



LAND REVIEW

A newsletter published by the **Darien Land Trust**, an independent, non-profit organization



Spring
2013

Dunlap Woods

Forever

From Chris Filmer, President

Very few can say that the work they do will create results that last forever. This is certainly a rewarding motivation for the volunteers who put in hundreds of hours on the DLT open spaces. However, being in the business of “forever” also demands that we ensure that the DLT is strong and vibrant-not just today and fifty years from now but — Forever!

For this reason we need to maintain strong connections within our community for the stewards that will follow behind us. Well-designed stewardship programs that restore the land to an environmentally healthy state, a strong board with ties to all ages within our town, a robust financial plan and programs that appeal to all age groups will help us to do this.

And how does the preservation of open space enhance the environment of Darien moving forward?

- **Trees and vegetation play a critical role in improving air quality**
- **Open spaces along waterways reduce run-off and pollution**
- **Coastal salt marshes protect waterfront land in storm surges**
- **Nature preserves and habitats protect native species and wildlife**
- **Scenic views and nature walks enhance quality of life**

The Darien Land Trust is **your** local land trust and we are working hard year-round to achieve these goals. Please continue to support us by writing a check to become a member and join us at our clean-up day on Saturday, April 27th in Dunlap / Selleck's Woods.



Dogwoods Blooming at Waterbury Field

Last fall the first stage of a stewardship plan was begun at Waterbury Field with the planting of 10 native dogwood trees from the Darien Tree Conservancy sale. We consulted with the Audubon at Home habitat restoration program to determine the best native plants and trees to enhance biodiversity at this much-loved property. Through our study of using native plants and eliminating invasives we are learning how to improve the environment of our Town for future generations.

New Acquisitions!

Last summer we reached the milestone of the protection of more than 200 acres of open space in Darien with three new acquisitions. This means that despite the fact that Darien is now 97% developed, thanks to generous donors and supporters we are still managing to conserve land for future generations. More than 40 acres have been saved since the preservation of Mather Meadows in 2003. We are your local land trust keeping open space protected forever.



Bringing Nature to Darien's Children

Our children are the next generation of nature lovers who will aspire to preserve and protect our most precious open spaces. By using our nature preserves to introduce children through science-curriculum based nature programs and preschool visits; we hope to share our love of the natural world with them. The grade school programs are conducted with the Darien Nature Center — in a partnership that utilizes their trained teachers with our open spaces.



"People protect what they love..."
- Jacques Yves Cousteau



Celebration of the Woods and Streams

Together with Friends of Selleck's Woods, last June we held an event of fun and learning for several hundred children and adults. Funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: Long Island Sound Futures Fund, the event offered exhibits, games, food, music and the beauty of one of Darien's loveliest open spaces.

Activities included butterfly gardens, woodland exhibits, nature guides along discovery trails (including guided bird tours and specialists in frogs, turtles and salamanders), a native plant garden, I Spy Corner and tree identification. Many young families visited, and for some it was their first visit to the Dunlap/Selleck's Woods Nature Preserve on Parklands Drive.



Warblers abound!

For many birders the spring migration is defined by the warblers that pass through our area. Warblers are small, colorful song birds that winter in the southern US and South America and then return during spring migration, with some even sticking around to nest and raise families on our properties. Most migrate through southern Connecticut from late April through early Jul, using open spaces to rest and refuel. Dunlap Woods has at least two types of warblers, including this beautiful Yellow-Rump Warbler.

Volunteers come through in wake of Hurricane Sandy

In the wake of the damage and flooding of Hurricane Sandy, board members and volunteers worked together to salvage trees, clear trails and reopen Dunlap/ Selleck's Woods to visitors.

This was a huge commitment of volunteer time as at least a dozen large trees were lost in Dunlap/Selleck's Woods. The land and wetland we conserve as open space create natural buffers against future severe storms.





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IN THIS ISSUE: Volunteers, Warblers, Dogwoods and New Acquisitions!

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**Spring
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BE A STEWARD FOR A DAY!!!

Saturday, April 27th 10:00 am - Noon

Join us for our Annual Spring Cleanup



DIRECTIONS TO DUNLAP/SELLECKS WOODS

Head towards Norwalk on the Post Rd., turn right at Trader Joes/Rory's on to Kings Hwy North. Immediately after you go over I-95, turn right onto Parklands Drive and continue past the office buildings to the entrance to Dunlap/ Selleck's Woods.

There are always maintenance projects to work on at the Darien Land Trust, especially after extreme storm events such as Hurricane Sandy. We urge you to join us and become a member, but we also invite you to join our Stewardship Team for a day. On Sat., April 27th we will meet at the entrance to Dunlap Woods (directions below) to prepare the Woods for spring.

All ages are welcome, and volunteers need only a pair of garden gloves, comfortable work clothes and mud-ready shoes. Rakes, pitchforks and a wheelbarrow are also useful.

**Please RSVP to Gordon Hough at
203-655-7077 by April 25th and join us!**

Water and light refreshments will be provided.