



Creating Citizen Scientists with iNaturalist

By Kelly Ems

What's blooming on these chilly autumn days? Take a stroll into your neighborhood forest and look in the understorey for the spindly yellow flowers of the American witch hazel (*Witchamora virginiana*) tree. Are your identification skills rusty? Well, we have the perfect tool to help you identify that witch hazel: iNaturalist.

Earlier this year we were introduced to a new app called iNaturalist and we think it's a useful tool for the identification of both plant and animal species. It's simple to use. Once you have a specimen, take a photo from your phone. The iNaturalist app will let its top suggestions for the identification of the species.

Naturalist

We encourage you to use Naturalist for a variety of reasons. Knowing more about the ecological systems that make up our conservation properties increases appreciation for the land, documenting plant and animal species creates an inventory that will help us learn more about the biodiversity of our properties and the impact of climate change on our natural world has a positive impact on mental health for adults and children. It's a proven fact!



male black & white salamander

Other scientists at work! Join us along with other Groton family members we explore our various ponds again!

Over the course of the year, we've recognized iNaturalist in many of our events such as identifying tree leaves on the Tree ID Walk, looking for spring birds during the General Field party, finding signs of fall at Gobotfest or our first open challenge: Feeders. Member Linda Loren won our prize for submitting the most predator photos during that August challenge. Be on the lookout for our future iNaturalist challenges. Next up: The Scavenge Hunt.

Not sure how to use iNaturalist? There are some video tutorials found on our website. www.groton.org has a second tutorial for adults and children. It's a proven fact!

NOTES

Trustees

President
Mark Cavan, Vice President
John Lelida, Treasurer
Scott Weston, Clerk
Diane Hinkle, Secretary
Wendy Goddard
Susan Higgins
Ed McKinney
David Pines
Michael Blaby
Cheryl E. Minkler-Linden

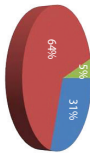


groton.org

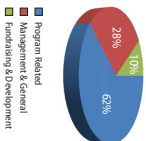
2017 Funding

Where it came from, how we spent it

Revenue: \$32,239



Expenditures: \$16,468

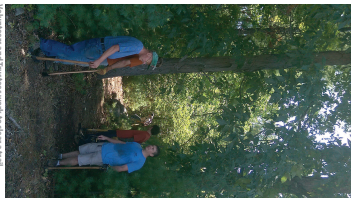


Thanks to You

Your membership helps our staff better manage the property, as well as provide public access to over forty private conservation properties comprising 1,400 acres in Groton. These parcels are integral to a wider mosaic of contiguous habitat that benefits wildlife as well as hikers, mountain bikers, and those who enjoy the wonderful trail network.

You support not only protect special places, but also help fund the conservation of all our events like the ones mentioned here. If you are already a member, now is the time to renew your commitment for the coming year. If you are not yet a member, now is the time to become one! Use the enclosed reply card to become one! Use the enclosed reply card to become one! Use the enclosed reply card to become one!

We are grateful to all our generous supporters who have made the year's conservation work possible. Thank you for your contribution to working in Groton!



CONSERVATION AND TRAILS WORK, 10/12/17 BY J. W. BIRD

Get Your Window Stickers Now

Show your GCT pride with one of these stickers on your car and let the world know you support conservation in Groton. These are available for all current members. If you are not a member, please contact us at info@groton.org and get your own sticker in the mail. Please use the enclosed reply card and envelope to send a check or go to groton.org. Or email us at info@groton.org.



Planned Giving

The GCT was fortunate this year to receive two donations from two different planned giving bequests. Planned giving has long been a staple in the philanthropic tool kit, and it had us wondering how many people know of this wonderful gift-giving option. The first bequest gift came from a retirement plan from former trustee, June Johnson, at the time of her death in the spring. Steve Leman, June's husband, agreed to talk more about June's planned giving. We will explore different planned giving options in upcoming newsletters.

GCT: June named the GCT as beneficiary to an IRA. Is this complicated?

Steve: It was almost effortless. All June needed to do was to make the GCT a named beneficiary of her IRA and assign a percentage of the total IRA that would be paid to the GCT. She was able to carry out the steps on-line with the financial institution in just a matter of days. The GCT will receive the funds from the IRA and give this amount through a check. We will have a discussion about the benefits of planned giving at any time with the same simple steps.

GCT: What makes this an effective planned giving tool?

Steve: The beauty of naming your favorite charitable organization as beneficiary of your IRA is that there is no need to make any changes to your will or any other estate documents that you have.

GCT: How does this differ from naming an organization in your will?

Steve: There is no need for the gifted funds to wait for the often lengthy estate probate process. And because these funds are part of your retirement plan, you can use them for retirement purposes. You can also use them for non-retirement accounts, which are subject to the same tax-deferred status as the IRA. We may wish to prioritize our tax-deferred retirement accounts as the source for our planned giving. The GCT will receive the funds from the IRA and give this amount through a check. We will have a discussion about the benefits of planned giving at any time with the same simple steps.

The GCT does not have any stock.



June Johnson and Tappin Family Honored at May Annual Meeting

At our annual meeting in May we paid special tribute to veteran conservationists who have made exceptional lifetime contributions to the GCT.

President Ted Lappin led a commemoration of former trustee June Johnson who died in 1998 and Tappin family who donated the property to the GCT in 2014 and was named an Honorary Trustee.

The Tappin recognition honored Linda and Virginia Tappin for their many generous gifts of land to the town of Groton over the years. Tom and Carl Tappin, along with their many friends and supporters, hosted the annual meeting and appreciation. Trustee David Pines presented the award. The GCT fund has come from Tappin gifts. He called them the quietest yet most influential conservationists in town.



MAINTENANCE WORK AT TAPPIN WILDLIFE SANCTUARY