

NEW JERSEY NATURAL LANDS TRUST



2004 Annual Report





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. The Trust preserves land primarily by donations of open space through acquisition of title in fee simple or of conservation easements, and manages its properties to conserve endangered species habitat, rare natural features, and significant ecosystems. Access to Trust lands is generally not restricted. The Trust invites passive use by the public for recreational or educational purposes wherever such use 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.

New Jersey Natural Lands Trust contact information:

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Index of Preserves Referenced Within the 2004 Annual Report

ATLANTIC COUNTY

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Mankiller Preserve–1

ATLANTIC AND GLOUCESTER COUNTIES

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge–1, 6, 8

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Cover photo: Michael Catania, NJ Natural Lands Trust Chairperson, speaks at the dedication of the Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs. The Breden family listens.

Photo credits:

Michael Hogan–page 6 (prothonotary warbler)
Martin Rapp–page 1, 6 (Crossley Preserve)
Michael Van Clef–page 3
Martha Windisch–cover, page 2, 4, 5

Preserving Wetlands that Include Significant Ecological Resources

During 2004, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and the Wetlands Mitigation Council executed an amended Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that, among other things, provides for the transfer of \$1 million from the Wetlands Mitigation Fund to the Trust's Wetlands Mitigation Acquisition Fund. This money is to be used by the Trust to acquire freshwater wetlands and associated transition areas that have the potential to be restored and/or enhanced. This MOU authorizes Trust staff to proceed with the direct acquisition of ecologically significant properties within 13 pre-approved Natural Heritage Priority Sites that support significant wetlands and wetland transition areas. Natural Heritage Priority Sites, a product of the Office of Natural Lands Management's (ONLM) Natural Heritage Program, represent some of the best remaining habitat for rare species and ecological communities in the State. Trust staff has already identified one acquisition within the Papakating Creek Priority Site and hopes to assist Green Acres in the acquisition of this significant property.



Papakating Creek Preserve

Personnel notes:

In 2004, the Trust welcomed **James F. Hall**, Superintendent of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission. **John S. Watson, Jr.**, Assistant Commissioner, Natural Historic Resources, now represents the Commissioner of DEP on the Trust's board, after **Marc A. Matsil** was appointed as a DEP Senior Policy Advisor.

John S. Watson, Jr.'s previous position was filled by John Flynn, Administrator of the Green Acres Program. ♻️

In 2004...

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust completed eleven individual closings, bringing 2,246 additional acres under Trust stewardship. With the addition of this acreage, the Trust is currently responsible for over 19,400 acres throughout the state.

Three of the Trust's new holdings were donated directly to the Trust, five were transferred to the Trust for management through the State's Green Acres Program, two were made possible by the Pinelands Limited Practical Use (LPU) Program, and one was a donated conservation easement. The Trust's 2004 land acquisitions ranged in size from 4.9 acres to 1,069 acres.

Four of the eleven new land holdings established three new Trust Preserves—**Barton's Run Preserve**, **Blair Creek Preserve** (Blair Creek includes two new holdings), and the **Unexpected Wildlife Refuge**. Seven of the 2004 closings represented additions to the **Bear Swamp at Red Lion Preserve**, **Crossley Preserve**, **Hamilton Preserve**, **Mankiller Preserve** (2 additions), **Sweet Hollow Preserve**, and the **Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs**. ♻️

Dedication of the Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs

On June 4, 2004, the Milford Bluffs Preserve was dedicated by the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Chapter in memory of Thomas F. Breden as the Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs.

Tom, who passed away suddenly on July 1, 2003, was employed with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry for nineteen years. He worked first as Coordinator/Ecologist of the Natural Heritage Program and then as Administrator of the Office of Natural Lands Management and Executive Director of the Trust. Tom was also a founding member of the board of directors of NatureServe, a non-profit network connecting science with conservation.



Nancy Breden speaks at the dedication of the Thomas F. Breden Preserve.

"No one worked harder than Tom did for the cause of conservation and natural diversity, and no one did it with more enthusiasm or more good will towards others in the fight." Tom used his passion for the natural world to protect "places where butterflies live ..."

Speakers included Michael Catania, Chair, New Jersey Natural Lands Trust; Tom's wife, Nancy Breden; John S. Watson, Jr., Assistant Commissioner, Natural and Historic Resources, DEP; Mark Schaefer, President, NatureServe; Michael W. Huber, Chairman, The Nature Conservancy of New Jersey; Marc A. Matsil, Senior Policy Advisor for Natural Resources, DEP; and Robert J. Cartica, Acting Executive Director, New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. After the scheduled speakers, the podium was made available to the audience who shared their fond memories of Tom. After the final word was spoken, a moment of silence was held in honor of Tom—during this moment, the cicadas seemed to sing their buzzing chorus ever more loudly in a fitting tribute to Tom. It was as if they were singing in recognition of Tom for having protected this place where cicadas also live! 🐛

The preserve dedication was held outdoors at Milford Bluffs on a warm, sunny spring day during which 17-year cicadas buzzed in competition with the speakers.

Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs

Just north of the town of Milford, a very striking feature along the east bank of the Delaware River is the ridgeline, high above County Route 627. The majestic, yet peaceful place located at the top of this red shale ridge is the Thomas F. Breden Preserve at Milford Bluffs, once known as "Hidden Acres." The preserve, famous for its breathtaking views of the Delaware River and beyond, is where the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust has joined forces with the New Jersey Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. The red shale bluff, with its hot, dry microclimate, along with the mesic community at the base of the bluff is home to rare plant species, and is under the stewardship of The Nature Conservancy. The Natural Lands Trust's 202-acre preserve occupies the plateau and includes woodlots, old fields, and a hemlock-shaded trout stream. This level or gently sloping land has plentiful wildlife such as fox, deer, and wild turkey. 🐾

A new preserve established in 2004, the Trust's Blair Creek Preserve...

In February 2004, the Trust obtained a 134-acre Green Acres management assignment within the Blair Creek Watershed, in Stillwater and Hardwick Townships, Sussex and Warren Counties. In April 2004, a 485-acre parcel was added to the Blair Creek Preserve. This property, once owned by Blair Academy, is to the southwest of the initial acreage and on the southeast end of Fairview Lake. The Blair Creek-Blair Academy parcel was preserved through a partnership with the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, the Ridge and Valley Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy along with the Ridge and Valley Conservancy will provide for the day-to-day management of the Blair Academy portion of the preserve. 🌿

Establishment of Blair Creek Preserve Protects Habitat for Forest Dwellers

by Michael Van Clef, Director of Science and Stewardship, The Nature Conservancy, Skylands Office

The significance of the Blair Creek Preserve is that it represents a portion of a 12,000-acre block of contiguous forest, unbroken by human activities. Species known or suspected to inhabit the Preserve include Cerulean warblers, red-shouldered hawks, wood turtles, and timber rattlesnakes.



Rhododendron (R. maximum) at Blair Creek-Blair Academy Preserve.

The three co-owners of the Preserve have established a comprehensive management plan that will guide activities under the Preservation Goal, which states that “The Blair Creek Preserve will be managed in a natural state, with the goal of maintaining and promoting its biodiversity and that of surrounding areas.” The management plan also

clearly describes the Preserve’s ecological and public access/outreach objectives.

A striking aspect of the Preserve is its very low density of invasive plants. The Nature Conservancy will be conducting a thorough mapping of the Preserve to locate small populations of invasive species and will formulate an eradication program to ensure that the site remains in a pristine condition.

The Preserve does show signs of over browsing of the forest understory (herbs, shrubs, and tree seedlings) by

white-tailed deer. In order to restore the forest understory, hunting of white-tailed deer will be allowed through a controlled hunt managed by The

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Volunteer Commitment...Volunteer Commitment..

True volunteers are a dedicated group of people. In 2004, Trust volunteers donated a total of 1,367 hours. This is 123 more hours than that contributed by volunteers in 2003, and represents what is equal in hours to nearly 10 months of work by a full-time employee. Of these 1,367 hours, 780 hours were volunteered by Trust preserve monitors and 587 hours were contributed by volunteers involved in preserve management and clean up.

Currently, the Trust has volunteers monitoring 56 of the 115 Trust preserves, from Abraitys Pine Stand to Whale Pond Brook and from Atlantic County to Sussex



A group of NJNLT hunter/volunteers pose after a long day of cleaning up debris dumped at the Bear Swamp Preserve.

County. Note that some of the Trust preserves are not suitable for volunteer monitoring, mainly due to lack of easy or legal access; thus, there will never be a monitor for every preserve.

Besides volunteer monitors, approximately 518 volunteers are on-hand for management projects throughout the State—these volunteers consist mostly of hunters with permission to deer hunt on certain Trust preserves. Many of these hunters are ready to come to a workday after receiving a simple phone call or email. In fact, in 2004, three such workdays were held at Trust preserves. On March 27, a huge clean up was conducted at the Hamilton Preserve in Atlantic County. This clean up was sponsored by New Jersey Community Water Watch



New Jersey Community Water Watch volunteers clean up Hamilton Preserve.

and 93 volunteers worked for all or part of the day removing tons of trash. The Mayor of Hamilton Township and Fred Akers of the Great Egg Harbor River Watershed Association spoke at the event. The New Jersey Community Water Watch supplied pizza and drinks for lunch.

On June 12, ten volunteers participated in a clean up, mostly of dumped contractor

debris, at the Crossley Preserve in Ocean County. The volunteers in this group included the South Jersey Geocachers, the Jamesburg Field and Stream Hunting Club, and several individual volunteers. On September 18,



All ages join in to help clean up the Hamilton Preserve.

twenty hunters showed up for a workday at the Bear Swamp Preserve in Burlington County to clean up a large impro-



A young girl with a trash bag nearly as big as her at the Crossley workday.

vised paintball play area, which was illegally constructed on the preserve. The morning and most of the afternoon was spent removing various junk items, including an old boat, placed by teens seeking refuge from incoming paintballs.

In addition to the organized group clean ups, the Trust volunteer coordinator received a continuous stream of reports from volunteer monitors, hunters, and other preserve users concerning trash that they had taken the

.Volunteer Commitment...Volunteer Commitment



Volunteers preparing for the Crossley workday.

initiative to clean up on their own. Here are some of their quoted reports, “In September, I picked up a few cans and bottles on the west side of the preserve and a leaf bag full on the east side”, “Removed two TV’s, boxes of old shingles, several tires, and some light trash”, “I did remove seven old tires and some dumped metal during my deer scouting trip this winter”, “I spent a couple of hours cleaning up an old dumped pile of glass”. Repeat these quotes again and again and you will realize what a difference Trust volunteers make!

It becomes even more evident what a good job Trust volunteers do upon hearing about the phone call to the Trust’s Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator from a gentleman who enjoys walking at the Crossley Preserve. He said, “This may seem strange, but I’ve noticed that as soon as I step off Trust property there are many more beer bottles and cans in the woods along the road.” He thought that maybe people wait to toss trash once they leave Trust property. The real story is that the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust has committed volunteers who pick up trash as they walk Trust preserves. 🍷

Individuals who gave 10 or more hours of volunteer service to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust in 2004:

**John Borum
Marian Brovero
Bob Campana
Wendy Chase
Robert Confer
Scott Dilts
Craig Fiamingo
Ethel Fiamingo
David Gabriel
Kris Gordon**

**Jill Halkin
Bill Hall
Vince Kugler
Douglas Jay Michell
Marshall Nelson
Thomas O’Brien
Rocco Passerini
Tom Puzio
Thomas Ryan
Yvonne Werzinsky**

2004 List of Donors

The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust gratefully extends its thanks to those who have donated land or funds to the Trust in 2004 to help preserve and protect New Jersey’s natural heritage.

Berkeley Township, Ocean County

Robert and Lois Campbell

Karl Dronke, Jr. and Carol Ann Dronke

Garden State Sign Company

Hamilton Township, Atlantic County

Michael Hogan

The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Chapter

New Holland Property Associates, LLC

Bernard and Lois Sack

Guy A. Scott

Southampton Township, Burlington County

Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

The Trust accepts gifts, legacies, bequests, and endowments of land and/or funds for use in accordance with the Trust’s purpose. For more information about how you can make a donation to further the Trust’s mission to acquire, preserve, and manage natural lands for the protection of natural diversity, call 609-984-1339. 🍷

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

Completion of The Nature Conservancy's Leisure Technology Additions to the Trust's Crossley Preserve

On January 8, 2004, the Trust received the final land donation of the multifaceted Leisure Technology donations from the New Jersey Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This 1,069-acre donation is now part of the Trust's Crossley Preserve. Crossley is the Trust's largest holding and consists of over 2,600 acres of pitch pine uplands and lowlands in central Ocean County, within a largely undeveloped 7,000-acre area of the New Jersey Pine Barrens known as the Berkeley Triangle. The Crossley Preserve provides important habitat for rare plant species including New Jersey rush, Pickering's morning-glory, Pine Barren smoke grass, Pine Barren reed grass, and Knieskern's beaked-rush. It is also home to several rare Pine Barren's reptiles and amphibians, including the pine snake, a threatened species, and the corn snake and Pine Barrens treefrog, both endangered species.



Pine Barren hudsonia (Hudsonia ericoides) at Crossley Preserve.

This 1,069-acre addition and a previous 27-acre addition to Crossley Preserve became possible in 1996, when TNC worked together with the Trust, local governments, the Pinelands Commission, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to secure a donation of 4,100 acres of Pine Barrens from Leisure Technology,

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The Trust Acquires a Conservation Easement at Unexpected Wildlife Refuge

On January 13, 2004, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust received a 456-acre conservation easement from Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Inc. This easement spans three Pinelands municipalities and two counties; Franklin Township in Gloucester County, and Buena Vista Township and Buena Boro in Atlantic County. Unexpected Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, supported entirely by private donations. It was formed in 1954 when Hope and Cavit Buyukmihci, with their three children, purchased an 85-acre tract in Buena Vista Township at the western edge of the Pine



Prothonotary warbler by Michael Hogan Photography— Fine Art Photography of Southern New Jersey: www.hoganphoto.com

Barrens, halfway between Philadelphia and Atlantic City. The purchase included mostly wooded swampland with an acre of cleared land, which included an old barn and a cabin. It also included a stream dammed by beavers, creating a large pond.

Because Hope had enjoyed nature since childhood and had passed along her respect and love for nature to her family, the family decided to dedicate their land to habitat preservation so that native wildlife could thrive. They named their nature preserve "Unexpected Wildlife Refuge" after Unexpected Road, off of which the preserve is located. The Buyukmihci's developed walking trails throughout the

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Stefan Martin Prints for Sale to Benefit the Trust

In 1984, the Trust undertook a fundraising effort by marketing a series of limited edition prints created exclusively for the Trust by New Jersey wood engraver Stefan Martin. Each of the three prints highlights an object of the Trust's preservation efforts, the State endangered peregrine falcon, titled "Peregrine Falcon", a northern New Jersey stream habitat titled, "Morning Stream", and a grouping of three Pine Barrens gentian titled, "Gentian". In 1994, Stefan Martin died in a fishing accident. A fellow artist noted that Martin was "absolutely one of the most important artists in New Jersey. He won many awards, was nationally known, and very well-loved."

The Trust is again putting its remaining Stefan Martin prints up for sale. The unframed prints (framing is not supplied by the Trust) are \$150 each, or \$400 for all three (a \$50 savings). Remaining as of this writing are 203 "Peregrine Falcon", 131 "Morning Stream", and 20 "Gentian" prints.

To order Stefan Martin prints, contact the Trust at 609-984-1339 or email NatLands@dep.state.nj.us and let us know which print or prints you would like to order and your name and phone number or email address. We will get back to you with availability and ordering details. ☺



"Morning Stream"



"Gentian"



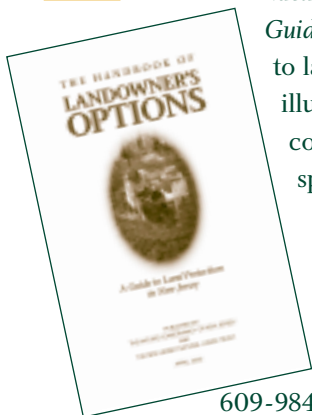
"Peregrine Falcon"

The Handbook of Landowner's Options— A Guide to Land Protection in New Jersey

Land in New Jersey is in demand more than ever before. Realizing that much of the effort to preserve land must come from the private sector, the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust and The Nature Conservancy of New Jersey published *The Handbook of Landowner's Options—A Guide to Land Protection in New Jersey*. The handbook describes the options available to landowners who wish to preserve the natural attributes of their property. It illustrates how property owners can work together with private, nonprofit conservation organizations and government agencies to preserve open space through a variety of methods tailored to their individual needs.

The Handbook is available on the World Wide Web at the site of the New Jersey Environmental Digital Library. The link to the document is <http://njedl.rutgers.edu/ftp/PDFs/2116.pdf>.

To receive hard copy(s) of this document (the first copy is free, additional copies are \$1 each), contact the Trust at 609-984-1339 or email NatLands@dep.state.nj.us. If requesting more than one copy, make your check payable to the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, and send your request, including the name and address that you wish the handbooks sent, to the NJ Natural Lands Trust, P.O. Box 404, Trenton, NJ 080625-0404. ☺



Establishment of Blair Creek Preserve Protects Habitat for Forest Dwellers *(continued from page 3)*

Nature Conservancy. The goal of the hunting program is to reduce the overall herd size by focusing on the harvesting of antlerless deer.

In the short time since acquiring this Preserve, observations of rare animals and birds requiring large forested areas have demonstrated its great ecological value. Our careful management will ensure that the Preserve's treasures are preserved for future generations. 🌿

Completion of The Nature Conservancy's Leisure Technology Additions to the Trust's Crossley Preserve

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Inc., a developer of senior citizen housing. Leisure Technology, Inc. and TNC worked together to formulate a model agreement that balanced the needs for additional housing with the protection of critical habitat. Key to this deal was the transfer of development rights from sensitive areas to the site of an existing development in Southampton Township, Burlington County, where sewers, water supply and a road network were already in place.

Of the 4,100 acres donated by Leisure Technology, Inc., 1,647 acres went to the Trust, expanding the Crossley Preserve and establishing the Retreat Preserve in Southampton Township. The remaining acreage went to the Division of Parks and Forestry and the Division of Fish and Wildlife, expanding several pre-existing State properties within the area of the Berkeley Triangle. Thanks to The Nature Conservancy's land preservation efforts in Berkeley and Manchester Townships, Ocean County, an ecologically significant area in the New Jersey Pine Barrens will be protected. 🌿

The Trust Acquires a Conservation Easement at Unexpected Wildlife Refuge *(continued from page 6)*

property, erected birdhouses, posted no trespassing signs, and invited friends, photographers, clubs, and school children to visit and learn about the environment of South Jersey. That was in 1961, when the word "ecology" was unknown to the general public. Today, 43 years later, Unexpected Wildlife Refuge's board of directors continues to maintain the refuge as a sanctuary for wildlife. After years of land acquisition, the initial 85-acre tract has grown to over 500 acres of swamp, bogs, forests, and lakes. The refuge is known for its extensive populations of beaver, bluebirds, prothonotary warblers, and large snapping turtles. Its over 100 birdhouses provide nesting for many species of songbirds, woodducks, and screech owls. The preserve is also home to otter, mink, snakes, and various other species of wildlife.

Cavit passed away in 1987, shortly after he had retired, and Hope continued to run the refuge with the help of dedicated volunteers until June 2001 when she passed away and the directorship was turned over to Sarah Summerville. The New Jersey Natural Lands Trust's Unexpected Wildlife Refuge conservation easement will ensure that this large forest tract will remain intact by prohibiting logging, landfilling, and excavation. Thus, this nature haven for indigenous animals and plants that Hope and Cavit Buyukmihci devoted their lives to will live on as a protected preserve in perpetuity. 🌿



The New Jersey NATURAL LANDS TRUST *Board of Trustees*

An eleven-member Board of Trustees sets policy for the Trust.
Six members are appointed by the Governor from the recommendations
of a nominating caucus of conservation organizations and five members are State officials.

Michael Catania (Chairperson), *President, Conservation Resources, Inc.*

Leigh Rae, (Vice Chairperson), *Director, The Trust for Public Land, New Jersey Field Office.*

Theresa Lettman, (*Secretary/Treasurer*), *Pinelands Preservation Alliance.*

Emile DeVito, *Director of Conservation Biology, New Jersey Conservation Foundation.*

John Flynn, *Administrator, Green Acres Program, Department of Environmental Protection.*

Thomas Gilmore, *President, New Jersey Audubon Society.*

Ernest Hahn, *Executive Director, Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission.*

James Hall, *Superintendent, Palisades Interstate Park Commission.*

Adrienne Kreipke, *Manager, Budget—Office of Management & Budget, NJ Department of Treasury.*

John S. Watson, Jr., *Assistant Commissioner, Natural and Historic Resources, Department of Environmental Protection.*

Vacant—Statehouse Commission Member

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Martin Rapp, *Ecologist*

Martha Windisch, *Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator*

Alyssa Pearlman Wolfe, *Counsel*



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