

Lower Shore Land Connections

A publication of the Lower Shore Land Trust

Connecting Land & People

Spring 2023



Our Mission: Lower Shore Land Trust protects and restores natural resources, wildlife habitat and working lands to support and connect healthy and vibrant communities.



Board of Directors

- Chair – Hugh Cropper, IV
- Vice Chair – Judith Stribling
- Treasurer – Suzy Taylor
- Secretary – Charlene Sharpe
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- Bruce Robson

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- Jared Parks - Land Programs Manager
- Beth Sheppard - Agriculture Outreach Specialist
- Margot Resto - Executive Administrator
- Kaylee Justice - Restoration Manager
- Frank Deuter - Stewardship Coordinator
- Kacie Larcen -Chesapeake Conservation Corps

Director's Notes

It's been a busy start to the year at the land trust, and we're looking forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. This year, some of our board members are hosting events that will take you out on the creek, have you exploring wetlands, and have you eating homemade pizza with tomatoes and peppers grown on their family farm. These more intimate activities will give you a chance to learn why our board members are passionate about the mission of the land trust. They will also serve to show you why we need you more than ever - as we look at maintaining and expanding habitat for wildlife to thrive and for our communities to recreate and renew our spirit.



We ushered in April by settling on a new conservation easement property in the Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area, adding over 60 acres of protected lands to our portfolio. The private property is a mix of agriculture, forest, and forested wetlands, with about 65% considered Green Infrastructure Hub and 100% Targeted Ecological Area by MD DNR. This property will be managed for its scenic values and buffer along Tony's Creek.

Last week Jared Parks presented at a workshop for landowners hosted by Maryland Coastal Bays Program and US Fish and Wildlife Service. Attendees learned about restoring saltmarsh along the Atlantic coastal areas. Earlier in March we held a cleanup at our preserve located near Pocomoke. With help from Salisbury University students, we picked up trash along the roadside and discarded lumber from long-forgotten projects. We are planning a bioblitz for later this spring with a group of scientists, naturalists, and volunteers. The idea is to conduct surveys of the property to record as many living plants and animals so that we have a baseline inventory for our preserve.

And back in February, we submitted our renewal application for accreditation with the Land Trust Commission. Being an accredited land trust means that we have the systems in place to provide the long-term stewardship to our conservation properties. It means that we have our policies and procedures in place to manage the organization into the future. And most important, being an accredited land trust shows you and other donors that we are managing our resources effectively and efficiently. We are now in the period of waiting for the commission to come back to us with a list of areas for improvement, and the bar is constantly being set a little higher.

Without you, we would not be able to accomplish all of the land protection, restoration, community gardens, and stewardship activities that benefit our communities and wildlife that make our region so unique. Thank you for partnering with us on this journey.

Kate Patton

Cover photo courtesy of Frank Deuter, LSLT Stewardship Coordinator



Lower Shore Land Trust
 100 River Street
 Snow Hill, MD 21863
www.lowershorelandtrust.org

- @LowerShoreLandTrust
- @LSLTrust
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Lower Shore Land Trust 16th Annual Native Plant Sale

Pick up will be on Friday, May 5th
and Saturday, May 6th
Click on the QR code to order!



3rd Annual Pollinator Garden Tour

Friday, June 23rd and Saturday, June 24th, 8am - 4pm

\$30 in advance, \$35 day of event

Save the date!



Artist: Gail Stern 2022



This year's self-guided tour focuses on Pollinator-Friendly gardens within Wicomico County. Visit a new array of gardens landscaped with native plants and meet the artists painting 'en plein air'. Your garden will benefit as you find ways to incorporate native plants into your own yard.

For more information visit: lowershorelandtrust.org

Board Member Spotlight

Hugh Cropper IV



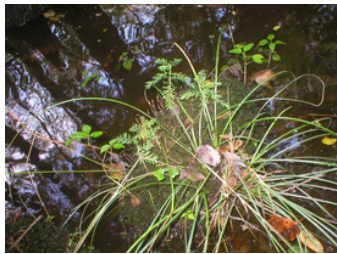
Hugh Cropper grew up in Berlin, Maryland, and like many kids, went hunting and fishing every chance he could. He not only grew up with the stories of the glory hunting days, he spent many days out in duck blinds and out fishing with some of the legends, including his grandfather Hugh Thomas Cropper, who served as mayor of Ocean City. Others, like Earl Simpson and Mac Simpson and Tom Patton made a lasting impression on Hugh. Taking a boat ride down the creek with Hugh is like taking a walk through the pages of history - it's just part of who he is. He knows the landscape and the people who live along the bays, creeks, and marshes, which is why people like Hugh are critical to organizations like the Lower Shore Land Trust. After Hugh protected his land with a conservation

easement, he made it his business to learn more about the land trust and to become involved. Hugh is an attorney with Booth, Cropper, & Marriner, PC, and lives outside Ocean City with his wife Jennifer and twins Myra and Hugh Thomas.

"It's an honor to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors. I've prioritized landowner relations by fostering cooperation and communications between landowners and the land trust. The Lower Shore Land Trust has a great staff and is committed to working with local communities to protect those resources identified by the people who live here." -
Hugh Cropper IV



Get To Know the Land Trust Board at Upcoming Events



Explore Shad Landing State Park Cypress Swamp & Surrounding Forest with Judith Stribling - April 20, 8:30 am - 10:30 am (Rain date April 25)

Join Judith Stribling, LSLT Board Member and Professor Emeritus in Biological Studies at Salisbury University, and Jared Parks, LSLT Land Programs Manager and avid birder, for a wetland plant and bird walk through the Trail of Change at Shad Landing State Park. This short trail has a lot to offer, from the bald cypress swamp to the hardwood forest. The swamp is especially beautiful and green in spring and resplendent with migrating birds.



Evening paddle on Ayers Creek with Bonfire with Board members Rachel Pennington and Suzy Taylor - July 13, 5:30 - 9:00 pm (Rain date July 20)

Enjoy the beautiful calm water on Ayers Creek with LSLT Board Members Rachel Pennington and Suzy Taylor. This paddle provides an opportunity to observe some amazing protected properties along Ayers Creek while getting an up close view of birds and wildlife along the way. The paddle will be followed by a bonfire social with drinks and refreshments. Plan to arrive by 5:30 PM to be outfitted for your paddle. Approximately 2 hour easy paddle.



Pizza, Peppers and Prosecco on the Family Farm with Board member Tracy Causey-Jeffery August 20, 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Join LSLT Board Member and Maryland Master Gardener, Tracy Causey-Jeffery and her husband Mark Jeffery on their 4th generation family farm outside Snow Hill, MD for an early evening get-together with wood fired pizza, Prosecco, a quick presentation of their vegetable growing and hot sauce production, a brief discussion on the importance of small family food gardens and the pollinators who frequent them, and a short presentation from Beth Sheppard on the LSLT Quail project.



Paddle Wetipquin Creek with Tom Horton and Board member Bruce Robson September 16, 1 pm - 3:00 pm

Join renowned author Tom Horton, the nation's leading environmental journalist on the Chesapeake Bay, for a morning paddle on Wetipquin Creek. Wetipquin Creek is a beautiful waterway off of the Nanticoke River with minimal development. Discover the beauty of Wetipquin as you learn the significance of protecting this pristine waterway in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Hosted by LSLT Board Member Bruce Robson.

Partnership Expands Habitat on Lower Shore



In 2022 we launched a grant-funded partnership with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Washington College's Center for Environment and Society. Working with their field biologist, Dan Small, Lower Shore Land Trust has made over 16 site visits within Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. Our collaborative program helps landowners address challenges with hydric soil, restore wildlife habitat, protect nearby water sources, and provide alternative farm practices based on the individual levels of agricultural conversion and suitable cost-share practices.

Engaging with the Natural Resource Conservation Service we recommended a customized warm season grass mix which provides desirable pollinator and quail food sources. Some of the most widely used species include Little Blue Stem, Partridge Pea and Aster novi-belgii.

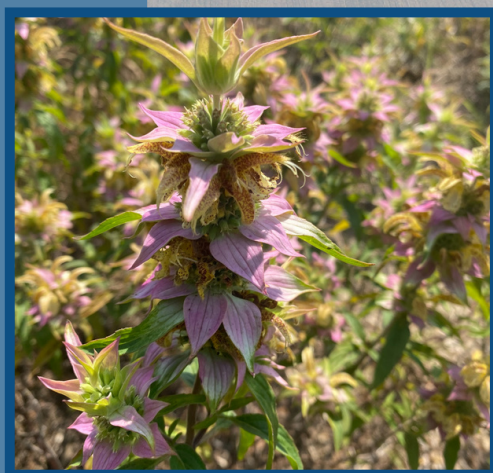


Dan Small, Natural Lands Project Coordinator, speaks to participants at Chino Farms and a Northern Bobwhite



The Natural Lands Project requires a 10-year commitment from landowners when working to establish the meadow. The steps may include annual mowing or burning and selective invasive weed control. This approach sets the stage for sustainable breeding, ground nesting, and brooding habitat for our endangered Northern Bobwhite Quail.

Overall, the Lower Shore Land Trust is reaching a wide array of landowners, sharing resources that detail why quail need a mixture of specific habitat. With increased implementation and connectivity across property lines, there is valuable opportunity to ensure the survival of our Northern Bobwhite, other threatened songbirds, pollinator species, and wildlife who share similar landscape needs.



Converting Lawn to Meadow

CAN YOU TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

Have you given much thought to what is planted in your yard? For most of us, we get outside in the spring, plant a few plants, throw down some mulch, and we're on to the next project. Some of us have been in the process of transitioning our yard to mostly native perennials, shrubs, and trees, as we try to provide food for butterflies and birds, and other wildlife. Then there are the more ambitious projects - like converting lawn to meadows! We aren't suggesting you convert your lawn to meadow just because it looks pretty. In the Maryland, Delaware, and DC regions alone, there are over 400 species of native bees, and that doesn't even take into consideration the birds, butterflies, and other beneficial insects that depend on meadows for pollination.



These pollinators are disappearing at an alarming rate, in part because of loss of habitat, excessive use of pesticides and other chemicals, and climate change. Entomologist, author, and founder of homegrownnationalpark.org, Doug Tallamy, advocates for regenerating biodiversity in our backyards. Mary Reynolds, the Irish gardener pushing for re-wilding 50% of our lawns, designs "arcs" or Acts of Restorative Kindness, to combat biodiversity loss. We are losing species at an alarming rate, but we can all make a difference by planting native plants and creating areas for wildlife. If you have enough yard, consider a meadow. Meadows are dynamic landscapes that show the personality of a site – diverse textures, colors, fragrances, and heights over the seasons and as the meadow develops over time.

A meadow is an open area of native perennial grasses and forbs (flowering plants), where the plants work together to provide food and habitat for pollinators like bees, butterflies, beneficial insects, birds, and many other animals as well. To learn more about how you can convert your lawn to a meadow, or even just add some native plants to attract more beneficial and beautiful insects and other pollinators to your property, check out the resources on our website www.https://www.lowershorelandtrust.org/pollinators.



CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST GRANT: ADVANCING THE ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES AND CULTIVATING CONGREGATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) is excited to announce they are the recipient of a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant award through the Outreach and Restoration Award Program, running through August 2024. As part of the grant award, LSLT will work closely with One Water Partnership (OWP) on several projects centered around outreach and restoration in our local community, primarily with local congregational partners. The grant will fund several upcoming projects including parking island garden installation, cistern installation, the creation of mini-pollinator meadow guides, and tree and pollinator garden planting projects.

On March 25th, LSLT and OWP hosted the first of the grant projects, a Rain Barrel workshop at Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Parish in Salisbury, Maryland. Over 20 guests participated in the workshop where University of Maryland Extension Watershed Restoration Specialist, Jen Dindinger, provided information on the installation, maintenance, and importance of rain barrels. Participants received their own rain barrel kits to install on their personal properties, contributing to water conservation and reduction of soil erosion and stormwater runoff in the three lower counties.



Jen Dindinger, Watershed Restoration Specialist, University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension, speaks to a group at St Frances De Sales for the rain barrel workshop

Stewardship Corner

Adventure, Challenge, Wonder and Accomplishment in a Few Hours

I was reminded how wonderful all the people who contribute to the Lower Shore Land Trust really are when I was recently out with our stewardship coordinator, Frank Deuter. We visited three conservation properties that land owners like you have protected with easements, so the properties' beauty and habitats are conserved for perpetuity. We entered one property down a long farmland lane and found ourselves surrounded by bird song, restored historic farm buildings, guinea fowl, and a gorgeous blue peacock! Such an idyllic setting made more so by the friendly easement owners who met and chatted with us treating us as old friends, sharing their love for the woods and the historic buildings they hoped to pass along to their grandchildren. A second property provided the comforting shade and quick dappled light from pine trees that had to be close to one hundred years old. The only sounds came from the pine warblers flitting through those glorious boughs and the *rap, rap, rap* of a pileated woodpecker.

I could feel my racing mind calm and peace enter my soul. The surprise of a house and pond around the next curve as well as the sight of squabbling, swirling eastern bluebirds made me catch my breath in wonder. The next easement property proved my challenge for the day. I am not one who likes to wade through mud and muck. The sucking feeling of a rubber boot going down into the ooze may make some people feel connected to the marsh, but I can't claim to be one of them. However, Frank and I wanted to walk as much of this property as we could and that meant a bit of bog. Thankfully, Frank was sure footed and kind, leading the way so that I could concentrate on where to place my feet and even lent a helping hand during the one instance when I did almost lose my boot to the muck. I came away from the days' walks marveling at the diversity of plant and bird life to be found here on our beautiful Eastern Shore of Maryland and concerned that such habitat is still being lost to habitat mismanagement and development on a daily basis. So, thank you to each landowner and donor who has taken the steps of donating a conservation easement to the land trust, provided bequests of property or funds to the land trust, or have become sustaining monthly or annually donors to help continue the conservation efforts. Whatever you choose, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping to preserve our woods, wetlands, and farmlands for future generations to enjoy. I can't wait to walk a property with you, share a private pollinator garden with you on one of our tours, or enjoy a laugh over my next near boot loss with you at one of our events. Welcome to the LSLT family circle!

-Tracy Causey-Jeffery, Board Member and volunteer land steward



Land steward volunteers from left: Laurie Lawton Smith, Mike Walsh, Katherine Layton, Mary Schultz, Tracy Causey-Jeffery, and Marianne Pettis

Ways to Support Lower Shore Land Trust

There are several ways that you can make a huge impact - FOREVER!

Financial/Monetary Donation: In addition to accepting cash donations, LSLT accepts gifts of Stock, Mutual Funds, IRA Charitable Rollovers, Donor Advised Funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs).

Planned Giving: Consider naming LSLT as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy or include us in your Will.

Real Estate: LSLT accepts gifts of land - we are always looking for conservation properties. We also accept donations of cars, boats, buildings and other assets that can be sold and used to further LSLT's mission.

We encourage you to contact your financial advisor, estate attorney, or a tax consultant to learn how these transactions can benefit you and support the causes that matter to you. If you would like to learn more about how you can make a lasting impact, contact Kate Patton, LSLT Executive Director at 443-234-5587 or kpatton@lowershorelandtrust.org.

Land Connections

Lower Shore Land Trust
100 River Street
Snow Hill, MD 21863



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SALISBURY, MD
21801

Upcoming Events...

Friday, April 14, 5:00 - 6:00 pm (doors open at 4:30 pm) "Planting Native" with Doug Tallamy

How to bring nature into your backyard by Dr. Doug Tallamy. Presented in partnership with Maryland Coastal Bays Program. To be held at the Ocean City Golf and Yacht Club. Space is limited, reservations required. (410) 213-2297

"Explore Shad Landing State Park Cypress Swamp & Surrounding Forest" with Judith Stribling - April 20, 8:30 am - 10:30 am (Rain date April 25) For more information or to register call 443-234-5587 or email mresto@lowershorelandtrust.org.

Saturday, April 22 - Earth Day!

Check out events at the Salisbury Zoo and Assateague State Park. LSLT will have a booth at each location

Lower Shore Land Trust May 5th & 6th Native Plant Sale
(Pre-orders required)



Wednesday, June 7, 5:30 - 7:00 pm - Chris Pax - "Managing Your Garden for Healthy Habitat"

Chris covers tips for making your landscape more beneficial to wildlife by using native plants and design techniques. Chris has over 20 years of experience as a native landscape designer. To be held at Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, Salisbury. RSVP 443-234-5587 or bsheppard@lowershorelandtrust.org

Pollinator Garden Tour - Friday, June 23rd & Saturday, June 24th - For more information or to register go to www.lowershorelandtrust.org

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Paddle Wetipquin Creek with Tom Horton and Board member Bruce Robson September 16, 9am - noon

Save the Date! Flannel Formal November 11th!