



The Steep Rock VISTA Spring 2010

Dogs a Problem At Macricostas

Dramatic Rise in Reported Incidents

These are just a few of the complaints:

- Steep Rock staff person bitten in an unprovoked attack; owner unable to catch dog after incident.
- Roaming groups of three and four unleashed dogs.
- Graffiti on ledge along ridgeline praising a "woof" club.
- Two incidents of large dogs growling and attempting to bite a small dog ; threatening owner who picked up small dog to protect it; owner of aggressive dog claimed owners of small dog shouldn't be in the Preserve.
- Groups (3-5) of dogs seen running over agricultural field; owners not in sight.
- Dogs observed hunting on the ridgeline; owners unable to retrieve them.

In 1999, in response to many complaints, including complaints of so-called friendly dogs accosting hikers, we posted notices at all entrances to Steep Rock and Hidden Valley. The wording on the signs was based on that found in the CT State Statutes, reminding dog owners that their dogs should be under their control.

In 2001 dog problems arose again, including an incident in Hidden Valley wherein a small dog was attacked and killed by a large dog. In this case neither dog was on a leash. At that time Steep Rock's Stewardship and Trails Committee warned that continuing complaints would necessitate a rule requiring all dogs be leashed .

By 2002 dog problems had not subsided and incidents and complaints were increasing. Acting on a recommendation from the Stewardship committee, the Board of Trustees reluctantly voted (on March 23, 2002) that dogs must be leashed when in the Steep Rock and Hidden Valley Preserves. Signs were posted at all entrances to the Steep Rock and Hidden Valley Preserves.

At Macricostas, there are currently no signs stating Steep Rock's policy that dogs must be leashed at all times. In this newest of our Preserves we expected dog owners to act responsibly and keep their dogs under

From a biological standpoint, Macricostas is our most diverse preserve. Two state-listed birds found there—the ground nesting Woodcock and Savannah Sparrow, are particularly susceptible to disturbance by dogs. Other migratory species such as Bobolinks inhabit the grassy fields. There are innumerable other nesting species that can suffer from unleashed, roaming dogs. The Baltimore Checkerspot, while not a listed butterfly species is rare throughout CT, and colonies of the caterpillars feed on Turtlehead plants in the wet areas along portions of the boardwalk.



American Woodcock. There are several nesting pairs of these state listed birds at Macricostas. They've been observed in and around the information board by the trailhead.

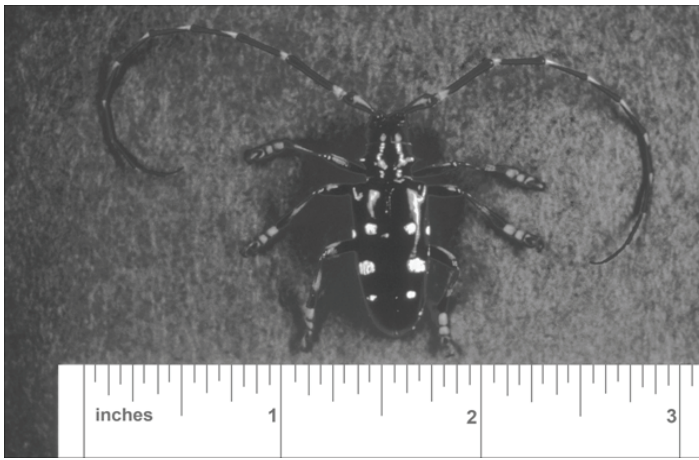
Portions of CT Statute Sec. 22-364

(a) No owner or keeper of any dog shall allow such dog to roam at large upon the land of another and not under control of the owner... Violation of any provision of this subsection shall be an infraction.

(b) Any owner or keeper of any dog who, knowing of the vicious propensities of such dog and having violated the provisions of subsection (a) of this section within the preceding year, intentionally or recklessly violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than six months, or both..."

Asian longhorned beetle

A Threat to our Forests



Asian long horned beetle (ALB)
Anoplophora glabripennis



Larval exit hole, 3/8/ inches in diameter



Boxelder tree killed by ALB.
Bark has fallen off revealing larval galleries and exit holes.

The Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) is an exotic pest threatening a wide variety of hardwood trees in North America. Adults are large (0.75 - 1.50 inches long) with very long black and white banded antennae. The body is glossy black with irregular white spots. The beetle has been introduced into New York City, Chicago, New Jersey and most recently Worcester, Massachusetts. Adults can be seen from late spring to fall depending on the climate.

ALB attacks and kills many hardwood trees, such as maple, elm, horsechestnut, ash, birch, poplar, willow and many more. ALB could significantly disrupt the forest ecosystem if it became established over a large area.

The US Federal government is trying to eradicate this species primarily for two reasons: If it becomes established it could significantly impact natural forests and urban environment, with an estimated death toll of 1.2 billion trees if it spread nationwide.

Some steps that have been taken to eliminate the ALB include:

Quarantines. Quarantines have been established around infested areas to prevent accidental spread of ALB by people.

Infested trees cut, chipped and burned. All infested trees are being removed, chipped in place, and the chips are being burned. The stumps of infested trees are ground to below the soil level. All tree removal is done by certified tree care personnel to ensure that the process is completed properly.

Insecticide treatments. Research is underway to determine the effectiveness of certain insecticides against ALB. Insecticidal treatments have begun in New York and Chicago in hopes of preventing and containing infestations.

Extensive surveys. All host trees on public and private property located within an established distance from an infested area are surveyed by trained personnel. Infested areas are re-surveyed at least once per year for 3-5 years after the last beetle or infested tree is found.

Editor's note: Information for this article was gleaned from several online sources, including UVM Entomology Research Laboratory, USDA National Invasive Species Information Center and Wikipedia. The photos were found on the US Forest Services website, Northeastern Area

Steep Rock Association

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2010 Land Trust Alliance Rally in Hartford

This year's LTA Rally will be held Oct. 2-5 in Hartford. The Rally is also known as the National Land Conservation Conference. It is the largest conference of its kind in the country, attended by more than 1800 land trust staff, volunteers, seasoned professionals, agencies, and others from all 50 states, Canada, South America and beyond.

This four-day program consists of exciting field trips planned by local conservation groups; high-quality educational sessions presented by prominent, experienced course leaders; inspirational keynote speakers. Special events are sprinkled throughout the program, as well as exhibits and numerous networking opportunities.

Look for more information on LTA's website: lta.org.

Asian Longhorned Beetle

Program Sponsored by
Garden Club, WEC, Steep Rock

On April 29, 2010 at 5 pm, the Washington Garden Club, Washington Environmental Council and The Steep Rock Association invite you to attend an Open Meeting to learn about the Asian longhorned beetle and its serious threat to our environment. Rose Hiskes from the Entomology Department at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven will be the featured speaker.

The program will take place in the Judea Parish House at the First Congregational Church, Washing-

Dig at Macricostas Institute for American Indian Studies



The Connecticut Culture and Tourism Commission recently awarded the Institute for American Indian Studies (IAIS) a grant to conduct an archeological reconnaissance survey at the Macricostas Preserve.

Under the direction of Dr. Lucianne Lavin, Director of Research and Collections at the Institute, several test holes were dug near the Meeker House. Found artifacts were removed, cleaned and brought to the Institute for further study and documentation.

The field and lab crew consisted mainly of undergraduate and graduate students with anthropology backgrounds. Several members of the Institute's recently formed Litchfield Hills Archaeology Club also participated.

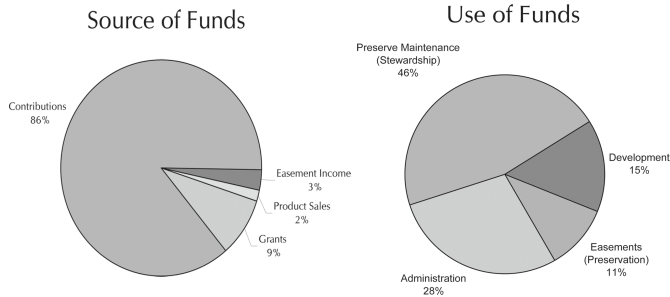
We hope to publish the report of the findings in our next issue of VISTA.

Annual Membership Drive

Please Join Us!

We're halfway through our Annual Membership Drive. Please consider becoming a member of Steep Rock. We rely on Membership contributions for more than 80% of our operating budget. We receive no funding from the town or the state. Without these contributions we cannot fulfill our stewardship obligations, which increase with every passing year. Mail your check to:

Steep Rock Association
 P.O. Box 279
 Washington Depot, CT 06794



Steep Rock's Birthday

85 in 2010

Events to celebrate are being planned, the big one being the Annual Picnic on Saturday, September 11. Check our website for regular updates.

www.steeprocksassoc.org



Steep Rock Association
 PO Box 279
 Washington Depot, CT 06794



Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) . Isidor Jeklin photograph,

Spring Means Goshawks

March and April herald the arrival of spring and also the increased activity of our resident Goshawks. We have at least one pair each in Hidden Valley and Steep Rock. Goshawks are year round residents. They are aggressive during their breeding season which is from early spring through mid to late summer.

Please report any early sightings to us. When we know they have become active we will close trails. Help us protect these important birds by staying off the closed trails.

The Hidden Valley Goshawks have nested in the same general area — on the top of the ridgeline along the west side of the river, often called the Bee Brook area— for many years.

Steep Rock's Goshawks have nested on the section of the yellow trail between the Hauser Bridge and the top of Steep Rock.

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