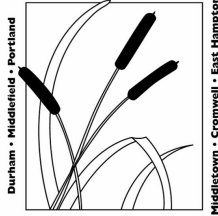


MIDDLESEX



LAND TRUST

The MIDDLESEX LANDSCAPE

Serving the towns of Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland, and East Hampton



Photographs Courtesy of ProteCT Public Lands

REMINDER for Tuesday: Constitutional Amendment on the Ballot This November

There will be an important question on the ballot in Connecticut for land conservation on Tuesday. The Middlesex Land Trust supports the passage of the proposed Constitutional Amendment to protect State lands and we encourage you to vote “YES” on ballot question #2 on November 6th.

Surprisingly, without this added protection, the Connecticut legislature is free to give away, sell, or swap our public lands – our beloved beaches, parks, forests, and landmarks – without the public’s input. If passed, this proposed amendment will ensure that the Connecticut legislature has to hold a public hearing and gain a 2/3rd’s majority vote before any valuable state-owned park, forest, wildlife management area, or farmland is sold, swapped, or given away.

For more information on this important ballot item for protected lands in our state, please visit our [website](#), or the websites of the following organizations: [ProteCT Public Lands](#), [Connecticut Forest & Park Association](#), and the [Connecticut Land Conservation Council](#).

Leave the Leaves

If you're looking to optimize your backyard habitat for wildlife this fall and winter, look no further than the leaves on the ground. Leaves and brush are beneficial for many species for both food and habitat. Toads, salamanders, mice, chipmunks, rabbits, earthworms, box turtles, and



many insect species are just some of the wildlife that rely on the piles of leaves and brush in your backyard for food and shelter during the winter. The animals that feed on these species will also thrive with this essential habitat element, including various bird species, snakes, skunks, and fox.

Looking to the spring, many pollinator species overwinter in fallen leaves. Butterfly and moth species' pupae depend on the leaves for shelter and food during the cold winter months. These pollinators are vital to the entire ecological food web - pollinating the plants in your yard and beyond that are food sources - as well as serving as a food source themselves for a wide variety of bird species and their babies during the following spring. If a lawn covered in fallen leaves doesn't appeal to you, then make smaller piles of leaves and brush along garden beds or the perimeter of your lawn.



Stewardship Update

After the rainy and stormy summer, there was plenty of work to be done at our protected properties. In July, a large tree fell into the field at Palmer-Taylor Preserve in Portland that required several work parties with chainsaws and a great amount of physical labor on the part of our dedicated stewardship volunteers to clear.

With each protected acre for the Land Trust, comes the obligation to steward the land to maintain and improve the habitat, and to keep the trails and properties safe for hikers and other visitors. If you're interested in helping with our stewardship work parties in the future and don't already receive our stewardship emails, please email us at kathy.middlesexlandtrust@gmail.com to be added to our stewardship email list.

Preserve Spotlight: Palmer Taylor Preserve (Portland)

History by John LeShane

(with excerpts from "History of Middlesex County, Connecticut", J.B. Beers & Co., 36 Vesey Street. 1884.)

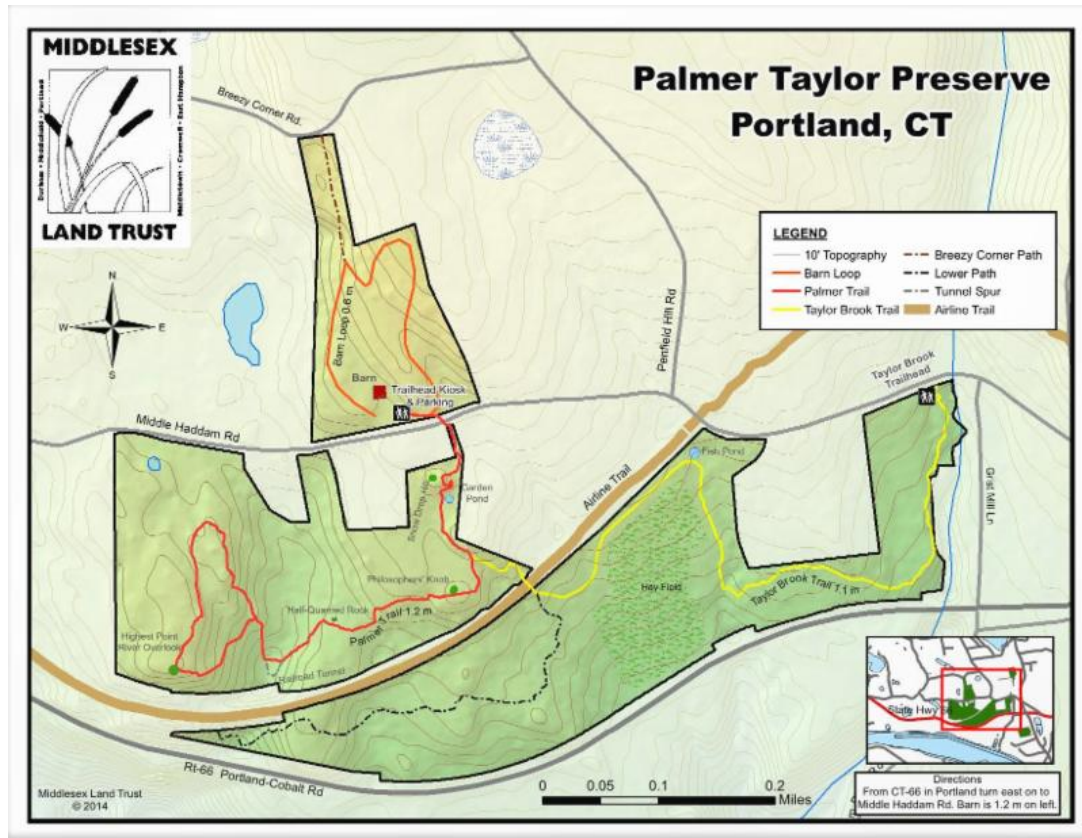


A gristmill, built prior to the Revolutionary War, stood near the current boundary between East Hampton and Portland. This is now where Middle Haddam Road crosses Great Hill Pond Brook (also known as Taylor Brook), and the eastern-most boundary of the Middlesex Land Trust's Palmer Taylor Preserve. The gristmill was owned and used by Lieutenant George Hubbard, who

held his commission from the British government in the old colonial times. The property changed hands many times over the years, with many different uses including the original milling operation, manufacturing of coffin hardware and trimmings, and manufacturing by The Cobalt Manufacturing Company. The

power to drive the mill and machinery for these operations was mainly derived from the water flowing from Great Hill Pond. Great Hill Pond is an artificial lake at the foot of Great Hill, covering about 100 acres of marshy land.

The Palmer Taylor Preserve is a 90 acre preserve that consists of several land parcels donated to the Trust by the Palmer family over many years. It is one of the Middlesex Land Trust's primary preserves and has the historic Erinmore Barn on the property. There are wooded uplands, large hay fields, two ponds, and Taylor Brook. The preserve is crossed by the Airline Trail.



Increased Protection for Atlantic Herring

In September of this year, the New England Fishery Management Council passed an amendment to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan that will provide increased protection for the vital herring fishery in the Long Island Sound and other New England waters. This decision was based on years of scientific review and public comment. The added protection for Atlantic herring also benefits many other species in the Long Island Sound and the New England ocean ecosystem in general, as well as the rivers and estuaries of these ecosystems. These species include bird species that eat fish, sport fish, and marine mammals.

This amendment reduces the harvest of Atlantic Herring and defines how catch limits will be set for at least the next three years in order to allow the declining population to rebuild. In addition, a coastal buffer zone was established that prohibits industrial mid-water trawlers from fishing in these buffer areas, which extend 12 miles from the coast in most New England waters and 20 miles from the shore in Cape Cod.

River herring are often found with Atlantic herring in the Long Island Sound and, as a result, they are a frequent bycatch of Atlantic herring fisheries. Therefore, this amendment will also increase the chances for recovery of the

river herring population that has historically spawned in the Connecticut River.



Credit: Creative Commons - Jacob Botter (Flickr)

The Middlesex Land Trust, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve open space in northern Middlesex County (Durham, Middlefield, Middletown, Cromwell, Portland, & East Hampton).

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For additional information, call the Middlesex Land Trust at 860-343-7537 or send an email to info@middlesexlandtrust.org.

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