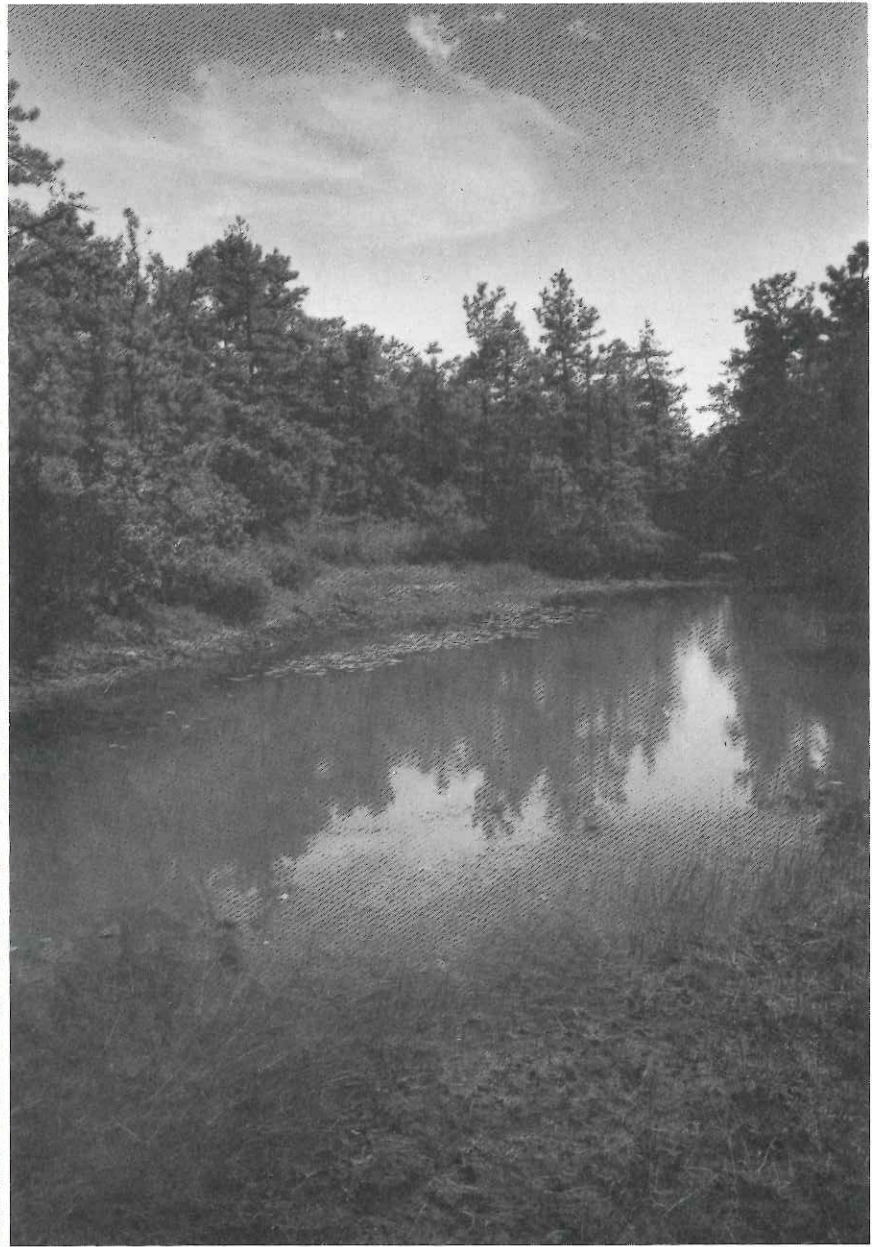


Photo by Robert J. Carlica



The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust
1991 Annual Report

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust Board of Trustees

Policy for the Trust is set by an eleven-member Board of Trustees. Six members are appointed by the Governor from the recommendations of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations. Five members are State officials.

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Counsel

Martin Rapp
Ecologist

JoAnne Ruscio
Management Assistant



Photo by Leslie DiCola

In Memory of Joseph H. Taylor

In his quiet, firm voice, Joseph Taylor explained the significance of the oddly shaped rocks and fossils lying on the table in front of him. The Indian artifacts had been found on the Taylor's Riverside Homestead Farm in Cinnaminson, the only remaining operating farm on the Delaware River between Bordentown and Camden. Joe was talking to about eighty people who had gathered at his home for a nature walk at the Taylor Wildlife Preserve. Using maps to illustrate his talk, Joe related the cultural and natural history of the constantly changing riverfront.

Joe Taylor died on the last day of 1991. He had spent much of his 77 years working to preserve land along the Delaware River. He and his wife, Sylvia, donated a conservation easement on 89 acres of the Taylor Riverside Homestead Farm to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust in 1975. The adjoining 35 acres are still farmed. In addition to being a sanctuary for wildlife, the preserve is used for environmental education for local schools and scout organizations as well as for nature walks held several times a year by the Trust. Joe was always there to tell visitors about the property. Until his death, he worked to preserve nearby open space and to maintain the protected acres.

During his lifetime, Joe taught school and became a principal in the Riverside, Medford, and West Deptford School Districts, while operating the organic farm part time. After his retirement, he returned to running the farm full time. He is survived by his wife, six children, and fifteen grandchildren. He also has left a legacy of land for his family and the residents of New Jersey. The Trust's 1991 Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Joseph H. Taylor, who contributed his land, time, and energy to the protection of open space in New Jersey.

Game Branch Preserve in Salem County Protected through Joint Venture

Through the efforts of three organizations, 391 acres of forested wetlands in Salem County have been permanently protected. The tract of land was donated to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust by the Natural Lands Trust, Inc., a regional land trust with the same name, based in Media, Pennsylvania. The Natural Lands Trust, Inc., transferred the land to the New Jersey trust as it was more convenient for the New Jersey organization to manage the property.

The land originally included a two-acre parcel with an abandoned farmhouse and two outbuildings. Neither trust was in a position to renovate or remove the house. Instead, the trusts were able to settle on an agreement with the Salem County Habitat for Humanity, an international organization that renovates and builds modest homes, enabling low-income families to become homeowners. Several new homes have been constructed by Habitat in the city of Salem. According to Rebecca Kerrigan, president of the Salem County Habitats, "We have made a commitment to work in the western Salem County area as well, and we are eager to explore the possibilities that this piece of land may offer."

"We are very pleased to see the property permanently preserved in the capable hands of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, and we are delighted that the house and the property will benefit Habitat for

Humanity. It is always rewarding when a land conservation project can also achieve other worthwhile goals such as providing for more affordable housing," Michael Clarke, President of Natural Lands Trust, Inc., commented at the time of the transfer.

The Trust will be working with neighboring landowners to monitor and manage the recently acquired Game Branch Preserve. The Trust also hopes to further develop working relationships with Habitat for Humanity and the Natural Lands Trust in order to realize the successful completion of similar projects that benefit the residents of New Jersey as well as the organizations.



Photo by JoAnne Ruscio

Land Saving Workshops

The Trust joined with several conservation organizations to sponsor two workshops for new and developing land trusts in New Jersey. The first workshop, held in May, offered participants a chance to hear several leaders of the land conservation movement talk about their efforts to protect open space in the state. Jean Hocker, Executive Director of the Land Trust Alliance, the national land trust organization located in Washington, DC, opened the program with a talk on the

crucial role of local land trusts in conserving land in their communities. The second workshop, held in December, focused on establishing a nonprofit organization, building an effective board of directors, fundraising, and developing community public relations. Speakers included environmentalists and an attorney from New Jersey as well as a communications specialist from the Land Trust Alliance.

Protecting Natural Diversity through Land Conservation

Recognizing that larger parcels of land offer better protection for natural diversity, the Trust focused its efforts in land conservation in 1991 on identifying areas for protection. Several project sites near Trust-owned properties were chosen. The next step will be to contact the landowners in these areas to talk to them about protecting their land through donation or by placing conservation easements on their property to conserve its natural attributes. The proposed nature preserves are in several counties, including Camden, Gloucester, and Ocean.

Following the same concept, the Trust staff worked to acquire land adjacent to existing preserves. The 300-acre Hamilton Preserve in Atlantic County was increased by 93 acres presented to the Trust by six of the donors of the original acreage, Jean A. and Sylvia Herz, John and Lorraine Cannis, and Gayle and Joel Moskowitz. An Atlantic white cedar forest covers a good portion of the property. In the same area, another 15 acres was given to the Trust by Lawrence, Sandra, and Martin Kelman, who were contacted by the staff and were informed of the environmental significance of their property.

In Burlington County, a volunteer group, Citizens Advocating Responsible and Equitable Zoning (CAREZ), has been working for several years to acquire individual lots in a designated 170-acre tract. The Trust serves as recipient of the properties. Five additional lots were donated in 1991, bringing the total protected lots to 48.

The Trust also accepted an additional parcel as the result of mitigation in the area of the Mystic Island Preserve in Little Egg Harbor, Ocean County. The original 169-acre preserve is a tidal saltwater marsh with a nesting site for the State threatened osprey.

Conservation easements play an important role in the Trust's land preservation program. A conservation easement was granted on 33 acres bordering the 240-acre Reinhardt Preserve in Sussex County. This is the second easement received by the Trust that is contiguous to the Reinhardt Preserve—the first was donated in 1990. The land rights for both properties were transferred to the Trust by the landowners who wanted to see their land protected from development.

The final easement of a limited development project in Sussex County was received in 1991. 150 acres of a former 170-acre farm now are permanently protected due to a combination of the granting of conservation easements and an outright donation of 79 acres for a wildlife sanctuary. The property held in private ownership was divided into five 15-22 acre lots with deed restrictions placed on each lot with a four-acre exemption for building. The Trust owns the Congleton Wildlife Sanctuary and holds the easements on the five lots.

Individual Donations Provide Protection of Habitat for Wildlife

The generosity of several landowners enabled the Trust to acquire land that will protect natural communities and watersheds that support diverse plants and animals including the State threatened osprey.

Julia Buhlman donated a 17-acre property in Cumberland County in memory of her husband. Keeping this space open and free of the impact of development helps protect portions of Rattlesnake Gut and Rattlesnake Run, two streams that join on site and flow into the Cohansey River. The site is a combination of forested uplands and wetlands. The tree-lined streams provide habitat for wood ducks.



Osprey Illustration by Robin Sigmann

The watershed of a trout production stream in Alexandria Township in Hunterdon County is now protected as the result of a contribution of land from Melvin and Isabel Wolock, who wanted to keep the land untouched so others could enjoy the forested property as they and their family had.

In Cape May County, two separate donations of open spartina marsh guarantee the protection of feeding habitat of the osprey on the property. The Miller Creek Marsh property also buffers and protects the osprey's nesting area. The properties were donated by Addis and Edgar Tomlinson and by Robert and Janice Monihan. Another donation, the 16-acre Tilton Creek Preserve, which lies along Barnegat Bay, also provides feeding habitat for the osprey. In Hamilton Township, Atlantic County, two 40-acre gifts of land protect the headwaters for the Great Egg Harbor River and a downstream wetland along the tributary of the river. Donated by Sylvia and Sydney Allen, the properties lie near other Trust landholdings in Hamilton.

DONORS

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust gratefully extends its thanks to those who have donated land or funds to the Trust in 1991 to help preserve and protect New Jersey's natural heritage.

Sydney and Sylvia Allen

Julia Buhlman

Margaret Bunnell

Lorraine and John P. Cannis

J. Phillip Citta

John DeGrossa

The Fanwood Foundation

Helen C. Fenske

Habitat for Humanity, Salem County

Edward and Diana Heckendorn

William and Arlene Hendricks

Jean A. and Sylvia Herz

Hirair Hovnanian

Joseph Iscaro

Martin Kelman

Lawrence and Sandra Kelman

George Korn

Paul G. and Jacquelyn F. Manko

Robert and Janice Monihan

Joel and Gail Moskowitz

Natural Lands Trust, Inc.,
Media, Pennsylvania

William Rapp

Gretchen Sieg-Groeneveld

Jacob J. Smith

Edgar and Addis Tomlinson

Melvin M. and Isabel Wolock

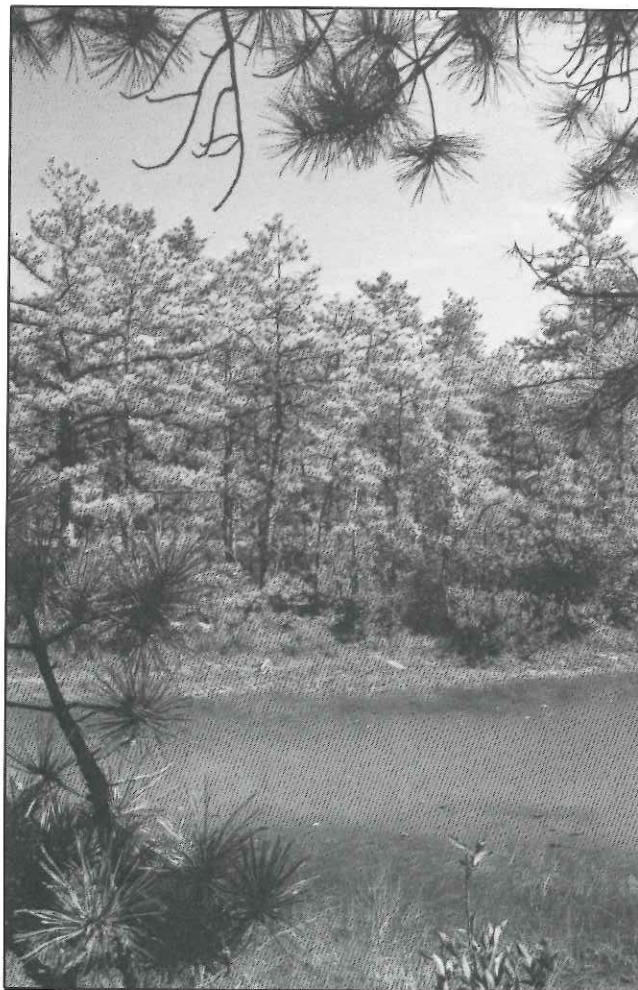
The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust financial report is available upon request.

Developers and Conservationists—Working Together

The Trust received 112 acres of forested uplands and wetlands in Gloucester County from Hovson's Inc., a developer of senior citizen housing in south Jersey. The protected property is home to an Atlantic white cedar forest, which is often habitat for certain endangered plants. Senior citizen housing will be constructed on adjacent property.

The donation of land was accompanied by a monetary contribution to the land management fund. An agreement between the Trust and Hovson's specifies that the developer will assist with cleaning up litter on the preserve and that the Trust will conduct environmental education programs for the public and for the residents of the development by sponsoring nature walks, providing literature, and giving talks to the homeowner's association. The environmental education program will be similar to the program at Crossley Preserve in Ocean County, where the goal is to educate local residents about the pine forests, the wetlands, and the plants and animals living on the preserve, as well as to provide a self-guided trail for the use of residents and local schools.

The Trust has worked with Hovson's on a clean-up project at Crossley Preserve, thus establishing a working relationship between the developer and the land trust. The combined endeavor of two such disparate organizations to achieve the same goal—the care of a natural area—led to the donation of the Gloucester parcel of land by Hovson's to the Trust. The Trust hopes to preserve other valuable habitat in this area, which is part of the Four-Mile Branch Nature Preserve.



Environmental Education—A Conservation Tool

Gathered at the edge of a small bog on a June evening, a group of people listened as a naturalist identified the call of the whippoorwill and the endangered Pine Barrens treefrog. The group had just completed a nature walk through Crossley Preserve in Berkeley Township, Ocean County, led by Lois Morris, a local resident and Trust volunteer. Lois pointed out plants native to the pine barrens, while Bob Zappalorti, from Herpetological Associates, identified night calls and exhibited the endangered corn snake, the threatened pine snake, and a milk snake.

Recognizing the importance of environmental education to help protect open space and natural diversity, the Trust increased the number of nature walks and programs held for the public this year. The Trust also was one of several sponsors of workshops on how citizens can save open space in their community.

Nature Walks and Programs

With the help of volunteers, the Trust offered nature walks at Crossley Preserve, Taylor Wildlife Preserve, and Highfields Preserve during Environmental Education Week in April. At Crossley Preserve, Lois Morris and Bob Zappalorti described habitat and identified wildlife for the visitors. Karl Anderson and Karen Koenig from the Rancocas Nature Center, and John Heilferty, a local resident, assisted landowners Joseph and Sylvia Taylor at the nature walk at the Taylor Wildlife Preserve in Burlington County. Jane Butts, a ranger with the Somerset County Park Commission led a walk at the Highfields Preserve situated in Mercer and Somerset counties.

Additional nature walks were held in spring and fall at Crossley Preserve and the Taylor Wildlife Preserve. The nature walks gave the Trust an opportunity to not only offer educational programs on the ecological value of the preserves, but to talk to the public about the importance of land conservation and the methods available to protect land.

The Department of Environmental Protection and Energy celebrated Earth Day by holding a festival at the Garden State Arts Center. Along with many other conservation organizations, the Trust participated in the event by setting up a table with a photo display of Trust preserves and by distributing literature on the various methods of saving land. The staff took part in several other conferences during the year including the national Land Trust Alliance Rally in New Hampshire.

New Trails

New trails were constructed at Crossley Preserve and Highfields Preserve. At Crossley, the new 1.6-mile loop

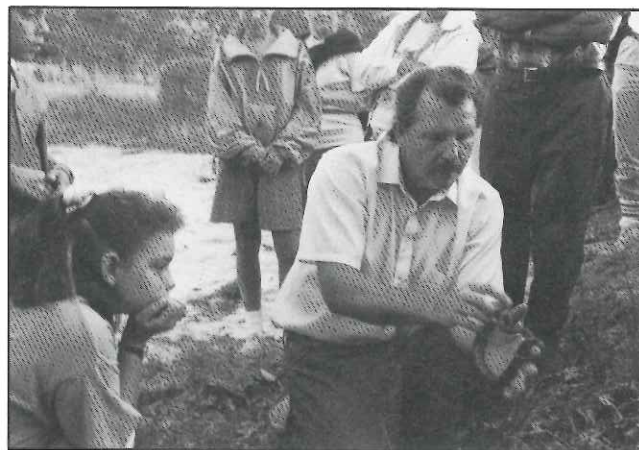
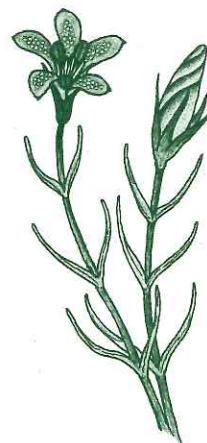


Photo by JoAnne Ruscio

trail runs through pine woods and fields along the Wrangel Brook and abandoned cranberry bogs. The trail, which partly follows the old railroad track used to transport clay from the clay pits to the train that conveyed it to Whiting, ends at the remains of an old loading dock and the platform of a maintenance building. The trail was cleared by the Trust staff and volunteer Jerry Wines, who spent days cutting back branches and putting down wood chips donated by the Ocean County Recycling Center. Signposts with text were placed along the trail describing the natural and historical features of the property. Volunteers will maintain the trail.

On the Highfields property, which is owned by the Department of Corrections, the boys staying at the Highfields Residential Center cleared and marked a one-mile trail on the 180-acre portion of the former Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh property, which is protected by a conservation easement held by the Trust. The one-mile trail is open to the public and is an easy stroll through a hardwood forest, old fields, and thickets growing along intermittent streams.



Pine-barrens Gentian Illustration by Robin Sigmund

Trash Clean Up at Lin Lee Preserve

One of the most troublesome and constant management problems faced by the Trust staff is the dumping of trash and the accumulation of litter on the preserves. At the Lin Lee Preserve in Ocean County, litter from roads and residences is carried onto the property by stormwater. Plastic bottles, aluminum cans, glass containers, styrofoam, and other trash enter the preserve through two large storm drains, ending up along the stream banks and in the wetlands.

With the assistance of Webelos Den 9, Pack 66, of Barnegat Township, the Trust completed the first phase of a clean-up effort at the Lin Lee Preserve in October. The Scouts constructed a trash filter fence to catch the litter entering the preserve through the storm drains. The Scouts also cleaned up the trash remaining on the preserve. The trash was then sorted and recycled.

The next phase of management will include another stream clean up and the construction of silt and sediment traps to catch the excessive amounts of sand that wash through the stream during heavy rains. The unmanageable amount of sand is caused by the stormwater erosion from the nearby development. The traps keep the sand from settling into the sensitive wetlands where it chokes out the native plants, changes the community structure, and reduces the water storage capacity.

The boys of Pack 66 have adopted the Lin Lee Preserve and will act as a watchdog group, keeping the preserve free of litter and cleaning the traps and filters regularly.

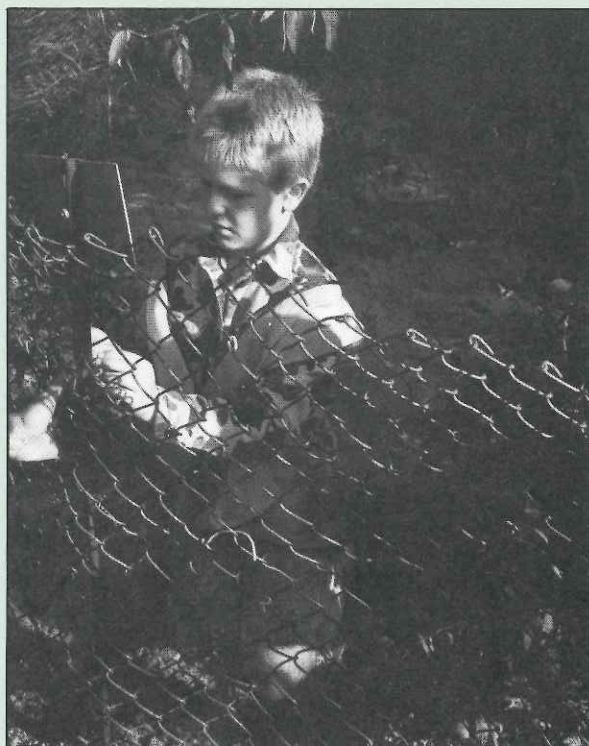


Photo by Martin Rapp

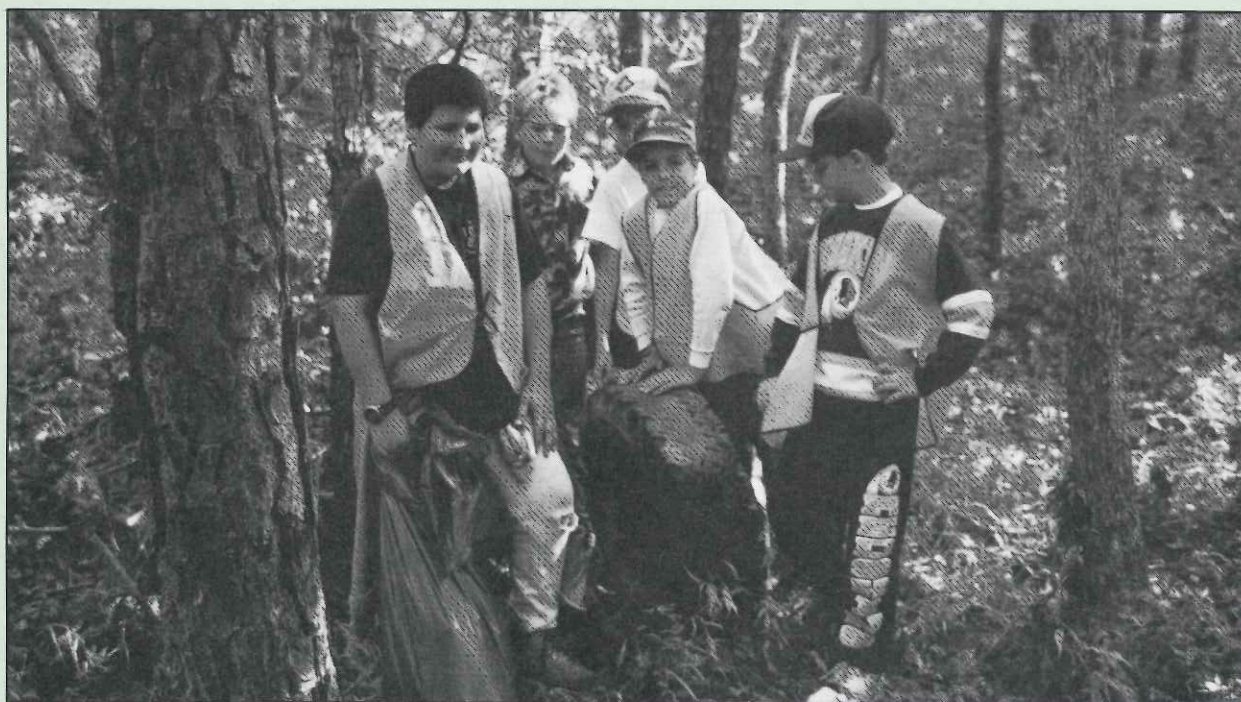


Photo by Martin Rapp

Habitat Management at Crossley Preserve— Studies and Recommendations

For most wildlife, life is a precarious existence. The daily struggle for food and territory is often intensified by encroaching development. For the endangered Pine Barrens tree frog, the endangered corn snake, and the threatened pine snake, Crossley Preserve in Berkeley Township, Ocean County, and the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Sanctuary less than two miles away, offers sanctuary from the surrounding developed areas.

Herpetological Study

In June 1988, the Trust commissioned Robert Zappalorti of Herpetological Associates, Inc., of Forked River, to conduct a three-year wildlife inventory and habitat evaluation, and to provide a long-term management plan for Crossley Preserve and the Hovnanian Sanctuary.

The 382-acre Crossley Preserve is valued for its Pine Barrens landscape and endangered plant and animal habitats. The Trust holds a conservation easement on the 465-acre Hovnanian Sanctuary, which is owned by the New Jersey Audubon Society and is an excellent example of upland pine forest habitat found in the Pine Barrens. Both properties are within an area known as the Berkeley triangle, a 7,000-acre area of mostly undeveloped forest that provides important habitat for rare snakes as well as for many species of frogs and toads, turtles, salamanders, and lizards.

Purpose and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to inventory the reptiles and amphibians on Crossley Preserve and the Hovnanian Sanctuary, evaluate the unique and important components of the habitat, and to recommend a long-term management plan to improve the habitat by increasing protective cover, food resources, and nesting areas.

Nesting areas, known as hibernacula, provide sites within the snakes' environment where they hibernate during the winter months. The natural hibernacula of pine snakes and corn snakes are usually old tree stumps and their root systems, or abandoned mammal burrows. Artificial hibernacula attempt to copy these same conditions. Human-made dens, constructed to replace destroyed natural habitat, may reduce the especially high mortality rate during the hatchlings' first winter. Artificial habitat is created to mitigate the loss or disturbance of critical wildlife habitat as a result of development. The mitigation is not done to encourage the destruction of ecologically sensitive areas, but to protect the species.

The Herpetological Inventory and Habitat Evaluation was completed in 1991 and contained the following information and recommendations:

- ✎ Protect and maintain the habitat of the rare reptiles and amphibians living on the properties.
- ✎ Maintain the existing protective vegetation structure, which provides protective cover and food resources for area reptiles.
- ✎ Increase areas for nesting and hibernating for snakes. Build additional hibernacula on selected sites at Crossley Preserve. The dens must be located on uplands with appropriate soil and adjacent to property with suitable habitats for foraging for the snakes. Additional surrounding property should be preserved.
- ✎ Maintain dens and protect snakes as much as possible from theft by collectors. Monitor hatchlings progress and the use of the hibernacula. Continue to rely on Trust staff and volunteers as well as conservation officers to monitor the preserve to watch for illegal snake collectors.

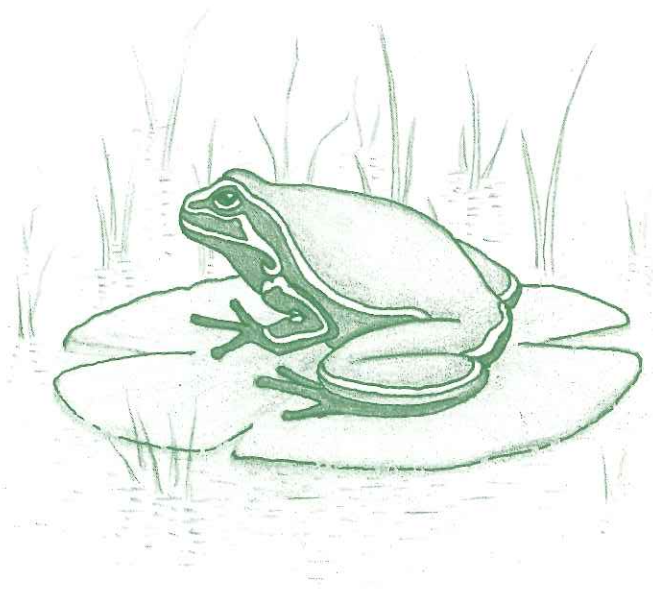


Illustration by Robin Sigmund

Wetland Mitigation Projects

The 42-acre Whale Pond Brook property in Monmouth County was transferred from the New Jersey State Department of Transportation to the protection of the Trust to fulfill a mitigation requirement that resulted from the filling in of wetlands needed to complete a section of Route 18. Although Whale Pond Brook does not boast the presence of whales, it does wind through an Atlantic white cedar forest, a valuable species that grows in discrete stands and often serves as habitat for endangered species.

To balance the impact of the filling in of approximately 46 acres of palustrine wetlands to complete the road, NJDOT will create forested wetlands on an additional 32 acres to fulfill the mitigation requirements by the Army Corps of Engineers. The created wetlands will be transferred to the Trust in 1992, after DOT, who is responsible for the mitigation project, satisfies the Army Corps of Engineers plant survival requirements of 85% over a two-year period.

The Trust has accepted other mitigation properties including the Mystic Island Preserve, where a State wetlands permit was issued for the filling of .72 acres of wetlands to construct an access road on Mystic Island. A condition of this wetlands permit required that .74 acres of filled wetlands be restored. The restoration was successful and the Trust received title to the replanted

areas and 169 acres of adjacent unspoiled saltwater coastal marsh from S&J Development Corporation.

This past year, the Trust Board of Trustees was offered the opportunity of serving as the NJDEPE's Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Council's official recipient of monies from applicants who are required to make payments to the Council. The Trust Board of Trustees approved the concept and a formal agreement between the two boards will be drawn up early in 1992.



Photo by Martin Rapp

Restoration of Open Space

Formerly a New Jersey State Department of Transportation (DOT) maintenance yard, the recently restored nine-acre Flemer Preserve in Franklin Township, Somerset County, runs parallel to the Delaware and Raritan Canal. The previous owners of the property had leased a portion of the tract to DOT, but upon donating the land to the Trust, requested the Trust to terminate the lease with DOT so the land could be restored to its natural state and preserved as open space.

In 1991, DOT vacated the property, removing all structures and debris from the maintenance yard, which covered one fourth of the preserve. The land was regraded to its original contour, covered with top soil, and seeded. In the spring, the reclaimed area will be landscaped for passive recreation, and picnic tables and park benches will be installed. A trail will be cleared on

the section of the preserve that has remained natural and is comprised of woodlands, steep slopes, and some marshy areas.

The Flemer Preserve was donated by Alison Flemer and Robert and Vivian Engelbrecht in 1987 in memory of Alison Flemer's late husband, John W. Flemer, for a wildlife sanctuary and for passive recreation by the public. It is a critical link in open space protection in the historic area of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. The donation specifies that the Trust own the preserve and that it be managed in cooperation with Franklin Township.

Working together, the Trust and Franklin Township municipal government, with help from the donors of the land, are bringing about the preservation and restoration of an historic and natural area that provides a scenic buffer for the Delaware and Raritan Canal.

The Impact of Wetlands Mitigation on the Preservation of Open Space

*By John Weingart, Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Regulation
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection & Energy*

Sometimes wetlands must be destroyed. Despite their undisputed value for providing capacity for flood storage habitat for many plant and animal species, and welcome open space in a densely developed state, federal and state laws acknowledge that when there is no alternative site for a project, permits to fill wetlands can and must be issued. The laws require that the extent of wetlands damage be minimized and that mitigation then be provided for the lost wetlands. While minimizing the impacts meets the first dictionary definition of "mitigation", it is a later definition "to take the place of"—that gives the word its current prominence in environmental protection.

In New Jersey in recent years, mitigation has come to mean the construction of twice as many acres of wetlands as were destroyed. The two-for-one ratio is imposed because new wetlands cannot become as environmentally productive as the natural wetlands for a long time, and the larger area is therefore more likely to provide a net ecological balance. In general, wetlands are constructed by excavating a dredged spoil site, farm field, or forest to a level where hydric soils exist and then planting wetlands species. There are approximately 400 sites in New Jersey where this type of mitigation has been required under state or federal permits.

Prior to 1970, New Jersey's wetlands were called swamps and were widely thought of as smelly areas that bred annoying bugs and as cheap land for new development. With wetlands preservation as a relatively new part of governmental regulation, mitigation is an even more recent component. The concept raises a number of questions, only a few of which have answers at this time.

First, is a good mitigation proposal a way to gain government approvals for a greater amount of wetlands filling?

Under current laws, the answer is clearly no. The New Jersey Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act, in particular, explicitly states that mitigation can only be considered after a landowner meets the stringent tests that show there are not other alternatives to the destruction of wetlands and that all impacts have been minimized to the fullest extent possible.

Second, does mitigation work: Can wetlands successfully be created?

Here, the answer is that people do know how to successfully create saltwater or coastal wetlands, but the record for creating inland or freshwater wetlands is much more spotty. With both types of wetlands, there are problems of compliance just to be sure that someone adheres to the conditions of a permit requiring that wetlands are created, but with freshwater wetland creation there are also outstanding scientific and logistic questions as to whether the most well-intentioned and best informed person can consistently successfully create freshwater wetlands. Without question, there are sites in New Jersey and elsewhere where this has been done and those successes are providing lessons regarding the factors that seem to contribute to success and failure. The DEPE is completing a report to the Legislature assessing the experience to date.

Third, what is wetlands banking and how can it contribute to environmental protection?

Mitigation has generally been required on a case-by-case basis. A developer gains approval to fill a certain amount of wetlands and then is required to develop a mitigation project to create wetlands that are twice as big. The result is that a number of developers, who do not necessarily have any particular

expertise in the field of wetlands creation, must each search for an appropriate mitigation site and then hire the appropriate consultants to develop a plan likely to be successful. Mitigation banking offers an alternative approach that seems likely to make life better for both the environment, the developers, and interested citizens and groups. The idea is that a number of larger wetland creation projects could be undertaken in different parts of the state, rather than having a number of small projects scattered throughout the area. A developer who needs to conduct mitigation could contribute money to one of these larger projects through a mitigation bank, rather than searching for and designing their own wetland creation project. The larger mitigation projects would be likely to have greater environmental benefits than a series of smaller projects, and it would be easier to assemble the necessary private environmental expertise and State oversight and monitoring at the smaller number of larger sites.

The concept of wetland mitigation banking is just beginning to approach reality. New Jersey's Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Council, created by the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act, has been evaluating a number of proposals and is likely to approve the first ones later this year.

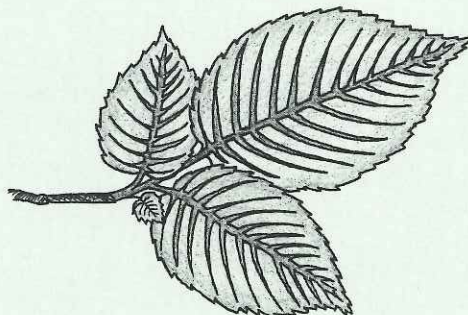
The fourth and final question is the toughest: Is the creation of wetlands the best or only form of mitigation that should be considered?

Under the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act to date, the DEPE has defined mitigation only as the creation of wetlands, but under other statutes, including the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) and the Flood Hazard Area Control Act (Stream Encroachment), the Department has in a small number of cases allowed mitigation in the form of a donation of land or money instead. The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, for example, has benefited from projects in which two developers in Ocean County were required to acquire and donate a total of 132 acres to help expand the Crossley Preserve in Berkeley Township to a total of 382 acres. Similarly, the Department recently required a Cherry Hill developer to provide funds that will enable the Trust to complete acquisition and protection of the Moorestown Project Area in Burlington County. This will be the first of the six regional areas designated as priority areas by the Trust to gain complete protection.



In each of these cases, the developers had to pay just as much money as if they had been required to create wetlands. Since no wetlands were created, however, the state did suffer a net loss of wetlands. On the other hand, sensitive natural areas, including wetland buffer areas, were saved from potential future development and protected as part of a larger natural system that will forever provide environmental benefit and areas for nature study and passive recreation.

Should mitigation in New Jersey be limited to the creation of wetlands or should it be expanded to more routinely encompass projects such as the acquisition of lands at the Crossley Preserve and the Moorestown Project Area? This is one of the major challenges facing the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, the Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Council, the Department, the Legislature and the general public as we work together to develop a process through which mitigation concepts and specific proposals of all types can be evaluated.



Statement of Purpose

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust was created in 1968 by the Legislature as an independent agency with the mission to preserve land in its natural state for enjoyment by the public and to protect natural diversity through the acquisition of open space. Land is preserved primarily by donations of open space through fee simple title or conservation easements, and is managed to conserve endangered species habitat, rare natural features, and significant ecosystems. Passive recreational use is considered only if it will not adversely affect natural communities and biological diversity.

The Trust also recognizes that ownership and management alone are not enough to achieve its mission. Public education is an integral function of protecting natural diversity. The Trust distributes printed information and sponsors interpretive programs and seminars designed to convey a conservation ethic for the protection of open space and its natural values.



The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust

501 East State Street, CN 404
Trenton, NJ 08625
(609) 984-1339



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