

OPEN SPACES

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST, INC.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

FALL 2024



WE DID IT!

Stamford Conservation Land Trust
Has Acquired a New 64-Acre Preserve!

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.” ~John Muir

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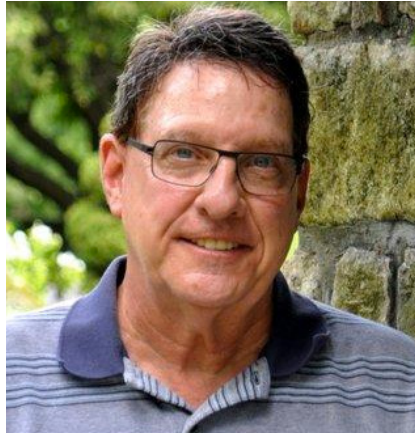
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Harry Day, Stamford Land Conservation Trust President

Dear Friends of SLCT,
WE'VE DONE IT! SLCT has successfully closed on the 64 acres we have been negotiating to purchase since late 2020.

The purchase took longer than anyone could have imagined at the outset. It seemed each time we thought we had everything in order; there was something new to address. At times frustrating, we never lost sight of the prize, and are grateful to the sellers, our partners, and our supporters for being patient alongside us.

We could spend time looking back, but now is really the time to look forward.

These 64 acres connect our existing Helen Altschul Preserve to the city's Newman Mills Park and the Taylor Preserve of Mianus River Gorge, Inc.,

to create approximately 240 acres of contiguous open space.

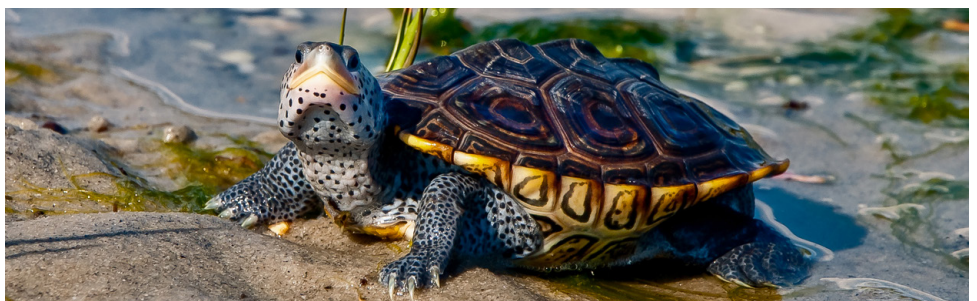
While a crowning achievement for SLCT, it's also an invaluable asset for the Stamford community. At a time when open space around the country is disappearing, we are privileged to be growing our access to natural, forested open space and creating opportunities for passive recreation.

We are anxious to embark on the next phase of the acquisition, which entails improving the entrance to the new preserve, creating a small parking area, adding signage, and blazing trails. As soon as this work is completed, we look forward to welcoming our friends and neighbors from all over Stamford into the preserve.

As we prepare the preserve for its first human visitors, we are also excited this land will remain forever a wildlife habitat, never threatened by development.

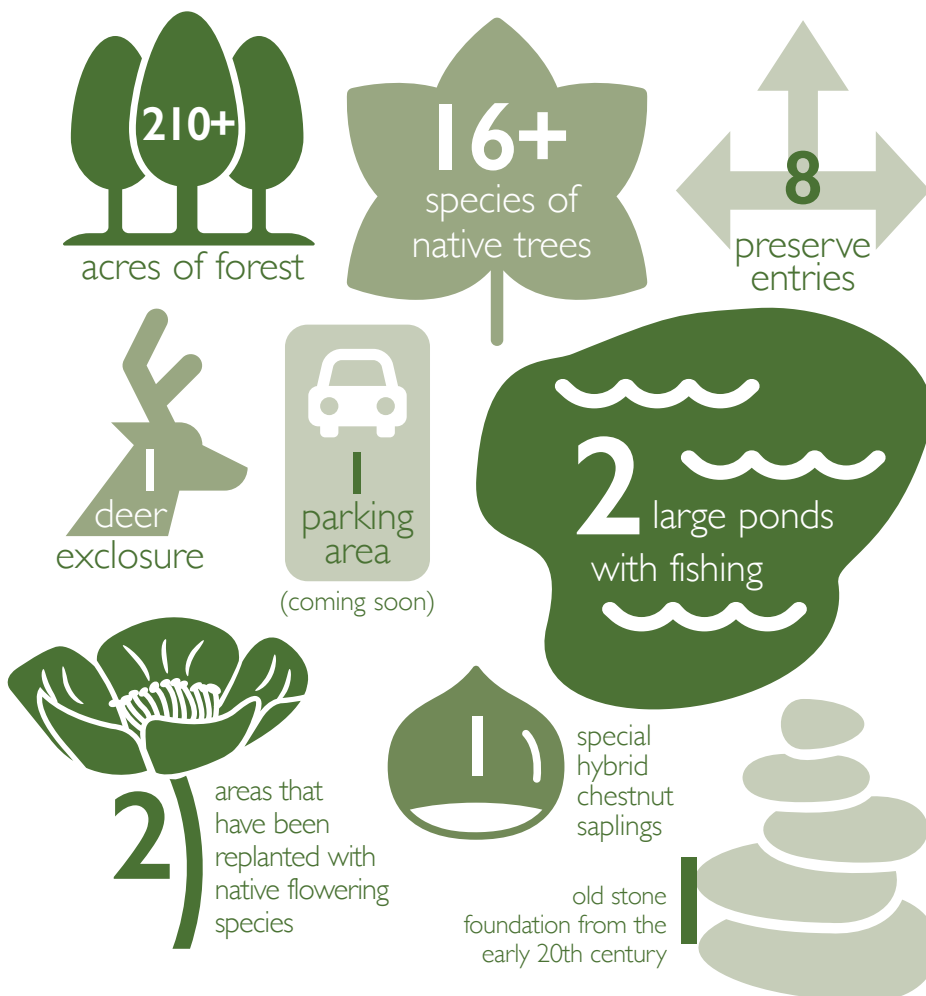
I've said many times in past letters that we could not have accomplished this without your support. We hope you will come celebrate with us at this year's Annual Meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, October 22nd. We have a great program planned. Check our website at www.stamfordland.org and your mailbox for updated information and details.

Warm regards,
Harry Day, President



ALTSCHUL AND DAY PRESERVES: FACTS & FIGURES

These combined 210+ acres of preserves offer much to discover. We hope you will visit this beautiful natural space, which has been preserved for the enjoyment of all of Stamford's residents.



The Altschul and Day Preserves Are Home To:

- Wetland and swamp areas
- Walking trails
- Hundreds of birds and small animals
- Deer and coyote
- Beautiful rock formations
- Countless stone walls

**SLCT wishes to thank the many
people without whom this important
acquisition would not have happened:**

The Trustees of the Margaret Lang and
Arthur Altschul Trusts

The Connecticut Department of Energy
and Environmental Protection

The City of Stamford

The Day Family Foundation

Robinson & Cole LLP

Redniss & Mead

Richard Freedman

June Rosenthal

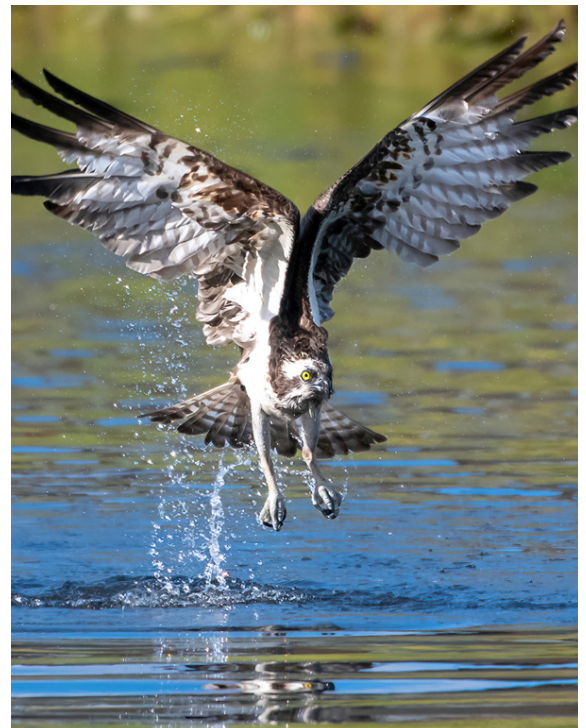
All of our donors and supporters



THE MAGNIFICENT OSPREY

COMEBACK KID OF THE CONNECTICUT COASTLINE

In recent years, the osprey, a majestic bird of prey, have made a heartening comeback in Connecticut. Their revival is not only a testament to nature's resilience, but also a story of community effort and conservation success.



A Brief History

Ospreys, often called “sea hawks” or “fish eagles,” are large birds known for their incredible ability to dive for fish. These birds once faced severe population declines across North America due to habitat loss and the use of pesticides like DDT. By the mid-20th century, their numbers had dwindled alarmingly.

Connecticut, with its rich waterways, was no exception. The osprey population in the state saw a dramatic drop, and by the 1970s, they were on the brink of local extinction. However, the banning of DDT in 1972 marked the beginning of a slow yet steady recovery for these birds.

Conservation Efforts

The resurgence of ospreys in Connecticut is largely due to concerted conservation efforts. Organizations and volunteers have played a critical role in this success story. One of the key initiatives has been the construction of artificial nesting platforms. These structures provide ospreys with safe, stable places to build their nests and raise their young.

Additionally, wetlands and coastal areas have been protected and restored, providing ospreys with ideal hunting grounds. Public awareness campaigns have also encouraged people to support and respect these habitats.

Monitoring and Community Involvement

Monitoring programs have been instrumental in tracking ospreys' return. Volunteers, often referred to as “osprey stewards,” monitor active nests, collect data, and report on the birds' health and behavior. These efforts help biologists understand more about osprey populations and inform future conservation strategies.

Towns and cities like Stamford have embraced the presence of these birds, taking pride in local osprey nests and actively participating in their protection. There are

many osprey nests along our local shoreline, some on man-made platforms and others on treetops, utility poles, channel markers, pilings, and other structures in or near water.

Ospreys winter in South America and migrate north in the spring. Many residents look forward to their return as a sign of warmer days and the enduring strength of the natural world.

The Current Status

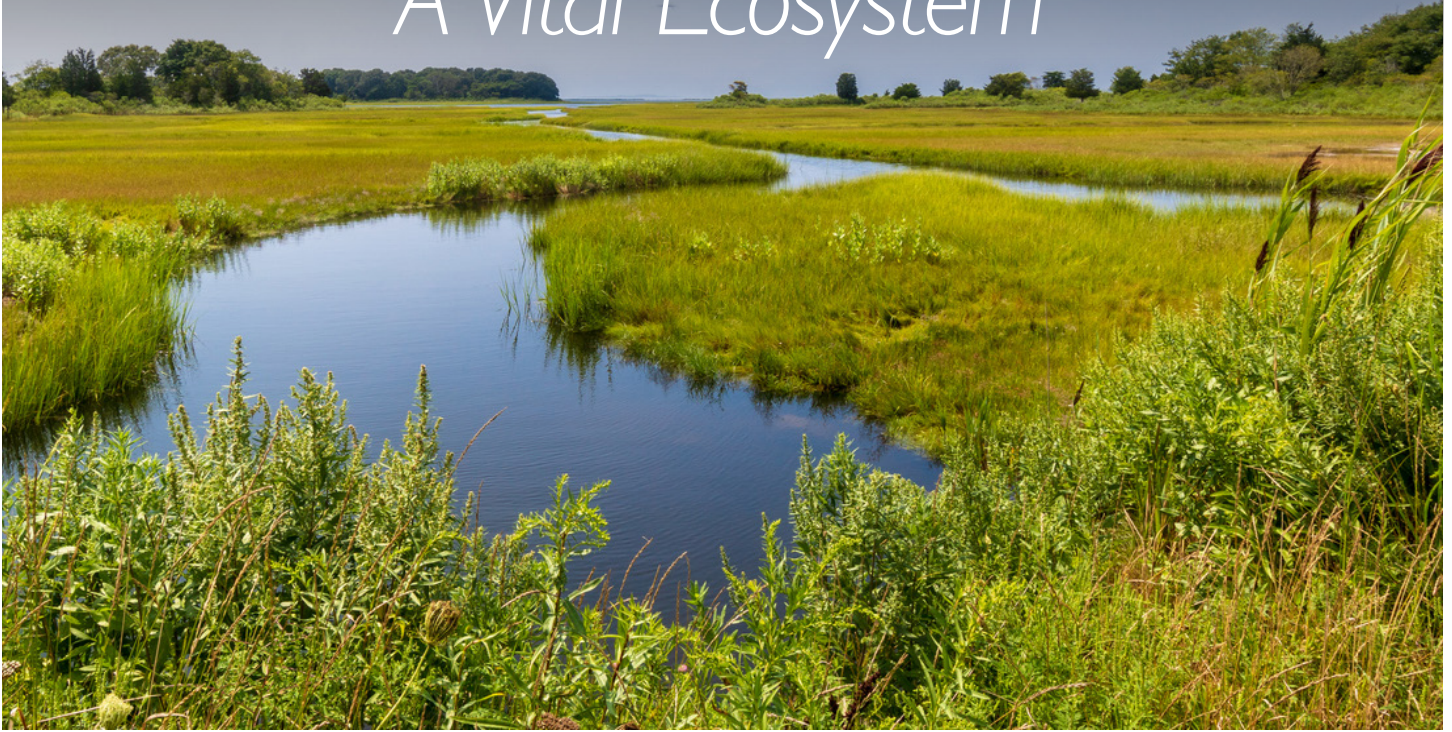
Today the osprey population in Connecticut is thriving and they are a familiar sight along rivers, lakes, and coastal areas. This success story serves as an inspiring example of what can be achieved when communities come together to protect the natural world.

The osprey's comeback is not just about numbers; it's a reminder of the importance of preserving our environment for future generations. By continuing to support conservation efforts, we can ensure that these magnificent birds soar over Connecticut's skies for many years to come.



The Stamford Land Conservation Trust has built an osprey nest on its preserve at Wallacks Point in the Shippan section of Stamford. Although we have not hosted an osprey family yet, we are hopeful for next season. You can see a live stream of our nest on our website at stamfordland.org.

SALT MARSHES OF THE CONNECTICUT COASTLINE: *A Vital Ecosystem*



Salt marshes are unique coastal wetlands

Salt marshes are dominated by tough, salt-tolerant plants that have adapted to survive in the harsh conditions where salty water regularly floods the soil. The most common plants are grasses, such as smooth cordgrass and salt meadow cordgrass.

These grasses are vital because they help trap sediment, build up the marsh, and shelter many small animals. Their roots also help stabilize the coastline, preventing erosion from waves and storms.

Salt marshes are teeming with life, offering a safe haven for many animals. One of the most iconic creatures of the salt marsh is the blue crab. These crabs thrive in the

shallow waters of the marsh, where they hunt for small fish, insects, and other invertebrates. The marshes are also home to the diamondback terrapin, a turtle species that relies on these wetlands for nesting and feeding.

Birds are another major group that depends on salt marshes. The great egret and clapper rail are just two examples of birds that find food and nesting sites in these areas. The marshes provide these birds with many small fish, crabs, and insects to eat.

Fish use the salt marshes as nurseries. Juvenile striped bass, for instance, spend their early lives in these protected waters before venturing into the open ocean.

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST CONTACTS

Email: info@stamfordland.org
Phone: 203-578-7258

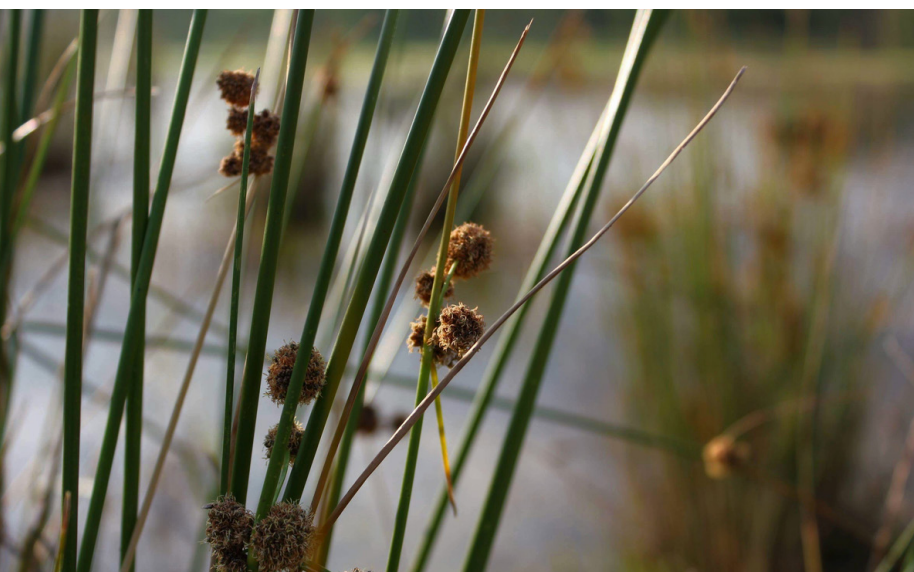
Website: www.StamfordLand.org
Address: 22 First Street, Stamford CT

The marsh's complex network of grasses and shallow channels offers a safe environment for young fish to grow.

The Importance of Salt Marshes

Beyond providing habitat, salt marshes offer many benefits to shore communities. They act as natural water filters, trapping pollutants and excess nutrients before they reach the ocean. Salt marshes also serve as buffers against storm surges, protecting inland areas from flooding and erosion.

Unfortunately, these marshes are threatened by development, pollution, and rising sea levels. By preserving the salt marshes along the New York and Connecticut coastlines, we ensure that these rich habitats continue to thrive, providing homes for wildlife and protecting our shorelines for future generations.



JOIN US FOR THE SLCT ANNUAL MEETING

Filmmaker Jacob Steinberg will be the guest speaker at this year's SLCT Annual Meeting.

Our program will include a showing of Jacob's short film "My Wild Backyard." The film explores the saltwater marshes of the New York and Connecticut coastlines. The film will be followed by a discussion and Q&A with Jacob.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, from 5:30 to 7:30.

Join us for light refreshments and drinks. Our program will start at 6:15.



About Jacob Steinberg

Jacob is an Emmy-nominated Cinematographer and Producer specializing in natural history. In 2012, he founded CosmoVision Media Group—an award-winning media production house—and has since produced and shot a variety of acclaimed films for international television and subscription-based broadcasts. His latest TV special, *Season of the Osprey* (PBS Nature, 2021), was broadcast in over thirty territories and re-versioned in six languages.

STAMFORD LAND CONSERVATION TRUST

22 FIRST STREET, STAMFORD, CT 06905-0247



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When: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Where: Knobloch Family Farmhouse Education
Center at the Stamford Museum
and Nature Center
151 Scofieldtown Road

Ample parking on the premises

Time: 5:30 to 7:30 PM