



Winter 2015-2016
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Conservancy a Primary Partner in Lake Louise Protection

A multi-year land project came to completion late last summer with the protection of 750 acres of forestland along $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of Thumb Lake (also known as Lake Louise). Located near Boyne Falls, this land is one of the largest privately-owned parcels in the region. Many partners came together to secure a \$900,000 Forest Legacy grant from the U.S. Forest Service. The grant was used to purchase a conservation easement on the property that is held by the state of Michigan, ensuring permanent protection. The land remains owned by the Lake Louise Christian Community Camp & Retreat Center.

In 1934, the Horner family donated 5,500 acres of land to the United Methodist Church to become the Lake Louise Christian Community Camp & Retreat Center (LLCC), offering a youth camp and cottage site for families of the church. The camp has been operating since 1935 and extends its opportunities to the local community. In their words the camp is open "to all people seeking respite and renewal, we look to the future filled with joy, a sense of privilege to be entrusted with these lands, community, and ministry, and hope for the future."

At the time of the camp formation, nearly half of the original land gift was sold to the State of Michigan, and additional parcels were sold over the years. A majority of the land was also enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act (CFA) in 1973, and it has periodi-

"After six years, the stars finally aligned for this project. The recipe was just right: a unique working forest with outstanding conservation values, a committed and patient landowner with a strong land ethic, an invaluable partner/facilitator with LTC, and tireless efforts from DNR (and LTC) to take this project from inception to completion."

- Ty Ratliff, Senior Land Protection Specialist

cally been sustainably harvested for timber (see page 5 for more information about CFA). Several years ago the Conservancy learned about the federal Forest Legacy Program that is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture, and believed the camp's remaining 1,800 acres might be a candidate for protection through this program. The LLCC board and camp director strongly supported the concept, and moved forward to partner with the Little Traverse Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources." The board and the camp director at that time partnered with Little Traverse Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources to prepare the application. In 2009, a grant request for funding to purchase a conservation easement on the entire property was submit-

continued next page

Growing the Ponshewaing Nature Preserve

After decades of no known successful loon nestings on Crooked Lake in Emmet County, this mother loon hatched and raised two young near Rocky Point. *photo credit: Gene Klco.*

"It's hardly a coincidence that LTC preserves and successful loon nest sites go hand in hand." - Jeff Lange, LoonCorps Coordinator

As a result of many generous donors, the Conservancy has completed the purchase of a nine-acre addition to the Ponshewaing Nature Preserve on the north shore of Crooked Lake. Located ½ mile southwest of the Alanson Waterway Locks, the addition includes 700 feet of undeveloped Crooked Lake shoreline. The scenic shoreline provides outstanding waterfowl, fisheries, and wetland habitat.

Earlier this fall, a family foundation offered a generous pledge of \$15,000 as a 1:1 matching grant toward the final \$25,000 needed to meet the \$100,000 goal. Additional support was given from the Oleson Foundation, the Pickerel-Crooked Lake Association, the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation, and more than \$40,000 in donations from Crooked and Pickerel lake residents.

"This was a true partnership project pulling together so many avenues of support to protect a cherished waterway," said Senior Land Protection Specialist Ty Ratliff.

LOONS & PROTECTED LAND: According to LoonCorps Coordinator Jeff Lange, a new loon nesting platform is planned to be situated very close to the Ponshewaing Preserve. This past summer, loons successfully nested on Crooked Lake raising two chicks east of Rocky Point Cove (see photo above). "Loon rafts on Pickerel Lake, Round Lake, and all three on Crooked Lake are adjacent to LTC preserve properties. It's hardly a coincidence that LTC preserves and successful loon nest sites go hand in hand," Jeff said. *(photo by Gene Klco)*



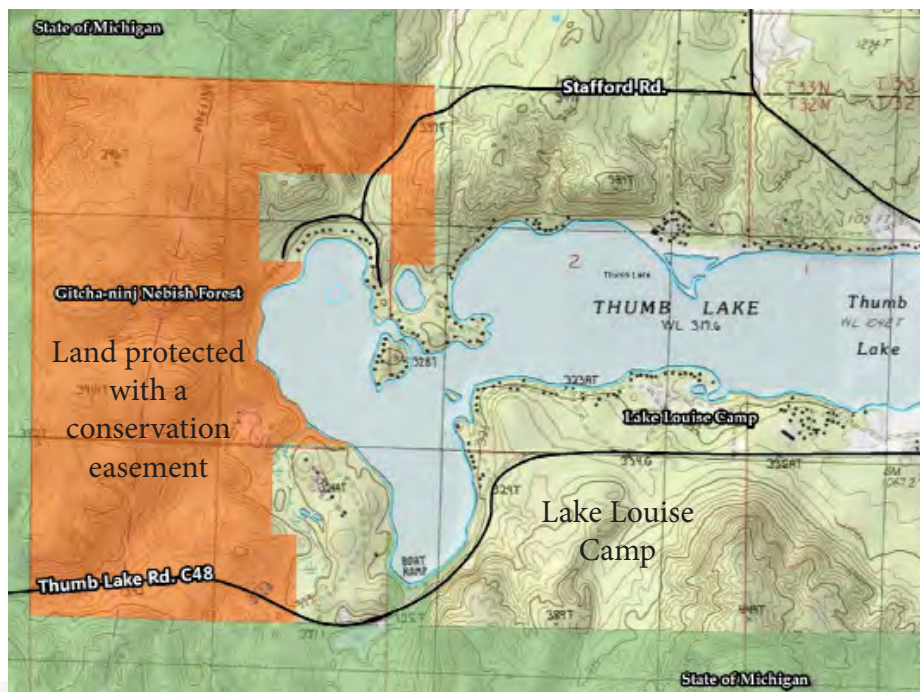
Lake Louise Protection continued from cover

ted to the Forest Legacy Program. That year, the project did not score high enough for funding, but this didn't stop the partners from trying again. The application was submitted again in 2010 and while the project scored better, it was still not high enough to qualify for funding. Undaunted, the group did not yet throw in the towel. This time, they scaled the project back to include 750 acres and gave the project a new name: Gitcha-ninj Nebish Forest (an Ottawa name meaning "Big Finger Water") resubmitting their application one more time. The third time was a charm, and a \$1 million grant was approved in 2013. The LLCC did a bargain-sale of their conservation easement, bringing the payment to \$900,000. The funding was officially awarded late this past summer.

David Gladstone was director of the LLCC through much of the application process. "The intention was always to keep the west end of the camp property wild, but intentions give way to pressures and there was always the risk that it could have been sold off in the future," Gladstone says. "This was seen as a way of protecting it for perpetuity to use it as it had always been used keeping with the value we had always professed. It also provided an influx of money into the association to help sustain the camp. The cottager community is really quite thrilled that they have acted in a way that protects the land forever."

Current camp director, Jim Willford, explains that this multi-year process has renewed the camp's commitment to teaching a land ethic in their camp curriculum. "While I had nothing to do with the project, I came in for the benefit of the celebration and the opportunity to move forward." Willford explains that the camp plans to expand the forest conservation education component during their nine weeks of summer camps to further the message of healthy forests and land conservation.

The conservation easement will be held by the State of Michigan, and ensures that this land will remain protected, a working forest, and will provide continued public access.



"Anyone who has driven down Thumb Lake Road past this property (especially in autumn) has had the privilege of experiencing one of northern Michigan's hidden treasures. So the desire to protect such a beautiful natural resource was inherent. When you add that to the conviction of the landowner and the unwavering support of a partner like Little Traverse Conservancy, we knew that we would be able to overcome whatever obstacles we met along the way. We had to make adjustments to our proposal to make it more competitive at the national level, deal with unexpected complications, and maneuver through a bureaucratic maze but the end result is well worth all of the effort that it took to achieve!"

- Kerry Wieber, Department of Natural Resources



Menonaqua Preserve Grows FAMILY DONATES IN MEMORY OF SON

Ten acres were recently purchased with funds from the Harbor Springs Greenbelt Program to add onto the Menonaqua Woods Nature Preserve. Largely wooded with a combination of mixed northern hardwoods and lowland conifers, this land is part of a large complex of protected lands surrounding Harbor Springs proper.

BE EXPANDED, SO AM
LEAVING ROOM

What do our conservation easements protect?

Conservation easements voluntary legal agreements that restrict development on privately-owned property. Bald Eagles have been reported from 30 different conservation easement protected properties within the five counties that we serve, while 24 different threatened or endangered species have been documented across 47 easement properties.

Elbert Family Nature Preserve

A five-acre addition to the Elbert Family Nature Preserve near Crooked Lake was recently donated, bringing the preserve to 74 acres.



Awake Ye Sleeping Giants

Given their vast and growing network of protected lands, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's 2015 Annual Report says land trusts are the sleeping giant in bird conservation. In the future, the Lab hopes to offer a suite of services for land trusts to help support the more than 100 bird species with breeding distributions primarily on private lands. Their report also summarizes research that shows birders are tops among outdoor recreationists for engaging in conservation activities.



Red-breasted Nuthatch at Waldron Fen Preserve/Darrell Lawson



A New Category of Protected Lands

WORKING FOREST RESERVES

IN 1986, THE CONSERVANCY ACCEPTED A 70-ACRE LAND DONATION, the Sims-Moffatt Preserve, that was enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act Program (CFA). CFA designation means it has and always will be actively managed for timber.

Over the years, a few other preserves have been accepted that include CFA designation including the Offield Family Nature Preserve. And this fall, the Conservancy received the last of a 1,200-acre land gift consisting of 17 parcels enrolled in CFA, prompting us to create a new category of protected lands: Working Forest Reserves.

While the majority of the organization's lands are traditional nature preserves with a "hands off" management philosophy, the forests of Working Forest Reserves will be carefully managed. In order to distinguish working reserve lands from traditional nature preserves, we will be using a different colored sign (*see photo above right*).

Lands enrolled in the Commercial Forest Act Program must have a forest management plan on file with the state, and the land must be managed for long-term timber production. The CFA also requires that the land be open to the public for hunting, fishing, and trapping. Removing a property from CFA involves paying a penalty.

As part of its forest management plan, selective logging will periodically occur on our CFA lands. This logging will occur in a sustainable manner following closely managed guidelines outlined by a professional forester with input from a wildlife biologist. While the initial appearance of the reserve may seem unsightly, proper forest management will eventually enhance the biodiversity and health of the property by mimicking natural disturbance, suppressing forest diseases, and allowing native vegetation to thrive.

"We want the public to be assured that we are engaging in a very thorough and conscientious process to ensure the long-term management of our working reserve lands," said Kieran Fleming, the Conservancy's director of land protection and stewardship. "We have worked hard to ensure that our forestry practices are following best protocols for sustainable forestry, meaning that we are actively harvesting timber, but doing so in a way that maintains the integrity of the forest so that it will be here and healthy for future generations."

Nationwide and statewide, the practice of forest management on conservancy-owned lands is not uncommon. And for many years, LTC has harvested pine plantations that are composed of Scotch pine or other exotic species on nature preserves.

"For the Conservancy, this is about balance" added Fleming, "we have thousands of acres on which we simply let nature take its course. In a hundred years, many of these will resemble a form of 'old growth' forest. And that's great but we also feel it is appropriate to own Working Forest Reserves that will have a more active management philosophy. This will enable us to diversify our forest habitats for the benefit of a wider variety of wildlife. All told, these are currently less than 10% of our holdings."

CFA Land at a Glance

Michigan's commercial forest program provides a tax incentive to landowners who manage their property for long-term timber production. Landowners enrolled in the program pay reduced property taxes and the state of Michigan pays an additional amount to counties where the land is enrolled to help make-up for the tax reduction.

The Commercial Forest Act requires that landowners manage the property for commercial timber production and must have a written management plan. It also requires that landowners must allow foot access to allow the general public the privilege of hunting, fishing, or trapping on commercial forest land.

More information can be found at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website.

Memorial Gifts

August 26-November, 2015

Dorothy Aufranc

Birchwood Association of Mullett Lake

Hanna Marie Campbell

Mrs. Barbara Bohls Graham

Steve Chatters

Ms. Jane Bruce

James Lee Dale

Dick and Veroneze Strader

James Farley

Cordelia Westwater Robinson & Hugh N. Westwater

Mr. Charles "Chick" Fisher, III

Mrs. Walter L. Ross, II

Donna Rae Gaunt

Ms. Joan Caldwell

Gilbert Gove

Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Sellers

June Grundy

Birchwood Association of Mullett Lake

Elizabeth Austin Hall

Mr. Walter Scott

Frank Harris

Mr. and Mrs. Ian Bund

Eugene C. Herzog

Walt and Susan Coyle
Dr. Edward and Joanne Loniewski
Mark and Mary Ann (Loniewski) Ransler

Jack Herzog

Walt and Susan Coyle
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Mrs. Jean I. Everest
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Todd and Valerie Terry

Carol Kromer

Birchwood Association of Mullett Lake

John Maximiuk

Ms. Lucille Daniels
Mr. Paul C. Daniels

Anne C. McClure

Cordelia Westwater Robinson & Hugh N. Westwater
Mrs. Margaret Winslow

June Muchmore

Birchwood Association of Mullett Lake

Paxson Offield

Between the Covers
Mr. and Mrs. James C. Fabiano, Sr.
Gib and Jennifer James
Cordelia Westwater Robinson & Hugh N. Westwater
Mrs. Margaret Winslow

Jennie Peterson

Mrs. Barbara Bohls Graham

Suzanne Fitzsimons Reynolds

Cordelia Westwater Robinson & Hugh N. Westwater

Elizabeth "Libby" Ross

Mrs. William Barnes, III
Mr. and Mrs. James K. Dobbs, III
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Townsend Driggs
Mrs. Walter L. Ross, II
Cordelia Westwater Robinson & Hugh N. Westwater

Judy Rossman

Karen and David Hill

Alice Roth

Ms. Darleen Roth Flaherty

David A. Roth

Ms. Darleen Roth Flaherty

Sarah Schwartz

Joseph and Diane Brandonisio

Louise Arbaugh Shumway

Anonymous

David Watson Smith

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David's Consumers Energy Staff

In Honor of John & Rita Picton

Tom, Alison and Brian Rink

Kiefer Pirrung & Molly Parker in honor of their engagement

Mrs. Anne D. Wallace



partnering with TIP OF MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL'S
Watershed Academy

For the 2nd school season, LTC educators assisted with the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council's Watershed Academy program. This exciting new hands-on program involves high school students learning about their local watershed by participating in the Watershed Council's stream monitoring program. This past fall, classes from Alanson, Boyne City, East Jordan, Harbor Springs and Pellston High Schools were involved. Tip of the Mitt staff meets with the students in the classroom and in the field with a portion of the field day taking students to an LTC nature preserve near the stream monitoring site to learn about the connection between land use and water quality.

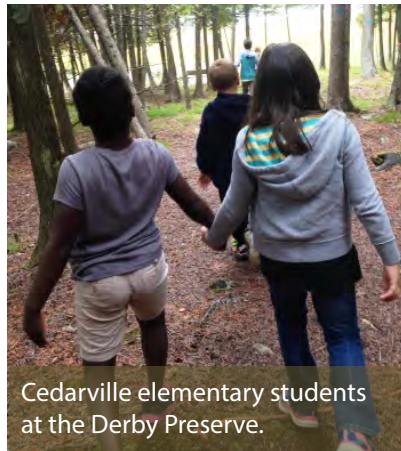


*Registration for winter programs begins
December 1 with programs running
January 12 – February 26, 2016.*

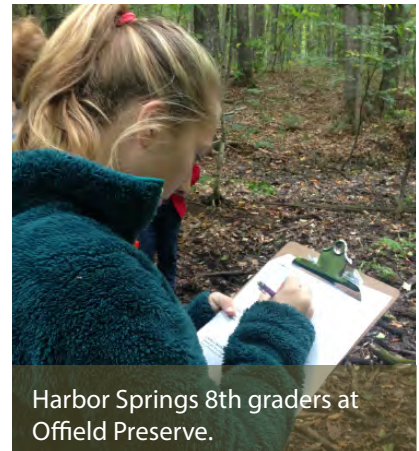
St. Ignace 2nd graders at Thorne Swift Nature Preserve



Joe Clark

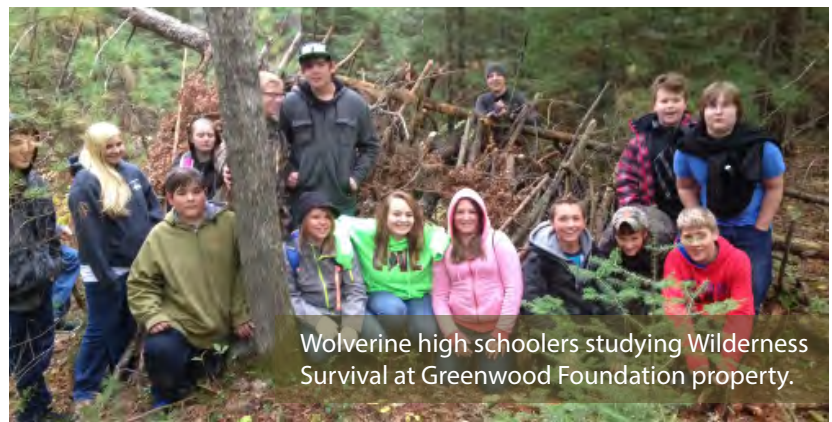


Cedarville elementary students
at the Derby Preserve.



Harbor Springs 8th graders at
Offield Preserve.

*This past fall, 67 education groups (1,251 students) participated in a
Little Traverse Conservancy environmental education outing.*



Wolverine high schoolers studying Wilderness
Survival at Greenwood Foundation property.

New Members

The Conservancy would like to thank the following new members and Friends or Benefactors who are new donors or increased their giving within that level from August 25, 2015 to November 20, 2015.

Friends and Benefactors

Businesses

Consumers Energy

Families/Individuals

Mr. and Mrs. Ian Bund
Mr. Ralph R. Carruthers
William and Deborah Hodges
Brian and Jean Hunt
Lara and John Killgore
Mark and Denise Lammert
Mr. and Mrs. Tad M. Malpass
Martha and Mark Patterson
Mrs. Margaret Winslow

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Businesses

Fox Charlevoix

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Heather Rinkel
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Roesner
Thomas and Jeanne Schmidt
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Shaw
Stephen W. and Janice Smith
Joseph and Carol Steger
Elizabeth Holowinski and Gabriel Valle

Wish List

Kitchen Dining Table
Pots and Pans for Intern House
DJI Osmo Handheld, Stabilized Video
Camera
New Drills
Drill Press
Snowmobile Trailer

New McCune
Preserve parking
area off of
Berger Road

MAKING ROOM FOR THE SCHOOL BUS Planned Parking Areas for Better Use

*Two of LTC's most popular nature preserves had a shared problem:
Because their parking areas were not large enough for a school bus, it has been a challenge for
classes to visit. New parking areas will not make it safer for kid dropoff and parent parking!*

at Susan Creek Preserve....

...our neighboring landowner, Consumer's Energy, donated half an acre of land that includes 400 feet of frontage along US-31. This gift, valued at \$30,000, allows the Conservancy to expand the parking area at the existing location so that it will be safe for a school bus to pull in and turn around off of busy US-31.

at McCune Preserve...

...the previous parking area off of Maxwell Road was slanted and often iced up during the winter, and was not large enough for a school bus at any time of the year. A generous grant from the Petoskey-Harbor Springs Area Community Foundation enabled the Conservancy to add a whole new larger and flatter parking area to the west end of this popular community preserve.

Attention Nordic Skiers & Snowshoers*

Which preserves will be groomed?

EMMET COUNTY

Goodhart Farms Preserve

3.5 miles

Offield Family Preserve

4.5 miles

McCune Preserve

2.5 miles

Waldron Fen Preserve

2 miles

CHEBOYGAN COUNTY

Banwell Family Preserve

3.5 miles

Chaboiganing Preserve / Colonial Point Memorial Forest

3.5 miles

CHARLEVOIX COUNTY

Driggers Preserve

1 mile

The Hill Preserve

2 miles

Rogers Family Homestead

1 mile

Wisser-Saworski Preserve

1.5 miles

MACKINAC COUNTY

Birge Preserve

2 miles

Derby Preserve

1.5 miles

**Snowshoers are reminded to please
stay off of groomed ski tracks.*

Thank you to our 2015

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**Denotes Benefactor Gift of \$1,000 or more; Friends contribute \$500 or more)*

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Bill and Betsy Stewart
Stoney Acre Grill
Dr. Jim and Sue Straley
Sturgeon River Pottery
Patrick and Lois Sullivan
Sam and Mary Lou Supernaw
Teddy Griffin's Road House

Three Pines Studio & Gallery
Toski Sands Market & Wine Shop
Trout Creek Condominiums
Touring Gear
Dr. and Mrs. Miles W. Trumble
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MIKE RYAN WAS BORN AND RAISED NEAR DETROIT, BUT grew up traveling to the family cottage in Gaylord where, over the years, he developed a passion for boating. He and his wife Sherri knew early on that if they ever had the opportunity, they would move north to live year round. In 1990, the couple was able to fulfill that dream when Mike started working for a marine business in Gaylord. Soon, he found a new career in the software business, but his heart was always in the boating world. As luck would have it, an opportunity arose to purchase the Indian River Marina and — in partnership with his sister and brother-in-law — the families purchased the marina in May 2014. While Mike and Sherri still live in Gaylord where they have raised their three sons, it is just a short trip north on I-75 for Mike to commute to his office along the shore of Indian River.

"We are thrilled to be back in this line of work and to now be part of a long history with this marina," Mike says. "Every day of the boating season, we have people come in who want to explore the inland waterway and they never come back disappointed," he adds. "Even my business partner and brother-in-law who now lives full time in California never ceases to love his returns to this region and our quality of life, good people, and beautiful natural resources."

"We support the Conservancy because we value your work and fully realize how it is protecting those very things that make our business succeed. Any way we can support the Conservancy's work is money well spent!"

BUSINESS PROFILE

Indian River Marina

Mike & Sherri Ryan and Ed & Kathy Deenihan



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Building Boxes In Honor of Local Conservationist



John Baker and Beth Skau building kestrel boxes, with the finished product below.



As a tribute to their longtime friend, Packy Offield, two families have donated their time to construct 20 kestrel boxes to be used with the Conservancy's Kestrel Box Monitoring Program. Packy first funded the Conservancy's program in 2012 as part of the nationwide efforts of The Peregrine Fund to help ensure the success of the smallest falcons, the American Kestrel.

Packy, who passed away last summer, is remembered for his passionate support of conservation causes and for his lifelong community philanthropy.

"I wanted to commemorate Packy as a friend and to thank him for his support of conservation and of Little Traverse Conservancy," says John Baker who knew Packy since they were both kids. Greg and Beth Skau were also friends with Packy and Greg once took a trip with Packy to Argentina as part of The Peregrine Fund.



Packy Offield

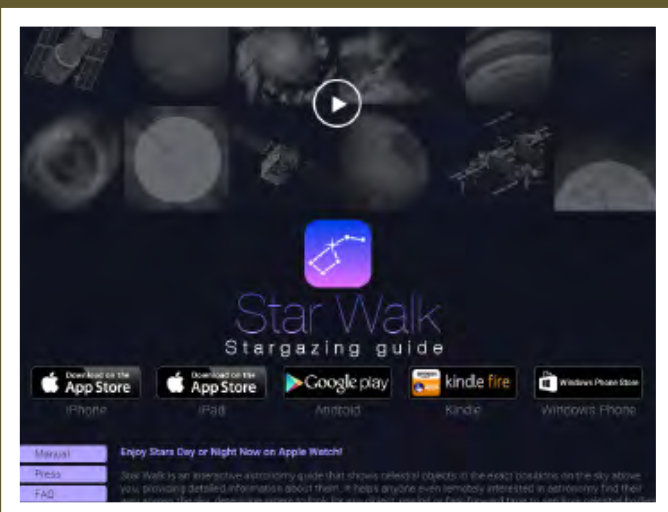
This season 33 kestrel boxes monitored on nature preserves and conservation easements. Here is what was observed:

- Seven boxes were inhabited by nesting pairs, six of those fledged young;
- Eggs from one of the seven nests were eaten by a predator;
- Six chicks from two nest boxes were banded by a licensed bird-bander;
- Three boxes had European starling nests in them;
- One box had a great crested flycatcher nest;
- Seven boxes saw no bird activity;
- At four box locations, kestrels were seen near a box but were not using the box itself, and two of those reported seeing fledglings nearby; and
- Eight boxes were unreported.

We are still seeking monitors for some of the newly built and installed nest boxes. Interested? Please call 231.347.0991 or contact cacia@landtrust.org.



American Kestrel



StargazingApps Recommended by Mary

With so much darkness in our day, it is the perfect time of year to turn your gaze starward and learn more about the wonderful night sky. We asked Mary Stewart Adams, Director of the International Dark Sky Park at The Headlands, to suggest her favorite dark sky apps and she recommends the following. Both are available for Apple or Android phones:

- Star Walk - \$2.99
- Distant Suns - \$5.99

Restoring a Native Meadow with Seed Bombs

As part of the Little Traverse Conservancy's ongoing, multi-year project to restore the Meadowgate Nature Preserve to native species, Harbor Springs middle schoolers helped the Conservancy create and disperse hundreds of native seed bombs at the preserve this week. Conservancy staff worked alongside Kelli Polley's Harbor Springs 6th graders to create the seed bombs in their class Monday afternoon. The following day, they traveled to the preserve along M-119 just outside of Harbor Springs to "disperse" or throw the bombs around the meadow. Middle School principal Wil Cwikiel helped direct the bombs by running along the meadow with a hoola hoop target.

A grant from the Wildflower Association of Michigan allowed for the purchase of the native seeds. Clay for the seed bombs was donated by Stuchell Ceramics.

"This project is exactly what we imagine our new EcoStewards program to entail; engaging students in nature, on our preserves, and accomplishing something meaningful—adding several species of native wildflowers for the benefit of a host of creatures on up the food chain, even us, as we drive by and see the colors. Just wait!"
— *Conservation Easement Specialist Derek Shiels*



From the Director

Reflections...Tom Bailey

NEW BOARD MEMBER INTERVIEW: Jim Kimmell

Like so many of us who have “discovered” northern Michigan, Joe Kimmel’s eyes shine when sharing the story of how he and his wife, Karen, first fell in love with this magical part of the world.

As natives of southern Indiana, the couple had lived in Ann Arbor while Joe attended law school at the University of Michigan. But they had never traveled very far north until friends invited them to their Harbor Springs home. “After that visit, we started renting in Harbor Springs every summer,” Joe recalls. “First we just took a week, then two weeks, and then Karen and the kids would spend a whole month up north.”

During those early years in Harbor, Joe met Dave Irish, owner of Irish Boat Shop and one of Little Traverse Conservancy’s founders. “Dave introduced me to the Conservancy and we have been supporters ever since,” Joe says.

This will have more and photo is coming!

Thank YOU



Thank you Toski Sands for donating proceeds from bag sales to LTC

Bo Mayfield for a refrigerator for the office.

Bruce Dawley for lending equipment to the stewardship staff.

Ed and Diane Strzelinski, Diane Winchell, and Jack Shimala for raking the trails at Darnton Preserve after loose pigs rooted them up!

Fred and Mary Clinton, Mark Prendeville, and Holly Willcome for helping build the new trails at McCune Preserve.

Char-Em United Way Day of Caring Volunteer employees from Circuit Controls Corporation: Nick Brooks, Roger Fosmore, Jack George, Diane Morse, Greg Moyer, Sally White, and Phil Whittaker who helped build the trail to the Lake Michigan Shoreline.

Char-Em United Way Day of Caring Volunteers from Petoskey High School who helped build new trails at McCune Nature Preserve.

Josh Epperly for his AmeriCorps service at LTC this year.

Fall field trips: Greenwood Foundation for hosting a hike this fall, Darrell Lawson for leading a birding field trip at Waldron Fen Preserve with 2” of new snow, and Mary Trout for leading our children’s birding programs and donating program materials.

Fall Mailing Volunteers Sandy Festerling, Peggy Swenor, and RSVP Mailing volunteers Sally Bales, Marlene Bartson, Barb Bechhold, Gretchen Brown, Betty Deschermeier, Doris Lark, Sharon Ledingham, Nancy Staley, and Lurli Vaughan.

Trail use data analysis volunteers Tamara Stevens and Mary Jane Clayton.

Gow Litzenburger and Litzenburger Landscaping staff for mounting and placing a memorial plaque and boulder at the Braun South Preserve.

LSSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club for clearing trails at Round Island Point Preserve and Ashley Moerke for providing chili for everyone.

Virginia Zimmerman, Elise Gibson, and Elise’s daughter Victoria Duda for cleaning up trash at the Banwell Preserve.

John Baker and Greg and Beth Skau for building Kestrel nest boxes.

Nathan Moffett for helping build kestrel boxes and prepare trails for winter XC ski grooming.

Harbor Springs Middle School Principal, Will Cwikiel, teacher Kelli Polleys, and her 6th grade science class for helping spread native wildflower seeds at the Meadowgate Preserve. Thank you also to Stuchell Ceramics for donated clay for Meadowgate Wildflower project.

Ginny Cole for helping education department update teacher database.

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Scan the codes below for LTC's smart phone nature preserve app, available at no charge. The app includes info about LTC trails as well as other area trails such as the North Country Trail.



iPhone

Android

Little Traverse Conservancy, Inc.
3264 Powell Road
Harbor Springs, MI 49740-9469
231.347.0991
www.landtrust.org

Address Service Requested

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Petoskey, MI
Permit No. 110

Winter 2016 COMMUNITY FIELD TRIPS

*Pre-registration is required by calling 231.347.0991 or registering online.
Kids snowshoes may be available by requesting when you sign up!*

Eastern Upper Peninsula Birding

Saturday, Jan 23rd 8am – 6pm

Join LTC staff and Petoskey Regional Audubon Society president Darrell Lawson for a full day of birding around the Eastern Upper Peninsula. We will be targeting northern Owls and Northern Hawk as well as other winter birds such as Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll, Pine Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, White-winged Crossbill, and Bohemian Waxwing. Sharp-tailed Grouse and Northern Shrike will almost certainly be encountered as well. Cameras are welcome, but we will be moving frequently. Participation is limited to XX number of participants, so register early! In case of inclement weather, reschedule date is Sunday, January 24.

Greenwood Foundation Wildlife Adventure

Saturday, January 30 10am - Noon

The Greenwood Foundation is a privately-owned property near Wolverine protected with a conservation easement held by LTC. Greenwood welcomes the public to enjoy and explore this more than 1,700-acre remote property. A groomed trail for skiers will lead you through the trail systems. There will also be a shorter route for those who desire to snowshoe. Please provide your own skis or snowshoes for this outing. Snowshoes are available for children 12 and under. Because this is private property, no dogs are allowed. Please arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Andreae – Banwell Ski and Snowshoe Event Andreae & Banwell Preserves, Cheboygan Co.

Saturday January 30 1-4pm

Hike/ski/snowshoe the trails at the Andreae and Banwell Preserves with a destination in mind – the Andreae Cabin on the Pigeon River. Park at the Andreae Preserve and make your way to the Andreae Cabin, exploring the preserve trails at your leisure. At the cabin, hot cocoa and a warm fire will be waiting for you. This is one of our most extensive trail systems and the ski/snowshoe trek can be anywhere from 4-6 miles out and back.

Knee High Naturalists

Round Lake Nature Preserve, Emmet County

Saturday, February 6 11am – 12 pm

TRACKS IN THE SNOW: Bring your 3-5 year old to explore animal tracks in winter! They'll discover what animals are active in winter and what their footprints look like. Indoor activities including a story and craft will be followed by a hike on packed trail to look for real tracks in the snow. Siblings are welcome!

Snowshoe Outing with Eric Hemenway

Stutsmanville Bog Preserve, Emmet County

Saturday, February 13 10am - Noon

In times past, the Odawa and other Great Lakes tribes would measure years by winters. Winter was a make or break time for tribal communities in Michigan. Harsh conditions and lack of game were a combination for potential hardships. On this walk, we not only will learn about how the Odawa prepared for winter but get a feel for what a family had to endure every day with a winter hike.

Snowshoe Outing

Derby Preserve, Mackinac County

Saturday February 20th 10am – Noon

Join LTC staff for a wonderful snowshoe hike through our William B. Derby Nature Preserve. With 200 acres to explore and more than two miles of trails, there is something for everyone. You can join the group for a hike or break out on your own and make your own trip. Come see the wonderful mix of habitat as well as ½ mile of Lake Huron frontage.

Winter Open House

McCune Preserve, Emmet County

Saturday February 27 11am-2pm

Right in our backyard, this beautiful preserve on the Minnehaha Creek offers 3.8 miles of trails. Recently expanded, these trails showcase the creek, hardwoods, and hemlock forests on the preserve. Meet at the new parking area on Berger Rd. at 11:30 for a guided snowshoe hike or arrive any time to explore the groomed trails on your own. Cider, chili, hot cocoa and other treats will be provided after the guided hike to warm up. Registration is appreciated.