

# Northern Woodlands Conference

Friday, September 30 – Sunday, October 2, 2016

Hulbert Outdoor Center, Fairlee, Vermont

## Conference Schedule

Sponsored by The Bailey Charitable Foundation and The Trust for Public Land, this event celebrates the natural history of our region and the interactions of people and place.

### Friday, September 30

- 4:30 – 6:00 pm      **Registration** – *Library*
- 5:00 – 6:00 pm      **Social Hour** – *Conference Hall*
- 6:00 – 7:00 pm      **Dinner** – *Dining Hall*
- 7:15 – 8:15 pm      **Plenary Session: Golden Eagles in the Northern Woodlands Presentation by Todd Katzner** – *Conference Hall*
- Golden eagles are a secretive, rarely seen but widespread apex predator in eastern North America. This talk will focus on the ecology, flight behavior, and conservation of these remarkable birds, focusing on the migration and wintering periods they spend in the northern woodlands.
- 8:30 – whenever      **Poetry & Music in the Barn** – reading by poet Verandah Porche and music with folk singer Celia Evans – *Barn*

### Saturday, October 1

- 6:45 – 7:45 am      **Early Bird Woods Walk with Virginia Barlow & Dave Mance III**
- 7:30 – 8:30 am      **Breakfast** – *Dining Hall*
- 8:00 – 8:30 am      **Registration** – *Library*
- 8:45 – 9:30 am      **Welcome & Keynote Address “If You Don’t Know the Ground...” by Richard Ober** – *Conference Hall*
- “...you are probably wrong about nearly everything else.” Norman Maclean's line from *Young Men and Fire* has defined Mr. Ober’s career in conservation,

philanthropy, and writing, and how he thinks about the powerful bonds between people and place.

9:30 – 9:45 am **Break**

## **Morning Workshop Sessions**

(Choose TWO 1 hour sessions A&B, or ONE 2 hour session AB)

### **Morning Session A**

9:45 – 10:45 am

- **The Common Loon: Habitat, Colonization, and Stories from the Field Walk with Eric Hanson**
  - Eric Hanson, the Vermont Center for Ecostudies loon biologist, will lead a walk down to the shores of Lake Morey in hopes of observing a loon or two on the lake. Currently loons do not nest on the lake but are often present. We'll talk about the return of loons to this region of Vermont and see what kind of habitat they prefer. Mr. Hanson will share stories from rescues to recent research being conducting around North America, including tales from a recent loon rescue caught in fishing line on nearby Lake Fairlee.
- **Writing Workshop with Author and *Northern Woodlands* Columnist Robert Kimber**
  - (*Limit: 20*) In this workshop we'll look at a personal essay and a reportorial piece to see how their authors bring characters into them and why. Copies of the texts will be sent to registered participants a few weeks before the conference.

### **Morning Session B**

11:00 – 12:00 pm

- **Thirty-Eight: The Hurricane That Transformed New England with Stephen Long**
  - The 1938 hurricane was the most devastating weather event ever in New England. It left lasting impressions in the pine forests of New Hampshire and Massachusetts and in the sugar bushes of Vermont. Stephen Long, the author of *Thirty-Eight* will explore the human and ecological consequences of this huge disturbance.
- **Finding the Verse in Conversation Writing Workshop with Verandah Porche**
  - Verandah Porche will offer the concept of told poems— shared narratives of lives, created collaboratively with "ordinary people." This is the process she used to distill the text for *Shedding Light on the Working Forest*, a traveling exhibition with paintings by Kathleen Kolb.

### **Morning Session AB**

9:45 – 12:00 pm

- **A Place in Mind Writing Workshop with Terry Osborne & Patrick White**
  - (*Limit: 20*) This workshop will be focused on developing short personal narratives about place. We will use indoor and outdoor writing exercises to explore specific aspects of

successful place narratives. Some sample place-based nature essays will be sent to registered participants beforehand, and if you come to the workshop with your own “place” in mind—a location you’d like to write about, and even a reason you’d like to write about it—you’ll have material to develop in the workshop.

- **Connecting to Place: Learning in Nature at Every Age Educator Workshop with Lisa Purcell & Cheryl Charles**
  - As very young children we connect to nature through play – splashing in puddles, stirring mud soup on a stump stove, pretending to be baby birds in a nest. We ask endless questions – how much can an ant carry, who lives in the burrow under the porch, what trees are best for climbing? Questions become investigations, and, by high school, students are working together to gather data and share results as they explore the local environment. From preschool through adulthood, our understanding and connection to place expands and deepens with each opportunity we have to engage with nature in our own way and in our own time. All children deserve a high quality, nature-based environmental education. What is our role as educators, parents, adults in nurturing a child’s natural curiosity and connection to place? And how do we nurture our own? Let’s explore these questions together by experiencing and reflecting on connecting to nature at every age.

12:00 – 1:00 pm      **Lunch** – Dining Hall

1:15 – 2:45 pm      **Plenary Session: “Elements of Story” Reading & Discussion with Rick Bass**  
– Barn

2:45 – 3:00 pm      **Break**

4:00 – 6:00 pm      **The Caterpillar Lab will be open.** – Meet an assortment of late season native caterpillars.

## **Afternoon Workshop Sessions**

*(Choose TWO 1 hour sessions A&B, or ONE 2 hour session AB)*

### **Afternoon Session A**

3:00 – 4:00 pm

- **Caterpillars of New England: Their Natural History and Value as an Educational Resource with Sam Jaffe**
  - Sam Jaffe will discuss his work growing The Caterpillar Lab, from its roots in natural history photography to its current form as a multidisciplinary project focused on using native caterpillars to inspire interest in the natural world. Through a visually stunning presentation of slides and videos, Sam will explore the surprising diversity of caterpillars to be found in New England, their particular strength as educational tools, and their

value to us and to local ecosystems. He will also share a multitude of tips on finding, collecting, and rearing caterpillars at home.

- **How to Make Venomous Snakes Sound Appealing Reading & Discussion with Ted Levin**
  - Read from Ted's new book and discuss the obstacles to working with an endangered species.
- **Finding Stories and Humor in Nature Workshop & Walk with Michael Caduto**
  - A compelling narrative is the flesh and blood that animates the bones of a good nature essay, luring the reader into the tale. Michael J. Caduto—author, ecologist and storyteller— leads the audience in exploring how to weave story and humor into natural history, which is fascinating in its own right. Along the way, Michael will share selected stories from his new book, *Through a Naturalist's Eyes* (University Press of New England), and then take the group on a brief nature walk to explore some favorite tales (and punch-lines) lurking in the wilds.

## Afternoon Session B

4:15 – 5:15 pm

- **Why Ice Storms Aren't Cool: New Research at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest Targets Deadly Winter Storms with Dr. Lindsey Rustad**
  - Despite their influential role in shaping forest ecosystems and the services they provide, knowledge of ice storms and their impacts remains relatively limited, largely because these storms remain hard to predict and scientists don't know when or where they will next occur. This workshop will feature a new study at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, part of the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire that is using a suite of tools, including creating artificial ice storms, to study the impacts of these storms on northern hardwood forests. This research will provide the scientific community, land managers and the concerned public greater insight on the impacts of these powerful, frightening, and curiously aesthetic extreme winter weather events on ecosystem dynamics in northern hardwood forests.
- **The Natural (and Unnatural) History of the Common Loon with Eric Hanson**
  - Eric Hanson will lead a PowerPoint program about the natural history and conservation of the common loon. Loons have made an incredible comeback from less than 10 nesting pairs in Vermont in the 1980s to over 80 pairs today. Along the way, researchers have learned much more about this bird through banding and satellite telemetry as well as decades of monitoring statewide populations in VT and NH.

## Afternoon Session AB

3:00 – 5:30 pm

- **Elements of Story Writing Workshop with Rick Bass**
  - (*Limit: 20*) We will discuss what makes good stories good, reiterating ten basic rules to remember in all writing, whether fiction or nonfiction.

- **The Story and the Pitch Writing Workshop with Jim Collins & Jay Heinrichs**
  - (*Limit: 20*) As the publishing landscape continues to change at a disorienting pace, traditional models of how writers get published are changing, as well. The first part of this interactive, two-hour workshop will focus on the crucial question that all writers still must ask: What makes your idea a true story — one that is narrative, memorable, and exciting to editors? The second part of the workshop will look at the key question at the heart of the new publishing frontier: How do you get your story out there in front of an audience? The session will include a discussion and development of story pitches provided by participants. Level: Early- and mid-career writers. Note: Participants will be invited to submit 200-word “story pitches” in advance of the session. Jim or Jay will hold a brief consulting session with each participant who submits a pitch; and they’ll pick three pitches to use as examples in the group discussion.
- **Nature Illustration with Nona Estrin & Adelaide Tyrol**
  - (*Limit: 20*) Anyone interested in the outdoors and willing to put some effort into acquiring some basic art skills is welcome to this two hour field drawing workshop. The class will be an introduction to drawing using gesture, contour, and watercolor techniques to quickly record one’s experience and observations of nature. We encourage people to bring a simple set of watercolors and/or watercolor pencils, a pad, and pencils. The workshop will focus on connecting visually with nature. We will talk about the importance of using art as a communication tool to inform and elucidate the things we see as important. Field science and field drawing are fabulous mates: both take curiosity, patience, and attention to detail. There is such a need to slow down, to be patient, in order to really experience the world around us. Drawing outdoors cultivates a kind of profound attention to the natural world and our place in it.

- 5:30 – 6:00 pm**      **Social Hour** – *schmooze, enjoy hors d’oeuvres and check out four seasons of highlights from our Reader Photo Gallery*
- 6:00 – 7:00 pm**      **Dinner** – *Dining Hall*
- 7:15 – 8:15 pm**      **Plenary Session: “Voices from the Hills” with Jeffrey Lent** – *Conference Hall*
- A talk about Jeffrey’s experience growing up on a mixed-use, mid-20th century typical Vermont hill farm, and how that model is regaining viability in practice today. He’ll conclude with a short reading from his Spring 2017 release, *Before We Sleep*.
- 8:30 – whenever**      **Party in the Barn!** – *With Open Mic kicked off by Bill Torrey and Dede Cummings, emceed by Dave Mance and Elise Tillinghast*

## Sunday, October 2

- 7:30 – 8:30 am      *Breakfast and Thank You*
- 8:45 – 10:30 am    **Plenary Session: “Wildlife Messages: Parental Guidance Advised,”**  
**Presentation on Scent Marking with Susan Morse** – *Conference Hall*
- 11:00 am            *Check-out*

*Learn more:*

<http://northernwoodlands.org/writersconference>

*Register Today:*

<http://northernwoodlands.org/shop/c/conference-registration>