

Monitoring Report



Photo submitted by Dan Ewald

All our monitoring responsibilities for the properties on which we hold Conservation Restrictions were successfully completed in 2020. These include the Wiita Conservation Land (Blood Hill), South Road Fields, Morrison Property, Arnold Property, and the new Ewald Property. There were no encroachments to deal with, but there are some ongoing issues with motorized vehicles again this year on Blood Hill. Another problem is the continuing spread of invasive plants, (oriental bittersweet and multiflora rose) particularly on the wooded edges of South Road Fields. These non-native invasive plants crowd out native species and have a detrimental effect on wildlife, particularly pollinators. Research has shown that pollinators, which include many insects and some animals, are critically important to sustaining both a healthy flowering plant population and all the creatures that rely on them as a source of food and shelter.

Thank you to Board members Bob Leary, Doug Leab, Rebecca Walsh and Dan Ewald for their work in monitoring this past year. We also want to thank our co-holders, North County Land Trust for their collaboration in monitoring Blood Hill and New England Forestry Foundation for their collaboration with the Arnold Property. Working with these fine organizations eases the work load and brings in expertise and new ideas.

Duck Derby

The 2020 Rubber Duck Derby was a success despite the challenges of Covid. We sold out at 700 ducks and were ready for a rollicking good time at Willard Brook in May. Unfortunately, due to the quarantine, our permit was revoked. We were left with hundreds of ducks with nowhere to go.

Not to be deterred we found a secret location, with a waterfall, and ran a sampling of ducks over the falls and filmed it (and filmed it, and filmed it some more).

Mike McCallum directed, "The Guy in New York" edited and produced, a cast of hundreds of ducks (and a few humans) performed, and the historic "Quacking Quarantine Duck Derby" movie was born. Winners were pulled from their designated race groups sitting on Doug's deck, and a good time was had by all.

Go to Ashbylandtrust.org to see the movie trailer and exciting full length feature film.

The Duck race continues to be our most fun and successful fundraiser. We sold out of 2021 ducks by November 2020 and have high hopes of returning to Willard Brook on May 2, 2021 for a live running of our Derby. Post time will be at 1:00. Spectators may be limited depending on Covid restrictions at the time, but rest assured there will be winners from this year's entrants. You can stay up to date by checking our Facebook page www.facebook.com/ashbylandtrust.



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