College. She was a founding member of CLC, contributing quietly and consistently over many years. She served on our Board as Editor of our Newsletter for a number of years and then as Treasurer. Rosemary was among the CLC members who helped to start and oversee the recycling program in Lexington, including diving into the recycling bins to retrieve materials that did not belong there.

Rosemary was an active outdoor enthusiast. She biked, hiked, and canoed. She lived for many years near Whipple Hill and spent many enjoyable hours walking and birding there and in Lexington's other conservation lands. She took up kayaking in her 60's, hiked up Mt. Cardigan at the age of 78, and biked until the age of 82.

She was a devoted member of both St. Brigid and Sacred Heart churches and a dedicated volunteer at the Lexington Food Pantry.

She leaves four children and nine grandchildren. There will be a memorial service for Rosemary on June 15 at 7 PM at Sacred Heart Church. Rosemary's family invites remembrance statements from her friends at this service. After the service there will be refreshments in the Parish Center.

## **The Forest Unseen by David George Haskell**

Reviewed by Keith Ohmart

I have read the works of many naturalists over the years but few can match David George Haskell's skill in marrying the poetry of the English language with the observational skills of a good naturalist. What Haskell can tease out of his observations of a one square meter

patch of woodland forest floor in his native Tennessee over the course of a calendar year is both astounding and magical. Who could imagine that so much could be revealed from such a small space, but that is all that Haskell needs to captivate his readers.

Through Haskell's eyes chapter by chapter we observe the incredible variety of life forms that inhabit or traverse this seemingly ordinary patch of woodland over the course of the seasons. These observations in turn provide Haskell with an invitation to consider the intricacies of the wider ecosystems underpinning this small world that have endured for thousands and sometimes for millions of years. Through acute attention to even the tiniest of creatures, Haskell effortlessly spins connections to the wider world and our place in it.

I began reading this volume last summer while on vacation and found as I neared the end of the book that I simply did not want to finish it. I put it aside to savor the last chapters one at a time finishing the final chapter near the end of the year. I didn't want to end my visits to this patch of Tennessee forestland and through it the wider natural world that Haskell evokes from his patient observations of life that goes on unseen except by all but the dedicated and trained naturalist. Read this book and you will never again look at a salamander let alone a millipede or even tinier springtail in the same way again.

## **Bringing Nature Home**

On May 9th, Citizens for Lexington Conservation and the Lexington Field and Garden Club will host the second of two events that focus on how individual homeowners and community groups can create Meadow Landscapes populated with native plants that support native pollinators and birds.

The first event, held on March 26, featured the movie *Urban and Suburban Meadows*, which explains and illustrates the virtues and practicalities of replacing a conventional lawn with meadow landscaping. Following the video, two local experts with experience in creating natural backyard habitats, Karen Longeteig and Trevor Smith, answered a variety of questions from the audience based on their own experiences.

The second event will feature a showing of *Hometown Habitat - Stories of Bringing Nature Home* This film, which focuses on developing meadow landscaping in community spaces, profiles seven hometown habitat heroes who have created Meadow Landscapes. The narrative thread of this documentary is provided by renowned entomologist Douglas Tallamy, Ph.D. whose research, books and lectures about the use of non-native plants in landscaping sound the alarm about habitat and species loss. Dr. Tallamy challenges the notion that humans are here and nature is someplace else. Tallamy says, "It doesn't have to and shouldn't be that way."

This second event will be held from 7-9 pm on Tuesday, May 9, in the large lecture room at Cary Memorial Library. The event is free and refreshments will be provided. Please join us.

## Goldfinches

By Bobbie Hodson

What's singing "Potato Chips" on an August morning? Is that burst of gold flying by in summer the same olive brown bird during the winter? What about that little bird that doesn't, unlike most birds, dart quickly to our feeder and disappear swiftly, but rather sits there and appears to be contentedly eating the seeds? All these are our beloved American Goldfinch, one of three goldfinches in North America. The other two species are southwestern birds, whereas the American Goldfinch breeds in all of the lower 48 states.

Unlike the Baltimore Oriole and Yellow Warbler, which have finished parenting and are migrating by late August; the goldfinch produces young to coincide with the availability of its principal food source, seeds, and hence is actively singing and visible during the late summer and early fall. Its well-hidden nest is built by the female, and consists of a solid cup of plant fibers and spider web strings. While the female incubates the 4-7 eggs for two weeks, the male feeds her. Once the eggs hatch, both parents actively feed the growing birds, which fledge about two weeks after hatching. After they can fly, the young are still fed by the male. Sometimes the female proceeds to make a second nest.



Preceding migration, all goldfinches molt into their drab winter colors; then in early fall the young start to leave Massachusetts and move southward. During this period many goldfinches will gather together in large flocks in fields to feed. The residential finches we see in our area during the winter often are augmented by those from further north.

Its Latin name is *Carduelis tristis*, which refers to its sometimes sad song ending. Certainly an unusual name for such a colorful bird!!

## Bike Walk Bus Week 2017



<http://lexbikewalkbusweek.org>.

Saturday, May 13 through Sunday, May 21 will be Lexington's fifth annual "**Bike Walk 'n Bus Week**," promoting healthy and sustainable transportation options. During the 9-day period, which coincides with Bay State Bike Week, a variety of activities are being planned to celebrate the many alternative transportation resources available in Town. These events – including bike rides and walks for a variety of abilities and ages -- are being organized by the Lexington Bicycle Advisory, Greenways Corridor, and Safe Routes to School Committees in conjunction with Town staff.

Events this year include an early morning "Commuter Breakfast" at the Lexington Depot for everyone walking or biking to work or school, followed by a historic walk leaving from the Depot; a walk on the newest ACROSS Lexington route; a bike ride through two ACROSS Lexington routes; a hands-on bike maintenance workshop; and a Saturday afternoon Bike Smart safety program for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Lexpress will be free for a day during BWB Week. Look for these and other activities in the schedule posted at <http://lexbikewalkbusweek.org>.

The planning team hopes that some time when you're on one of the bike rides or walks, getting your free bike safety check, riding for free on Lexpress, bicycling to work on national Bike to Work Day, or when you're with your children at the par course on Lincoln Field, you think,

**"What a glorious morning....**

**To take a walk  
To ride my bike  
To catch the bus  
.....to leave my car at home!"**

Peggy Enders on behalf of the BWB Week Planning Committee (Judy Crocker, Peggy Enders, David Kucharsky, Keith Ohmart, and Jeanette Rebecchi)