

The Pound Ridge Land Conservancy Green Spaces

www.prlc.net

Non-Profit Organization

— Preserving Pound Ridge Lands Forever —

Fall 2012

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Our Mission

The Pound Ridge Land Conservancy is a private, non-profit corporation, with the mission of preserving the semi-rural character of Pound Ridge through the acquisition, conservation and stewardship of land in town. The Conservancy's preserves are kept in their natural state for aesthetic, ecological and educational purposes. The preserves are held in perpetuity, i.e. they cannot be sold.

Save the Date

Land Stewardship in Action

Join us April 6th, 2013

PRLC Website Redesign: A New Chapter in Local Land Protection, Education and Programming

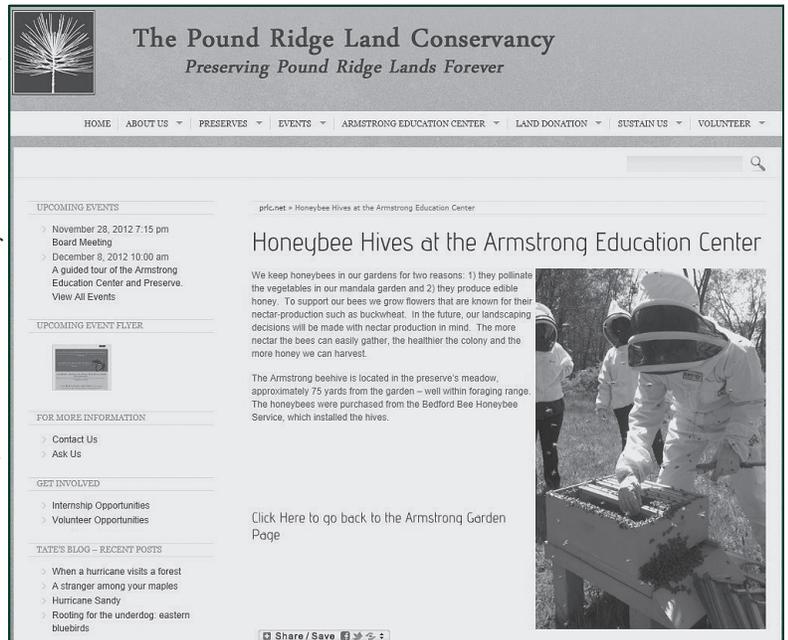
If you go to our old web address – www.prlc.net – you will be welcomed by a newly designed and expanded website. Looking for directions to a specific preserve or to download a printable trail map? Interested in the 'how to' of establishing a vegetable garden or what to best plant in your meadow to attract songbirds? Heard your neighbor speak about an exciting workshop they attended on green energy and how it applies to historical renovations? Have a few hours on a weekend morning to help clear trails after a storm, or participate in a guided walk to learn more about woodland inhabitants? If you said 'yes' to these questions, we invite you to log onto our website. Our goal: to create a website that links readers with PRLC's emerging hands-on projects and practices for 'Living Lighter on the Land'.

Since March of this year, PRLC has had its first full-time staff person—Tate Bushell—our local Land Steward/Educator. Employing a full time staff person does more than just build the PRLC's capacity; it formally symbolizes a new chapter in the work and scope of your local land conservancy. This new chapter uses the newly renovated, off-the-grid Armstrong House as a venue to launch our more traditional land protection programming into a larger conversation about the natural world and our place in it. We use the word 'conversation' hesitantly, it's not just *talking* that we do.

We are in the process of building and, in some cases, expanding our *outdoor classrooms*, which are used to demonstrate sustainable land use practices to our guests in workshops, classes and talks. To truly be a local resource, we focus on pertinent land issues that everyone in Pound Ridge can relate to. For example, we are converting our field of invasive plants (something that many people in Pound Ridge currently have) into a diverse meadow that will attract hundreds of amazing plants and animals. Additionally, we are using space right next to

the Armstrong House to demonstrate how to grow food in a sustainable way and increase the health of our soils via nutrient recycling. Through our public and demonstrational work at the Armstrong Education Center, we inspire the community of Northern Westchester to implement their own simple, enjoyable and sustainable land use practices, thereby lessening our human footprint on the land. After all- we are a land conservancy!

What does all of this have to do with our new website? Our new site is a hub for all of this information. Here's what you'll find: public events



calendar, descriptions of upcoming guided walks, hands-on workshops and educational events at our preserves and the Armstrong Education Center located off Rt 121, award winning blog posts, pictures of our public gatherings, preserves and projects, newly written preserve management plans, up-to-date information about our newest trails and preserves (all 17 of them), links to other walkable preserves in Pound Ridge and Bedford, new printable trail maps, membership information, simple steps to make tax-deductible donations and organizational information (mission, board member bios, staff bios). The website's depth is illustrated through full

Donate online at www.prlc.net under Sustain Us or use the Donation Envelope provided
Become a Member , Renew your Membership or Make A Gift Today!

President's Message: Connections

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world."

~John Muir

Connections. That is what the PRLC is about in truth- connections between landowners and the land they cherish, connections between residents and neighbors who share a special commitment to a place they call home, connections between each of us and the natural world and its inhabitants. Connections we need to understand about the conservation values important to us, our health and humanity.

PRLC has grown this past year as it has never done before in its 37 year history. It is simultaneously incredibly rewarding to see how expanded programming and outreach have provided opportunities for learning and experiencing connections to more students and PR residents and scary to know that PRLC depends on as never before the community which it- or we- serve. PRLC will only be as strong as those who support it, are involved with it, or provide leadership to it. It is your local land conservancy and environmental education vehicle. Whether we're providing programming at PRES with blue bird boxes in the rear meadow of the school, creating community service experiences for high school students, expanding our Mandala community garden, researching areas for deer enclosure protection in our woodlands, teaching concepts of permaculture and *living lighter on the land*, incorporating new green technologies at the Armstrong House as prototypes for our community's reduced footprint, demonstrating how to compost yard and kitchen waste so our community produces less garbage trucked to landfills or transfer stations, showcasing native foundation planting and rain gardens to better use our water resources, or reaching out to our 'neighborhood groups' on private land conservation tools, PRLC is dedicated to often experimental, leading-edge programming that speaks to local environmental concerns and lifestyles.

We hope you are with us. Join our efforts as a participant in a workshop or lecture, volunteer on a project or committee to the extent your time permits, provide leadership in an area of expertise you wish to cultivate or already have. Throughout the year- we need your financial support. We have never before had a residence to operate, a prototype fully integrated solar energy and solar thermal system and a rain water collection and dispersal system to fund, student interns to provide support to, insurance premiums to pay to allow the public on our private land and now, a new educational website to support. Please give a bit extra if you can afford it to cover those who might like to give but cannot. Enclosed you will find an envelope. Please return it with a gift of support to your local land conservancy or donate online. It is a gift as they say that will keep on giving.

Thank you.

Elyse Arnow Brill, President
December 2012

PRLC Website Redesign (cont'd from page1)

-spectrum attention to our projects including the *who, what, when, where* and *why* of our six part sustainable garden and the timeline and rationale behind our 5-year renovation of the off-the-grid Armstrong land steward's residence.

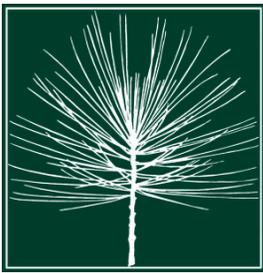
Perhaps our proudest additions to the new website are those that utilize the work products from our student interns such as maps, written content and a set of 3-D photo galleries. These intern work products were designed specifically to be used by the PRLC as public educational tools and, as such, will help you better understand both our land conservation work and the importance of our preserves and your backyard habitats.

Our website is designed to increase the con-

nection between our work and you. It's now easier to get involved, ask us a question, find out about an event, take a walk through a nearby preserve, learn more about your local environment and identify the natural value of your backyard. Although we personally advocate exploring your backyard over the internet, we know there is time in the day for both. The next time you sit down at your computer, please explore www.prlc.net to see what's new. In the same way you take advantage of your local library—taking out books, CD's and searching for answers to your questions—please take advantage of this important, new, online community resource. Once there, become a member and share your thoughts and suggestions with us!

Land Stewardship in Action: Managing Open Spaces as Meadow— Saturday, April 6th, 10am to Noon

Ever consider changing your lawn to meadow? At Armstrong, open space is a meadow, honeybee colony and orchard. Join Tate and our guest, Alan Haigh, NY state orchardist of the Home Orchard Company and Nursery, who will be planting bare root fruit trees and discussing the benefits of fruit trees to wildlife and our ecosystem.



www.prlc.net

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The Pound Ridge Land Conservancy is a 501 (C)(3) non-profit organization

To a Small, Local, Not-for-Profit Land Trust Like the PRLC, Volunteers Make all the Difference in the World...

The ongoing support of volunteers makes our projects possible and—by partnering with our neighbors—makes our efforts all the more rich.

One of the important goals of PRLC is to design a sustainable volunteer program that inspires townfolk of all ages to become involved with their local, home grown land trust. To do this, our Land Steward, Tate Bushell, focuses on the needs of each volunteer and strives to place each in a position that suits them, their interests and growing skills. As a veteran volunteer himself, Tate knows that volunteers are most rewarded and fulfilled when they are engaged in a project they are passionate about. Over the course of this year, Tate has established a variety of structured volunteer opportunities one can choose from whether they are a boy or girl scout, trail hiker, high school student, carpenter, digital wiz, handy with a chain saw, avid or novice gardener, or just interested in being outdoors. In essence, we have an opportunity for *you!*

We partner with boy scouts as they fulfill requirements for the *Eagle Scout Leadership Project*.

We are currently seeking skilled carpenters to tackle small building projects, such as benches, wooden bridges and kiosks at several of our preserves. You can work alone or help facilitate a small group.

Upon request, we facilitate larger, group volunteer events for your company or organization.

The *Trail Steward Program* is designed to empower people to care for the trails they routinely hike on. Select an available preserve and help us out!

Our *Native Plant Protectors* work at their own pace on a long-term project to remove invasive plants from a designated area and reestablish native plants.

Roughly once a month we offer a volunteer work session on one of our preserves or at the Armstrong Education Center. These are great, single-event opportunities for those folks or families who can't commit to an ongoing project.

By sustained involvement on an advisory committee, you can grow in an area of interest: vegetable gardening, habitat management, native plant landscape design, preserve management or the off-the-grid Armstrong House energy projects. Your work on an ongoing, all-volunteer committee will not only be personally rewarding but will greatly help strength your land trust's efforts.

Volunteer information can be found at our new website, www.prlc.net. Take a moment to see which opportunities best suit you and contact us. If you don't see what interests you—please inquire. We look forward to getting to know you and working with you.

Fall 2012-Spring 2013 Events (more at www.prlc.net)

- Dec. 8th** **A guided tour of the Armstrong Education Center and Preserve.** In lieu of our fall Open House, we will be providing a guided tour of the center, our outdoor classrooms and habitats, trail system, network of gardens, and The Armstrong House, an off-the-grid residence showcasing green technologies.
Sat 10-Noon
- Jan. 19th** **Winter Wonderland Walk through the Halle Ravine Preserve.** Join Tate Bushell, the PRLC's Land Steward/Educator, on this family-friendly, educational walk through one of our most popular preserves. Tate will interpret the winter landscape and provide stories about the Halle Preserve's plants and animal life.
Sat 10-Noon
- Feb. 8th** **Night at the movies—*Rivers and Tides: Art of Andy Goldsworthy*.** Have the long, dark nights got you craving some inspirational and beautiful imagery? Come enjoy this documentary about world famous artist Andy Goldsworthy. Informal discussion led by PRLC board member/ local Artist Susan Cox to follow.
Fri 6:30pm
- March 2nd** **Early season gardening techniques.** There's no need to wait until May to start working on your garden. Join the PRLC's land steward in this pre-season gardening workshop where we will focus on indoor seed starting, soil testing, cover cropping, planting 'cold hearty' greens and season-extending hardware.
Sun 11-1pm
- April 6th** **Land Stewardship in Action: Managing open spaces as meadow.** Most properties in and around Pound Ridge contain slivers of open space between the forest and the home. At the Armstrong Education Center, our open area is used as a wildflower meadow, a site for a honeybee colony, a hiking trail and a fruit orchard. **NY state orchardist, Alan Haigh of the Home Orchard Company and Nursery**, will be planting bare root fruit trees and discussing the benefits of fruit trees to wildlife and our ecosystem.
Sat 1-3pm
- April 13th** **A walk with a purpose: using GPS technology to record data on the Armstrong Preserve.** How big is that meadow? Where is the trillium growing? Join the PRLC's Land Steward on a walk through the Armstrong Preserve as he uses GPS technology to collect data to be used in an ongoing conservation project.
Sat 10-Noon
- May 5th** **Explorations along a bird sanctuary with PRLC board member Matt Coulter.** As a longtime birder, Matt Coulter treasures the PRLC's Russell Preserve as a place to search for birds in spring. Join Matt for the fifth annual Birding Expedition at the Russell Preserve, which contains a marsh and pond viewable from a dry trail.
Sun 8-10am
- May 11th** **Visit the disappearing forest: Northern Westchester wildflower tour.** Many wildflowers no longer grow in the forests of Pound Ridge. See these plants thrive in protected forests, home and business gardens, and research areas while learning about their natural history, threats to their wild populations and what you can do to provide habitat for these beautiful little plants.
Sat TBA
- June 8th** **Workshop: Land Stewardship in action, managing your wetland.** Marsh, swamp, pool, pond and creek – wetlands abound in Pound Ridge! This workshop will focus on providing homeowners with practical wetland management tools, including wetland identification, key plant identification, invasive plant removal and tree planting as well as a deeper understanding on the ecology of wet ecosystems.
Sat TBA

Notes from the Field: Tate Bushell, PRLC Land Steward/ Educator - Fall 2012

I have found one principle to remain true since I began as the PRLC's Land Steward/Educator last March:
timing is everything.

The stewardship work that I do on our preserves is precisely timed to match nature's schedule. Many examples exist. In the early summer, we conducted a bird survey on the Armstrong Preserve when the birds were most vocal. In July, when adult mammals were actively feeding their new families, we conducted a mammal survey. During mid-summer, we inventoried the plants thriving in our vernal pool. Invasive plant removal was timed to disrupt the plant's reproductive cycle—stilt grass in early September and mile-a-minute vine in late August. We took a cue from the first cold nights in late September and—with reused materials—started building an insulated cold frame at the Armstrong Education Center to showcase cold-tolerant greens perfect for winter snacking. In October, we gathered up great heaps of fallen leaves to add to our various compost systems and we started using row covers and a pop up green house in the garden to demonstrate growing season extension. In late September, I oversaw the mowing of the Clark Preserve meadow and now that the trees have entered winter dormancy, it's time to transplant native trees from our nursery into the wild. We cut the invasive, aquatic plant *phragmites* out of the Isaacson Fen in early August before it could resupply its root stock and I girdled invasive Norway maple trees in November when they were easily identifiable from their look alike cousin, the Sugar maple.

As you can see, in land management—just as in any other practice tied to the earth—it is best to understand and work with

nature's schedule.

In addition to these well-timed projects, the summer and fall were chock full of activities that weren't exactly locked into nature's clock. Our first summer internship program ran from early May to the end of August to coincide with the schedules of our college and high school student interns. Much of the work highlighted above was carried out by our seven summer student interns, each of whom carried out individual projects in the fields of conservation and environmental science. The interns also helped upgrade several of our trails—if you take a stroll along the trails at our Clark Preserve you will notice more secure walkways over the marsh, a new trail map and a newly marked trail system. Also, a newly constructed wooden bridge connects the Armstrong and Richards Preserves and a hand laid stone walkway will carry you over a wet area at the Richards Preserve.

Our spring events at the Armstrong Education Center will be intentionally timed to match what's happening outdoors: early season garden workshops where you will learn important organic garden practices; guided walks around our preserves; and our proud new series 'Land Stewardship in Action' where, in early March, we will investigate what it means to manage open space—those slivers of land between your woods and your home—as a meadow.

Remember, *timing is everything.* Through my projects, workshops and classes, I will help you understand nature's timing so you can become a better steward of your land. As we all become better stewards of our little pieces of land, we help improve the *entire* Pound Ridge ecosystem.

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Neighbor

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