



Wild & Scenic News

Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring 2004

Spring Treasures of the Riverbank

The woods beside the west bank of the Farmington River, 2.5 miles north of the Pleasant Valley Bridge, seem ordinary enough. Hobblebush and shadbush guard the entrance to the unassuming Henry Buck Trail.

Every May, hundreds of tiny plants wake up from a long Connecticut winter and put on a dazzling display. Renowned among state botanists, the trail is home to over 60 species of wild flowers. Arm yourself with your favorite wildflower guide and prepare to view of some of the most beautiful of nature's works. Red Trillium, Trout Lily, Yellow Clintonia and Dutchman's Breeches paint the landscape on the lower section of the two-mile trail. Ravens will almost always announce your presence with an eery screech.



Dutchman's Breeches, Bloodroot and Trout Lily.



Photos by E. Saulys and Dr. David Blevins

in the U.S. contain at least one ingredient derived from nature. False Hellebore is historically valued as an

analgesic for pain, epilepsy, convulsions, pneumonia and other maladies. Components of the plant are known to slow heart rate, reduce blood pres-

sure and stimulate blood flow. Leave extraction of these chemicals to the experts as all parts of the plant; especially the roots are highly or fatally

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Arrive early and watch the sun's rays appear to explode in a starburst over the moss-covered waterfall. Wild ginger, Partridge Berry and Jack-in-the-Pulpits arrange themselves streamside. The trail follows the brook to the site of the cheese box factory. Although the factory disappeared in the mid 1800's, False Hellebore still resides among the old foundations.

To add another dimension to the plant kingdom, considering taking along a field guide that highlights medicinal uses for each plant. Over 40 percent of prescription drugs sold

FRCC Examines the Health of the Riverbanks

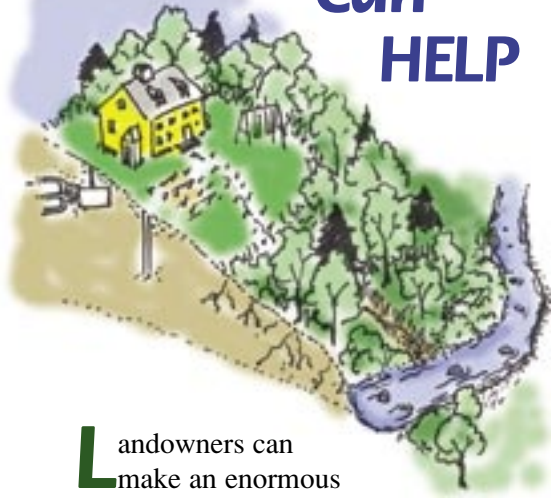
As the warm weather approaches, so too returns outdoor fun – boating, swimming and fishing on the river. This year the FRCC will be getting out there on the Farmington River to assess its river banks and numerous recreational access points. Riverbank erosion from the river's own nature plus our "over-enjoyment" of it can diminish fish and wildlife habitat, lead to sand and dirt deposited on the river bed, cause loss of trees and brush that buffer the river's edge, and degrade the beauty of the river with litter and worn areas.

FRCC has hired Jim MacBroom of Milone and MacBroom, Inc.

(MMI), a water resources engineer, to work with us on evaluating the 14-mile Wild and Scenic stretch of river. MMI will work with us to prepare maps, collect data by boat, car and foot, photograph and document problem areas and then then come up with the appropriate solution for each problematic riverbank area or access point. In some cases, the best course of action will be to leave it as is – in other cases, a bank and habitat restoration project may be planned.

The project will begin in early June and continue through the summer. Volunteers are welcome to participate. If you are interested please call FRCC at 379-0282.

Riverfront Landowners Can HELP



Landowners can make an enormous contribution to the health of the Farmington River by leaving or restoring a strip (buffer) of plants along their segment of shoreline.

These plants literally “buffer” the riverbank and water from harmful materials flowing into the river. The roots and bodies of the plants slow the polluted runoff and allow it to seep slowly into the ground where it is filtered and cleaned. The buffer plants catch eroded soil before it reaches the river, support wildlife, and moderate water temperature.

Buffers function best when they consist of native plants, and the most cost-effective way to insure a healthy buffer is to leave the naturally occurring vegetation in place. The Farmington River protection overlay districts require a 100’ buffer from the riverbank, and riverbank landowners can preserve and protect the river by their commitment to this restriction.

Riverbank buffers contribute to water quality, beauty of the waterway and well being of the people and animals and plants that live along the river.

Riverbank landowners are important river stewards. Please see <http://www.crjc.org/buffers/Backyard%20buffers.pdf> for more information on backyard buffers.

Source: The Importance of Streamside Buffers, Rivers Alliance, 2001

Tani in the River

I am Tani the little brown Stonefly. Tani is short for Taeniopterygidae which is shown on my Farmington River birth certificate. However, I am sure that no one really cares about that pedigree stuff.

Alas, everyone does care about spring. The fishing season started April 17, and I thought that I would give you a spring view from in the River.

The water is really cold. No one is moving around much. I mean that Kaiser the Brown trout is hiding, in a grumpy state, behind a fallen log. Denver, the Rainbow trout is also in a funk behind a rock. I suppose that once the temperature reaches about 48 degrees all ‘hell’ will break loose, and both Kaiser and Denver will be chasing me trying to eat me – of all things. Why don’t they pick on the other guys like the Epeorus nymphs around here? After all, they are a lot bigger and tastier than I.



Wait! I see a pair of beat up boots with waders that have lots of bubbles coming out of them. Hmm! It must be one of these insipid fly fishers with the big leak. Why don’t these people get a life and leave us alone? Also, of all things, this human is hanging and shaking, from a string, a puppet that is supposed to look like me. Get real!

Well, I think that I must as well grab onto a rock and watch. Maybe the sun will come out today. See ya!

Tani has been brought to you by the Farmington River Anglers Association

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toxic. False Hellebore can be identified by its large strongly pleated leaves poking through the moist soils.

Watch for the five petaled leaf of the Dwarf Ginseng flourishing in the same area. Beyond the foundation of the factory you can walk across the rustic bridge built by Eagle Scout Sean Kearney. You are now approaching the Tremendous Cliffs. As you start your ascent look for the plaque dedicated to Henry R. Buck placed in cliff rocks. The trail was named for Henry, an engineer for the CCC and vice president of the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. He was killed in an auto accident on Avon Mountain in the 1930’s. The trail rises steeply and then rewards the hiker with a wonderful view of the glacially sculpted,

federally designated Wild and Scenic river valley.

Just past the ledges the white flower of Painted Trillium, one of the most attractive trilliums can be found. It is easily recognized by the crimson veining at the base of each petal. If you are able to spot Miterwort (Bishop’s Cap), get out your hand lens and view its amazing geometry. The fruit has the shape of a small cap or bishop’s miter.

The trail descends along the north slope crossing a charcoal hearth. The trail will soon end soon on West River road and you will be .3 miles north of your starting point. You are guaranteed to leave a bit more serene. As you walk back to your car along the Farmington River ponder the water that never seems to stop flowing and make your own analogies to life.

The Farmington River Coordinating Committee

Our Mission ... FRCC was established in 1994 as part of the Upper Farmington River Management Plan and the federal Wild and Scenic designation to promote long-term protection of the Farmington River by:

- Bringing interested parties in river management together on a regular and on-going basis,
- Stimulating cooperation and coordination among those parties,
- Providing a forum for all river interests to discuss and resolve issues, and
- Coordinating implementation of the Upper Farmington River Management Plan.

You can reach the FRCC at 379-0282 or by email at info@farmingtonriver.org. Our office is located in the historic Squires Tavern at 100 East River Road, Pleasant Valley.

From top to bottom, left to right: Kevin Case (National Park Service), Bror Lindau (Hartland), Fred Jones (Hartland), Harry White (Colebrook), Tom Stanton (Colebrook), Mario Santoro (Barkhamsted), Diana Hiza (Canton), Rick Jacobson (CT DEP), Liz Lacy (NPS/FRCC Director), Pat Keener (New Hartford), Jean Miller (Barkhamsted), Bud Sanders (MDC), Eric Hammerling (Farmington River Watershed Association), Jamie Fosburgh (National Park Service) Not pictured, Sally Snyder (CT DEP), Chris Bailey (Canton), Mark Lindquist (New Hartford)



Bald Eagles Continue to Thrive

The American bald eagle was last observed nesting in Connecticut in the early 1950's. The application of DDT to control forest and agricultural pests has been held mostly responsible for the decline of eagle and many other bird populations around the world.

In 1989 the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) conducted a timber harvest on the west side of Barkhamsted Reservoir. An unusually large white pine tree was left and trees were cut around this tree with the anticipation of seeding in white pines from this magnificent seed source. However, inadvertently, the conditions were created that a pair of young eagles took a liking to. Late in 1989 they attempted to build a nest in this huge tree. However, in



the winter of 1989-90 the partial nest was blown out of the tree.

In 1990, the MDC with the assistance of a member of a volunteer organization, the "Bald Eagle Study Group" climbed the tree and installed a nesting platform. The eagles added additional nesting material to the platform in 1990-1991, but did not successfully incubate. In 1992 the

now mature eagles successfully hatched and fledged 2 chicks.

Since initial success in the original tree, 11 chicks have successfully fledged from two nests on the Barkhamsted Reservoir. In 2002 the Barkhamsted eagles abandoned the original tree and built a new nest on the Reservoir. Another nest on Colebrook Reservoir has fledged 10 chicks since 1999 and in 2003, one chick was fledged from a new nest on Nepaug Reservoir. To this point, 22 chicks have been hatched on MDC lands and one additional adoptee from Massachusetts fledged.

In May, each chick is lowered to the ground, banded, examined by a veterinarian and returned to the nest. As a result, the whereabouts of the eagles can be tracked and success of subsequent generations followed by scientists throughout the Northeast.

Volunteers Needed for Stream Monitoring Program

The FRCC, in cooperation with the Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA), is sponsoring a Stream Walk (paddling too!) program for the 14-mile Wild & Scenic River section of the Farmington River and for the Still River (tributary to the Farmington River). A Stream Walk survey is designed for volunteers to quickly identify and assess visible problems associated with the health of the stream corridor. Stream walk volunteer training has been scheduled for June 12, 2004, 8:30 a.m. until noon, at the Canton Community Center. On that morning, volunteers will be trained in documenting the health of a selected river segment. Volunteers will be assigned river segments to survey at their leisure during July and August of this year. For more information on this exciting program, or to sign up for Stream Walk training on June 12th, please call Regina Mahony at FRWA at 860/658-4442, ex. 203.



Farmington River Coordinating Committee
P.O. Box 395
Pleasant Valley, CT 06063

www.farmingtonriver.org

Celebrating 10 Years of Wild & Scenic Designation

Calendar of Events Everyone is welcome!

FRCC MEETINGS

Thursdays - June 3, July 22

7:00 pm at the historic Squires Tavern located at 100 East River Road in Pleasant Valley (please call to confirm, meeting dates may change).

PRE-MEETING OUTINGS – TO SIGN UP CALL 379-0282

June 3 - Canoe Trip from Pleasant Valley bridge to Callahan Park New Hartford – learn about aquatic bugs and historic features along the way with Mike Beauchene of CT DEP and Walt Landgraf.

July 22 – Canoe Trip – for some fun and a look at fish habitat features – with guide Tim Berry of CT DEP.

Mark Your Calendars for the Upper Farmington River Wild and Scenic Designation's 10th Anniversary Celebration!

August 26th at Squires Tavern – stay tuned or call us for more details.

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