

UPCOMING EVENTS

- MAY 10** **Forest Habitat Restoration at Milford Experimental Forest**
Milford, PA, 9am-3pm
- MAY 18** **Migratory Bird Walk**
Pike County, PA, 7am
- MAY 31** **Pollinator Workshop**
Bethel, NY, 9am-12pm
- JUNE 14** **Native Plants Walk with Dr. Ann Rhoads**
Forest Reserve at Smallwood, Bethel, NY, 9am-12pm
- JUNE 28** **Family Tree Series #1, 10am-1pm**
Pike County, PA, 10am-12pm

Visit www.DelawareHighlands.org, or call 570-226-3164/845-583-1010 for more information on these events and others, and to register.

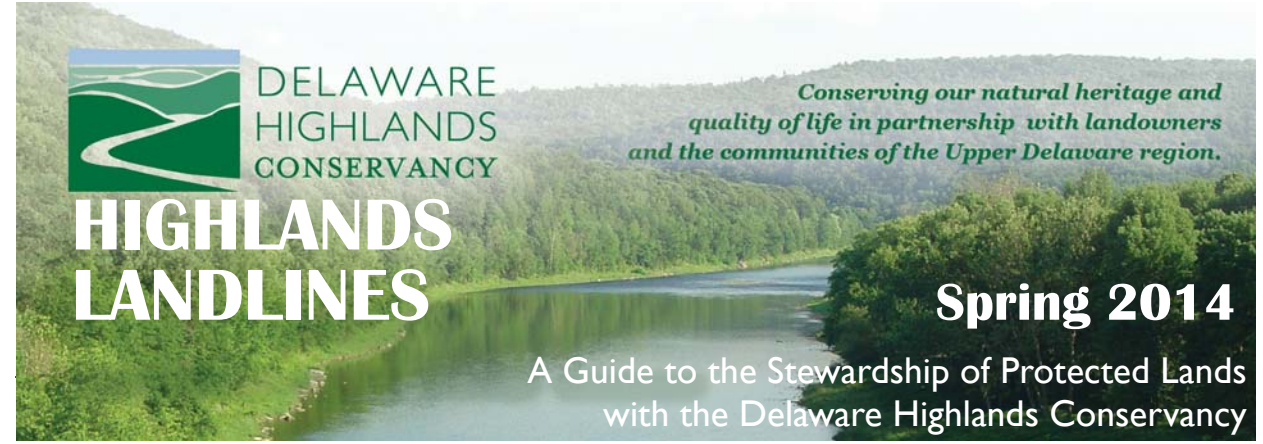
- **INSIDE**
- **Landowner Story: We are All Connected**
- **The Gift of a Legacy**
- **Prepare for Annual Property Visits**
- **Alternatives to Invasive Species**
- **Share Your Stories and Win!**



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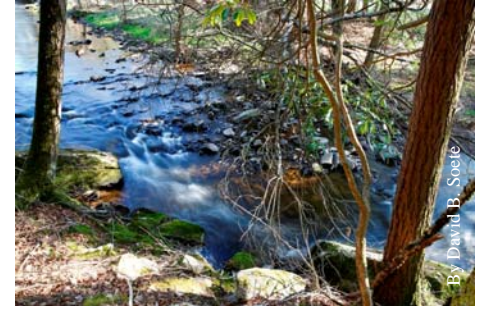
DELAWARE HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

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Landowner Story: We Are All Connected

Motivated to begin searching for an escape from the noise pollution of her New York City residence, Helen Beichel came across Mitchell Pond Brook, a protected property that was owned by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy. The land was donated outright to the Conservancy by Mimi Raleigh in 2012, who wanted to ensure the property would always be cared for.



After receiving this generous donation, the Conservancy protected the property with a conservation easement before looking for a conservation-minded buyer.

During her first visit to the property, Helen began to connect with the place. “I really liked the way the cottage was tucked in; the creek was beautiful and there were small red salamanders everywhere,” she says. “Later, I learned that the red-spotted newt is common, but is also a good indicator of healthy habitat.”



A self-described “city person”, Helen began to learn about other natural features of the land, such as the forest types represented there. A blighted American chestnut tree caught her attention, prompting her to join the American Chestnut Foundation. She has since planted four chestnut seeds, specially bred to resist chestnut blight, in hopes of restoring chestnuts to the site, and will soon be planting more.

Because the cottage on the property had become structurally unsound, Helen is replacing it with “as passive a house as possible,” with features such as passive solar and straw bale construction. The lumber for the house has been sawn from the trees that once stood on site and pieces of the old cottage have been retained to use in the new house.

(Continued on page 6)

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy is a land trust dedicated to conserving our natural heritage and quality of life in partnership with landowners and the communities of the Upper Delaware River region.

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Highlands LandLines is a semi-annual newsletter created by the Conservancy for landowners who have a conservation easement with the Conservancy. This publication is also available electronically.



What is Highlands LandLines?

You probably already receive the Delaware Highlands Conservancy's regular newsletter, *Highlands Journal*. Our newsletter is distributed to all of our landowners, members, and other like-minded folks who are interested in the Conservancy's activities, accomplishments, and conservation goals.

This publication, *Highlands LandLines*, comes to you twice a year and is dedicated to landowners. *LandLines* provides you, the landowner, with useful information and tips for the stewardship of your land and conservation easement.

Participate in LandLines!

We are interested in your ideas for future articles and features, or your comments on the publication in general.

We'd love to know what you think!



Save the Date!

Mark your calendars for two exciting events coming up in 2014 as **we celebrate twenty years of conservation and education** in the Upper Delaware River region.

September 6—Annual Free Community Picnic at our Bethel, NY Office

November 22—20th Anniversary Celebration at Bethel Woods in Sullivan County, NY

Annual Property Visit Questionnaire

Please help the Conservancy prepare for our annual property visits by completing the below survey and mailing to:

Delaware Highlands Conservancy Attn: Stewardship Coordinator
 PO Box 218
 Hawley, PA 18428
 Or email: conserve@delawarehighlands.org

Contact: _____ Email: _____

Annual property visits allow the Conservancy to uphold the terms of the conservation easement for each property. These visits allow the Conservancy to determine whether the conservation values outlined in the conservation easement are intact. In addition, the visit is a fundamental part of relationship building between the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, its members, and landowners.

Would you like to attend the property visit? Yes No

Do you have plans to sell, subdivide or lease the property?..... Yes No

Have any structures (houses, sheds, barns, gazebos, garage, pole barn) been built or replaced within the boundaries of the conservation easement?..... Yes No

Has there been any land disturbance as a result of road/trail construction, digging/filling, planting, fencing or other construction?..... Yes No

In the last year, has the protected property been affected by any of the following:

Insect damage.....	Yes	No
Storm damage.....	Yes	No
Fire.....	Yes	No
Vandalism; trespassing, dumping, abusive use of ATVs or other vehicles....	Yes	No
Property line violations from neighboring parcels.....	Yes	No

Has there been any timber harvesting on the property?..... Yes No
 If so, was the harvest a result of a recommendation by a current Forest Management Plan?..... Yes No

Have you noticed any of the following affecting wetlands or waterways on the property?

Encroachment of invasive vegetation or animals.....	Yes	No
Change in flow, quality or quantity of water	Yes	No
Livestock in or near waterways or wetlands.....	Yes	No
Erosion along banks or channels.....	Yes	No

Have you signed a lease for use of the land? (ie. gas lease, agricultural)..... Yes No

Have you noticed new populations or an increase in existing populations of invasive vegetation?..... Yes No 7

(Continued from page 1) The insulation in the home is recycled, and Helen will be installing a solar thermal heating system with propane and a wood burning stove as a backup to try to be as carbon neutral as possible. "I like to say the trees have returned to the land in a different form," Helen explains.

The property has also sparked her interest in Permaculture and led her to take a course with Andrew Faust, an expert with the Center for Bioregional Living (www.homebiome.com) who stresses the connection between urban centers like Manhattan and the surrounding countryside as bioregions of interdependence.

"We in NYC are completely dependent on water that comes partly from the Upper Delaware region. Water is the source of life and it's because of the Conservancy's protection of land that our water is so pure," Helen explains.

"My land is a part of that. We're all connected. And we need that connection to the land because it's also a source of rejuvenation and recreation."

Of the Conservancy's role, Helen is pleased to have found a like-minded partner. "It excited me that I would be working with people who had similar goals. For example, the Conservancy wanted a Forest Management Plan and they helped me to find the resources to do so. By working together to preserve this land, my three nieces and generations to come will all benefit from this partnership."



Finding Alternatives to Invasive Ornamental Plants

Before planting in your yard or garden this spring, ensure that you're not inadvertently introducing an invasive species. We've provided one common invasive and an alternative option on page 3. Learn more about invasives below, and in the free guidebook available for download from Cornell Cooperative Extension.

What is an invasive plant?

An invasive plant is generally considered to be a plant that is not native to the ecosystem under consideration AND whose introduction causes measurable harm to the natural and scenic environment, agriculture, recreation, and human health and safety.

How do invasive plants cause harm to the environment?

Invasive plants may harm the environment by establishing in natural ecosystems and displacing the native flora. This in turn affects wildlife and other species that may be dependent upon indigenous plants for food or habitat. Invasive plants may also disrupt natural ecosystem processes such as hydrology, nutrient cycling, wildfire regimes, natural succession, and soil cycles.

About 42% of species listed on the U.S. Threatened or Endangered Species Lists are considered to be at risk primarily due to competition or predation from invasive species. Control measures employed to manage invasive plants, such as herbicide use and mechanical harvesting, may also increase risk to non-target plant and animal species.

Reprinted with permission from Finding Alternatives to Invasive Ornamental Plants in New York, Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Download the complete text at <http://www.nyis.info/index.php>

Invasive Species Corner

Japanese Barberry

Berberis thunbergii

Japanese Barberry is a dense, deciduous shrub introduced from Japan, often used as a hedging plant or barrier. It can invade forests, open woods, and old fields, where it forms dense thickets. It can alter soil pH and nitrogen levels which may increase its competitive advantage. Because it is not palatable to deer, it also increases browse pressure on other plants.

Over 2,000 fruits can be produced on a single plant, which are dispersed by birds and small mammals. In forests invaded by Japanese Barberry, studies have shown that the abundance of Lyme disease-carrying ticks is higher.

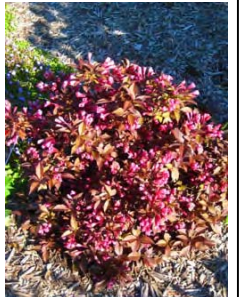


Native Species Alternatives

Old Fashioned Weigela

Weigela florida

An alternative to Japanese barberry, Weigela is a small, deciduous flowering shrub with dark purple to reddish-bronze foliage which may also be used for border and foundation plantings. It is very adaptable to different soil types; pollution-tolerant, and is a similar size to Japanese Barberry, reaching 2-3 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide at maturity.



Smokebush

Cotinus coggygria

Another barberry alternative, Smokebush may also be used for border and foundation plantings and is a rich maroon color with rounded foliage and a reddish-purple fall color. It is also much larger than the others, reaching 10-15 feet tall and 10-15 feet wide at maturity.

Native and invasive species information and photos reprinted with permission from Finding Alternatives to Invasive Ornamental Plants in New York, Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. Download the complete text at <http://www.nyis.info/index.php>

The Gift of a Legacy

“When our family started talking about a conservation easement, we had owned our forest for nearly one hundred years and in that time period, the number of co-owners grew from two to nine. All held varying ideas on what the land meant to them and what should be done with it. Without protecting the land under a conservation easement, its long-term future was at risk,” explains Leila Pinchot, research fellow for the Pinchot Institute of Conservation.

She continues, “Nothing makes me happier than knowing that our cherished forestland is now protected forever, and that it still serves both as a place for our family to come together, and as a working forestland. There are still varying ideas within our family of what the land means; for me it is a place to share the story of healthy forest management. For others, it is a place for our young family members to learn about nature. And for some, it is a place to visit once in a long while. But for all of us, it is a piece of our heritage.”

You can probably relate to Leila’s story. As you know, for landowners like Leila and her family, making the decision to permanently protect a cherished piece of property from development and subdivision is a gift to present and future generations that also honors her family’s legacy. But protected lands benefit everyone—forested lands filter our drinking water and provide healthy wildlife habitat, working farms provide us with fresh, healthy local foods, and natural areas offer opportunities to enjoy the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the outdoors.



For your friends or family members who may be curious about their options for their lands, estate planning offers other opportunities to make gifts that reflect our values and create a lasting legacy for future generations.

Legacy Leaders are a special group of people who give an exceptional gift back to the Conservancy and the environment. These individuals leave a charitable bequest or an estate gift in their will to the Conservancy—and they too have the satisfaction of knowing they contributed

to protecting the special places of the Upper Delaware River region for generations to come.

For individuals who do not own land, making a tax-deductible contribution to the Conservancy is another opportunity to invest in the future, give back to the community in an impactful and meaningful way, and to join the community of folks committed to ensuring a sustainable future and maintaining the high quality of life we enjoy in the Upper Delaware River region.

Giving within your local community allows you to see and experience the positive effects of your contribution, and is a gift that gives back to you, your family, and your neighbors.

Whether making a purchase from a local farm stand, contributing to the Conservancy, or making the decision to permanently protect a piece of land, the dollars you invest help to create a community—and a legacy—we can all be proud of.

For more information on making a gift to the Conservancy, please email Kate Mitchell at give@delawarehighlands.org or call 570-226-3164 / 845-583-1010 ext. 4.



Landowner Perspective This newsletter is YOUR space!

Share your connections to the land with other LandLines newsletter readers. Send Amanda an email at conserve@delawarehighlands.org with your photos, journal entries, drawings, other artwork, or stories, and we'll share it here.

You'll be entered to WIN this stack of books to help you steward your lands.



Help Monitor Other Protected Properties!

As you know, the Conservancy conducts annual visits to our protected properties throughout the summer. Our Monitoring Coordinator, Jamie Bartholomew, is always looking for volunteers to help out with monitoring visits. Meet other landowners, see some beautiful properties, and enjoy a nice day in the outdoors!

To volunteer, email monitor@delawarehighlands.org or call 570-226-3164, and Jamie will add you to her list. Help out as much or as little as you would like, in the morning or afternoon.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

The Conservancy welcomes volunteers throughout the year to help out with a wide range of tasks, from staffing a booth at an event, participating in Eagle Watch during the winter season, to helping with mailings or other office tasks, among others.

Send an email to Patricia at volunteer@delawarehighlands.org to learn more about the different opportunities or to discuss your own skills and talents to contribute.



Find us at <http://www.facebook.com/DelawareHighlandsConservancy> and www.DelawareHighlands.org or on Twitter @DHConservancy

