



## Our New Home

80 Scout Road  
Gansevoort, NY 12831  
518-450-0321  
[www.wiltonpreserve.org](http://www.wiltonpreserve.org)  
[info@wiltonpreserve.org](mailto:info@wiltonpreserve.org)

The mission of the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is to conserve ecological systems and natural settings, while providing opportunities for environmental education and recreational experiences.

The Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park represents a partnership between The Nature Conservancy, the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Visit the website for a full-color newsletter.

After a two-year period of anticipation, the grand opening of the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park's new office at 80 Scout Road took place September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Adjacent to Camp Saratoga, the new office location provides easy public access to information about membership, the area's natural history, protected lands, the WWPP trail network, upcoming educational programs, recreational activities, and volunteer opportunities.

In 2005, the Town of Wilton purchased the four-acre 80 Scout Road property to renovate the barn and single-family residence for the WWPP. The Saratoga County Farmland & Open Space Protection Program awarded Wilton \$24,525 to offset the cost of the purchase.

The Town invested over \$124,000 and hundreds of hours to the renovations. Councilman Larry Gordon oversaw the entire effort. Under his supervision, the Town's highway department, buildings and grounds team, numerous contractors, and Preserve & Park volunteers carried the concept through to reality.



*Grand opening of new WWPP headquarters at 80 Scout Road. From L to R: Wilton Councilman and WWPP board member Ian McGaughey, Wilton Deputy Supervisor Ray O'Connor, District Director for Congresswoman Gillibrand Michael Russo, WWPP executive director Sarah Clarkin, WWPP chair Pieter Litchfield, Wilton Town Supervisor Arthur Johnson, Wilton Councilman Larry Gordon*

Groups of volunteers improved the barn's structural soundness and applied siding. One volunteer installed the computers, network, and wireless connections. Another produced a native plant landscaping design for the front yard.

State Senator Hugh Farley provided an Aid-to-Localities grant for the purchase of needed materials for the barn. (Cont'd on p. 7)

## Board of Directors

Pieter Litchfield, Chair  
Ian McGaughey, Vice-Chair

Martha Devaney, Sec.

Robert Rice, Treas.

Linda Baker

Lynne Florio

Chris Zimmerman

Emeritus

Bobby D'Andrea

Roy McDonald

## Worth the Trip: The Preserve & Park's Website

Visiting the Preserve & Park's website is a great way to stay in touch with all that's happening.

The latest cross-country ski report and real-time weather conditions are available. Not sure about upcoming programs? The website has the most recent listing of events for you, your friends and family.

If you have questions about the trails, maps are available and can be downloaded.

The website also has a membership form. It's easy to print, complete and mail.

Share  
in the  
Success!

## From the Director

Producing this newsletter gives me the opportunity to reflect on the work we do at the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park. As with many things, it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day details, looking at what's on the desk as opposed to what's out the window. Just last week I was reminded how wonderful looking up and away from the desk can be. Stealing a glance out the window, I witnessed a barred owl swooping to and landing on the telephone pole in the front yard of the new office! I happily observed this beautiful brown-eyed raptor through binoculars for several minutes before it lifted off and swooped down the road. With that, my eyes and mind returned to what lay on the desk with renewed energy and purpose.

Our work has great purpose. With our partners, volunteers and financial contributors, we protect open spaces, manage them for compatible uses, restore habitat for a suite of species jeopardized by habitat loss, offer a variety of environmental education programs to people of all ages, and provide numerous recreational opportunities. We are also involved in exciting research projects regarding Karner blue butterfly recovery efforts and the newly discovered Blanding's turtle.

I encourage you to get outside, observe, reflect, and participate. There are so many ways to make a positive difference and increase your sense of purpose. *Sarah*

## Our Education & Conservation Intern

Kimberly Lanzarotta is our Education & Conservation Intern. A recent environmental and biological conservation graduate from the University of Virginia, Kimberly is enjoying her stay in the northeast.

As the position's title states, Kimberly is involved in all aspects of the WWPP's education and conservation work. She identifies, develops and leads education programming for both the general public and children. Examples of recent programs include plant seeds and animal tracking for children.

Kimberly oversees the elementary school outreach program, which works with local first, second and third graders. This is a demanding task that involves recruiting and training volunteers, scheduling the programs, communicating with everyone, organizing supplies and materials, and teaching. The conservation aspect of the job has Kimberly working with Nature Conservancy and state Department of Environmental Conservation staff on Karner blue butterfly recovery efforts. More specifically, she develops and implements habitat management plans for the Karner blue butterfly. This can entail clearing undesirable plant species, planting desirable plant species that support the butterfly, and collecting native plant seeds.

Asked about her favorite part of the internship so far, Kimberly responded she's enjoyed the education programs and learning about this area's plant species. Without question, her favorite activity has been the Annual Moonlight Ski & Snowshoe.

Kimberly has been tremendously helpful with her enthusiasm, work, and her knowledge of all things technical. She is here through the end of June.



## Elementary School Outreach Program

The 2007/2008 academic year marks the third year of our elementary school outreach program with Dorothy Nolan and Ballard Road schools. With each year, a grade has been added to the program so that, now, over 600 first, second and third graders participate in this fun and educational experience.

In the late fall and winter, Preserve & Park staff and trained volunteers visit with each class to teach students about resident plants and animals. Then, in the late spring, the students visit the Preserve & Park to reinforce the classroom lessons and see some of the things they studied.

The first grade lesson focuses on the Karner blue butterfly, its life cycle and status as an endangered species. Second graders learn about the wild blue lupine, host plant for the butterfly. As part of the program, the children plant lupine seeds in their classrooms, record their growth in journals, and learn about the plant's adaptations to the local environment. In the third grade, the subject is native plants and plant parts. In addition to other activities, the children work in groups measuring and recording the growth of four native plant species in both table and graph formats. The second and third graders transplant their lupine and other native plant seedlings to a Karner blue butterfly restoration site as part of their visit to the Preserve & Park in the spring.

Each program runs approximately 75 to 90 minutes and meets standards set forth in New York State's *Elementary Science Core Curriculum Guide*.

The success of this program hinges on the Preserve & Park's Leadership Volunteers. Information on how to get involved appears on page 5.



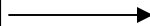
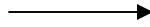
S. Clarkin

## Snowpack Monitoring Study—Year Two

Last winter, a research program to monitor snow depths across a Karner blue butterfly restoration site in the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park began. A dedicated team of snowshoe-clad volunteers checked thirty-nine snow gauges weekly to evaluate the depth and duration of snow cover in order to determine its connection to Karner blue butterfly survival. The butterfly's eggs, which are laid on or near the ground in the summer and remain there through the fall and winter, are vulnerable to desiccation, freezing, predation and disease. A long term dataset will help determine how climate affects the overwintering survival of eggs and how management practices may increase their survival.

The 2006-07 winter season was a stingy one. The first accumulating snowfall did not occur until January 10<sup>th</sup>, and there were only two major storms, on Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. Snow lingered until April 18<sup>th</sup>, for 89 total days of snowcover. This was significantly more snowcover than a similarly monitored site in the Albany Pine Bush, which had on average 2 less inches and 19 fewer days of snow cover for the season. The collected data was used to design a broader study for the current season. In combination with climatic data from the weather station at the new Preserve & Park office, this monitoring will contribute to better habitat management for the Karner blue butterfly.

## The New Office and Barn - Before & After



S. Clarkin

## Ecological Management Report

Seeds are at the heart of all efforts to restore Karner blue butterfly habitat. Every summer and fall, dozens of student and adult volunteers work at sites in Wilton and nearby municipalities collecting seeds that will become the plants that support the Karner blue butterfly in its various life stages.

In 2007, Karner blue butterfly habitat restoration efforts took place on close to fifty acres on six parcels.

In the spring, the twenty-five-acre Old Gick Farm Northwest management unit, prepared in the fall of 2006, was planted with Glacial Lake Albany seed mix. The principal ingredient of this seed mix is wild blue lupine, the host plant for the butterfly. In its larval stage, the butterfly eats nothing but the leaves of the wild blue lupine; thus, it is critical to recovery efforts. The seed mix also contains nectar species, which nourish the adults. Little bluestem grass is also planted to shade and buffer the butterfly from hot sun, strong winds, and heavy rains.

To remain viable, this habitat requires a disturbance regime to establish and maintain the open spaces necessary to support component plant species. Absent natural disturbances, conservationists mimic nature. In this case, pitch pine and oak were retained and the plentiful and prolific white and red pines were removed.

In the fall, another twenty-five acres on five parcels were thinned to prepare the way for a spring 2008 planting. A tractor pulling a no-till seed drill will be used to plant the restoration sites quickly and effectively.



S. Clarkin

*The Old Gick Farm Central management unit awash in lupine in spring 2007.*



## Share in the Success! Become a Leadership Volunteer

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If you want to improve the quality of life in our community, join us.

The Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is looking for volunteers to:

- Educate school children about the importance of our environment;
- Inform the public about our efforts to conserve open spaces, protect plants and animals,
- Provide recreational opportunities and educational programs;
- Assist with community outreach events; and
- Work to recover the endangered Karner blue butterfly.

**IDEAL FOR RETIRED TEACHERS, COLLEGE STUDENTS, AND  
THOSE WITH FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES!**

- Leadership Volunteers offer 30+ hours of service each year.
- Informational interview is required.
- Training for all tasks is provided.
- Bi-monthly meetings to get together and receive updates (optional).

**Call the Wilton Wildlife  
Preserve & Park office, at  
450-0321 ext. 1, for more  
information and to schedule an  
interview.**

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while providing opportunities for environmental education and recreational experiences.*

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## Annual Moonlight Ski & Snowshoe

This event, originally scheduled for January, was postponed because of the lack of snow. Fortunately, a Valentine's Day snowstorm created perfect conditions for the February 24<sup>th</sup> snow date. Allerdice Rent-All, Allerdice Building Supply, and the Route 9 Dunkin' Donuts in Wilton sponsored the event with contributions of urns, candles, and hot chocolate. An estimated 300 people turned out to enjoy the lit trails, relax by the bonfire, and sip hot chocolate. The Preserve & Park's Leadership Volunteers and the Wilton Rotary Club volunteers ensured a smoothly run and fun evening for all.



K. Lanzetta

## Wilton Rotary to Hold WWPP Fundraiser

The Wilton Rotary Club is holding a fundraiser for the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park at Longfellows Restaurant, in Saratoga Springs, on Thursday, April 10th.

This elegant event is the ideal opportunity to support the Preserve & Park without having to dress in layers, apply sunscreen, or conduct tick checks!

Save the date! More information is forthcoming!



## Education Report

The Preserve & Park offered thirty-one educational programs targeting many ages and interests in 2007.

Most education programs were geared to the general public and free of charge. They addressed diverse topics including clouds, moose, and global warming. Several programs, like December's Build-A-Birdfeeder, were targeted to children. Additional programs were presented before specific groups such as scout troops and garden clubs.



L. Florio

*Build A Birdfeeder Program in December.*

The Preserve & Park is grateful to all the gifted and knowledgeable people in both the private and public sectors who contributed their time and talent to lead or assist with a program.

Education efforts were not limited to programs with a presenter speaking before a gathered audience. Other education outlets included information tables at area festivals, a monthly column in the *Saratogian* newspaper, and the website, [www.wiltonpreserve.org](http://www.wiltonpreserve.org).

To receive news about upcoming programs, send your e-mail address and note to [info@wiltonpreserve.org](mailto:info@wiltonpreserve.org).

## Protection Update

The Preserve & Park grew by ninety-eight acres in October with the addition of an ecologically significant parcel on Ruggles Road between King and Louden roads. The property harbors potential Karner blue butterfly habitat and wetland/upland habitat supporting a suite of at-risk reptile and amphibian species.

The Nature Conservancy purchased the property with help from Saratoga County, which awarded a \$100,000 Farmland & Open Space Protection Program grant to assist in its protection. It will eventually be transferred to New York State.

The Preserve & Park and The Nature Conservancy are planning to establish Karner blue butterfly habitat on suitable upland areas.

There are now close to 2,000 acres of protected lands within or immediately adjacent to the Preserve & Park's Study Area.



S. Clarkin

*A vernal pool on the newly protected Ruggles Road property.*

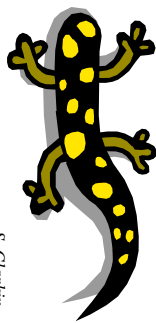
## Annual Open House

An estimated 400 people attended the 2007 Open House held September 8<sup>th</sup> under threatening but ultimately dry skies. The Town of Wilton and Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park also held a joint grand opening ceremony for the new Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park office at 80 Scout Road that afternoon.

The Annual Open House offered an array of fun and educational activities, walks, and programs for all ages. Beth Bidwell of the Wildlife Institute of Eastern New York engrossed children and adults with live birds of prey, reptiles and amphibians, and discussion of their adaptations and characteristics. Ballston Spa National Bank sponsored Beth's appearance.

Children enjoyed hands-on exploration of Delegan Pond, guided Nature Explorer walks, and age-appropriate environmental crafts. Teens and adults exercised their brains with programs focusing on Karner blue butterfly habitat restoration efforts, birds, and leave-no-trace camping. Partner organizations and enterprises had exhibit tables stocked with interesting and informative displays and materials. Wilton Scout Troop 24 hosted a barbecue

The 2008 Annual Open House is Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 12noon to 4pm at Camp Saratoga. It is free and open to the public.



Top: State wildlife biologist Kathy O'Brien shares her passion for pond life with two curious explorers.  
Bottom: Wildlife t-shirts are a popular craft project.

## Recreation Report

The 5k Fun Run Series, sponsored by the Saratoga Stryders, continues to grow in popularity. Held every other Monday during the summer months, the course and weather conditions challenge even the hardiest folks. The Stryders donate the event's proceeds to the Preserve & Park.

Thanks to a large last minute snow-storm, the 2007 8k Snowshoe Race took place.

Competitors, forced to wade through 8 kilometers

of light powder, had relatively slow times. This event is also sponsored by the Saratoga Stryders and serves as a qualifier for the US National Snowshoe Championship. It's a great race to run or watch. The Stryders also donate the proceeds of this event to the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park.



S. Clarkin

*The snow flies at the 8k snowshoe race.*

## Grand Opening (cont'd from p. 1)

The building houses a large L-shaped room with space for educational exhibits, informal meetings, and public programming. Two offices afford work space for the executive director and interns. Living quarters can house up to two interns. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are shared. The entire building is handicapped accessible.

The Town is working with New York State to protect the rear two acres for the Karner blue butterfly. This area has supported the butterfly in the past and opportunities to expand the habitat exist.

Plans call for the establishment of regular hours with volunteers available to distribute trail brochures, answer questions and rent snowshoes. The board's education committee is working to identify and develop interpretive educational exhibits focusing on the Saratoga Sandplains, its plants, animals, and ecosystems.

This facility's future is bright. If in the immediate area, the public is encouraged to visit. If stopping by is the sole reason for the trip to the area, call in advance as the staff may be working in the field!

## Upcoming Programs

**NEW!!! Children's Preserve & Park Program Series.** The Preserve & Park is offering a series of three environmental education programs for children ages 6 to 12. Every child who participates in all three programs receives a Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park patch. There will be two groups, 6-9 year olds and 10-12 year olds. Subject matter and activities are tailored to each group. Group size is limited to fifteen children. Pre-registration is required; call 518-450-0321. Fee of \$10.00/child covers cost of all three programs.

***The Forest; Saturday, April 26th, 10am-11:30am.*** The forest is home to many plants and animals of all sizes. Large and small, they all have a role. Explore the forest ecosystem and discover the connections!

***The Field; Saturday, May 17th, 10am-11:30am.*** As the last snows melt, fields come to life with a wide variety of plants, animals and insects. Get to know the field ecosystem; you'll be surprised at what you'll find!

***The Pond; Saturday, June 14th, 10am-11:30am.*** What creatures live under the water and in the slime of a pond? Discover the pond ecosystem, the insects, amphibians and host of other animals Delegan Pond supports. Be ready to get messy!

**Bird Walk; Saturday, May 10th, 7:30am; Camp Saratoga, Scout Road.** May is the best time to hear and see migratory songbirds in our area. Field and forest come alive with a rich variety of songs, and some species dazzle with tropical colors. This will be a leisurely walk along the trails and varied habitats of Camp Saratoga. Depending on bird activity, we hope to do more stopping and looking and less walking. Bring binoculars and insect repellent. Rain date is Sunday, May 11th. Offered through the Adirondack Mountain Club. Pre-registration required; call Rich Speidel at 518-623-2587.

**The Blanding's Turtle – A New Find; Saturday, July 19th, 10am-12:30pm.** A state-threatened Blanding's turtle was discovered within the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park in 2003, approximately 75 miles from the nearest known population. This surprise, unsurprisingly, raised many questions. This indoor/outdoor program will tell the story of the turtle's discovery, its life cycle and history, the threats confronting it, current research, and protection efforts. Participants will also spend time in the field either tracking or releasing a previously trapped Blanding's turtle. Terrain: hummucky wetlands with some uplands. Distance: 1-2 miles. Pre-registration required; call 518-450-0321.

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