## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

## WILTON WILDLIFE PRESERVE & PARK





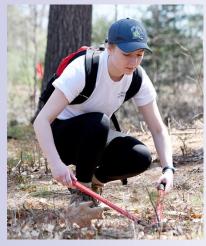


The mission of Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is to conserve ecological systems and natural settings, while providing opportunities for environmental education and outdoor recreation, working in partnership with the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County, The Nature Conservancy, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.



### CONSERVATION

Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park works with our partners to support a wide range of conservation efforts in the Saratoga Sandplains Our partner, NYS DEC takes the lead role in conservation management,. This year saw Saratoga County working with the DEC to create new Karner butterfly habitat on County Forestland as part of the airport mitigation project.



We coordinate with our partners to provide support and manpower. We assisted with most of the year's projects with our Environmental Education and Conservation Interns and volunteers.

- Karner blue butterfly monitoring
- Blanding's Turtle Research Project
- Reptile Monitoring
- Habitat preparation work at Fox
- DEC habitat mowing and brush removal
- Pheasant release at Old Gick
- Wild Blue Lupine seed picking
- New Jersey Tea seed picking
- Butterfly Milkweed seed picking and cleaning
- Woodcock Survey
- FrogWatch USA training
- FrogWatch surveys
- Transect marking in Karner habitat
- Earth Day Transect Marking
- Easement Monitoring
- iMap Invasives Training

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

Our environmental education program continues to grow as we work with schools and groups from the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County, and beyond. At the end of 2019 we restructured our staffing which will allow us to work with more college interns and to work more closely with schools, camps, after school programs, and other groups from preschoolers through adults.

Group programs are just one part of what we do. For the public, we offer nature walks and talks, pond explorations and craft programs year-round. During the two broods of the Karner blue butterfly, we have guided walks to educate about our best known species! We have an annual Wildlife Festival and bring our exhibits and hands-on activities to many community events and festivals. This year we received funding to bring outdoor painting workshops and musical performances in nature.

We work with so many different community groups it is hard to list them all, but here is list of many of the groups we worked with in 2019: 4H, Academy for Lifelong Learning, BOCES, Boy Scouts, Colonie Youth Center; Franklin Community Center's Project Lift, Gavin Park, Girl Scouts, Hudson Crossing Park, Malta Community Center, Moreau Lake State Park, the Prevention Council, Saratoga Spa State Park, the Saratoga Springs Public Library, Skidmore College Environmental Studies students, and Washington County Important Bird Area.



#### **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

An important part of our mission is to encourage people in our community to get outdoors and experience the beauty and healthful benefits found in nature. We work closely with our partners to help provide year round outdoor recreation by working with them in maintaining existing trails and helping to create new trails and linkages. This year, the Town of Wilton and NYS DEC worked to complete a connector trail along Scout Road. Our volunteer trail stewards are dedicated to helping monitor the trails and assist in their upkeep.



Outdoor recreation means different things to different people but it is all important! New York State acknowledges the importance through many of its plans and initiatives and we are proud to be able to help get people outdoors. We see people using the Preserve & Park to go on a nature walk, go bird watching, get out to photograph nature, for walking outdoors for themselves and for their pets, for going for fitness runs, for mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and more! With all of the parcels of protected land, there are over 25 miles of trails for people to enjoy.

Our commitment to year-round outdoor recreation includes our winter trail grooming program at Camp Saratoga North. We will be better able to accomplish this with Trevor Borden's Eagle Scout Project to build a new grooming equipment shed. It was completed with great assistance from the Town of Wilton

The Saratoga Stryders running club is a valued partner, holding a series of 5k fun runs in the summer and an 8k snowshoe race in the winter.

# 9TH ANNUAL WILTON WILDLIFE FESTIVAL



This annual event is held every year on the Sunday after Memorial Day since that is the time of year when the wild blue lupine in the meadow is in full bloom and the first brood of Karner blue butterflies have emerged. It is the perfect time to see the Preserve & Park at its peak!

We had a wonderful event in 2019 after the previous year's rainy event. Hundreds of people from the community came to Camp Saratoga to enjoy all of the activities, including the Silent Wings program in the Dining Hall. Activities included pond exploration, nature crafts, planting lupine, and going on nature walks into the meadow to look for Karner blue butterflies. The Town of Wilton's historic Cornell Hill Fire Tower was open to the public. As with all of our events, our volunteers made it all possible! Thanks to Ballston Spa National Bank and Southern Adirondack Audubon their sponsorship support.



# 8TH ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW

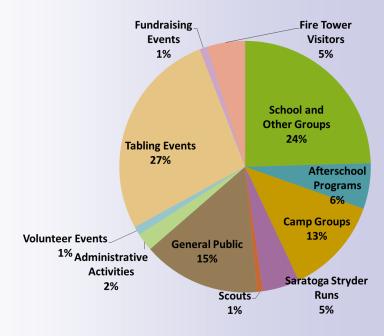
The eighth annual Photography Show debuted at the Annual Meeting in December at the Preserve & Park Office. Winners were:

- Best in Show: Karner on Purple by Ron Harrower
- Judge's Choice: Golden Rod Golden Hour by Amyjean Robbins
- Best in Conservation: Sunbeams and Lupine by Ashley Feiheit
- Best in Recreation: Conservation Past by Bernie Fabry
- Best Under 13: Feather by Bethany Myatt
- Best Karner Blue Butterfly Shot: Above the Lupine by Brian Herkalo
- Best Nature in Autumn: Pond in Fall Splendor by Craig Horneck
- Best in Education: Mets Fan by Howard Lester
- Best Nature in Winter: Prints and Reflections by Michelle O'Hare
- Best Animal Shot: Black Racer Head by Ron Harrower

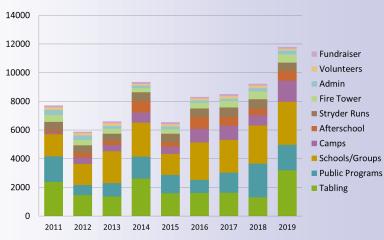
Eric Avery, once again served as judge for the more than fifty entries submitted by seventeen photographers. All photographs were taken at Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park and highlight the amazing beauty and diversity of the natural world that is right in our own community. Many of the photographs are featured in this Annual Report.



### ATTENDANCE FOR 2019



11,788
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



YEARLY ATTENDANCE COMPARISON

Visit us on-line for event notices, program updates, trail conditions and closures, trail maps, directions, volunteer opportunities, and more! www.wiltonpreserve.org

You can also visit us on facebook: www/facebook.com/#1/WiltonPreserve

## THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME AND EXPERTISE IN 2019

## Volunteers contributed more than 1,500 hours in 2019!

Our fantasitic volunteers help out in so many ways. Their work allows us to fulfill our mission and is key to our success. So a big, heartfelt Thank You to everyone who volunteered for Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park in 2019.



## **MORE THAN** 100 Hours

Rachel Adamsky Linda Baker Jennifer Benaman Matthew Miczek

## 51 - 99 Hours

Larry Dana Freddie Klaus Richard Pine Caroline Stem

## 20 - 50 Hours

Eric Avery Mark Bellantoni Trevor Borden Bob Fagan Jeffrey Lawson Howard Lester Robert Lippman Jill & Pieter Litchfield

## David Luck Sue Matthews Dave Matteson Peg McCanty

Marci Revette Bob Rice Ryan Riper Tim Schlachter Kurt Smemo Karen Sosler Wilton Troop 24

## **UNDER 20** Hours

Adirondack Sky Watchers **Jeff Barnes** Liam Bell Amelie & Katie Benaman-Roginski Howard Blake Melissa Calabria

## Heather Coton Chantal Coutore

Joe & Susan Crua Martha Devaney Jenn Ferriss Johanna Garrison Lori McCarron Jodi & Taylor Gurney Scott Harrington Bridget Henry Shelby Himelrick Jean Hoins Linda Hovious

Parker Huer Heidi Kaufmann Peter & Tony Krackeler Loy La LASAR

LeMovne College Service Trip

## Students

Lois Leonard

Anna Lewis Johanna MacKay Wendy Mahaney

Jessica Plotnik Emily Popp Bob Reepmeyer Brenda Sanchez

Jessica Shea Maja & Sophie Smemo

Snowden Family Sophia Spellman Gretchen Stark Malina Stawarz

Wendy Whittmore Don Wildermuth Wilton Rotary

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David MacDougall Ray O'Conor Frank Parillo Mike Prutsman

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Margo Olson, Executive Director

Alexander Garrigan -Piela, Education

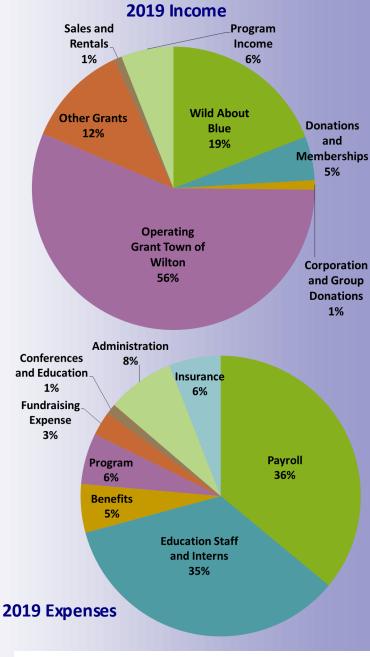
Victoria Herkalo, Education

Coordinator

Coordinator/ Environmental Educator

Erin McCabe, Volunteer and Stewardship Coordinator/ Environmental Educator

Rachel Adamsky Freddie Klaus Environ mental Education and Conservation Interns



Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Inc. is a tax-exempt public charity under Section 501 (c)3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code and a registered NYS charity.

All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. A copy of our audited financial statements may be obtained by writing to us at 80 Scout Road, Gansevoort, NY 12831 or from the NYS Dept. of Law

Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

## WILD ABOUT BLUE

Wild about Blue, the major fundraising event for the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park took place on Sunday, October 20, 2019 at Prime at the Saratoga National Golf Club with drinks, a bountiful dinner, and a unique silent auction.

Each year at the event, we present the Metamorphosis Award, which honors individuals who have helped create dramatic changes in their communities, just as the Karner blue butterfly and other species go through remarkable transformations in their life cycles.





The Metamorphosis Award this year is honored Art Johnson for his work for the Wilton community for so many years. Art was the first chair of the committee that was formed by the Town of Wilton to explore the idea of creating Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park. He has been a tireless supporter of Wilton Wildlife and an advocate for the residents of Wilton, first as a town board member and then as the Town Supervisor. Art has created positive and dramatic changes in our community and we were proud to have him as our honoree this year!

#### WILD ABOUT BLUE HONORARY COMMITTEE

#### **CONSERVATIONIST**

Jennifer Benaman & Andrew Roginski ◆ Scotty's Exit 16 – The Parillos ◆ Wilton Rotary

#### **STEWARD**

Anchor QEA \* Linda Baker \* Drs. Chris & Leisa Brockett \* Robert Lippman; Lemery Greisler LLC Spring Valley Apartments, Saratoga Springs \* Stewart's Shops \* The D.A. Collins Companies Lucy R. Waletzky, M.D.

### **GUARDIAN**

Mark & Annamaria Bellantoni \* Mark & Marie Dailey \* Linda Hovious, Richard Hovious, & Dawn Delafave Tony & Rachel Krackeler \* Prime at Saratoga National \* Bob Rice, Debbie Rice, Hailey Houde Kurt Smemo & Wendy Mahaney \* Karen Sosler & John Henry \* Caroline Stem & Bill Sprengnether The Nature Conservancy, New York

#### **PROTECTOR**

Adirondack Trust Company \* Rabbi Bert & Bailey Bloom \* Jean & John Buhac \* Dr. Lawrence A. Dana Steve Dempsey & Jenn Hunt Dempsey \* Lana Earle & Bradley Birge \* Chris & Jen Ferriss \* Robert Fagan Carol & Arnold Firestone \* Sally Hart \* Patty HasBrouck \* George & Becky Hodgson \* Jean E. Hoins Kilduff & O'Connor Family \* Joanne & Tom Klepetar \* Marti La Due & Mark Baker \* Greg & Marti Laird John & Sue Lant \* Maxine & Joel Lautenberg \* Howard Lester \* Lyons & Mulder Family Dentistry Kim Marsella & Blue Neils \* Marshall & Sterling Insurance \* Liz & Phil McCabe \* Douglas Meyer & Lee McGoldrick \* Matthew Miczek & Ann Marie Przywara \* Ray & Mary O'Conor \* David & Caroline Putman RK Engineering \* Saratoga National Bank and Trust Co. \* Tim Schlachter & Kate Ferris \* Susan, Alan, & Brian Solinsky \* Steve & Rene Streicher \* Patricia Watkins \* John Witt \* Jeannine Woutersz





# PLANNING FOR THE LARRY GORDON CAMP SARATOGA VISITOR CENTER

In 2019, we began the planning for an exciting new project to be located at Camp Saratoga. We worked with the Town of Wilton to begin to develop a plan for a year-round Visitor Center that would become the focal point for visitors and users of Camp Saratoga. It is being named after Larry Gordon, who spent most of his life protecting, enhancing, and promoting the conservation of the landscape of Camp Saratoga. The Visitor Center is a collaborative project of the Town of Wilton, Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, and the Scouting Museum Committee.

The Vision of the Larry Gordon Camp Saratoga Visitor Center:

- A welcoming building located alongside the trailhead at Camp Saratoga;
- A facility filled with information and exhibits about the natural history, flora, fauna, and environment of the Saratoga Sandplains; the human history of Camp Saratoga; and that encourages people to get outdoors;
- A place where knowledgeable staff and volunteers will enhance the park visitors' experience;
- The new heart of public programming at Camp Saratoga.



## 2019 MEMBERS & DONORS

Thanks to all who made financial or other contributions to the Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park in 2019. The following list identifies those who have granted permission for their names to be included. We apologize for any errors and ask that they be brought to our attention.



Adirondack Trust Company ADK-Glens Falls/Saratoga Chapter Christopher & Santa Alba Robin Ambrosino & David Hurteau Anchor QEA Robin & Frank Antalek Mrs Linda Baker Mark Baker Ballston Spa National Bank Kevin & Gabe Bartlett Lisa Bates Ramona Bearor Jackie Beattie Mr Andrew Beers Mark and Annamaria Bellantoni Jennifer Benaman & Drew Roginski Mark Bettinger & Julie Rogers Bradley Birge & Lana Earle Beverly Blinn-Knapp Rabbi and Mrs. Bert Bloom Joel Bloom & Julie Novkov Duane Bogardus & Shelly Knowles Donald Bookstein & Helene Garber Mr. and Mrs. John Borel Laurie & Joseph F. Bouchard Drs. Jean & John Buhac Janice Bums Mr. and Mrs. David Canavan Timothy Carr Sarah & Sean Cartwright Mr. and Mrs. Werner Classen Michael Cohen & Diana Goodwin Jean Hoins Mr. and Mrs. John Collins Mr. and Mrs. Don Colosimo Mr. Todd Compani Mr. and Mrs. Brian Corcoran Ms. Ann Crowell D.A. Collins Companies Mr. and Mrs. Larry Dana

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In Memory of Larry Gordon Mr. & Mrs. Keith Hall Mr. Rich Speidel

In Memory of Our Parents Mr. and Mrs. Chip Guyon

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In Memory of Michael E. McCarron Lori McCarron

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Grants. Corporate, and Foundation Support: Adirondack Trust Community Foundation Ballston Spa National Bank Saratoga Arts Community Arts Grant through the New York State Council on the Arts Stewart's Shops ZBGA Program of New York State **OPRHP** 

