

Watershed Observer



NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT LAND TRUST - VOLUME 31 NO. 4 FALL 2017

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COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

16 SAT — GUIDED CANOE TRIP (11:00
A.M.—2:00 P.M.) (SUNDAY RAIN DATE)

21 THURS — GUIDED CANOE TRIP WITH
CBL IN CELEBRATION OF ESTUARIES
WEEK (4:00 P.M.—7:00 P.M.)

23 SAT. — HOLLY HILL CAMPAIGN KICK
OFF CELEBRATION

30 SAT — GUIDED CANOE TRIP (10:30
A.M.—1:30 P.M.) (SUNDAY RAIN DATE)

SEE MORE OF THE 2017 CALENDAR ON
PAGE 6 OR ONLINE AT
[HTTP://ACLWEB.ORG.](http://acltweb.org)

Germination of a Land Preservation Campaign



The Parkers Creek Watershed is a treasure to our county, our community and to ACLT. Its health benefits more than just the land itself. It supports our native wildlife and plant life, provides clean water and clean air, and helps to protect our national treasure — the Chesapeake Bay. Therefore, a project as sweeping as preserving the largest tract of unprotected land within the watershed is of vital importance both to the organization and to the community. As our President Pat Griffin notes in his letter on page 2, our Board of Directors made the decision to reach out to community leaders from across the region to gather advice and input on the effort.

The ACLT Board of Directors has been interested in preserving Holly Hill for twenty years and suddenly it had only a few months to prepare the message and reach out to donors. Further, it has been 30 years since the Board has undertaken such a large property (over 400 acres), and this campaign will be over three times as costly than that of the 437-acre Gravatt property, its first purchase. What has followed has been a leap of faith — in the members of ACLT and in the community at large.

It all started in late 2015 when the Board learned that Maryland Rural Legacy grant money awarded to Calvert County might be available for purchasing an easement on Holly Hill. The owners were not interested in selling an easement themselves, but they were willing to discuss selling the property to ACLT. The land trust had just over one year to negotiate a deal or the funds would be lost.

The Land Acquisition & Preservation Committee, chaired by Dave Farr, sprang into action. First, it reached out to the owners. After confirming that they were still willing to consider an offer for the property, the Committee ordered an appraisal. Next, the Committee worked with county staffer Rachel

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AMERICAN CHESTNUT LAND TRUST, INC.

P. O. Box 2363
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Phone: 410-414-3400
Fax: 410-414-3402
info@acltweb.org
<http://acltweb.org/nl>

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Editors: Ellen and David Farr

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From the President's Desk

"To profit from good advice requires more wisdom than to give it."
Wilson Mizner

Welcome ACLT Advisory Board!

The current campaign to purchase Holly Hill has demanded that the Board explore ways, beyond anything we have done before, to penetrate the hearts, minds and, I guess, wallets of the broader Calvert County community. While this broader effort is a work in progress, we are delighted to announce the formulation of the ACLT Advisory Committee as a key component.

The Advisory Committee was initially conceived as a way to enhance our Holly Hill fundraising campaign. Early indications are that the new Committee is already proving itself to be a valuable asset. They all have committed to personally assist us financially and/or help us develop significant leads that would expand our efforts.

However, the broad and substantial response to our initial overtures for financial support suggested we may have been underestimating the impact ACLT has had on the community. The Board quickly realized the expanded role the Advisory Committee could play in fully embracing this realization by also guiding us as we manage the demands and responsibilities of a rapidly maturing organization.

In our initial meeting with the Advisory Committee, we shared our hopes that in addition to fundraising they could help us in the following ways. First, by simply lending their name and officially associating themselves with ACLT. This would allow us to share in their stature, providing further validation and awareness of our efforts. Secondly, by helping us deepen and broaden our relationships in parts of the county we have not been able to effectively reach. And lastly, as seasoned professionals and experienced individuals, they would share their wisdom regarding organizational strategy, environmental science, and the political realities of the county and state.

I am proud to share with you the names of the founding members of the Advisory Committee who are the following: Honorable Bernie Fowler, Mrs. Mary Dwan, Honorable David Bonior, Mr. Joe Slater, Mr. Dan Boez, Honorable Jerry Clark, Mr. Mike Rudy, and Honorable Sue Kullen. We will be looking to expand the membership in the future. In the meantime, to ensure continuity with the Board, I will be serving as acting Chairman with Board members Karen Edgecombe and Joy Bartholomew serving in an ex-officio capacity.

This is an important and exciting development for ACLT. The Advisory Committee's involvement could have a significant impact on ACLT's long term growth and prosperity. The Board recognizes the need to use this resource wisely. However, we must also remain cognizant and grateful that the lifeblood of this organization will always be its members and cherished volunteers.

Patrick Griffin, President

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

O’Shea to determine the value of an easement, based on a state approved formula. Then it worked with state rural legacy staff to confirm the easement value and the eligibility of the property for sale of the easement. Finally, it began working on the terms of the easement with the county and state staffs.

Over the summer of 2016, the Board considered how the Trust could pay for the property and under what terms. In September, the Board began negotiations and by December there was a tentative agreement on price, but not on the terms of the contract. When ACLT reported to the County and State that there was at least an agreement on the price, the grant was extended for six more months. By the end of April, the parties had signed a contract with a six-month study period to allow the ACLT Board to back out of the contract if the money could not be raised.

Meanwhile, the Holly Hill Steering Committee, chaired by Gary Loew, had started meeting in November 2016. From the beginning, there were concerns. It had been a long time since the Trust had taken on such a huge project. What if we signed a contract and the donations did not come in?

One of its first recommendations came from Pam Shilling, Community Relations Coordinator, who had attended a Land Trust Alliance Rally in 2015. She had heard an excellent development speaker, David Allen, of *Development for Conservation*. Hearing of Mr. Allen’s message and his reputation, the Board asked him to attend a meeting to discuss approaches to raising enough funds to buy Holly Hill. At the Board meeting in February, he advised them on how to begin laying out a campaign strategy.

One of his key messages was that any request for support must come from the heart--it must be personal. During an exercise about the personal reasons that members cared so much about this property, stories came out

about childhood remembrances of playing in the forest, in streams, and in recollections of driving through Calvert for the first time. They wanted these generations and the next generations to be able to find similar experiences in a developing world.

There is something quixotic and inspiring about seeing 20 Board members spend months building the case for preserving a property, not even close to their own homes, to make it available to the public for trails and for ecosystem health. With their words and dreams, Pam Shilling put together the campaign materials and members set out to ask for pledges/donations. The Board, Steering Committee and a number of early donors have turned a daunting challenge into one that might just be possible!

When we reported on our progress to David Allen, he was impressed at the generosity of the members. **We are not “there yet”, but we are on track to reach 80% of the goal by the time that we announce the campaign to the public at our event on September 23rd.** With each donation, we get that much closer to being able to protect this amazing piece of land in perpetuity!

However, we’ve been warned that the last 20% is the most difficult to achieve. **We will need your help to preserve Holly Hill and protect the Parkers Creek Watershed forever.**

Here is what some of our Steering Committee members have said about why they care so much about Holly Hill:

“Holly Hill costs just around 20 cents per square foot! What rare plant might grow on that square foot today or in a hundred years? \$1000 protects 5000 square feet of the earth’s living skin.” Peter Vogt

“Holly Hill is your gateway to the Parkers Creek Preserve. As you turn onto Double Oak Road, you are immediately



greeted by active farm fields on the right and left. Soon you enter the canopied portion of the road where oaks and hickories drape their crowns across the road and where you might be lucky enough to see a small group of wild turkey or a spotted fawn scurry across your path. You leave your busy life behind as you wind your way around each curve of the deeply incised historic road. On the hottest days of summer, your car’s thermometer drops by as much as 10 degrees. You have left the 21st century behind and are ready to relax, listen to the birds, watch for signs of other wildlife and enjoy your favorite trail. All thanks to the permanent protection of Holly Hill.” Karen Edgecombe

“Preserving the 400 acres adjacent to ACLT is a win-win on many fronts: protection of an important watershed of the Chesapeake Bay, extension of a trail system that is open for all residents to enjoy, safeguarding contiguous forestland for wildlife habitat and hunting, avoidance of air and water quality degradation that comes with development, helping the County to further mitigate run-off from the Prince Frederick Town Center and knowing that we are leaving future generations a unique and significant area for experiencing the great outdoors.” Dawn Balinski

“Being in the woods is essential for my mental and physical well-being. Taking a deep breath, as I enter the forest, seems to push out the current day stress allowing me to just relax and enjoy the moment.” Dave Farr

Change to ACLT's Policy on Hiking During Hunting Season

The State of Maryland allows its hiking trails to remain open during hunting season. Here at ACLT, however, we've always closed trails during hunting season. Now that the State is managing hunting on its properties and because our trails are located on both state and ACLT land, it's no longer practical to enforce separate policies. The Land Management Committee made the recommendation during the July board meeting that all ACLT trails remain open during hunting season to be consistent with state policy. During the discussion, Board members understood the need to modify our policies but advised that we must clearly publish hunting seasons in our newsletters and other mailings and at all trail heads. Committee representatives clarified that the policy would apply to both north and south side properties, and that we would still permit only bow hunting on properties containing the south side trails. There will be firearm hunting on properties containing the North-South trail. With that, the motion was passed unanimously.

Hunter/Hiker related injuries are very rare in Maryland. But for everyone's peace of mind we encourage everyone to consider the following suggestions:

1. When in the forest, wear bright colors (orange and red are especially good!) and avoid earth tones (browns, dark greens, etc.)
2. Add a brightly colored item to your leashed dog as well for their safety.
3. Look for signs displaying hunting season dates. ACLT will have them posted on both the website and at the trailheads.
4. Avoid early morning and late evening hikes during those weeks.
5. Hunters have been notified to avoid shooting near trails.

Hunting Season Dates: 2017-2018 (Deer Hunting Only)



Archery: Sept 8 – Oct 18; Oct 22 – Nov 24; Dec 11 – Dec 15; Jan 1 – Jan 4; Jan 8 – Jan 31

Firearms: Nov 25 – Dec 9; Jan 5 – Jan 7

Muzzleloader: Oct 19 – Oct 28; Dec 16 – Dec 30

Image by Canine Friendly Web.

Great Discussions at the Advisory Committee Meeting



On Friday, July 14th, Pat Griffin opened the first meeting of Holly Hill Advisory Committee. The traditional role of an advisory committee in a fundraising campaign is to oversee the campaign to be sure that funds are collected and spent properly and to establish credibility in the campaign process. All of the members shouldered these tasks graciously.

However, it was obvious that the chair was encouraging more out of the friends and dignitaries assembled. Asking some broad questions concerning perceptions of ACLT and what direction it should take yielded a number of perspectives and recommendations:

- ACLT has an image of being organized and focused.
- There was a suggestion that we reach out beyond our traditional, narrow geographic orientation to seek support from similar organizations outside this area.
- We should consider some different kind of events that would be attractive to younger people.
- We should work to broaden our membership with more young people. They are our future. We have a good reputation, great resources and should seek to involve young people for recreation, science and education.
- One member volunteered to help us reach out to corporate sponsors and to participate in soliciting their involvement.
- ACLT properties are a hidden gem, but a member expressed that we are *hard to find*.
- Another member had several observations:
 - He advised that we should manage perceptions, stay positive and be moderate in our approach.
 - He suggested that we should convey our purpose to improve the quality of life in Calvert County and to serve its people.
- A member reinforced the fact that our hunters are great supporters and could help bridge the gap between the business and environmental communities.
- One member recommended that we all read the book, *Getting to Green* (Saving Nature: A Bipartisan Solution) by Frederic C. Rich where he suggests a model for vigorous bipartisanship.

- We do have some 'branding issues' that we were addressing e.g. our name and signs which refer variously to the American Chestnut Land Trust (title), The Chestnut Land Trust Trails (road signs), the Parkers Creek Preserve (north side signs) and others.
- A member praised the ACLT for what we have been doing to preserve the quality of life in Calvert County. He stated that what we have done and are doing is good news. We should bring people together so that they can see what we are doing to preserve the community and see how they might participate. He encouraged us to "corral the land" while we can.

The staff and board of ACLT are thrilled to have the support and guidance of these distinguished advisors. Your thoughts and suggestions are valuable to us! Please send us a note through info@acltweb.org if you have something you'd like to share.

Around ACLT

And the Blitz is ON!

In 2016, the Board of Directors approved the creation of a new standing committee, the Science Committee. Its role is to "help ACLT to protect, restore, and identify threats to the ecological integrity of the Parkers Creek ecosystem". Chaired by Denise Breitburg, scientist at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, the Committee is teaming with trained scientists in a variety of areas of expertise.

After gathering data and doing preliminary assessments, the Committee noted that the Trust's stream testing program thus far has been focused the main stem of Parkers Creek. Water quality testing results have been good overall, but the results do not tell us if there are areas in the watershed where water quality is declining. Someone suggested a water-testing blitz, a sampling of feeder streams throughout the watershed. Walter Boynton agreed to formulate the scientific approach and a promising graduating senior at Calvert, Emma Dodsworth, volunteered to organize the project.

On March 19th, in the early morning chill, Emma, Walter, and a dozen or so eager volunteers convened at the Double Oak office. While Walter discussed the sampling protocols, Emma handed out the assignments for the sample sites that she, with the Land Manager's assistance, had plotted out. Each of the 6 teams of volunteers received a map with GPS points at each of their assigned sampling sites. Using an app on their phones to find the sites, the teams set off to their sampling stations. Afterward, Walter taught volunteers how to prepare the samples for testing and storage until they were taken to the lab in Solomons.

The County standard for good water quality includes a threshold of less than .7 mil/litter of nitrogen. All testing-site samples fell below that number. However, some sites were clearly better than others. At their meeting in June, the Science Committee agreed to broaden the blitz in 2018 and to orient some of the sample sites around areas of concern.

Volunteers Cathy Foutz, Walter Boynton and Emma Dodsworth begin work on water samples.
(Photo by Greg Bowen)



Give at the Office!

Donate to ACLT through the Combined Federal Campaign and the Maryland Charity Campaign. Thank you!

CFC #53731

MCC #521489614

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GROWING TO GIVE TO OUR NEIGHBORS

Double Oak Farm

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Connecting People to the Land
22 miles of trails across a 3,000 acre preserve, guided canoe trips on the beautiful Parkers Creek, regenerative farming that benefits a local food pantry. ACLT is dedicated to land conservation and to the community.

EXPLORE THE LAND

Enjoy guided canoe trips & 22 miles of trails

[TRAIL MAPS](#)

CARE FOR THE LAND

Help the land, the wildlife & the mission

[VOLUNTEER](#)

FARM THE LAND

Donating earth-friendly produce to food pantries

[DOUBLE OAK FARM](#)

Check out ACLT's NEW WEBSITE!

Improved access to:

- trail information**
- event details & registration**
- volunteer info**
- and a new blog!**

ACLTweb.org

ACLT Receives Dual Grant Awards

We are excited to announce that ACLT has been awarded two grants in order to continue working towards ecosystem monitoring and restoration. These funds have been graciously gifted through the Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust and Baltimore Gas and Electric in the amounts of \$5,720 and \$6,000 respectively. These grants provide money to cover salaries to manage the projects to continue our stewardship of the Parkers Creek Preserve, and have enabled us to hire our former Chesapeake Conservation Corps member, Mike Molina.

The 6 month plan will include a *Phragmites australis* management project, forest diversity study, and implementing native meadows. The funding will also support the organization of another, expanded water quality blitz in 2018. Mike will also continue working on projects such as the Double Oak Farm fall harvest and conducting a fall survey of fish diversity within Parkers Creek.

The ACLT would like to thank all of its members, advocates and generous funders who have helped with these goals. As always, your continued support is greatly appreciated and please feel free to inquire into any of these projects we will be initiating this upcoming fall.

American Chestnut Land Trust Calendar of Events

September

- 16 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip (11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.)
(Sunday Rain Date)
- 21 Thurs – Guided Canoe Trip with CBL in celebration of Estuaries Week (4:00–7:00 p.m.)
- 23 Sat. – Holly Hill Campaign Kick Off Celebration
- 30 Sat – Fall Hiking Trail Maintenance Day (9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., picnic lunch)
- 30 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip (10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.)
(Sunday Rain Date)

October

- 7 & 8 Sat & Sun – Patuxent River Appreciation Days (10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.)
- 14 Sat – The Parkers Creek Challenge – ACLT's Modified Triathlon (10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.)
- 28 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip (9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.)
(Sunday Rain Date)

November

- 4 Sat – 21st Annual Auction & Dinner
- 15 Fri – Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (6:30–9 p.m.)
- 19 Sat – Fall Colors Guided Hike (1:00–3:00 p.m.)
- 30 Thu – Wreath-Making Workshop (6:00–9:00 p.m.)

December

- 1 Fri – Wreath-Making Workshops (10 a.m.–2 p.m.)
- 2 Sat – Holiday Wreath & Greens Sale at ACLT South Side Barn (11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.)

Welcome ACLT's 2018 CCC Intern

Hello ACLT members!

My name is Taylor Roswall and I am so excited to say that I will be Chesapeake Bay Trust's 2017-2018 Conservation Corps Member. I could not be happier with my placement in the beautiful Calvert County and am looking forward to exploring your nature. To give you an idea of who I am, I was born and raised in the small southern town of Bristol, Tennessee located in the Appalachian Mountains. I went off to boarding school in Chattanooga, TN at the age of 16 and began to develop a deep love for our environment. I just recently graduated college from the University of California at Los Angeles where I received a B.S. degree in Biology. I focused my curriculum on conservation and land restoration and am looking forward to materializing my newfound knowledge at ACLT.



While in school, I worked in a research lab which piloted the Bird Genoscape Project. This project aimed to collect a comprehensive and collaborative inventory of Neotropical bird feathers and sequence their genomes to better understand population and subpopulation dynamics. In lab, I aided in extracting DNA from feathers, blood, and tissue samples. My favorite college experience was traveling to the Dja Faunal Preserve in Cameroon where I conducted a comparative biological diversity study on primate and bird species in light of the Bouamir Research Station closing in 1999.

This year I will assist ACLT in various projects but will also coordinate my very own capstone project. If you have any ideas or guidance, I would love to hear from you on how to improve Parker's Creek Preserve. This year will be my first time living in Maryland, but I can already tell I am going to be blown away by all it has to offer. I love hiking and all other outdoor activities, especially bird watching and reading on back porches. If you ever want to bring me on an adventure feel free to show me the Maryland way. I hope I get to know each and every one of you throughout my upcoming year!

Land Manager's Corner

The Times They Are a-Changin' -Bob Dylan

In many ways, the protected land in the Parkers Creek watershed may seem largely unchanged over time. For those of us who have been able to paddle up Parkers Creek, the landscape along the entire navigable portion of the creek from the Bay to the old bridge spur may look similar to the way it did when John Smith explored the area in the early 1600s. Smith is well known for his writings which give us a glimpse into a more pristine habitat which Smith experienced before significant human alteration. One difference is water clarity. Smith writes about oysters that "lay as thick as stones," and the Bay and its rivers containing more sturgeon "than could be devoured by dog or man" (Chesapeake Bay Program). He described clear water in the Bay with an abundance of submerged aquatic vegetation and saw mink, otter, deer, and wolves (SultanaEducation).

While the landscape and ecosystem were definitely different during John Smith's exploration, it still wasn't completely without human influence. Native Americans had long cleared land for hunting, agriculture, and settlements in the Chesapeake region, though their impact on water quality, flora, and fauna had been minimal. After word of John Smith's voyage made it back to Europe, many immigrants made the journey to America's east coast and the Chesapeake Bay region. The influx of European settlers meant an increase in cleared land and the introduction of non-native species. The settlers also took advantage of the diverse and prolific wildlife as a source of food and clothing. As a result, many animals, such as wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, and passenger pigeons, were overhunted and extirpated or drastically reduced in number. Many other furbearing animals and song birds were also used for clothing or food and predators such as the Mountain lion and the Timberwolf were extirpated to minimize livestock damage (MD SWAP). In a short amount of time, the landscape and the ecosystems within it had changed forever.

A Decline in Diversity

As human populations increased exponentially over the next 400 years, our impact on the landscape has spread far and wide. Habitat loss and degradation paired with overhunting have changed the species that are found throughout Maryland and the entire region. The Gray wolf, American elk, Eastern mountain lion, Snowshoe hare, American marten, and Eastern harvest mouse have all been extirpated from Maryland (Maryland Mammals). Birds such as the Passenger pigeon and the Carolina parakeet have been driven to extinction world-wide (MD SWAP).

In the 1800's, the Passenger pigeon was the most abundant bird in North America and was said to have flown in flocks so large and dense that they blocked out the sun. Unfortunately for them, flying around in huge flocks also made them easy to hunt and they were harvested in large numbers as a source of protein and to prevent crop damage. The expansion of the railroad also made it possible to transport harvested pigeons around the country. Their populations

declined under the increased hunting and the last known Passenger pigeon died at the Cincinnati Zoo on September 1, 1914 (The Audubon Magazine). The Carolina parakeet was the only parrot native to North America north of Mexico. Much like the Passenger pigeon, the Carolina parakeet was considered a pest due to its voracious appetite for farmers' crops. Because of its bright feathers, it was also harvested so that its feathers could be used to make women's hats. It was hunted excessively for both of these reasons and met the same fate as the Passenger pigeon when it went extinct in the 1920's (The Audubon Society).

Some other wildlife has not been seen in Calvert County in a long time and are considered extirpated from the area. According to Calvert County Natural Resources Division, the last confirmed bobcat sighting in Calvert County was in 1945. The last fox squirrel documented in Calvert County was in 1952 and the last confirmed Timber Rattlesnake was seen in 1698.

Reintroductions

Unfortunately, it probably isn't new information to many readers of the **Watershed Observer** that some of our ecological diversity has been lost in the past few centuries and that many species are at increasing risk today. Luckily, however, it's not ALL doom and gloom! There have



American marten and Carolina parakeets. Photo credits at end of article.

been a few conservation success stories that biologists can use to help guide their efforts in the future. One method of species conservation is to reintroduce a species into area where it has been extirpated from or where its population has reached such a low number that it is at risk of extirpation. A few reintroduction efforts have been successful right here in our home state.

Not many people realize that white-tailed deer were once hunted to the brink of extirpation in Maryland and much of the eastern United States. Throughout the 1800's, white-tailed deer were hunted extensively as a food source and for their fur. By 1902, the Maryland General Assembly made it illegal to hunt deer throughout the state. Following this, some deer were brought in from other areas and released into Maryland to try and rebuild the populations. Additionally, deer were raised in large, fenced-in forested areas and then transported to other areas. The hunting ban and reintroductions resulted in the gradual increase of the white-tailed deer population and the hunting ban was lifted in Maryland in 1929. To date, the rebound of the white-tailed deer population is known as one of the most successful species conservation programs in history- perhaps a bit *too* successful. White-tailed deer rebounded so quickly that researcher Bill Stickel classified deer at the Patuxent Research Refuge as "very rare" in the early 1940's but "abundant and destructive" in the 1970's (USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center). This quick increase in population was due to the fact that there were no longer any natural predators in the region.

Another successful conservation story in Maryland is that of the wild turkey. Unrestricted hunting was once again to blame for the decline of the wild turkey populations in addition to habitat loss from large amounts of land being clear cut for timber and settlement in the 1700's and 1800's. At the turn of the 20th century, turkeys were extirpated from the entire state of Maryland except for the most western regions. In an effort to combat this extreme population decline, Garrett County banned turkey hunting in 1920 and the State of Maryland began a program to release pen-raised turkeys throughout the state. Between 1930 and 1971 the state released 33,000 birds.

Unfortunately, the pen-raised turkeys did not exhibit the same behaviors as wild turkeys and the expensive program was unsuccessful. Instead, the state switched to trapping wild turkeys where populations still existed and transplanting them to areas where they had been extirpated. Initial reintroduction efforts were successful in Frederick County but were not effective in Southern

Maryland or the Eastern Shore until efforts were intensified between 1979 and 2001. In total, 1,129 turkeys were trapped and located around the state during that 22-year period. Every county in Maryland now has self-sustaining wild turkey populations and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources works to survey the number of turkey throughout the state (Branching Out).

Yet another species that was completely extirpated from Maryland in the 1700's was the American elk. In 2011, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources paired with the Maryland Legislative Sportsmen's Foundation, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to determine the feasibility of reintroducing elk in the western part of Maryland and to determine if there was public support for the reintroduction (The New York Times). Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Virginia now have elk populations with West Virginia hoping to follow suit soon. Western Maryland residents did not support the reintroduction when the study was conducted in 2011 however, so for now, elk remain on the list as one of many species extirpated from Maryland (Maryland Independent).

As I mentioned previously, bobcats are another species that are generally considered to be extirpated from Southern Maryland. Bobcats are found in Western Maryland but there hasn't been a confirmed sighting in Calvert County in almost 75 years. While some will swear that they are here, and it's likely enough that they could be, it would still be very rare to see one. I've saved the bobcat for last because it is my and Greg's not-so-secret wish to have bobcats at ACLT. Besides the fact that they are awesome and adorable animals, recent studies have found that small mammal predators play a huge role in limiting the spread of Lyme disease. You've probably heard that Lyme disease is primarily spread by white-tailed deer and you might be wondering how the relatively small bobcat would be able to



Wild turkey and bobcat.
Photo credits at the end
of the article

take down anything other than a fawn, but recent findings show that four species of small mammals (white footed-mouse, Eastern chipmunk, short-tailed shrew, and masked-shrew) are responsible for infecting 80-90% of ticks that carry Lyme disease (Levi, et al. 2012). So, increasing our number of small mammal predators may also help limit the frequency of Lyme disease.

In this article, I have covered many successful reintroduction efforts. It is important to note however, that the best way to preserve our species diversity is to protect them before reintroduction measures are necessary. We work to do this at ACLT by focusing specifically on providing habitat for some of the species that are most rare in our region. Some examples of this include installing barn owl and bat boxes to help these rare species have more readily available nesting places, maintaining our open fields to provide a declining habitat type for grassland and song birds, and establishing pollinator gardens and native plant meadows to support our struggling pollinator species. With some extra effort now, we may be able to prevent the need to reintroduce these species in the future. As climate change affects the entire planet, there may not be any populations surviving to repopulate our region.

While the marsh, streams, and forest in the land managed by ACLT may be largely the same, changes in the landscape throughout much of Maryland have impacted the wildlife found here. Gone are the wolves, elk, marten, and Carolina Parakeet. Non-natives such as snakehead and European starlings take their place. But with this large, contiguous, permanently protected property, the land managed by ACLT serves as a place where reintroductions or recolonizations of some species requiring prime habitat can succeed. A place where the iconic Bobwhite quail could forage in our open fields and the secretive bobcat could thrive in the 3,000 acres of forest in the Parkers Creek Preserve.

Autumn Phillips-Lewis
Land Manager

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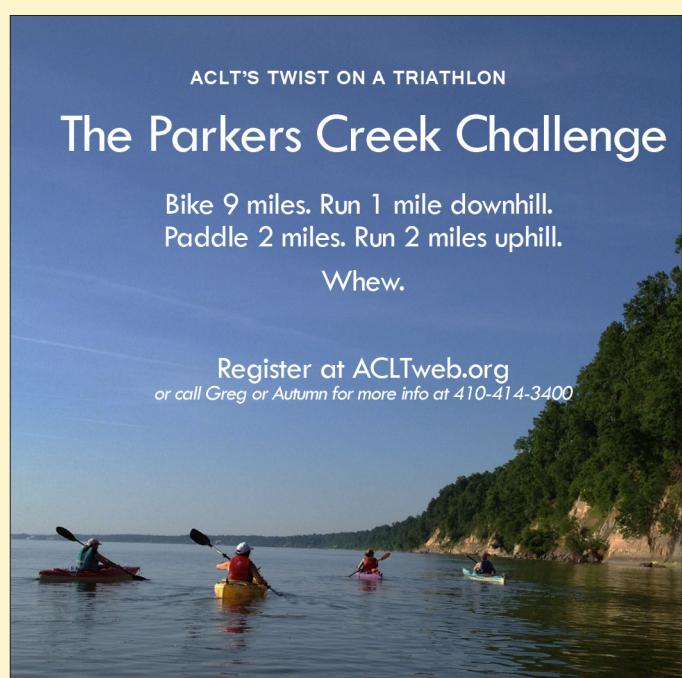
Links for photo credit:

Bobcat: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/NaturalAreas/Western/South-Savage-Mountain.aspx>

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Help and Have Fun at ACLT's Fall Events!

Help ACLT take on its biggest challenge in many years by attending and getting involved with our events this fall! Things are progressing well as we move toward fully launching the "Campaign to Preserve Holly Hill". To kick it off we'll be hosting a "Sip & Save" Beer Tasting Party on September 23rd. Plan to come spend a fall afternoon tasting the offerings of local breweries plus a few specialty craft beers from around the country. Hang out on the lawn to enjoy live music, food, and activities for the kids. Enjoy corn hole, door prizes, and more! While there, pick up information to share with friends and neighbors about ACLT's land conservation efforts and our campaign to save the Parkers Creek Watershed!

In October we'll be hosting our first official Parkers Creek Challenge – a modified triathlon- the morning of October 14th. There's still time to sign up to bike 9 miles from the south side trail head to the end of Double Oak Road, run down Parkers Creek Road Trail, paddle from the raft to Warriors Rest, then run back to the South Side Trailhead. Visit ACLT's website to register. **We could certainly use lots of volunteers for this awesome event, as well as all of our fall activities!**

ACLT's Annual Auction is also quickly approaching. Last year's "Experience ACLT" theme was such a wonderful success we are once again focusing on fun things to do as well as unique and special items to treasure. Do you have an interesting item to donate or an amazing experience to offer at the auction? Here are some examples from last year:
A private visit with the otters at the Solomons Marine Museum—Create your own Brew with Scorpion Brewery—A stunning driftwood sculpture by Larry Ringgold—Vacations to North Carolina, South Carolina, the Bahamas and more...

We can't guarantee the same donations, but we are constantly amazed by our generous friends! We encourage you to be creative and consider donating an experience or item. And of course we hope you plan to join us on November 4th for a fun evening "Conserving for Calvert."

Be a part of this great upcoming season. Volunteer, donate, or just come hang out with us. You are welcome and invited to take an active role in ACLT's land conservation activities!



I Want to Donate an Item or Experience to this year's Auction!

If you would like to notify us about a donation, please fill this form out and mail it to Janel Young, ACLT, PO Box 2363, Prince Frederick, MD 20678 OR fill out the form online at <http://acltweb.org>

Your Name _____

Phone # _____

Please describe the item or experience you're donating below:

Email _____

Special Instructions _____

Thank You! We'll be in touch soon to discuss!

Thank you for your support ...

New Members

ACLT would like to welcome the following new members since the Summer 2017 newsletter:

Jenn Barber
Dorothy Brady
Jody Brouwer
Jackie Burson
Rev. Daniel Carson
Margaret Cook
Jan Degeneffe
Tine Dickey
Lisa Farinelli
Deborah Gibson
Richard Gray
Lindsay Halterman
Grace Hanners
Cassidy Kees
Kimberly King
Sallie McElrath
Richard Mersereau
Michael Miller
Mike Molina
John Nance
David Rice
Sarah Rosier
Lori Sampson
Tom Tremmel
Timothy Wells
Richard Wilson

the founders of the ACLT as a Charter Member and a dedicated volunteer and supporter:
Roberta Safer & Klaus Zwilsky

Spring Appeal

Frederick Bumgarner
Doug & Kathy Cochrane
Kathy & Mike Ellwood
Kathi Hanna
Ronald & Kathy Klauda
David Knapp & Penny Firth
George & Maureen Kohl
Macy's Foundation
Edwin & Monica Noell
Norman & Helen Prince
Jeffery & Michele Quesenberry
William & Ann Scharpf
James & Anne Williams
Jeanne Young

General Donations and Designated Gifts

Denise Breitburg & Mark Smith
Jessica & Ty Clark
Kathy Daniel
Elaine Strong
Jeanne Young

Harrod Property Donations

Jerry Adams & Harriet Yaffe
David & Judy Bonior
Glenn & Karen Edgecombe
Randy Estabrook & Marie Bundy-Estabrook
Carl Fleischhauer & Paula Johnson
Jim & Susan Greene
Daniel & Justina Head
Rosanna Mason
Russ & Janie McKnight
Kathryn Nicodemus
Brett Raynor
Robert & Holly Ruhling
Crawford Feagin Stone
Guy & Anna Marie Tomassoni

Holly Hill Donations

Donald and Judith Dahmann
Mary Dwan
David & Ellen R. Farr
Martha W. Grahame
Pat & Abbey Griffin

P. Sue & Steve Kullen
Conrad & Marjorie Marsh
Kenneth Michael
Cheryl L. Place
Suzanne Shelden & Family
Austin J. Slater, Jr. & Carmen L. Slater
Peter & Jennie Stathis
Jim & Ann White

Sustaining Membership

Congratulations to the following members who have reached the level of Sustaining Membership:
Dawn & Steve Balinski
Barbara & Curtis Drumm
Ethel Dutky & Alvin Wilson
Martha Grahame
Patricia & John Hofmann
Vivian & Marjorie Marsh
Cheryl Place

In-Kind Donations

A special thanks to several wonderful and generous donors for their recent in-kind donations.



Our friends at SMECO donated a Ford F150.

Suzanne Shelden donated three festival quality tents

Marcia van Gemert & Tay Vaughan donated a John Deere mower.

Jeff Klapper, generous with his time and support, personally purchased parts and supplies to maintain several pieces of equipment for ACLT

Thank you ALL for your generosity!

In Memory of Contributions

Thank you to the following members who made a memorial contribution since our last newsletter:

In memory of **Richard Kay** who was a Sustaining Member and a dedicated supporter:

Helen & Marylinda Govaars
Jean Marie McDougall

In Honor of Contributions

Thank you to the following members who made an "in honor of" contribution since our last newsletter:

In honor of **Paul Dennett** who is a Sustaining Member, a past member of the Board of Directors, and a dedicated volunteer:

Richard Mercereau

In honor of **Mary Dwan** who is one of

Check us out
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Why does it say "Or Current Resident" in my address?

In order to use your donations as efficiently as possible, we use USPS Bulk Mail and this statement is now required in the address. Thank you for understanding!

Come Join Us!

Detach and Mail to: The American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 2363, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Name _____

e-mail _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I (we) learned about ACLT from _____

Regular Membership

- Land Saver—\$35.00 Habitat Protector—\$500.00
 Land Protector—\$60.00 Trustee of Land—\$1000.00
 Land Conservator—\$150.00 Sustaining—\$2500.00

Corporate Membership

- Land Saver Corporate—\$150.00
 Land Protector Corporate—\$250.00
 Land Conservator Corporate—\$500.00

The American Chestnut Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. A copy of the current ACLT financial statement is available on request. Requests should be directed to the American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc., P.O. Box 2363, Prince Frederick, MD 20678 or call (410) 414-3400. For the cost of copies and postage, documents and information submitted under the Business Regulation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland are available from the Secretary of State.