

Northern Woodlands Conference

Friday, October 18 – Sunday, October 20, 2019

Hulbert Outdoor Center, Fairlee, Vermont

Thank you to our sponsor:

The Bailey Charitable Foundation

With special thanks to:

The Upper Valley Land Trust - for supporting the weekend
with a natural community mapping event Sunday afternoon

Friday, October 18

4:00 – 5:00 pm **Registration - Library**

5:00 – 6:00 pm **Social Hour - Conference Hall**

6:00 – 7:00 pm **Dinner - Dining Hall**

7:00 – 8:00 pm **Plenary Session - Conference Hall**

Birds, Bees, Bats, and Bugs: Why Animals Make and Use Sound

❖ Laurel Symes, Assistant Director, Bioacoustics Research Program, Cornell Lab of Ornithology

This engaging and accessible presentation will delve into the world of animal sound to explore how and why animals produce sound. Using examples from New Hampshire crickets to Boston whales, we will discuss animal sounds that are too fast for us to follow, sounds that are too high for us to hear, and sounds that take hours or days to finish. The talk will include many opportunities to listen to animal sound and will include examples from far away and close to home.

8:30 – whenever **Social Time - Conference Hall**

With music by Celia Evans, Steve Langdon and friends

Saturday, October 19

6:45 – 7:45 am **Early Bird Woods Walk - Front Porch**

7:30 – 8:30 am **Breakfast - Dining Hall**

8:00 – 8:30 am **Registration - Library**

8:35 - 8:45 am **Welcome - Conference Hall**
Remarks from Elise Tillinghast and orientation to the Hulbert Outdoor Center

8:45 – 9:45 am **Plenary Session - Conference Hall**

A World in a Feather

- ❖ Chris Maynard, Artist, Author

Visual art can help people to see things in new ways. Using feathers as the artistic medium, we will cover what feathers are made of, how they grow, how birds use and shed them; legalities of using feathers; the art; and the symbology of flight and hope that feathers often represent.

9:45 – 10:00 am **Break**

Morning Sessions - Choose TWO 1-hour sessions (A & B)

10:00 –11:00 am **Morning Session A (1 Hour)**

1. The Social Behavior of Black Bears with Ben Kilham - Conference Hall

A lecture on black bear behavior with photos and video.

2. Following Nature's Track with Bernd Heinrich - Danny's Room

We are world-wide becoming increasingly urbanized and out of touch with nature. As society we are to the point of apparent divorce from it, especially concerning forests. Yet, we all depend on them for our climate, our lives, and our health and happiness. The link that determines our actions and our policies are knowledge and love. In this talk I plan to present a slide show to review my own trajectory of how one thing leads to another in nature tracking, to try to identify influences and their effects and to make suggestions for future nature trackers.

3. Raising Monarchs: Lessons in Caring with Dawn Dextraze - Upper Dining Hall

What leads humans to care for living things and what is the value of such experiences? Consider the answers to these questions with Dawn as she shares the lessons she has learned raising over 200 monarch butterflies the past 3 summers. A slide show of her photos of monarchs will accompany this talk.

4. The Ecology of Vermont, in One Hour and Thirty Pictures with Jerry Jenkins - Arts Building

Description pending.

5. Great River Terrace: Creating a Community After Homelessness with Verandah Porche

- Bridge Club House

Homeless people are living in the open, in tents, in cars, in the woods and riverbanks around the Brattleboro. A year and a half ago, Windham-Windsor Housing Trust and Groundworks Collaborative, a nonprofit providing services to people facing housing and food insecurity, teamed up to found Great River Terrace. “Voices of Great River Terrace” is the working title of a year-long collaborative writing project bringing together formerly homeless residents and poet Verandah Porche. Once the Lamplighter Inn, a motel that had fallen into disrepair, Great River Terrace is permanent housing, a collection of efficiency apartments and a pleasant common space on spacious grounds. A joint project of three innovative

nonprofits, Windham Windsor Housing Trust, Groundworks Collaborative, and HCRS, Great River Terrace will be a year old in June 2019. Verandah will share narratives and insights emphasizing “unbrokenness” rather than tragedy, to strengthen personal resilience, and to encourage and document the growth of this new community.

11:00 – 11:15 am Break

11:15 – 12:30 pm Morning Session B (1 Hour)

1. Setting Up Nature Journals with Clare Walker Leslie - Arts Building

Participants will learn simple techniques for setting up an ongoing seasonal Nature Journal from Clare Walker Leslie, who has been teaching Nature Journaling for over forty years and now has fifty-four journals herself. Her thirteen published books come from years learning from her journals. *Limit: 25. This session runs to 12:45.*

2. Bee Lining Walk with Tom Seeley - Front Porch

In this walk, we look at bee lining/hunting—locating wild colonies of honey bees—which is one of the most fascinating games in the world. We will review the equipment involved and the process of establishing and following beelines, which are lines of bees flying back to their secret homes. And, if the day is sunny and warm enough for bees to be flying, we will attempt to start a bee hunt. *This session runs to 12:45.*

3. Photography for Naturalists with Sean Beckett - Barn

Learn to harness your camera as a tool to enhance your ecological literacy. We'll blend photography techniques and naturalist inquiry skills to achieve a deeper connection with nature. Examples may include photography-based wilderness awareness exercises, natural history investigations using composition techniques, or the introduction of exposure principles to reliably capture great images in challenging light. Ideal for beginner and intermediate photographers with any type of camera (including mobile devices). Participants will leave with beautiful photographs and a powerful new approach to walking in the northern forest. *Limited to 16. This session runs to 12:45.*

4. Eastern Old-growth Forests: Management, Restoration, and Adaptation with William Keeton

- Upper Dining Hall

Can we restore old-growth forests to our region and is there a place for old-growth on the future landscape? This talk will take on these questions, describing the ecology and potential for restoring eastern old-growth forests and managing for their characteristics. It will present techniques and findings from a 20 experiment in old-growth management, outlining co-benefits such as biodiversity, carbon, flood resilience, and economic return. However, in the context of global change, the old-growth of the future may not be the same as the past, and we will need to consider that reality carefully. The talk will explore questions of resilience and adaption, with the aim of giving future generations an opportunity to experience old-growth forests.

5. A Place in Mind with Patrick White and Julia Shipley - Danny's Room

This workshop will focus 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.

12:30 – 1:30 pm Lunch - Dining Hall

1:45 – 2:30 pm Plenary Session - Conference Hall

The Resilient Forest Project

- ❖ Jim Collins, Author, Editor
- ❖ David Dobbs, Author
- ❖ Erica Heilman, Audio Producer, Host of *Rumble Strip*
- ❖ Ben Silberfarb, Filmmaker
- ❖ Elise Tillinghast, Executive Director / Publisher, Northern Woodlands

This joint presentation will share clips from Northern Woodlands' special 25th anniversary series "The Resilient Forest," and describe the purpose and creative process of creating the series.

2:30 – 2:45 pm Break

Afternoon Sessions - Choose TWO 1-hour sessions (A & B) or ONE 2-hour session (AB)

2:45 – 3:45 pm Afternoon Session A (1 Hour)

1. Composing for the Landscape with Ben Cosgrove - Conference Hall

Musician Ben Cosgrove has spent the better part of the last decade traveling around the country and documenting his experiences of its different physical environments in the instrumental music he writes and performs. This practice has required him to think critically about the process by which we construct and relate to place, about our tendency to project our inner lives and intellectual preconceptions onto natural landscapes, and about different strategies for representing something so subjective in a wordless medium. At this presentation, Ben will perform a concert of his music - including several pieces written during artist residencies at various National Parks and other public lands - on solo piano, while telling the stories behind each song's conception and development.

2. A Year in Nature: A Memoir of Solace Reading and Discussion with Clare Walker Leslie

- Upper Dining Hall

Clare Walker Leslie will read from and discuss thoughts and images from her newest book, *A Year in Nature: A Memoir of Solace*, just published with Green Writers Press. Beginning with the Winter Solstice, following the months through family, political, environmental worries, Clare finds returning solace in the ongoing seasons of nature.

3. Editor/Writers Panel Discussion - Danny's Room

This is an opportunity to talk with working writers/editors about their own experiences pitching, assigning, selecting and revising work that relates to the Northeast's people and forests. Featuring Ian

Aldrich, Deputy Editor of *Yankee Magazine* and Eileen Townsend, successful freelancer, Editor-in-chief at *The Northern Logger and Timber Processor* and Associate Research Scholar at the Brown Institute for Media Research. Bring your questions! *Additional panelists to be announced.*

4. Woods Walk with Bernd Heinrich - *Front Porch*

4:00 – 5:00 pm Afternoon Session B (1 Hour)

1. The Untold Story of the Honey Bee in the Wild with Tom Seeley - *Upper Dining Hall*

Humans have kept honey bees in hives for millennia, yet only in recent decades have biologists begun to investigate how these bees live in the natural world. In this talk we will review what has been learned about the behavior, social life, and survival strategies of honey bees living outside the beekeeper's hive, and how these things differ from their lives under the management of beekeepers. We will also see how the wild honey bee colonies can help us reverse the alarming die-off among the planet's managed honey bee colonies.

2. Wood Notes: A Multi-genre Approach to Writing About Trees with Julia Shipley - *Library*

In addition to writing on trees (aka: paper) Julia has frequently written about trees in both poems, article and multi-essay forms for publication including *Orion*, *Yankee Magazine*, *The Old Farmers' Almanac*, *Taproot*, and *Northern Woodlands*. She'll share excerpts from these pieces with some commentary on the writing process.

3. Workshop with Jerry Jenkins - *Barn*

Description pending

4. *Portrait of a Forest* Presentation by George Bellerose - *Danny's Room*

Portrait of a Forest: Men and Machine documents through field photography and wide-ranging interviews—historians, loggers, foresters, mill owners, environmentalists, state officials—the challenges facing the forest industry and the importance of a healthy forest. The Vermont Folklife Center will publish and distribute the free book with the help of organizations concerned about the future of the forest. The project is part of the center's mission to preserve and honor the voices and work of Vermonters.

2:45 – 4:45 pm Afternoon Session AB (2 Hours)

1. Structure as an Expressive Force in Writing with David Dobbs - *Arts Building*

A talk and workshop, with models from the blues, the sonata, and a piece of string: Structure is perhaps the writer's most underappreciated tool — even though it has tremendous power to reinforce and even generate meaning. In first a talk with musical examples, and then some collaborative problem-solving, this workshop will explore how composers and writers including Led Zeppelin, Franz Schubert, and John McPhee use structure as an expressive force - and how you can too. The talk is open to all. The workshoppy second half will be capped at 20 people. (We'll have a Kashmir-length bathroom break between the two.)

5:00 – 6:00 pm Social Hour - *Conference Hall*

6:00 – 7:00 pm **Plenary Session** - *Conference Hall*

Readings from Published Works

- ❖ David Carroll, Naturalist, Artist, Author

David Carroll will introduce his life and work as a naturalist, artist, and writer and read brief selections from his natural histories and memoir with pauses to invite Q&A, comments, and discussion.

7:00 – 8:00 pm **Dinner** - *Dining Hall*

8:15 – whenever **Open Mic Night** - *Conference Hall*

Musical performance by Ben Cosgrove, kicking off Open Mic Night

Sunday, October 20

7:30 – 8:30 am **Breakfast & Check-out of Cabins**

8:45 – 10:30 am **Plenary Session** - *Conference Hall*

Paleo-ecology of New England: Insights from Past Millennia with Wyatt Osborn

- ❖ Wyatt Osborn, Professor of Ecology and Earth Science, Emerson College, Research Fellow at Harvard Forest

As we attempt to understand and manage New England ecosystems and anticipate their response to climate change, we can look to the past for insights. The sediments that have accumulated at the bottoms of lakes and ponds over the past 15,000 years provide a key archive of past environmental change. Sediment cores can be radiocarbon-dated, and then various components of the sediment can be analyzed to reconstruct different aspects of the environment. For example, the chemistry and layering of sediments allow us to reconstruct past climate change, while analyses of ancient pollen grains and charcoal fragments reveal past changes in forest composition and fire activity. This type of retrospective science illustrates the pace, patterns, and drivers of past ecological dynamics, and also helps us understand long-term interactions between humans and the environment.

11:00 am **Check-out**

- ❖ The **Upper Valley Land Trust** will host a natural community mapping event at nearby Ely Mountain on Sunday afternoon - *details to come!*