



Wild & Scenic News

Volume 4, Issue 2

Summer 2007

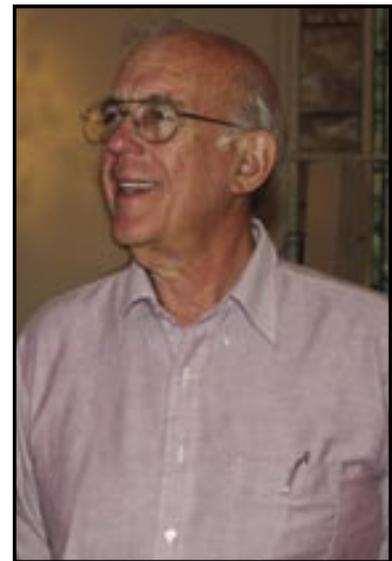
IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

Walter Landgraf (1941- 2007)

On July 23, 2007, the Farmington River lost a great friend. Walt Landgraf passed away suddenly after enjoying a day of birding, music and dancing in Nova Scotia with his wife Linne. Walt's presence around the region's communities was so constant and strong. His extensive knowledge of biology, river ecology, botany, and history, and his ability to excite others to learn was truly inspiring. He did so much for so many and — as one of his colleagues said — having his name associated with his deeds was never the reward. He liked getting things done.

We will think of Walt so often...at the Stone Museum, Squire's Tavern, seeing wildflowers in spring or pieces of pottery harvested from various archaeological sites, and wish he was around to answer all those questions we meant to ask...

FRCC bids a fond farewell to Walt and sends its sympathies to all those who were fortunate to know him.



Fishermen, Watch Your Step!

There is a new threat to the health of our rivers. This highly invasive fresh water algae, *Didymosphenia geminata*, known as "Didymo" or "rock snot" can form thick mats of cottony material (typically gray, white and/or brown, but never green) and smother aquatic plants, destroy fish habitat, and kill aquatic life. The Connecticut DEP is advising anglers and boaters to take precautions to prevent its spread into the state's waters. At risk will be our smaller rivers and streams with relatively shallow water and/or rocky substrate.

Humans are the primary carrier responsible for the spread of this microscopic algae. It can cling to fishing gear and especially to waders with felt soles. Didymo can be spread by jet skis, canoes, kayaks, and fishing boats and remain viable for several

weeks. It is recommended that all river users practice CHECK, CLEAN, DRY procedures below. These procedures will also be effective against other unwanted organisms.



From the CT DEP press release of 7/13/07

Check, Clean, Dry!

CHECK: Before leaving a river or stream, remove all obvious clumps of algae and look for hidden clumps. Leave them at the affected site. If you find any later, dispose in the trash not down the drain.

CLEAN: Soak and scrub all items for at least one minute in either hot water (140 degrees F), 2% solution of household bleach, 5% solution of salt, antiseptic hand cleaner or dishwashing detergent.

Give all water-absorbent gear a good soaking. Clean gear before switching sites and waterways.

DRY: If cleaning is not practical, after the item is completely dry to touch wait an additional 48 hrs. before use in any other waterway.

The Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study Committee Begins its Mission

On April 9, 2007, the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study Committee convened for the first time. The 10 towns which encompass the study area are represented on this committee: Canton



(from where the Upper Farmington River Wild & Scenic designation ends), Burlington, Avon, Farmington, Simsbury, East Granby, Granby, Hartland, Bloomfield and Windsor. In addition, the group also includes representatives from the National Park Service, who will be funding the 3-year investigation, Stanley Works, CT Department of Environmental Protection, and the Farmington River and Salmon Brook Watershed Associations.

The Committee has a three-fold task at hand:

1) determine if the river is **eligible** for inclusion in the Wild & Scenic River System by demonstrating that it has cultural, natural or recreational values of regional or national significance. These parameters are referred to as ORVs (outstandingly remarkable values);
2) determine if the river is **suitable** for Wild & Scenic status by generating local support and commitment to the

designation; and,
3) develop a **river management plan** that is supported locally by the towns surrounding the study area. The plan is to detail the strategies for future protection of the ORVs.

Three subcommittees have been established to concentrate on the various aspects of the studies eligibility, suitability and management plan. The **ORV Planning Subcommittee's** task will be to make recommendations to the full study group on the remarkable resources these rivers contain and that they believe meet the criteria of the Wild & Scenic program. The **Outreach and Education Subcommittee** will be in charge of implementing activities that will engage local landowners, land use commissions and other community interests in the evaluation process. In addition, they will provide educational opportunities regarding the unique resources within the study area. The **Management and Protection Planning**

Subcommittee has the responsibility of working with the Land Use boards and other stakeholder interests within the 10 towns to draft the Management/Protection Plan for the study areas.

The full committee meets the second Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Canton Community Center. The Outreach and Education Subcommittee gathers just prior to the full committee at 6:00 p.m.; the ORV Planning Subcommittee convenes the 4th Tuesday of every month; and the Planning Subcommittee assembles the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. For updates to the study please visit the following websites: www.lowerfarmingtonriver.org and www.salmonbrookwildandscenic.org. If you are interested in getting involved with the Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study or would like to attend one of the meetings, please contact Study Committee Chairman Sally Rieger at 658-7317.

ONE FISH, TWO FISH, RED FISH, BLUE FISH—

FRCC Provides Funding for Two Fish in the Classroom Projects

FRCC is pleased to announce that the Farmington River Anglers Association (FRAA) and Farmington Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited will be receiving



FRCC Grant Program funds to provide hands-on fish rearing programs in two nearby elementary schools. The Anglers Association is receiving \$650 to equip the Colebrook Consolidated School in their participation in the CT River Salmon Association's program Salmon in the Classroom. Trout Unlimited will be supporting a Trout in the Classroom project at the Hunter Montessori School in New Hartford with \$800.



If you are interested in learning more about FRCC's Grant Program, please visit our website at FarmingtonRiver.org.

West Hartland is full of swamps... beaver swamps to be exact. Historically, many of these areas were once flat riparian forest. Beaver inhabitation changed the landscape over time. Dammed streams created basins of still water drowning affected trees and allowing for the invasion of more water-tolerant shrubs and grasses. Although beaver swamps may decrease the commercial value of a forest gained from harvesting trees, they at the same time increase the amount of valuable natural habitat for a variety of species. The shallow waters produce aquatic foods for fish, birds and small mammals. The old snags of the dead trees become important nesting areas for birds.

I have one favorite swamp not too far from my house. I visit it periodically throughout the year. Each season has its own unique qualities. In winter, the marsh is quiet and still. If it's been cold, I can walk out on the ice between the mounded grass tussocks. It gives me a chance to check out the beaver houses to look for signs of recent activity.

The spring and early summer marsh



Wildlife Notes

by Nicki Hall



is full of sound. The chorus of birds, especially the red-winged blackbirds, sing out from early dawn to dusk. I have a little peninsula on which I sit to look out over the three or four acre site. Although I haven't kept an accurate record of my sightings there, I've witnessed some wonderful events. Most recently, the greatest excitement has been watching a Great Blue Heron's nest. It's set high in the crotch of a snag in the middle of the swamp. The nest is large and shaped like

a flat platform. Small sticks comprise the main building material with moss, pine needles and leaf debris forming the lining. This nest has three young birds, now in mid-July almost ready to fledge. Typical Great Blue Heron nests often have 4 eggs, laid in early spring. The chicks hatch after 28 days and usually fledge after 60 days. Typically, the survival rate is two for a brood.

Great Blues eat a variety of foods. Fish comprise the bulk of their diet but they will also eat crabs, frogs, snakes and salamanders (info courtesy of MA Audubon). This is the second year that there has been a brood in the marsh, reutilizing the same nesting spot. It's a treat to be able to see close-hand the daily comings and goings of such a magnificent and wild creature. It also serves as a reminder to me of the importance of maintaining protection over these few pristine areas remaining in our state.

ANNOUNCING—

The First Recipients of the Nancy L. Johnson Scholarship!

Congratulations to Erin Gukowski, a recently graduated senior from Regional 7, and Kai Starn, a continuing Environmental Studies major at the University of Vermont. Both will be receiving \$1000 Nancy L. Johnson Scholarships – named for the former Congresswoman who played such a key role in the designation of the Upper Farmington River as Wild & Scenic in 1994 – to pursue their environmental educations. We are delighted that there are offspring of the W&S area that may come back someday to be river stewards themselves! An important note - FRCC has expanded its eligibility for scholarships to all graduating high seniors and students in college from the W&S communities (Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, and New Hartford). For more information on the scholarship program please visit our website FarmingtonRiver.org or call us at 379-0282.

Who is FRCC?

The Farmington River Coordinating Committee was established when 14 miles of the upper Farmington River were designated as a National Wild & Scenic River on August 26, 1994. The FRCC comprises representatives from each of the five towns adjacent to the Farmington River and from groups noted below. The FRCC embodies an important partnership among the riverfront towns and others to provide stewardship of the Farmington River and its upper watershed. Visit us at www.FarmingtonRiver.org.

Current representatives are:

Barkhamsted – Jean Miller; Mario Santoro, alt.

Canton – Alis Ohlheiser

Colebrook – Tom Stanton

Hartland – Fred Jones; Nicki Hall and Sam Slater, alts.

New Hartford – Pat Keener; Mark Lindquist, alt.

CT DEP – Sally Snyder, alt.

Farmington River Anglers Association – Dick Reynolds; Dan Busa, alt.

Farmington River Watershed Association – David Sinish; Eric Hammerling, alt.

Metropolitan District Commission – Tim Anthony; Carol Youell, alt.

National Park Service – Jamie Fosburgh; Liz Lacy, alt.



Farmington River Coordinating Committee
P.O. Box 395
Pleasant Valley, CT 06063

www.farmingtonriver.org



🌞 Calendar 🌞

Thursday, September 20 — Our 3rd annual **Farmington River W&S Photo and Art Exhibit** will be kicked off at the annual FRCC Open House at Squire's Tavern at People's State Forest in Pleasant Valley. Traveling Trout Band will play music and refreshments will be served from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Members of the community are invited to the event and to submit artwork that has been inspired by the Wild & Scenic character of the Farmington River area. This year the exhibit will be open from September 20 through October 21. Submittal forms with more information are available on-line at FarmingtonRiver.org. Artists are asked to submit artwork on either September 10th or 11th between 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Squire's Tavern, 100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley.

Saturday September 29 — Annual **Farmington River Clean-up** throughout the watershed; 9:30 am -2:30 pm. Please call Aimee Petras at FRWA at 658-4442 for more information.

Tuesday October 2 — **Canton Stormwater Workshop** at Canton Community Center, 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Please call Aimee Petras at FRWA at 658-4442 for more information.

Saturday October 13 — **Macroinvertebrate Training** at Canton Community Center, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. Please call Aimee Petras at FRWA at 658-4442 for more information.

November 1 — **FRWA Annual Meeting** with **Tim Palmer, Photographer and Writer** — at Tower Ridge Country Club, Simsbury from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. Please call Aimee Petras at FRWA at 658-4442 for more information.

For more information on events, visit our Web site: www.FarmingtonRiver.org

“I have never taken a walk in the woods and been disappointed.”

Walt Landgraf
1941-2007