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COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR

APRIL

22 SAT – EARTH DAY 5K TRAIL RUN
(CHECK IN: 8:00 A.M.; RUN START:
9:00 A.M., HIKERS TO FOLLOW)

23 SUN – EARTH DAY CLEAN UP
(12:00–3:00 P.M.)

30 SUN – SPRING GUIDED FAMILY
HIKE (1:00–3:00 P.M.)

SEE MORE OF THE 2017 CALENDAR ON
PAGE 11 OR ONLINE.

ACLT's 2017 Annual Meeting

For the 30th time, the members of the American Chestnut Land Trust gathered to review the previous year and look ahead to the next. On March 11, 2017 the 30th Annual Meeting of the American Chestnut Land Trust was held at St. John Vianney's Family Life Center. Eighty members and guests came together to review the projects and goals of 2016 then turned their attention to the needs of 2017.

Much of the conversation centered on the day's theme of science informing policy and management decisions. ACLT's science committee has planned multiple "Baseline of Biodiversity" tests for the spring of 2017 including the Bird Diversity Monitoring, the Water Bio-Blitz and Chesapeake Conservation Corp Intern, Mike Molina's Parkers Creek Fish Diversity Survey. The results of these studies will be used as a comparison for future evaluations of management choices. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Land Use Planner for Maryland, Erik Fisher, offered the keynote address "Baselining for Bay Quality." This year CBF celebrates its 50th anniversary protecting the Chesapeake Bay.

ACLT Board President Pat Griffin led the meeting and, along with the other presenters, inspired increased participation and engagement. Other reports presented included the Treasurer's Report by Peter Stathis for Cheryl Place (financial chart displayed on page 10), the Land Preservation Report by David Farr, the Executive Director's Report by Greg Bowen, the Land Management Report by John Little and Autumn Phillips-Lewis, and the Membership and Outreach Report by Pam Shilling.

Pam was also honored to recognize and thank all of our volunteers, especially our volunteers who gave more than 100 hours of their time to ACLT in 2016. Those "Super-Volunteers" are: Natasha Bates, Kevin Donahue, Kathy Ellwood, Dave Farr, Ellen Farr, Bob Field, Sandy Foley, Cathy Foutz, Jeff Klapper, Ed Kobrinski, Ian Messent, Barbara Mogel, Penny Moran, Ginny Murphy, Ken Romney, Birgit Sharp, and RT West.

There is nothing more important to land conservation than an engaged group of dedicated citizens. Thank you to everyone that attended and expressed their interest in the work and well-being of ACLT and to all of our members and supporters.



Keynote speaker Erik Fisher, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Land Use Planner for Maryland.

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(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)



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Published quarterly by the American Chestnut Land Trust. The ACLT is dedicated to the preservation of Calvert County, Maryland's Natural and Historical Resources. Since it was established in 1986, ACLT has preserved over 3,000 acres. We own 985 acres, manage 1,910 acres owned by the State of Maryland, and hold conservation easements on 374 privately-owned acres.

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From the President's Desk

Happy Earth Day: What a Big Idea!

"Let us be protectors of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another, and of the environment."

Pope Francis

There aren't many successful worldwide events that have such a clear and undisputed patrimony as Earth Day. As many of you know, Gaylord Nelson conceived it in 1970. At that time, he was the junior senator from Wisconsin. Initially, he was just trying to be a good steward of the rolling hills, rivers and lakes that populated his state. His impassioned but parochial concerns about his constituency surprisingly exploded him onto the national stage when he gave a speech one spring in Seattle. He called for a day of environmental responsibility which quickly came to be known as Earth Day. He proposed the day be inaugurated with "teach-ins" nationwide. Within seven months after making this speech, there were 12,000 "teach-ins", 35,000 speakers and over 1,000,000 participants attending events in schools of all levels across the country.

Early corporate critics of the event argued that it was meaningless and unnecessary. They asserted that no corporate interest would knowingly damage the environment. Some on the far right went so far as to suggest that Earth Day was just a ruse for the political left to celebrate Vladimir Lenin's birthday. This was quickly countered with the fact that it was also St. Francis of Assisi's birthday who was seen by many as one of the world's most prominent and early environmentalists.

The criticism from the left was more poignant. It attempted to claim that focusing on the environment for a day was distracting the country from more pressing concerns regarding race, poverty and the war in Vietnam.

Senator Nelson, a dyed in the wool liberal himself, pushed back hard against his friends on the left. He argued that the youth, whom he saw as the foundation of this effort, already had major impact on altering national policy on civil rights and the war and could successfully build on that momentum. His hope was that their energy and focus would bring constructive attention to the concerns and importance of the environment, as well.

If history is any indication, Senator Nelson's instincts about the potential impact this day would have on the national environmental movement was, if anything, underestimated.

While not suggesting causality, the speech and subsequent rallies each year certainly encouraged President Nixon to sign into law the Clean Air Act of 1970, the Clean Water Act of 1972 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. All three pieces of legislation remain the cornerstone of our national environmental policy.

The next piece of major environmental legislation wasn't passed until another Republican, George H Bush, signed into law a proposal to protect the environment from acid rain in 1990.

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Around ACLT

ACLT Partners with Calvert County School Group to Celebrate Earth Day

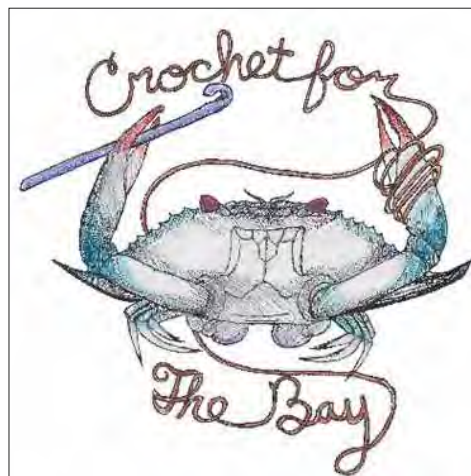
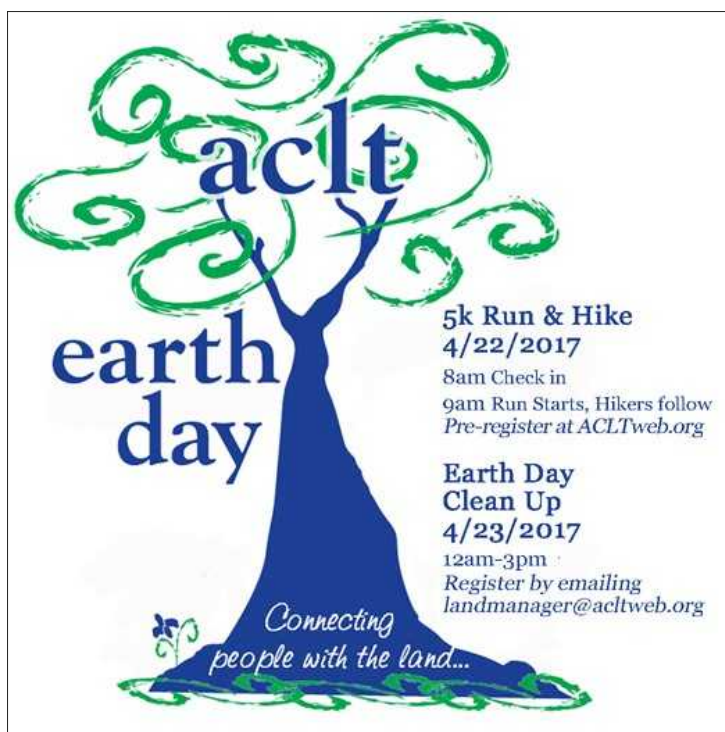
Earth Day is an annual “holiday” in which events are held around the world to show support for environmental protection. It’s a time to celebrate the progress that has been made, identify what needs attention and invite the community to share in the joy and satisfaction of caring for the planet. Needless to say, it’s our favorite holiday here at ACLT!

For friends and neighbors who don’t have a lot of time to devote to regular environmental volunteering, it’s a moment when we’re all more motivated to help. ACLT is earning the reputation of being the place people can come to participate in Earth Day, whether by running or hiking our Earth Day 5k or joining in our Earth Day Clean-Up. With the motivation of reaching as many community members as possible, we are always looking for like-minded groups whose mission it is to share environmental information and engage more participation. As such, we have found a kindred spirit in the student organization “Crochet for the Bay”.

“Crochet for the Bay” (C4B) is an environmental club at Huntingtown High School. Its founder, senior Dia Brown, and her now more than 40 club members sell craft items then donate the proceeds to bay restoration efforts. They have recently begun coordinating larger awareness events as well. With an interest in maximizing our ability to engage the county in Earth Day activities, ACLT and C4B have teamed up to support each other’s Earth Day activities. In particular, ACLT is assisting in the coordination of a “Bin Beautification” contest for Calvert County High Schools and Middle Schools.

The contest, as planned by the members of C4B, is simple: students are asked to team with a teacher to design and decorate their classroom’s recycle bin. During the week prior to Earth Day, the bins will be voted on. The top three bins from each participating school will be invited to showcase their creations at ACLT’s Earth Day 5k. Runners, hikers, students and their families will all be invited to stroll through the entries on display and to choose their favorites. One entry will win the honor of being named “2017’s Best Bin in Calvert County”!

We hope you plan to join ACLT at the Earth Day 5k for the run or walk, or simply plan to visit and see the amazing student creations. Visit the website for more information on registration for this year’s Earth Day Fun!



Middle image: Crochet for the Bay logo.
Bottom: One of the 18-gallon recycle bins that will be “re-imagined” for the county-wide contest.

From the Cradle to the Plate

Deep within the dark recesses of the American Chestnut Land Trust's office basement, there shines a beacon of light. This is the light of compact fluorescent lamps guiding young seedlings from the soil to a bright, beaming, and bountiful life in the gardens. Once out in the vast world, the hopes are high for these plants to grow vigorously and eventually feed the families in need at the St. John Vianney food pantry. Starting these crops from seed is a rewarding process, albeit a problematic one as well. With the potential for poor germination, fungal and bacterial diseases, insufficient lighting and other various environmental factors, the pain seems to outweigh the prize. So why would one undertake this colossal task?

Firstly, and some would argue most importantly, seeds are a lot cheaper than seedlings. While they do lose viability as time passes, seeds can last for several years depending on the variety. When you can buy a packet of seeds for roughly the equivalent price as a single plant of the same variety, it makes sense financially to invest in seeds for the next couple of seasons. Likewise, many transplants sell in sets of 6-8 and are typically the most common crop varieties one would find in the garden. Growing your own seedlings allows for experimenting with unique crop varieties that provide delectable flavors and exceptional nutrition. You can also specifically grow the quantity you need. Depending on the size of the garden, six squash plants may be five plants too many.

Another paramount reason to start seedlings indoors is the ability to extend the growing season. A plant started indoors six weeks prior to the last frost has a jump start on the season compared to a seed started outdoors after the last frost date. This is an undeniable way to reap the rewards of a garden much earlier in the year. Those who dwell in a northern climate (USDA Hardiness Zones 1-6) depend on starting indoor seedlings as their growing seasons can be brief. An advance on the season is therefore vital.

Finally, the aura of self-sufficiency is present when one nurtures their plants from seed to harvest. Dependence on others begins to dissipate and liberation ensues. Total control and management is placed in the hands of the one who grows their plants from seed and this is inclusive of fertilization, pest control, and environment.

Those who believe in organic plant production cannot always rely on transplants produced large scale unless they directly know who produces them and how they go about doing it. The freedom to choose from a wide variety of seeds and how you grow your plants is the remarkable beauty of starting your own seedlings.

Four important factors dictate the success of seedlings: soil moisture, light, humidity, and temperature.

Most seeds need high humidity during the germination process and plastic domes do a wonderful job at retaining moisture. However, after sprouts emerge soil should not remain damp for long periods of time in order to reduce chances of damping off. This devastating fungal disease inhabits the roots and stems of recently emerged seedlings resulting in them toppling over and dying. Finding the correct moisture content is a skill in itself, and a hard one at that. A test of squeezing the soil with your hand is a great barometer for determining the ideal condition. When squeezed, only a few drops of water should be produced as opposed to a stream of water flowing out. A small oscillating fan can also be utilized to keep the entire growing area aerated.

Potting soil mixes can be store-bought or created using compost, perlite, vermiculite, and coir or peat moss. A well-aerated and drained soil will make a nice home for the young plants.

Obviously, direct sunlight is the ideal solution for indoor plant growth and a heated greenhouse or plant room would be the best bet for simulating the plant's natural environment. However, not all have this luxury and one can be successful with artificial lights. LED or CFL lights work just as well. Bulbs in the blue light spectrum (around 6500K) are ideal for this stage of plant growth and the higher the lumen output, the better. As far as temperature goes, some plants like it hotter and some cooler. 70-80 degree Fahrenheit soil temperature will generally aid most plants in germination and this can be achieved through heating mats. The same goes for ambient temperature, but this is also plant-specific. For example, plants in the family Brassicaceae (broccoli, cabbage, kale) can tolerate cooler temperatures while plants in the family Solanaceae (tomato, pepper, eggplant) prefer temperatures in the range of 80-90 degrees Fahrenheit. While these are ideal conditions that promote vigorous growth, plants are resilient and will continue to grow as long as their environment is fairly optimal.

In spite of the obstacles presented when seed starting, producing your own seedlings offers a chance to unwind, spend time with friends and family, and is overall a pleasurable way to liberate your garden.

Mike Molina
Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member



Collard seedlings being grown at ACLT.

Reflections on Earth Day—Is there a Place for Agriculture?

It is spring! Crops are being planted at Double Oak Farm. The Food Forest is leafing out. Family gardens and community gardens are bustling across the county. Corn is being planted in farm fields and pastures are green.

My father was a farmer and he loved spring. It was a time of the year when one could reasonably hope for adequate rains and abundant crops. He and three generations before him had lived on a farm south of Hunting Creek. Dad was also a good fisherman and loved oysters, though his venture in oyster tonging proved to be less successful than farming. Generations of Bowens lived off of the abundance of the land and waters as did families across the Chesapeake watershed. As recently at 1940, the vast majority of all food consumed, from land and water, in the Chesapeake watershed was produced from the Chesapeake watershed¹.

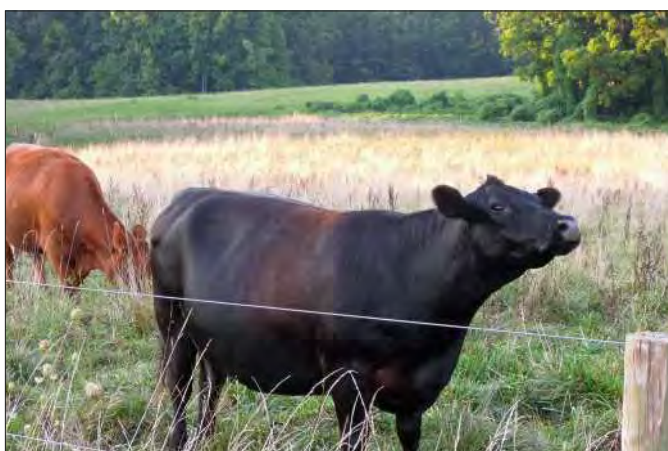
It is interesting to note that since 1940, the acreage of farmland in the three largest states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed (Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland) has dropped 70%². The number of acres of forestland was slightly higher in 2011 than in 1940³. And yet, water quality declined significantly as acres of farmland declined. Some fisheries have collapsed. What happened?

Certainly, the Green Revolution of agriculture in the 1950s and 1960s played a role. Crop yields quadrupled with the introduction of higher-yielding strains of plants and new fertilizers. Munition plants from World War II were converted to produce very cheap fertilizers. Excess nutrients flowed into the waterways, producing algal blooms and dead zones. Another cause of pollution over that period was population growth. The three states grew 52%⁴ since 1940, creating more sewage waste and more impervious surfaces. The tipping point appeared to have been around 1960, when water quality started its long steady decline.

Meanwhile, food consumed in the Bay watershed was no longer locally food sourced. By the end of the 20th century, over 90%⁵ of the food consumed in the Bay watershed was produced elsewhere. Today, food travels around the world to consumers, without respect to geography, climate or its environmental impacts. Large pieces of equipment plant and harvest grains in the Midwest that grow a large percentage of the nation's need for grain while, at the same time, polluting the Mississippi River. A handful of multi-national food companies supply the majority of our meat, most of which is produced at what is known as Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)⁶. All of these endeavors have lowered the cost of food. It is an amazing system. However, those intensive food production systems pollute waterways, use up more clean water than aquifers can supply, and deplete the soils. The system is not sustainable.

However, attitudes are changing. Many are calling for a more localized and sustainable food system. Some are concerned about the impact of climate change on weather patterns and food production. Others raise concerns about political instability around the world and the fear that war or cyberattacks could break food transport systems. Finally, many people simply don't trust international food corporations to produce and deliver food that is humanely and sustainably grown. They are beginning to think that local food should be thought of as an essential ecosystem resource and the closer to home the better.

But can we grow food without damaging the Bay? The good news is that Maryland is leading the nation in nutrient reduction from farms. It is the only state that requires nutrient management plans from nearly all farms, even one as small as Double Oak. It actively enforces the law when farms fail to follow the regulations. It assists farms in planting cover crops, one of the most effective ways to reduce nutrient pollution. And it is regulating the application of manure on fields. Farmers are learning more sustainable farming techniques, such as those employed at Double Oak. The Rodale institute in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, has proven that organic grain operations can meet or exceed the yields from conventional operations that use



Top: Double Oak Farm at ACLT.

Bottom: Monnett Farms in Prince Frederick, MD.

chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The Maryland Grazers Network, supported by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, is mentoring livestock, dairy, sheep, and poultry producers who want to switch to pasture operations which are generating more farm income while protecting the Bay.

This year, on its 50th anniversary, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is reporting that “we are seeing the clearest water in decades, regrowth of acres of lush underwater grass beds, and the comeback of the Chesapeake’s native oysters, which were nearly eradicated by disease, pollution, and overfishing⁷.” Food always was an ecosystem resource and it should be treated as one today. It is spring -- time to support our local sustainable farming operations and time to get our hands dirty!

Greg Bowen
Executive Director, ACLT

¹U.S. Census of Agriculture 1940

²U.S. Census of Agriculture 2012

³http://www.chesapeakebay.net/indicators/indicator/bay_watershed_forest_cover

⁴U.S. Census Bureau 1940 and 2010

⁵Based on direct sales reported in the Census of Agriculture in 2002, and USDA’s estimate that intermediate sales (resale of local foods) are double that of direct sales.

⁶<https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/aer785/18011_aer785_1_.pdf>, page 1.

⁷Chesapeake Bay Foundation 2016 *State of the Bay*

Springtime Blues

Spring and early summer can bring to mind many colors—the bright green of new leaves and the pinks, white, and yellow of spring wildflowers. At the ACLT Office at Double Oak Farm, one of our favorite colors of spring is blue.

In 2014 and 2015 we worked to install 23 bluebird boxes at 3 different locations within the Parkers Creek Preserve. On the North Side, 12 boxes were installed along a trail that runs along the field edge around the farm. Four boxes were put around the South Side fields and 7 more around the open areas at the Warriors Rest Sanctuary. Some of these were installed by our Thursday morning volunteer group and others were installed as an Eagle Scout project.

As you might be able to guess based on the locations of our nesting boxes, bluebirds prefer open grassy areas near wood edges. The open fields and grassy areas around ACLT are great habitat for bluebirds and our boxes were extremely successful with 58 bluebirds (and 8 chickadees!) fledged in 2016. It is common to see flashes of blue in our open meadow habitats as adults fly around building nests and gathering food for their young.

To say that we associate bluebirds with springtime is a bit misleading. Some bluebirds move south for the winter but many stay in Maryland. However, spring is the time when bluebirds begin to build their nests and raise their first brood of young. It is also the time of year when we begin to monitor our boxes once a week throughout the entire nesting season.

One of our most dedicated volunteers, Sandy Foley, vigilantly checked all 23 boxes once a week for the entire breeding season. By carefully monitoring each box to ensure minimal disturbance to the bluebirds, Sandy gathered data on the number of eggs and successful fledglings in each box. Each box was also cleaned out after the first brood as bluebirds often have more than one brood per nesting season.

If you look at the bluebird boxes at ACLT, you will notice a metal cone under each box. These metal cones are called predator guards and they are installed to ensure that snakes, raccoons, and other predators that might eat bluebird eggs cannot access the inside of the box. If you are going to install any sort of song bird nesting box, you should be sure to install a 24-inch predator guard as well. You should also make sure that there is no tall or overhanging vegetation around your nesting box that predators could use to get around the predator guard.

If you are considering erecting bluebird boxes, some additional guidelines to follow are not to paint boxes or install a perch on the outside of the box (perches encourage use by non-native European starlings) and to make sure boxes are installed by the third week in February (MD Department of Natural Resources). The majority of a bluebird’s diet consists of insects. Pesticides and herbicides can be toxic to bluebirds and will decrease the amount of food

ACLT GUIDED CANOE TRIPS

2017 SCHEDULE

May	6	Canoe Guide Training (10:30am – 2:30pm) <small>Experience and approval required. Contact office for more info.</small>
May	20	Guided Canoe Trip (10am – 1pm)
June	17	SUNRISE Guided Canoe Trip (7am – 10am)
July	15	SUNRISE Guided Canoe Trip (6am – 9am)
Aug.	12	SUNSET Canoe Trip (5:30pm – 8:30pm) <small>no rain date</small>
Sept	16	Guided Canoe Trip (11am – 2pm)
	30	Guided Canoe Trip (10am – 1pm)
Oct.	14	Guided Canoe Trip (10am – 1pm)
	28	Guided Canoe Trip (9am - 12pm)




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available for them, so locations where herbicides or pesticides are heavily used are not good locations for bluebird nest boxes (Penn State Extension).

Bluebirds are considered one of conservation's success stories. Bluebird numbers declined greatly as open farmland declined in the mid 1900's. The use of pesticides such as DDT also decreased bluebirds' food source and decreased nesting success by making their egg shells weaker (MD Department of Natural Resources). Other factors that contributed to declining bluebird populations were competition with non-native species and reduced number of standing dead trees that provided cavity nesting sites.

Efforts of individual landowners to provide nest boxes and manage for open field habitats has led to great successes in bluebird conservation. So, as you hit the trails over the next few months, keep an eye out for our blue feathered friends as you take in the colors of spring.

Autumn Phillips-Lewis
Land Manager

Resources:

MD Department of Natural Resources. "Creating a Wild Backyard- Eastern Bluebird". <<http://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/habitat/wabluebird.aspx>>.

Penn State Cooperative Extension. "Managing Habitat for Eastern Bluebirds". <<http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/wildlife/landscaping-for-wildlife/pa-wildlife-3-managing-habitat-for-eastern-bluebirds>>.



Female bluebird perched on a nest box. Bluebird eggs in nest box. Bluebird sitting on a nest. One-week-old bluebirds in a nest box. Two-week-old bluebirds in nest. All photos by Sandy Foley.

Land Manager's Corner

Bird Diversity in the Parkers Creek IBA

Much of the land surrounding Parkers Creek was designated an Important Bird Area by the Audubon Society in 2006. Often referred to as an IBA, Important Bird Areas are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird, including breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. IBAs can vary greatly in size but are usually discrete sites that stand out from the surrounding landscape (Audubon Society). To qualify as an IBA, sites must support species that are of conservation concern, species that are vulnerable because they are restricted to a certain area or habitat type, or species that gather in high densities at a certain location (Audubon Society).

The Parkers Creek IBA covers 6,324 acres and, like many IBAs, includes public and privately-owned land. The area is made up of a variety of ecosystems including tidal freshwater streams, saltmarsh wetlands, upland forests, beaches, open fields, and cliffs. The large amount of forested land in the Parkers Creek IBA makes it very important for Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS). Surveys conducted from 1999 through 2004 by long-standing ACLT member Leslie Starr supplied the data that lead to the designation of the land around Parkers Creek as an Important Bird Area. Leslie found that of the 24 FIDS that could potentially be found in the coastal plain region, 18 were found here. The Wood Thrush and the Kentucky Warbler are two declining at-risk species on the Audubon/American Bird Conservancy Watchlist and both breed in the Parkers Creek IBA in significant numbers (Audubon MD-D.C. Important Bird Areas).

One other factor that makes this land such great bird habitat is the unusually dense under-story vegetation layer. A thick and diverse under-story can provide food and nesting habitat for many FID birds and mammals.



Prothonotary Warbler.
Photo by Jason Avery.

The shrubs and herbaceous plants thrive at ACLT due to the success of our white-tailed deer herd management program. Members of the Parkers Creek Conservation Society have kept the

deer population in check which has allowed for a flourishing understory to support an array of FIDS.

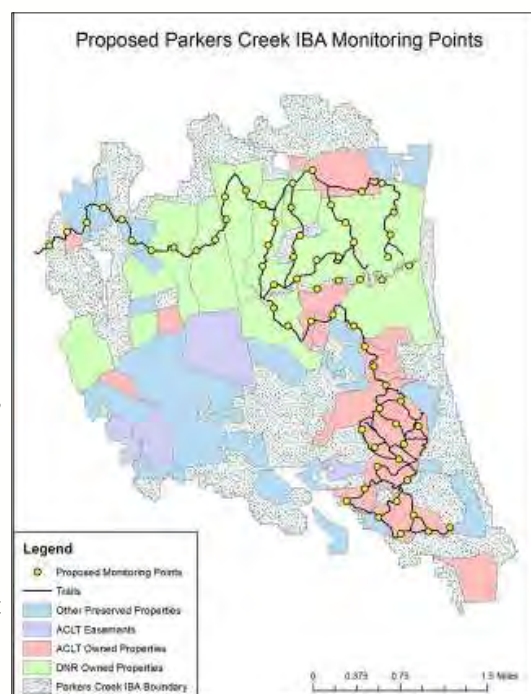
Monitoring Bird Populations

This spring, ACLT will be working with Audubon Maryland-D.C. to implement their monitoring program which was influenced heavily by Leslie Starr's surveying methods in 1999-2004. Audubon Maryland-D.C. started monitoring bird populations in a few IBAs throughout Maryland in 2015 and has been adding more IBAs each year since. This year, ACLT will be using their protocol to collect data on our bird populations as part of our on-going goal of establishing a baseline of diversity within the Parkers Creek watershed.

Over 60 survey points were selected within the Parkers Creek IBA. These sites were placed along trails so that they could be accessed easily and located so that none of the points were within 300m of each other. Volunteers will be assigned multiple points along a trail to survey between 5:45 a.m.

(sunrise) to 9:30 a.m. Upon arriving at each point, they will note the weather conditions, record any birds that they see or hear for exactly 5 minutes, then move on to the next point. This type of surveying is called a "point count" and it is the most common type of bird count method used in forest-like habitats where you hear many more birds than you see.

Each point will be surveyed by volunteers twice per year—once from May 25th and June 10th and the second time between June 11th and June 30th. This is to ensure that we only count birds that are breeding in the Parkers Creek IBA. If the point count survey was conducted before May 25th, we may see and hear birds that were just migrating through the area. If conducted after June 30th, birds would be singing much less because their breeding season would be over and it would result in a less accurate count of the bird populations. Surveys will only be conducted when wind is less than 12 mph and it is not raining as both of these conditions greatly reduce bird activity and would not give accurate data on the number of birds present.





Double-crested Cormorant in Parkers Creek. Photo by Harry Early.

By collecting data on the location and number of bird species within the Parkers Creek IBA we can see how the species and their population numbers change overtime. We can also use this information to influence our land management strategies. If rare species are found, we can take measures to improve the habitat for them on ACLT-managed land. If you are a skilled birder and would like to volunteer to help conduct bird point count surveys in the Parkers Creek IBA, please let us know at landmanager@acltweb.org.

[Editor's Note: On our ACLT Web site (<http://acltweb.org>) under "Natural Resources" you can find a printable "Checklist of Birds Found on ACLT Lands", a copy of Leslie Starr's "Study of Summer Birds of the Parker's Creek Watershed", and illustrated lists of birds found in ACLT's woods, field and water habitats.]

References

Audubon MD-D.C. Important Bird Areas. "Parkers Creek IBA". <http://md.audubon.org/sites/g/files/amh621/f/parkers_creek_iba-july_2016.pdf>

Audubon Society. "Important Bird Areas Program". <http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/?_ga=1.20419384.165451434.1462545593>

Autumn Phillips-Lewis
Land Manager, ACLT

Cultivating a Future

Before joining the Chesapeake Conservation Corps and thus the American Chestnut Land Trust, I spent my days working on a small farm located on the lower eastern shore of Maryland. After taking the farmer's class through Salisbury University, I became intrigued with the inner workings of this environment. Every action performed was intentional and rewarding, whilst the efficiency of a low-acreage farm stood out to me as extraordinary. Even though this farm was diminutive in size it produced food crops to feed hundreds of local families through markets and shares. This particular farmer I worked for was in fact a pioneer of organic production on the eastern shore and through this work I gained valuable skills and experiences that I will cherish for life. Work on this farm taught me various techniques including crop planning, seed starting, greenhouse production/maintenance, livestock management, and mushroom production. Most importantly, however, were the lessons learned about knowing precisely where your food is coming from and the methods by which it is produced. It is this face value that cannot be replaced by any organic certification.

According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture¹, the average age of the American farmer is 58 years old and growing. One could argue that food production is a dying trade; however, it is not just to succumb to the feelings of doom and gloom. In the past few years, Maine and other states in the northeast have seen an increase of 40 percent in farmers under the age of 35 (Mitchell, 2015). There has undoubtedly been a forceful push from consumers for an increased consciousness in food production in order to improve environmental and human health. This paradigm shift in our modern society is a crucial aspect of sustainable farming and the necessary support of it. It is my personal belief, and others may feel the same, that farmers such as the one I previously worked for, or ACLT's very own R.T. West, are a vital function in the propagation of sustainable agriculture for future generations. What comes to mind is the old adage of giving a person a fish versus teaching that same person how to fish. It is through the love of the trade and desire to teach it to a younger generation that a nation's food security can become established.

Mike Molina
Chesapeake Conservation Corps Member

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¹US Census of Agriculture 2012

Mitchell, Jennifer. "A Young Generation Sees Greener Pastures in Agriculture." <<http://www.npr.org>>. 3 January 2015. Web. 24 February 2017.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2)

The last legislative attempt to expand our environmental policy foundation was with the climate change legislation proposed by President Obama in 2010. Surprisingly, it was thwarted by his Democratic counterpart in the Senate, Harry Reid. President Obama then used his executive authority and associated the three initial pieces of legislation on air, water and endangered species to further protect the environment. Unfortunately, all the actions he took have now or will shortly be reversed by President Trump.

As this short summary suggests, Democrats and Republicans have been both champions and obstacles to strong environmental policy proposals. The reasons vary but it basically comes down to whether, at any given time, the price of acting aggressively to protect the environment costs society more than doing nothing. While this debate often has potent emotional overtones, thoughtful folks have made arguments on each side.

This debate is not over. I don't believe that either party will remain captive of their current position over the long haul. Politics and circumstance change, as do political positions accordingly.

Nevertheless we all must do what we can on Earth Day and every day to promote the importance of the environment and support actions at all levels of government that we believe are necessary. Sometimes that may require fighting over specific policy proposals. However, other times it requires stepping back and finding common ground in what we can all believe about the environment.

I think Senator Nelson captured that sentiment best when he said, "Our goal is an environmental decency, quality and mutual respect for all human beings and all other creatures- an environment without ugliness, without poverty, without discrimination, without hunger and without war. Our goal is a decent environment in its deepest and broadest sense."

I believe this perspective gives us all something to share on Earth Day regardless of where we might sit on the political spectrum.

Patrick Griffin, President

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.

Summary of Financial Status for Calendar Years 2015 and 2016
(Unaudited)

Fiscal Year 2016 Financials

	2015	2016
Operating Income:		
Memberships	19,222	18,456
Contributions and Memorials	106,050	89,677
Grants, General	111,420	105,682
Grants, Restricted	0	0
Program Income	35,326	40,531
Land Management Endowment Support	95,928	107,000
Double Oak Farm CSA/ASC	5,716	2,143
All Other Income	<u>90</u>	<u>4,445</u>
Total Income	373,752	367,934

Operating Expenses:		
Land Acquisition and Preservation	39,218	41,712
Land Management	102,739	109,829
Outreach and Member Services	94,015	102,443
Administration and Fundraising	60,654	68,119
Restricted Grants	3,900	
Double Oak Farm CSA/ASC	4,512	3,293
All Other Expenditures	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Expenditures	305,038	325,396

Year-End Special Fund Balances

Land Management Endowment Fund	1,976,586	2,053,679
Forever Endowment Fund	103,802	110,932
Land Acquisition Fund	325,767	376,707
Legal Defense Fund	50,000	50,000
Building Fund	64,801	54,474
Easement Monitoring Fund	14,921	15,000
Repair and Replacement Fund	24,685	31,634
State Land Management Fund	21,622	0
Double Oak Farm CSA/ASC	3,296	2,992
Restricted Grants Carryover	3,830	3,781

Cheryl Place Treasurer

American Chestnut Land Trust

Calendar of Events April – September 2017

April

22 Sat – Earth Day 5K Trail Run
(Check In: 8:00 a.m.; Run Start:
9:00 a.m., hikers to follow)
23 Sun – Earth Day Clean Up
(12:00–3:00 p.m.)
30 Sun – Spring Guided Family
Hike (1:00–3:00 p.m.)

May

6 Sat – Canoe Guide Training
(11:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.) (Sunday
Rain Date)
20 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip
(10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.) (Sunday
Rain Date)

June

4 Sun – Mountain Laurel Hike
(1:00–3:00 p.m.) (tentative-
depending on bloom)
11 Sun – 2nd Sunday Farmers
Market–Family Day (1:00–4:00
p.m.)
17 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip (9:00
–12:00 a.m.) (Sunday Rain Date)

July

9 Sun – 2nd Sunday Farmers
Market (1:00–4:00 p.m.)
15 Sat – SUNRISE Guided Canoe
Trip (6:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.)
(Sunday Rain Date)

August

12 Sat – SUNSET Canoe Trip
(6:00–9:00 p.m.) (No Rain Date)
13 Sun – 2nd Sunday Farmers
Market (1:00–4:00 p.m.)

September

16 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip
(11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.) (Sunday
Rain Date)
22 Fri – Volunteer Appreciation
Dinner (6:30–9 p.m.)
30 Sat – Guided Canoe Trip
(10:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.) (Sunday
Rain Date)

Thank you for your support ...

New Members

ACLT would like to welcome the follow-
ing new members since the Winter 2017
newsletter:

Mrs. Mary Alves
Ms. Sarah Bannat
Mrs. Lisa Bierer-Garrett
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Bogle
Mrs. Kate Dinnel
Ms. Susan Eckerle
Mr. Richard Falcone
Mrs. Julie Hall
Mrs. Maya Huchla
Ms. Gabriela Icaza
Ms. Lorianne Kerley
Mr. Frederick Lowther
Ms. Elise Martin
Ms. Karen Moreland
Mrs. Diep Nguyen-van Houtte
Mrs. Carol Orlando
Penn Staples & Madison Powers
Mr. Robert Schramm &
Ms. Nancy Williams
Mrs. Lucy Tonacci

In Memory of Contributions

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

In memory of **Mr. Ralph Dwan** who
was a Charter Member and one of the
founders of the ACLT. Ralph served as
ACLT's first President, and served on
the Board of Directors as Secretary,
Treasurer, and again as President and
on numerous committees throughout
the years:
Ms. Kathleen McGahey

In memory of **Mr. Gian Carlo Guarda**
who was a Charter Member and a long-
time supporter:
Mr. & Mrs. Glynn Frank
Mrs. Loretta Schaeffer Guarda

In memory of **Mr. Alan E. Wilson** who
was a Sustaining Member, a dedicated
volunteer and longtime supporter. Alan
served on the Board of Directors and on
numerous committees throughout the
years:

Ms. Judith Ayres & Mr. John Burke
Mr. & Mrs. Glynn Frank
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Morella
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wilson

Gift Memberships

Thank you to the following members
who gave a gift membership since the
last newsletter:

Ms. Joy Bartholomew &
Mr. Mark Edmondson
Mr. & Mrs. John Little

General Contributions and Designated Gifts

Thank you to the following for your gen-
erous gifts:

Anonymous
Ms. Denise Breitburg & Mr. Mark Smith
Ms. Kathy Daniel
Samuel & Barbara Dyer

Through IBM Workplace Giving:

Miss Lisa Manning

Through Macy's/Bloomingdale's Workplace Matching:

Mr. Gregory Locraft

Harrod Property Donations

Mrs. Magda Freeman

Check us out
on Facebook.



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nut Land Trust today!

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American-Chestnut-Land-
Trust/250928382473?ref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/pages/American-Chestnut-Land-Trust/250928382473?ref=ts))



American Chestnut Land Trust, Inc.
Post Office Box 2363
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

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 MD

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

Corporate Membership

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Saver—\$35.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Protector—\$500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Saver Corporate—\$150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Protector—\$60.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustee of Land—\$1000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Protector Corporate—\$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Conservator—\$150.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining—\$2500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> 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.