



U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help The Land

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Connecticut

March/April/May 2013

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NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS

If you are a woman or Hispanic farmer and believe you were improperly denied farm loan benefits by USDA between 1981 and 2000. You may be eligible for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov



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More than 220 million acres (over 50%) of the nation's wetlands no longer function; some states have lost over 90% of their wetland acres due to factors such as logging, construction, and stream channeling. However, public education about the value and functions of wetlands and successful restorations is helping.

Whether they're called marshes, swamps, bogs or fen, wetlands are good for the environment but also have significant economic benefits. For instance, plants and biological processes in the wetlands break down pollutants like fertilizers used in farming into less harmful substances. Filtered water then flows into nearby streams or sinks into underground aquifers, which become sources of municipal drinking water.

Towns are able to reduce water treatment system costs and are restoring wetland areas. As an added benefit, wetlands slow down and soak up water that runs off land, reducing flood impacts and eliminating the need to build expensive flood control structures like dams.

Wetlands vary by region, soil type, climate, vegetation, and water saturation levels, and are home to thousands of different plant and animal species, many of which are threatened and endangered. Not all wetlands provide every benefit, but they all still provide an overarching benefit to the communities, environment and wildlife of the area.

NRCS offers financial and technical assistance to remove marginal land from agricultural production, restore it to a functioning wetland and protect it from future development. To learn more about how to enroll in NRCS's Wetlands Reserve Program, contact your local service center (www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/contact).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Naromi Land Trust Finishes Project – and Thanks NRCS

Contact Fernando Rincon 860.688.7725, Ext. 139

The Naromi Land Trust, in Sherman, couldn't have ordered a more beautiful day for their ribbon cutting ... sunny, warm ... Earth Day 2013.

The boardwalk project they have been working on for several years has finally come to fruition. And now, Connecticut reaps the benefits. Residents and visitors will be able to enjoy the rich wildlife and unique topography of the area. And so will the several species listed as Threatened and Endangered as they now call this this home. (Bitterns, Bog turtles, and a number of rare plants have been noted to be present in this calcareous wetland (a wetland with a limestone bedrock underneath) that has been listed as an Imperiled Habitat.)

The Connecticut NRCS staff is very proud of the part they played in the project through several Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program contracts, including one that was granted under special circumstances since it was relatively new at the time. NRCS also cost-shared a beetle release program to control Purple Loosestrife and Phragmites, as well as the removal of a number of several invasive species on the site's edges.

Other partners in the project include the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the University of Connecticut.

During the event, representatives from the Naromi Land Trust thanked NRCS and expressed gratitude to the agency for getting the ball rolling.



NRCSers Fernando Rincon and Diane Blais attend the Naromi Land Trust Ribbon cutting.



Handicap access to a beautiful site!

Wimisink Preserve Restoration
Naromi Land Trust, Sherman, Connecticut

The Wimisink Preserve encompasses 477 acres acquired by Naromi Land Trust between 1974 and 1986. The preserve is known to support sensitive, threatened, and endangered animal species, including American bittern and woodcock populations.

2005 – 2011: NRCS/WHIP Grant to remove invasive plants and restore wildlife habitat.

Summer 2004: Wimisink Preserve is overrun with invasive plants and is barely visible from RT 30.

2005 & 2006: Invasive Gas Operating Company Land Enhancement and Acquisition Fund (LEAF) Grants for trail mapping, signage and to build informational kiosks.

Summer 2006: Girl Scout troop raises and releases Galerucella beetles as a biological control for purple loosestrife.

April 2013 – Boardwalk construction completed by Peter Simon & Associates and Barry Construction.

2010 – Housatonic River Natural Resources Damage (NRD) Grant application to build wetland boardwalk.

Naromi Land Trust, P.O. Box 202, Sherman, CT 06784 * www.naromi.org * info@naromi.org * 860-524-0960



NRCS Staff Holds Workshop for Envirothon Hopefuls

Contact Lisa Krall 860.871.4051

Fact: Envirothon soils workshop days are notorious for bad (even disastrous) weather. But this year, instructors, students and their coaches were greeted by the sun and warm temperatures.

Eighty-nine students from 19 Connecticut high schools, along with 25 of their parents and teachers showed up at the Tolland County Agricultural Center in Vernon to learn about soils and prepare for this year's upcoming competition (May 23, 2013 at the Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, Burlington).

NRCS employees Lisa Krall, Adam Maikshilo, Bill Purcell, Marissa Theve, Sally Timmons, and Charlotte Pyle; the University of Connecticut's Dawn Pettinelli; and volunteers Aaron Parsons, Diane Lambert, and Sarah Smith had a hand in making the day a great success.

The session opened with an introduction to soils, followed by an introduction to grazing (range management is the special topic at this year's national competition in Montana).

Everyone's full attention was then needed to deliver the hands-on breakout sessions where students honed their skills in map reading and soil texture and color identification. Students were also treated to a mock Envirothon soil test at a pit, toured the conservation practices on the grounds, and had the opportunity to tour a wetland soil.

Over the years, the Connecticut Envirothon Committee has made every effort to reach out and recruit students from urban areas, as well as those from schools in more rural parts of the state. As a result, we enjoy a student group representative of Connecticut's diverse population.

Many students, teachers, and parents thanked trainers for the effort – saying they not only enjoyed the day, they learned a lot!



Soil Conservationist Bill Purcell (standing upfront) gives the group an introduction to grazing at the Envirothon training session.

NRCS Participates in Brush Hill Farm Tour

Contact Bill Purcell 860.779.0557 Ext. 100, or Javier Cruz 860.887.4163 Ext. 307

The NRCS prescribed grazing system and a composted bedded pack facility were the topics of a talk given by NRCS staff members Javier Cruz (District Conservationist) and Bill Purcell (Soil Conservationist) during a farm tour this past February. The purpose of their presentation was to showcase the successful collaboration between NRCS and Brush Hill Farm, of Bozrah.

Brush Hill Farm milks approximately 45 cows and is run by husband and wife team Texas Moon and Sarah Brush. The couple sells raw milk and vegetables. Prior to working with NRCS, the couple's animals were confined in an old free stall barn and a muddy barnyard. Manure was stacked outside and most of the adjacent land was cultivated for corn production. In December 2007, Brush approached NRCS about converting the farm to a pasture-based dairy; Moon was skeptical. They signed up for technical and financial assistance through NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

The farm had sufficient land adjacent to the milking parlor to develop a prescribed grazing system for the dairy herd. As part of the plan, a few corn fields were seeded down to a cool season grass mixture, reducing erosion from the fields. In addition, fence, livestock pipeline, watering facilities, and an animal trail were installed to enable implementation of the system. After the first year of prescribed grazing, Moon was hooked. The couple has seen first-hand that prescribed grazing is much more economical for the farm, is less labor intensive, and is better for the environment. Now after each milking, the cows are moved to a new paddock in accordance with the plan. Heifer or beef cows follow the milking cows to finish off whatever forage remains, then the fields are mowed to control weeds.

In 2010, Moon and Brush approached NRCS to address manure storage. They found the barnyard where they confined cattle during the winter months was muddy, and any manure they collected had to be spread weekly. After discussing waste storage options, they decided to develop a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP).

The first CNMP practices to be implemented were two waste storage facilities and a heavy use area as part of a composted bedded pack barn. The bedded pack area now serves both as animal housing and waste storage. The heavy use area was included to contain the cows and collect the manure when the animals are waiting to be milked or when the bedded pack area needs to be maintained. An additional waste storage facility was also needed to collect manure from the feeding alley and holding area. After their second winter, Moon and Brush love their composted bedded pack facility. During the tour, Moon was asked if he would go back to confining the cattle in the barn and feeding them silage corn; his answer was an emphatic "No."

The farm offsets the cost of kiln dried sawdust with higher milk production, healthier cows, and the savings from applying collected manure to the fields rather than purchasing fertilizer. The grazing system also limits the use of the composted bedded pack facility to the winter months, which reduces bedding costs.

The tour was sponsored by the New London County Food and Agriculture Committee (comprised of representatives from NRCS, Farm Service Agency, University of Connecticut's Cooperative Extension System, Rural Development, and the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District).

For more information about Composted Bedded Pack Barns and Grazing Systems see our Conservation Practice Fact Sheets at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ct/newsroom/factsheets/



Javier Cruz (far right) and Bill Purcell (center) talk to the group.

NRCS Announces Women Inspiring Conservation in Connecticut Award

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service in Connecticut proudly announces the establishment of the *Women Inspiring Conservation in Connecticut* Award. The purpose is to recognize a woman who has made significant achievements and contributions within the state's conservation community.

If you know a female Connecticut resident who is committed to conservation and an inspiration to others, we invite you to nominate them.

The application, instructions, and criteria for nominations is available on our website at www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ct/home/?cid=STELPRDB1097462. The form may be typed or hand written. Mail completed and signed application form to:

Deborah Surabian
 State Soil Scientist/Federal Women's Program Special Emphasis Program Manager
 USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
 344 Merrow Road, Suite A
 Tolland, CT 06084-3917
 (860) 871-4042

Applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Residence: Must be active in the conservation arena in Connecticut.
- Experience: Must have experience in conservation work (either volunteer or employment).
- Contribution
- To Agriculture: Must have made some unique or outstanding contribution to the world of conservation in the State of Connecticut.

Deadline for Submissions is May 17, 2013

For additional information, please contact Debbie Surabian at (860) 871-4042, debbie.surabian@ct.usda.gov



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Held: Hallville Fishway Project Completed

Contact Todd Bobowick 203.287.8038 Ext. 103

The Hallville Fishway, which will allow alewife and other migratory fish access to the 11-acre Hallville Pond within the Poquetanuck Brook is officially open!

NRCS State Conservationist Lisa Coverdale joined representatives from the Eastern Connecticut Conservation District and other partners at the recent dedication.

Other partners included the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Fishers Island Ferry District, the Andrew Tate Memorial Fund, and the Piela family.

In 2010, the DEEP's Long Island Sound Fund awarded Eastern Connecticut Conservation District a grant to construct a fishway with a fish counter around the 15-foot high dam. As part of the project, ECCD has installed a video camera with a live feed to the internet to allow for real-time remote monitoring of the fish passage by scientists, students, and the public. Installation of an interpretive kiosk style educational sign at the site will also provide information to visitors.

This important project has benefitted from a strong partnership of local, private, and federal sources. Along with federal and state funding, the Andrew Tate Memorial Fund contributed several thousand dollars. Andrew Tate was a local young man who loved fishing and nature and ECCD was asked to set up the fund in his memory.

"The Hallville Fishway is an excellent example of the ecosystem services that can be restored when state, federal, and local entities work together. Through the tremendous efforts of the conservation partnership, good things are happening to protect the state's valuable aquatic resources, said Coverdale. "NRCS is proud to be a part of this group, having provided financial and technical support through the Wildlife Habitat Incentives

Program. The newly-completed fishway will now serve as a springboard for further restoration efforts."

Scott Gravatt, Executive Director of the Eastern Connecticut

Conservation District, and the project manager commented, "Since day one our partners and the state's DEEP have been truly remarkable. They recognized that the benefits of a strong and healthy Long Island Sound are enormous. The cooperation of the Piela family who owns the property was just fantastic, along with so many other partners that helped to make this project happen."

The project restores migratory fish passage to the 11-acre pond, but also sets the stage for future projects that have the potential for reconnecting an additional 8.5 miles of upstream historical fish habitat, including two lakes totaling 158 acres. Fish that will benefit from this project include alewife, sea-run trout and American

eel, as well as other resident species. Fish have already begun to ascend the fishway!

Rubber ducks were released to demonstrate how the fishway works.



State Conservationist Lisa Coverdale addresses the group.



News You Can Use Bulletin Board

Health & Wellness

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018

Although April was **National Stress Awareness Month**, it doesn't mean the stress in our lives is limited to that month. So, in the spirit of Health and Wellness, let's promote stress relief all year. Here are some tips for stress relief:

Meditate - Repetitive action can be a source of meditation – walking, swimming, painting, knitting. When you catch yourself getting stressed, bring your mind back to the repetition. Try it for 5-10 minutes/day.

Picture Yourself Relaxed - Try creating a peaceful visualization.. Replace stress with an image that evokes a sense of calm. The more realistic your daydream -- colors, sights, sounds; even touch and feel -- the more relaxed you'll feel.

Breathe Deeply - Try this: Let out a big sigh, dropping your chest, and exhaling through pursed lips. Imagine your low belly, or center, as a deep, powerful place. Feel your breath coming and going as your mind stays focused. Inhale, feeling your entire belly, sides, and lower back expand. Exhale, sighing again. Repeat 10 times, relaxing more fully each time.

Look Around You - Mindfulness means focusing on one activity at a time, so forget multi-tasking! Focus on your immediate surroundings. Keep your mind focused on something in the present and stress will take a back seat.

Drink Hot Tea - If you're a coffee-guzzler, consider going green. Coffee raises levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. Green tea is said to offer health; Chamomile and black tea are thought to calm and fight stress.

Show Some Love – Cuddle a pet, give an unexpected hug to a friend or family member, snuggle with your spouse, or talk to a friend about the good things in your lives. Studies have shown that physical contact may actually help lower blood pressure and decrease stress hormones.

Try Self-Massage - Place both hands on your shoulders and neck. Squeeze with fingers and palms. Rub vigorously,

keeping shoulders relaxed. Wrap one hand around the other forearm. Squeeze muscles with thumb and fingers. Move up and down from your elbow to fingertips and back again. Repeat with other arm.

Take a Time-Out - When you sense your temper is about to erupt, find a quiet place to sit or lie down and put the situation on hold. Take a few deep breaths, concentrate on releasing tension and calming your heartbeat.

Try a Musical Detour - Research shows that listening to 30 minutes of classical music may produce calming effects equivalent to taking 10 mg of Valium.

Welcome to your stretch of the month

Simple movements can help you reduce the effects of physical discomforts associated with the work we do. Keep these in mind throughout your work week as a way to move, breathe, and stay awake. Use these stretches while waiting for coffee or tea to brew, warming up lunch, starting or restarting your computer, or waiting for programs to load, during teleconference breaks, whenever you need to move!

This is a simple side waist stretch. It is an energizing movement which uses some of the large muscles of the body and can help increase circulation.

Begin by standing straight upright with feet parallel about a fist's width apart. Inhale through the nose and exhale as you raise your arms over your head and grab your left wrist with your right hand. Exhale. Inhale again and exhale as you pull your arm over your head to make a C-shape (choose to stay in this position for a few breaths or release as soon as you fully exhale). Take a clearing breath and begin the same movement on other side. Shake out your arms/legs between sides if you want. Try combining this stretch with other movements you are already familiar with.



Helpful Links:

[Official Site of Stress Awareness Month](#)

[Oxygen Plan Stress Test](#)

[National Walking Day: 5 Ways Walking Helps to Relieve Stress](#)

[Huffington Post - Stress Research](#)

Earth Team Volunteer Showcase: Student Volunteers Help Soil Survey Staff Prepare for Initiative

Contact Marissa Theve 860.871.4018

In the Spring 2013 semester, members of the 12-TOL Soil Survey office put out a notice to local colleges and universities with soils, geology, and environmental science/natural resource departments looking for student volunteers. The need for help stemmed from one of many changes the NRCS's Soil Science (formerly Soil Survey) Division is currently undergoing.

An initiative called the **Soil Data Join Re-Correlation** (SDJR) or Harmonization is one of the top two national Soil Science Division priorities. Soils staffs are expected to dedicate much of their time to the initiative. The process involves an estimated five years' worth of database work in every state in order to re-correlate similar map units so data flows continuously over political boundaries (*for more details, visit: <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NSSC/NCSS/Conferences/regional/2012/west/loerch.pdf>*). Little did the soil survey staff know by the end of the semester they would have eight volunteers assisting with this effort.

To prepare for this initiative, all available data must be updated and entered so the resulting new map units reflect the most representative soil properties. This process includes updating existing pedons to reflect laboratory results as well as entering typical pedons described in manuscripts but not yet entered into the database. The current roster of volunteers is ... Michelle DuCharme (CCSU), Daniel Grondin (ECSU), Laura Rice (UCONN), Jessica Rebholz (UCONN), Aaron Parsons (UCONN), Roger Dunn (CCSU), Lisa Halpin (recent UCONN graduate), and Bonnie Potocki (NRCS volunteer). Three UCONN students, Sienna Valente-Blough, Patrick McIntosh, and Andrew Brown, and one UMASS student Greg Anderson have also already agreed to volunteer at least weekly during the summer. The volunteer experience works twofold, as most students are gaining course credit for their work

through their respective universities, although some are simply using the experience to learn a little about soils, boost their resumes, or to just help out.

To facilitate the data entry, students downloaded the PedonPC program, were trained individually in the Tolland State Office on their personal lap tops, and were given a reference guide to help populate the more troublesome fields. From there, they could take as many prepared pedons as they felt they could complete and work from home. Most volunteers come to the office one or less times a week in order to share the completed data and pick up new pedons.

"With relatively little exposure to pedology, I was able to get a head start in understanding how to classify soils taxonomically," said Volunteer Dan Grondin. "This helped me later in the semester as I was introduced to more in-depth studies of the soil sciences during a geomorphology class. Everything from the mapping and understanding of how soils formed, along with the practical application in an agricultural, engineering, geological, and soil scientist's perspective. I plan on staying with NRCS to help when I can and further my understanding of the topic."

The program is really working as they have entered over 100 pedons as of the beginning of April! Pedons come from surveys as far back as 1973 to as recent as last year. This overwhelming success shows that with a simple flyer and a little training time, NRCS staff is able to attract exceptional volunteers and get a lot of work done. The 12-TOL staff look forward to sustaining new and continued university relationships, and hope to attract more students in need to college credit and experience throughout the SDJR process.

People Page

Connecticut Welcomes ... Bill Burgess

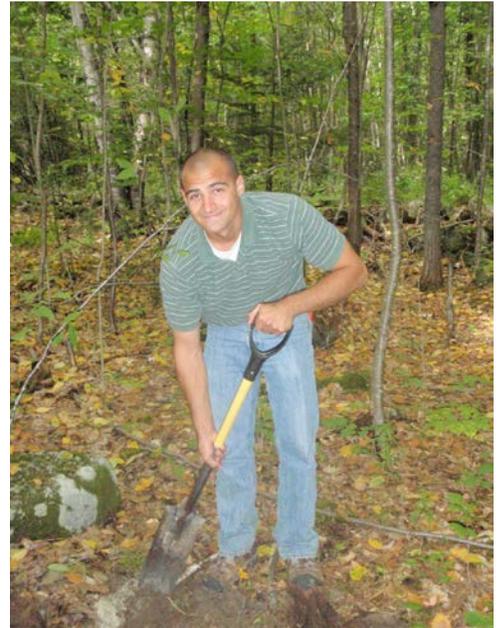
Bill Burgess recently joined the Connecticut NRCS staff as a soil conservationist in the Torrington Field Office.

Burgess grew up in the Waterbury area; however, his family is originally from Torrington. He graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a degree in Environmental Science and concentration in Soil Science.

Burgess started his NRCS career as a soil conservationist in New Hampshire in 2010, and completed a 3-month detail last fall as District Conservationist in Lewiston, Maine.

His hobbies include kayaking, hiking, vegetable gardening, and fishing.

Welcome back to Connecticut, Bill!



Connecticut State Conservationist Lisa Coverdale (left) presents the Civil Rights Award to State Soil Scientist Debbie Surabian.

Surabian Receives National Civil Rights Award

State Soil Scientist Debbie Surabian has been recognized for her extensive work to strengthen NRCS's cooperation with Connecticut State Archeologist Nicholas Bellantoni. The resulting partnership has brought to light new information on historical Native American and African American lives and culture, as well as contact with related individuals.

Debbie's knowledge of ground-penetrating radar (GPR), a non-intrusive technique for preliminary archaeological investigation, has been crucial to building this partnership.

Surabian and Bellantoni have investigated potential burial sites for such historic figures as David Ruggles, a Black 19th Century anti-slavery activist and publisher of *Mirror of Liberty*; and Albert Afraid-of-Hawk, an Oglala Sioux who died while performing with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show and was buried in an ornate coffin in Connecticut.

Her years of effort in civil rights, including serving as Connecticut's Federal Women's Program Manager, came full circle recently when she was awarded the National Civil Rights Award.

Congratulations, Debbie!

Healthy Soils Workshop Has Healthy Turnout!

Contact Raymond Covino 860.779.0557, Ext. 102



Eastern Connecticut RC&D President John Guskowski welcomes participants.

In partnership with the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, NRCS held the third Healthy Soils Workshop on a very appropriate day ... Earth Day 2013!

Over 60 landowners and producers turned out for the 2-day event that covered planning principles, economics/benefits, a local perspective of holistic management, case studies, and a field demonstration.

A big thank you goes out to East National Technology Support Center staff members David Lamm and Ray Archuleta who once again served as instructors for this session. They provided hands-on experience, expertise, and knowledge – all delivered in a manner appropriate to the varied skill levels of the participants.

The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with one attendee remarking it was, “The best I’ve attended.”



Ray Archuleta makes a point during the classroom portion of the workshop.



A very rainy field day.



Soil Scientist Lisa Krall gives a demonstration during the field day.



Rain simulator demonstration.



District Conservationist Ray Covino explain the rainfall simulator.

Extension of Comment Period for Information Collection Provisions Associated with Two FSMA Proposed Rules

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has extended the comment period for the information collection provisions associated with the proposed rules on “Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food” and “Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption” that appeared in the January 16, 2013, Federal Register.

In the preamble of these proposed rules, FDA requested comments by February 15, 2013, on the information collection provisions that are subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. FDA is taking the action of extending the deadline for the comment period in response to requests for that extension, in order to allow interested persons additional time to submit comments. May 16, 2013 is also the deadline for submitting comments to the proposed rules.

The public may submit either electronic or written comments by May 16, 2013, directly to OMB. OMB recommends that written comments be faxed to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OMB, Attn: FDA Desk Officer, FAX: 202-395-7285, or emailed to oir_submission@omb.eop.gov. All comments should be identified with the title of the relevant proposed rule, either “Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption” or “Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food”.

For more information, visit:

[Federal Register Notice: Current Good Manufacturing Practice and Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food; Extension of Comment Period for Information Collection Provisions](#)

[Federal Register Notice: Standards for the Growing, Harvesting, Packing, and Holding of Produce for Human Consumption; Extension of Comment Period for Information Collection Provisions](#)

Nominate a Connecticut Farmer for a National Award

Vance Publishing has announced its *40 Under 40 Awards*, which will recognize innovative young people from around the country who are involved in agriculture – from animal and crop production, biotechnology, and university researchers to food and nutrition technology, agricultural equipment, agronomy, and beyond.

Individuals must be nominated by a colleague or fellow professional active within America’s food system. Nominees must be 40 years or younger. ***Deadline for nominations is July 30, 2013.***

Nominees must be involved (owner, co-owner, employee, consultant, student) with a business engaged in food production, food processing, food safety, food research, or food transportation, or a group, organization, association, or university that serves those industries.

More information and a nomination form is available at www.vancepublishing.com/40-under-40, or by contacting Shonda Atwater at 913-438-8700 or 40under40@vancepublishing.com

Secretary of Agriculture Visits Connecticut School

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack enjoyed lunch with students at the Henry A. Wolcott Elementary School, in West Hartford, recently during a visit there to outline USDA's efforts to raise a healthier generation of Americans.

The Secretary noted that America's students now have healthier and more nutritious school meals due to improved nutrition standards implemented as a result of the historic Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. "For many kids, including 300,000 children who eat school lunch here in Connecticut, healthy meals at school are vital to growing up healthy and strong," said Vilsack. "When children are given the tools they need to make healthy food choices it sets them up to do better in school, while creating generational change that will lead to a healthier Nation."

Vilsack emphasized that USDA is focused on improving childhood nutrition and empowering families to make healthier food choices by providing science-based information and advice, while expanding the availability of healthy food.

The Secretary was joined by other dignitaries including Senator Richard Blumenthal, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Congressman Joe Courtney, and Governor Dannel Malloy. Representatives from USDA Offices in Connecticut were NRCS State Conservationist Lisa Coverdale, Farm Service Agency Acting Executive Director Robert Maurer, and Executive Director for Rural Development Jay Healy. Also in attendance was Connecticut's Commissioner of Agriculture Steven Reviczky.

Parents, teachers, healthcare professionals, and communities now have access to many USDA tools including ChooseMyPlate.gov,



Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack gets a student's views on nutrition.



Commissioner Steve Reviczky and NRCS State Conservationist Lisa Coverdale listen as Secretary Vilsack addresses the group.



Governor Malloy enjoys lunch with the students.



(l to r) Rep. Joe Courtney, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Rep. Rosa DeLauro (at podium) Secretary Tom Vilsack, and Governor Dannel Malloy.



Secretary Vilsack enjoying the company of students at the Wolcott School in West Hartford.

Governor's Council for Agricultural Development

Issues First Report

15 member farmer-based group makes recommendations to grow Connecticut agriculture

Contact Linda Piotrowicz 860.713.2558

Commissioner of Agriculture Steven K. Reviczky recently announced that the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development has presented its first annual report to Governor Dannel P. Malloy.

The report (available at www.CTGrown.gov/GovernorsCouncil) summarizes the council's first year of work on its strategic plan for the state's \$3.5 billion agricultural industry, Grow Connecticut Farms, and includes seven recommendations to further develop, diversify, and promote agriculture in the state.

"Agriculture is an important economic driver in Connecticut," said Governor Malloy. "Our farms are part of our heritage, and they are the source of great growth potential in our future. This report will help us make smart investments in the state's agriculture sector and bolster efforts to get CT Grown produce into more homes and schools. Over the next several weeks I will visit farms, farmer's markets, and other agricultural sites across the state—I look forward to working with the Council and our farmers to make Connecticut a stronger, more competitive state."

The council, whose 15 members are predominantly commercial farmers, gathered input from several hundred other producers and agricultural stakeholders in the development of the recommendations.

"This report is the product of feedback from several hundred people working in agriculture today," explained Reviczky, "and represents their views on ways to strengthen agriculture, create jobs, and increase the industry's economic activity beyond its current \$3.5 billion level. These are steps the council is ready to begin now, as it continues to identify additional opportunities to grow Connecticut farms and agriculture."

The council is organizing 12 working groups to begin addressing the recommendations and to establish additional priorities that surface in the process. It will issue a second report at the end of 2013.

The Governor's Council for Agricultural Development was reshaped by Public Act 11-189, which streamlined membership and tasked the council with making recommendations to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture on ways to increase the percentage of food dollars consumers spend on Connecticut Grown fresh produce and farm products, and on the development, diversification, and promotion of agricultural products, programs, and enterprises in the state. Members are appointed by Governor Malloy and legislative leadership and represent agricultural production, processing, education, sales, and marketing, along with an agricultural trade organization and the greenhouse/nursery sector.

Happy Birthday Hartford Food System!

In 1978, a group of committed individuals formed a nonprofit organization dedicated to understanding and addressing the root causes of food insecurity in their community. As the stewards of that early vision, the Hartford Food System is celebrating their 35th anniversary of fighting hunger and improving nutrition in Hartford.

One thing that hasn't changed in 35 years is that there is still so much to do to make the food system in Hartford strong, resilient, and responsive to the needs of the community. Spring is in full swing and all of their programs are in high gear, ensuring that 2013 will be another productive year.

NRCS thanks the Hartford Food System for their dedication to the people of Hartford!



THE NATURALIST'S NICHE

Ramping Up for Spring

Contact Charlotte Pyle 860.871.4066

"I can smell the Garlic Mustard on your hands," my husband said as he came in toting a small plastic bag of invasive Garlic Mustard and Narrowleaf Bittercress that we collected while on a little Early Detection – Rapid Response expedition.

"Actually," I told him, "I ate a Ramps leaf."

His eyes smiled...Spring is here, then.

There is a place where the brook makes a sudden drop as it trickles through a crumbling stone wall. The lightly shaded, moist, well drained soil of this rock jumble is a perfect place for Ramps to grow.

We know Ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) from the Southern Appalachian Mountains. You may know it as the Wild Leek – a plant with wide, flat, garlic-scented leaves. Though sometimes called Wild Garlic, Ramps is not the same plant at all as the pestiferous Wild Garlic of gardens, nurseries, and fields. The weedy Wild Garlic (*Allium vineale*) has narrow, tubular (round and hollow) leaves.

Ramps are considered Spring ephemeral plants. They come out of dormancy in early Spring to get the full benefit of sun on the forest floor before the deciduous trees leaf out. Spring ephemerals die back by summer. Ramps are a bit unusual in that they don't shoot up a flowering stalk until about July, a month or so after their leaves have yellowed and shriveled.

On the rock jumble at the brook, clumps of Ramps grow in what looks like overflowing basketfuls of lush green color. So uniformly rich is the green that I am tempted to burrow my hand in to feel for hidden Easter eggs.

The plant's unusual name, Ramps, is thought to come from the Anglo-Saxon word, hramsa (meaning onion or leek). The plural of hramsa is ramson (in language similar to the more familiar one ox, two oxen). Through time an s was added to the spoken word in Britain, and there, the wide-leaved wild garlic (*Allium ursinum*) now generally is known as Ramsons. In some places, Ramsons evolved into Ramps, the name later given to the similar plant in America.

When Ramps first poke up, it is a sign that Spring is coming here and in Britain. A play on the word Ramsons is that the Ram's sons appear in the woods when the sun is in the Ram (Aries).

In the rural Southern Appalachians, the sight of Ramps poking up is greeted with joy. Families traditionally piled into the wagon (later, the car), and headed with gunnysacks for their favorite Ramps collecting site. Ramps were made into a Spring tonic. Traditionally, the plant is cooked, not eaten fresh. Some people favor the root; others use the greens.

All who partake in the eating of Ramps gathered by family members in this long-held practice savor the informal ritual. And all those present should partake because this celebration of Spring lingers long on the breath.

A taste for Ramps has grown beyond a taste for a family celebration and Spring tonic. Now Ramps festivals are popular in the South and Ramps appear on the menu in swank restaurants in many places. With increased demand, Ramps are considered of Special Concern in Tennessee where they are categorized as commercially exploited. The species also is of Special Concern in Rhode Island and Maine. In Quebec, collection for more than personal consumption is illegal. Moderation is advisable.

NRCS 2013 Program Update

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) –AMA provides payments to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation practices into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures, and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - CRP reduces soil erosion and sedimentation in streams and lakes, improves water quality, establishes wildlife habitat, and enhances forest and wetland resources. It encourages farmers to convert highly erodible cropland or other environmentally sensitive acreage to vegetative cover such as tame or native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filterstrips, or riparian buffers. Farmers receive an annual rental payment for the term of the multi-year contract. Cost sharing is provided to establish the vegetative cover practices. *CRP is administered by the Farm Service Agency, with NRCS providing technical land eligibility determinations, conservation planning, and practice implementation.*

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) –A voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) –EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial incentives to producers to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals, optimize environmental benefits, and help farmers and ranchers meet federal, state, Tribal, and local environmental regulations.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) –A voluntary program that helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. The program provides matching funds to state, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations with existing farm and ranch land protection programs to purchase conservation easements.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) - A voluntary program for landowners and operators to protect, restore, and enhance grassland. The program emphasizes support for working grazing operations; enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity; and protection of grassland and land containing shrubs and forbs under threat of conversion.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) –A voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring eligible land from agriculture. Includes 30-year and permanent easement options and funding for restoration.

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) –WHIP is a voluntary program for private landowners to develop and improve high quality habitat that supports wildlife populations of national, state, Tribal, and local significance.

Office Locations

Danielson Field Office
71 Westcott Road
Danielson, CT 06238
860.779.0557
Raymond Covino
District Conservationist

Norwich Field Office
Yantic River Plaza
238 West Town St.
Norwich, CT 06360
860.887.3604
Javier Cruz
District Conservationist

Torrington Field Office
1185 New Litchfield St.
Torrington, CT 06790
860.626.8258
Kathleen Johnson
District Conservationist

Hamden Field Office
51 Mill Pond Road
Hamden, CT 06514-1703
(203) 287-8038
Diane Blais
District Conservationist

Windsor Field Office
100 Northfield Dr. 4th Floor
Windsor, CT 06095
860.688.7725
Vivian Felten
District Conservationist

Tolland State Office
344 Merrow Road, Suite A
Tolland, CT 06084
860.871.4011
Lisa Coverdale
State Conservationist

Calendar of Events

May

- 14** **MASTER NATURALIST TRAINING PROGRAM** – Connecticut Audubon Center, Pomfret Center – 8 AM – 12 PM - Have you always wanted to learn more about the natural sciences? Want to volunteer at the new center? With 40 hours (ten, four hour sessions), this may be the program for you. For more info, contact 860.928.4948
- 14** **CONNECTING THE DROPS: SOURCE TO SEA THROUGH THE LAST GREEN VALLEY** – Willimantic Public Library – 6:30-7:30 PM – Join one of our TLGV Rangers on a visual paddle down rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds of the Last Green Valley all the way to Long Island Sound. Explore the water resources of the region and learn how to ensure good water quality for future generations. Contact 860.465.3079 www.willimanticlibrary.org
- 15** **ON THE WILD SIDE: EXPLORING THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE LAST GREEN VALLEY** – Lisbon Community Center Barn – 7-8:30 PM –The Last Green Valley is almost 80% undeveloped land with a multitude of opportunities for exploring the outdoors. Whether hiking, paddling, or simply observing wildlife, the region has a rich assortment of venues for enjoying the natural environment. Light refreshments will be served. Please join us to celebrate our recent conservation achievements in Griswold and Preston. Business meeting /election of officers and board prior.
- 18** **WILLIMANTIC RIVERFEST** – Bridge Street, Willimantic – 9 AM – 3:30 PM – Registration begins at 9 AM. Before registering, drop boat off at the Eagleville Dam in Mansfield (staff will be on hand for security). After registration, ride back to Eagleville to begin. When you arrive in Willimantic, your belongings will be there. Enjoy the remainder of RiverFest including music, food, whitewater demonstrations, and the kayak ramp. \$10/individuals and \$20/families. All participants must wear a PFD. Contact Dan Mullins WilliWhitewater@gmail.com
- 18** **WHY WOLF ROCK?–** Joshua’s Tract, Mansfield Center – 10 AM – 12 PM – Join Robert Thorson, Professor of Geology, UConn, as he takes us on a field trip exploration of Wolf Rock Preserve and vicinity. Thorson will cover the cultural context of native American traditions, vista sampling, early outdoor tourism, and more. Contact 860.429.9023 or joshuatrust@snet.net
- 18-19** **SPRING ON THE FARM FESTIVAL WEEKEND** – Stamford Museum & Nature Center – 11 AM – 3 PM – Meet the latest additions to the Heckscher Farm family. Watch the sheep get their annual shearing and learn about what happens with their coats. Contact 203.322.1646
- 19** **90 BIRD DAY** – Day Road, Pomfret Center – 7 AM – 4 PM – The goal is to hear or see at least 90 species of birds in nine hours or less. We will be visiting many locations within a 10-mile radius. Interesting sightings from past years include Olive-sided Flycatcher, Bald Eagle, and Hooded Warbler. Bring lunch, drinks, and a snack. Cost: \$20/members; \$35/non-members. Contact 860.928.4948 to register
- 21** **QUINEBAUG RIVER PADDLE** – Canterbury to Butts Bridge, Killingly – 5-8 PM – Join us on a 2-hour paddle down the Quinebaug River. Ages 12 and up. For more info visit www.meetup.com/paddlekillingly/
- 21** **STINKOLOGY – FRAGRANCES OF FIELD AND FOREST** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 7 PM – Peter and Barbara Rzasa will present a program on the fragrances resulting from chemicals produced by plants as a defense against insect and animal predators and protect against fungal and bacterial attack. Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513 or email donna.kingston@ct.gov
- 21** **NORWALK RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING** – Wilton Library – 6-6:45 PM – Annual Meeting followed by Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation, a presentation by Gregg Treinish. Contact 877.679.2463 or email info@norwalkriver.org
- 21+22** **JOSHUA’S TRUST BIRDING WALKS** – Chaplin Town Hall – 7:30-9 AM – Well-known birder Steve Morytko will lead walks at 7:30 AM on both days. Bring binoculars. Meet at town hall parking lot. Contact 860.429.9023, or email skstratton23@gmail.com, or visit www.joshuaslandtrust.org
- 22** **BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM OPENS for 2013 Season** – 1-5 PM – Special 150th Anniversary Commemorative Exhibit *Civil War Diaries*. Exhibit tells the story of the creation and early years of the first South Carolina volunteers, the first regiment of freed slaves. Contact 860.774.7728 or email eknowlton@charter.net
- 22** **ARCHAEOLOGY DAY** – Sherwood Island, Westport – 9:30 AM – 12 PM - Join Professor Ernie Wiegand and Dr. Nick Bellantoni as they discuss the ongoing archaeological excavations to identify the 18th century Sherwood family home and well. NRCS’s Debbie Surabian will conduct a GPR survey to assist in defining historic areas of the park. Contact Jim Beschle 203.226.6983
- 23** **NOTABLE AND NOTORIOUS: CURIOUS AND INFAMOUS CHARACTERS FROM THE LAST GREEN VALLEY** – Mansfield Public Library – 7-8 PM – Join one of the TLGV Rangers for an introduction to the more *interesting* people that lived in the region ... from colorful characters, soldiers, statesmen, and spies, to the well-known and not-so-well-known entrepreneurs. The Last Green Valley was home to many people who, in their own unique way, shaped the region, stat, and country. Contact 860.423.2501
- 25-27** **WOOL DAYS** – Old Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, Massachusetts – 9:30 AM – 5 PM – The sheep get their yearly haircuts this weekend. Farmers shear sheep, and costumed history interpreters demonstrate the entire wool textile process from scouring and carding the wool, to spinning, knitting. Sheep herding demonstrations, knitting forScarves for Afghanistan Project, learn about natural dyes and modern dyeing techniques. See lambs, chickens, cows, and oxen. Adults \$24, Seniors \$22, Youth \$8. Contact 800.733.1830 or visit www.osv.org

- 25 **RIDE THE SHETUCKET FROM SCOTLAND TO SPRAGUE** – Sprague River Park – 10 AM – 1 PM – Meet at River Park. The town will provide free shuttle between River Park and Scotland Dam. Participants can put in any time between 10-12. Ride as many times as water level allows. Visit www.ctsprague.org Thursday prior to the event for any cancellations. Paddlers must have PFD's and a distress whistle. Contact Lou Dzialo at 860.822.6043.
- 31 **14th ANNUAL CT GREENWAY AWARDS AND NATIONAL TRAILS DAY CELEBRATION** – Chelsea Harbor Marina, Norwich – 10 AM – 12 PM – DEEP, the community of Norwich, and the CT Greenways Council Cordially invite you to a ceremony along the Shetucket River Greenway at historic Chelsea harbor.

June

- 1 **RIVER FEST & DRAGON BOAT RACING** – Chelsea Harbor, Norwich – 9 AM – 2:30 PM – Dragon boat races. RiverFest featuring Norwich area businesses on the pier. Contact 860.887.1647 or visit www.norwichchamber.com
- 1 **CT TRAIL DAYS PADDLE FAMILY CRUISE ON THE WILLIMANTIC RIVER** – River Park, Mansfield – 10 AM – 12 PM – An easy, flat water trip for canoes and kayaks from River Park to Eagleville Lake. Bring your own boat or rent a kayak at the Mansfield Community Center. Life jackets required. Bring water, lunch optional. Moderate to heavy rain cancels. Contact 860.429.3015, Ext. 204
- 1 **RAINBOW FISHWAY OPEN HOUSE** – Rainbow Dam Fishway, Windsor – 10 AM – 3 PM – The fishway will be open to the public for tours and viewing migrating fish. Contact Bruce Williams 860.447.4317
- 1 **CT TRAILS DAY BEACH WALK** – Meigs Point Nature Center, Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison – 10 AM – A plant identification walk along the dunes on the bike path followed by a return walk along the driftline on the beach. Contact Russ Miller 203.245.8743 or 860.462.9643 email rangermpnc@gmail.com 1
- 1 **CT TRAILS DAY WILDFLOWER HIKE** – Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby – 3-4 PM – Walk through fields and around ponds to learn more about the plants and wildflowers found in CT. Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513 or email donna.kingston@ct.gov
- 1 **TRAILS DAY HIKE** – Sessions Woods, Burlington – 1-3 PM – Join Hillary Clifton on a 3-mile hike to view a beaver marsh and learn about other special wildlife habitats. Contact Laura Rogers-Castro 860.675.8130
- 1-2 **CT TRAIL DAYS WEEKEND** – Trails throughout Connecticut – all day June 1 and 2 – Celebrate Connecticut Trails! Dozens of events to choose from – outdoor activities for everyone – including hiking, biking, trail running, horseback riding, trail maintenance, kayaking, educational walks, bird watching, letterboxing, and more. Events guided by volunteers from local hiking clubs, parks and rec departments, state agencies, conservation organizations, historic groups, naturalists, educators, and land trusts. Listing will be published in the CT Trail Days Weekend Booklet, available May 2013. Contact CT Forest & Park 860.346.8733
- 2 **WALK INTO HISTORY** - Nathan Hale Homestead, Coventry – 3-4 PM – Join Connecticut Landmarks staff for a slow 2-mile walk down the 18th century road toward Norwich. This unimproved dirt road is the route the Hale family used to take their livestock to market. Heavy rain cancels. Contact 860.872.6917 or email hale@ctlandmarks.org
- 6 **THE LAST GREEN VALLEY ANNUAL MEETING** – Wight Tavern, Sturbridge, Massachusetts – Take a complimentary tour of the village at 4 PM, followed by reception/cocktail hour 5-6 PM; dinner at 6:15, meeting lasts until 7:30 PM. Contact 860.774.3300
- 6-9 **CHELSEA BOTANICAL GARDENS BUTTERFLY PAVILLION** – Harts Greenhouse & Florist, Norwich – Over 1,000 native butterflies. Witness the four stages of butterfly development. Learn how to attract butterflies and plant a butterfly garden. Visit www.chelseabotanicalgardens.org
- 8 **A TASTE OF UCONN/Alumni Weekend** – South Campus Lawn and Patio – 12-3 PM. Sample foods from the new restaurants, ice cream from the Dairy Bar. Various schools and colleges will be onsite showcasing state-of-the-art technologies. Contact 860.486.5569, or email at marinda.reynolds@uconn.edu, or visit www.uconnalumni.com
- 8 **THE FARMERS COW OPEN HOUSE FARM DAY** – Fairview Farm, Woodstock – 1-3 PM – Celebrate Connecticut Day with the Miller Family at Fairview Farm. Take a wagon ride to tour the dairy barn, learn about what a cow eats, visit the milking parlor and see tractors. Contact 866.355.2697, email farmers@thefarmerscow.com, or visit www.thefarmerscow.com
- 9 **CONNECTICUT FOREST & PARK ANNUAL MEETING** – Sherwood Island State Park, Westport – 2-4:30 PM – Special presentations by Jason Newton, researcher and explorer of the Old Connecticut Path (the route taken by Thomas Hooker and other pioneers from the Massachusetts Bay Colony to Connecticut in the 1630s); and State Parks Director Tom Tyler, who will talk about the 2013-14 state park centennial celebrations. Contact 860.346.2372
- 22 **HISTORIC GOODWIN FOREST** – Hampton – 10 AM – 12 PM - Join Steve Broderick, Forester and Program Director of the Goodwin Forest Conservation Center, to learn about forest management from a historic point of view. A short presentation, followed by a hike exploring one of the oldest continually managed forests in America. \$10/members, \$15/non-members. Contact 860.486.4460 – or visit www.mnh.uconn.edu

June (continued)

- 25 **NOFA WORKSHOP: ORCHARD HEALTH IN THE SUMMER** – Conn College & Hidden Brook Gardens, New London and Ledyard. Contact NOFA 203.888.5146 or email ctnofa@ctnofa.org
- 30 **HAMMONASSETT SHORELINE ECOSYSTEMS** – Meigs Point Nature Center, Hammonasset State Park, Madison – 1-2:30 PM (rain or shine). Explore the ecosystems adjacent to Long Island Sound. From its sandy beach and rocky shore, to its salt marshes, CT's largest shoreline park is a diverse collection of plants and animals that call this environment home. Once the tour has been completed, enjoy the rest of the afternoon at this beautiful seaside setting. Bring appropriate footwear, it can get wet and muddy. \$5/members, \$10/non-members. Contact 860.486.4460, or visit www.mnh.uconn.edu

July

- 13 **FAMILY WALK/BEETLE HUNT** – Kellogg Env. Center, Derby – 10 AM – Join us in search of the many forms beetles take and see what we can find on the grounds of the Kellogg Environmental Center and Osbornedale State Park. For all ages. Contact Donna Kingston 203.734.2513 or donna.kingston@ct.gov
- 13 **OLD GRAVESTONES: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THEM** – Storrs – 10 AM – 12 PM – Join Ruth Shapleigh-Brown, Exec. Dir. of the Connecticut Gravestone Network, and discover what old gravestones reveal about our history. Learn what genealogists should know when looking for their ancestors' burial places. You will never look at history and old cemeteries in the same way again. The program will begin with a presentation, and will be followed by a hike exploring a historic Storrs cemetery. \$10/museum members, \$15/non-members. Contact 860.486.5560 or visit www.mnh.uconn.edu
- 16 **MANSFIELD HOLLOW LAKE PADDLE** – Mansfield Hollow Boat Launch, Mansfield – 5:30-7:30 PM – (Part of Paddle Killingly Project that will be hosting paddles Tuesday/Wednesday evenings all summer). The majority of the paddles are on lakes, ponds, or very slow moving waters. Informal and unsponsored events are at your own risk. PFDs are required. For more info visit www.meetup.com/paddlekillingly/
- 17 **BUTTERFLIES AT SESSIONS WOODS** – Burlington – 10-11:30 AM - Visit the flowers and fields at Sessions Woods to identify the local butterfly fauna. Contact Laura Rogers-Castro 860.675.8130
- 20 **PROJECT O – FUN IN THE LAB AND ON THE SEA!** – UConn Avery Point, Groton – 10 AM – 3:30 PM – Spend the day on the beautiful Connecticut shoreline experiencing marine science both onshore and at sea. Morning session in the lab exploring the natural history and diversity of Long Island Sound's animal and plant life. After lunch take a voyage out to sea on the Envirolab II research vessel and experience hands-on marine biology; learn chemistry and physics through scientific experimentation. Bring a picnic lunch. \$30/museum members, \$40/non-members. Fee includes both morning workshop and afternoon cruise. Register early as space is limited. Contact 860.486.4460 or visit www.mnh.uconn.edu
- 21 **FARMER'S COW ANNUAL ICE CREAM, BLUEBERRY, AND BLUEGRASS BASH** – Fort Hill Farm, Thompson – 1-4 PM – Celebrate national ice cream month, listen to live bluegrass music, tour the award winning quintessential gardens, enjoy a wagon ride around the fields, meet the calves that will grow up to become the next generation of Farmer's Cow milking cows. Contact 866.355.2697, email farmers@thefarm.com or visit www.thefarmerscow.com
- 22 **WEST THOMPSON LAKE FULL MOON PADDLE** – Thompson Lake Boat Ramp, North Grosvenordale – 7:30-9:30 PM – Part of Paddle Killingly series of paddles on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings all summer. Open to all skill levels and ages. Majority of paddles are on lakes, ponds, or very slow moving waters. Informal and unsponsored events are at your own risk. PFDs required. For more info, visit www.meetup.com/paddlekillingly/
- 26 **NOFA WORKSHOP: LAWN CERTIFICATE COURSE** – Naugatuck Valley Community College, Waterbury. Contact NOFA 203.888.5146 or email ctnofa@ctnofa.org
- 27 **SPECTACULAR SILKWORMS** – Museum of Natural History, Storrs – 3-4:30 PM - The silk trade had a far-ranging impact both economically and socially in ancient times, as well as in colonial and industrial Connecticut. Silk culture was introduced to Mansfield in 1790 and soon became a popular home industry. In the first decades of the 19th century, Mansfield led the nation in silk production. Many local families raised silkworms in their homes and processed silk thread by hand. Mansfield was also home to America's first silk mill, built in 1810. Join historian Ann Galonska to "unravel" the history of silk, and learn about the life cycle of silkworms. Learn about the techniques used to produce silk textiles from caterpillar cocoons and get a close up look at living silkworms. Contact 860.486.4460 or visit www.mnh.uconn.edu

August

- 4 2013 Understanding Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Webinars – **CROP ROTATION ON DIVERSIFIED FARMS** – 3-4 PM – Instructor Charles Mohler, Senior Research Assoc., Cornell University. Audio/video info to join a webinar released app.3 weeks prior to scheduled event. Visit <http://conservationwebinars.net>. Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/entsc/ to join webinar announcement email list and have event information sent directly to your Inbox.
- 10 **Norwalk River Watershed Association's BUTTERFLIES!** 10 Simpaug Turnpike, Redding – 10 AM – 12 PM – Lepidopterist Victor DeMasi will introduce area butterflies and moths, discuss their food and habitats, and show his remarkable collection. Contact DeMasi 203.448.0106 or email victormonarch@yahoo.com
- 13 **REMEDIATION ROUNDTABLE** – DEEP Headquarters, Phoenix Auditorium, Hartford – 1:30-3:30 PM – An open forum to exchange ideas and information on site cleanup in Connecticut and to solicit opinions, advice, and information from outside sources on a routine and established basis. Contact Camille Fontanella 860.424.3705 or camille.fontanella@ct.gov

September

- 29 **TRAILBLAZER: RUN THE GAUNTLET** – Hammonasset State Park, Madison – 8 AM – 12 NOON – 5k run with obstacles such as haybales, hurdles, etc. Race followed by cookout. Event benefits Shoreline Greenway Trail. Contact John Bysiewicz 203.481.5933

October

- 1 2013 Understanding Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Webinars – **PASTURED POULTRY AND CONSERVATION PLANNING** – 3-4 PM – Instructor Terrell Spencer, Poultry Spec., National Center for Appropriate Technology. Audio/video info to join a webinar released app.3 weeks prior to scheduled event. Visit <http://conservationwebinars.net>. Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/entsc/ to join webinar announcement email list and have event information sent directly to your Inbox.

November

- 12 **REMEDIATION ROUNDTABLE** – DEEP Headquarters, Phoenix Auditorium, Hartford – 1:30-3:30 PM – An open forum to exchange ideas and information on site cleanup in Connecticut and to solicit opinions, advice, and information from outside sources on a routine and established basis. Contact Camille Fontanella 860.424.3705 or camille.fontanella@ct.gov

December

- 3 2013 Understanding Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Webinars – **SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION USING YEAR-ROUND HIGH TUNNELS** – 3-4 PM – Instructor Michael Kilpatrick, Kilpatrick Family Farm. Audio/video info to join a webinar released app.3 weeks prior to scheduled event. Visit <http://conservationwebinars.net>. Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/entsc/ to join webinar announcement email list and have event information sent directly to your Inbox.