

FALL 2023

# *Field Notes*

A Lower Shore Land Trust resource for land managers,  
farmers, hunters, and naturalists

LANDOWNER  
SPOTLIGHT:  
SHAPING A  
VISION FOR  
AGRITOURISM

SALT MARSH  
STUDY GOES LIVE

NEW GRANTS WITH  
USDA FORESTRY



[LOWERSHORELANDTRUST.ORG](http://LOWERSHORELANDTRUST.ORG)



# LANDOWNER SPOTLIGHT

BY BETH SHEPPARD

## *SugarWater Manor - Dana and David Zucker*

When they purchased the historic Clifton (Westover, MD) and it's 68 acres in 2019, Dana and David Zucker adopted a conservation easement and subsequently added the adjacent 45 acres this summer. The Zuckers plan to expand and diversify their agritourism business, Watering Can, LLC.

Having a PhD in environmental economics, David jumped on board with Dana's desire to operate a sustainable farmstead. An avid fly fisherman, David wrote his dissertation on aquaculture on the Bay. Their combined efforts to practice what is best for the land will be good for the area and the ecosystem as a whole.

According to Dana, stewardship means sharing with the community: their guests, their social media following, and beyond. "I believe through agritourism we get consumers closer to their food...if I can increase the knowledge of one guest, they will then go out and share with others."

Sugar Water Manor aims to create a space where visitors can garner inspiration to share with others and do what is best for the land, for wildlife. Their sustainable farm, Sugar Water Manor, will engage in practices including high tunnels, raised beds, back to Eden gardening methods, permaculture, and regenerative and conservation preservation.



*Dana Zucker with one of her goats on the farm*

## ADDRESSING Quail and Pollinator Habitat, Living Shoreline Enhancement & Resiliency

Lower Shore Land Trust partners with the Natural Lands Project and USDA to build soil health, enhance habitat for Bobwhite quail, and improve resiliency of coastal lands. Contact Beth Sheppard at [bsheppard@lowershorelandtrust.org](mailto:bsheppard@lowershorelandtrust.org) to learn more and inquire about featuring your project in a future Field Notes!



*Situated along the Manokin river, this historic property requires an intelligent approach to erosion control and salt water encroachment.*



**NRCS District Conservationist Garth McCabe with Dana Zucker surveying the river bank**

*photo by Beth Sheppard*



# FUELING PARTNERSHIPS



MD state forester, Will Dyer, Agricultural Inspector, “Woodie” the dog, Victoria Spice, and our LSLT Land Program Director, Jared Parks, partner with the City of Salisbury to drive home the importance of vegetative management and proactively monitoring our parks, fields, and water bodies. Steering toward native plants equates to less pruning and less aggressive dispersal than the invasives recently managed within Salisbury City Park.

Since 2022, LSLT has partnered with Chesapeake Bay Trust and the City of Salisbury to provide invasive species identification and treatment, Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional BMP training, volunteer clean up days, native species restoration, and educational signs within Salisbury City Park.



## Upcoming Pesticide Training

**Pesticide safety classes (with pesticide credits)**  
These will fulfill the 4 credits continuing education required to renew the MDA private pesticide applicator license:

November 30, 6-8pm @ Wicomico Extension Office  
(To register call 410-749-6141)

Dec 11, 10am-noon @ Somerset Extension Office  
(To register call 410-651-1350)

Dec 20, 8-10am @ Worcester Extension Office  
(To register call 410-632-1972)

Jan 8, 6-8pm @ Worcester Extension Office  
(To register call 410-632-1972)

**Lower Shore Agronomy Day (with pesticide and nutrient management credits)**

Friday January 26, 9am-2:30pm  
Somerset County Civic Center, Princess Anne, MD  
Hear from state specialists and others on the latest agronomy research and updates.

Free event with a hot lunch.

Pesticide and Nutrient management credits will be offered.

To register or for more information, contact Sarah Hirsh at the University of Maryland Extension-Somerset Co. Office at (410) 651-1350



# MARSHES FOR TOMORROW SEEKS INPUT

Marshes for Tomorrow (MfT) is an ambitious project aiming to identify, protect, and restore at least 25,000 acres of the most important tidal salt marsh habitat in Maryland for Saltmarsh Sparrows (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) and strengthen resiliency along coastal communities.

We recognize community input is exceptionally important for the success of this project in identifying the best locations to concentrate our conservation and restoration efforts for birds and people.

## SCHEDULE for the first round of community meetings:

- January 19, 2024 @ Delmarva Discovery Center, Pocomoke MD 4:30 pm- 6 pm
- January 20, 2024 @ Princess Anne Library 2 pm - 3:30 pm
- January 25, Thursday @ Berlin Public Library 5:30 pm - 7 pm
- January 27, Saturday @ Harriett Tubman Musuem, 2 pm - 3:30 pm



*Members of the Marshes for Tomorrow restoration team at work*

We invite you to participate in our marsh-use survey:



SALTMARSH SPARROW (*AMMODRAMUS CAUDACUTUS*)

*photo by Jon Corcoran, 2014*

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/thrasher72/>

MARSH USE SURVEY QR CODE:



Lower Shore Land Trust and Maryland Coastal Bays Program are two of the many partners assisting in this project.

For information about upcoming meetings and project resources, please look for future postings

or contact:

[marshes4tomorrow@gmail.com](mailto:marshes4tomorrow@gmail.com).

 **Audubon** | MID-ATLANTIC

*MfT is a coalition of partners led by Audubon Mid-Atlantic and funded through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's National Coastal Resilience Fund grant and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.*



# REAL ESTATE FOR WOOD DUCKS AND BLUE BIRDS

## The Useless Tree

by Jared Parks

The tale of the useless tree is one of my favorite Taoist stories. Attributed to Chuang Tzu, the story details a conversation between a master carpenter and his apprentice. The apprentice sees a huge, old tree and asks the master why he doesn't even take a second look. The master replies "It's a worthless tree! Make boats out of it and they'd sink; make coffins and they'd rot in no time; make vessels and they'd break at once... It's not a timber tree – there's nothing it can be used for. That's how it got that old!"

Since I first read the story, I thought how nice it would be if more trees were useless trees. They could get old and run the natural course of their lives supplying shade, shelter, food, and homes to a whole host of critters, including us.

Don't get me wrong. The pragmatist in me appreciates the "useful trees" as well, but I have lived long enough and studied wildlife and natural resources enough to know that we don't have enough useless trees anymore. As the story relates, humanity has attributed the worth of trees to the benefits that accrue to humans... board feet, fruit, maple syrup, turpentine, firewood, etc. They haven't typically been valued for their intrinsic worth or their importance in the natural world. As our growing population puts more and more pressure on the planet to produce what we need, we continue to find fewer and fewer useless trees out there.

When I was a youngster, my father was very active in the local bird club, and the clear issue that galvanized so much interest at the time was the plummeting populations of charismatic species like eastern bluebird and wood duck. Both species are cavity nesters, so they require trees in the landscape that have the characteristics of old age, particularly the rot and irregular growth that create hollows in the wood. In short, they need worthless trees. Management that removes these trees from the landscape also removes these species from the landscape. Sure, we can put up bluebird and wood duck boxes to supplement the lost housing, but natural cavities are far superior to manmade ones.

2023 LOWER SHORE BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT FROM MBS: 54 boxes, 283 bluebird, tree swallow and Carolina chickadee fledged.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
<http://mdbluebirdsociety.org/>





# QUANTICO CREEK RURAL LEGACY AREA

The Quantico Creek Rural Legacy (QCRLA) was delineated to protect a host of resources important to western Wicomico County and the City of Salisbury. The original area was centered around Quantico Creek to preserve the significant working farms and forests in the area while contributing to the protection of the creek's water quality and natural habitats.

The area was enlarged to include a large portion of the Paleo-channel that provides a significant percentage of the drinking water for Salisbury as well as the overlying agricultural lands that surround the western and northwestern portions of the city.

Growth areas important to the City of Salisbury and the town of Hebron were intentionally left out of the Rural Legacy Area to encourage development adjacent to the existing infrastructure of those residential and commercial centers.

*photo by Frank Deuter*

## **Have You Considered Selling or Donating a Conservation Easement on your Property?**

We can help you navigate the process! Lower Shore Land Trust partners with Wicomico County to administer the Quantico Creek Rural Legacy Area. The Rural Legacy Program pays eligible landowners to restrict development on their properties through a conservation easement. Typically, eligible properties must be at least 50 acres and have development potential available to retire through the easement. Interested landowners within the Rural Legacy Area can call (443-234-5587) or email Director of Land Programs, Jared Parks ([jparks@lowershorelandtrust.org](mailto:jparks@lowershorelandtrust.org)) for more information.

Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) is an accredited land trust working throughout Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. Since 1990, LSLT has protected more than 25,000 acres on 136 properties.



# PIN YOUR CALENDAR



## SOLAR SUMMIT NOVEMBER 29

@ MDA in Annapolis

The 2023 MDA Solar Summit is being held on Wednesday, November 29 from 10 a.m.- 1 p.m at the Maryland Department of Agriculture Headquarters in Annapolis. Coffee and refreshments will be served beginning at 9:30 a.m., and a light lunch will be served. With the state's laudably ambitious renewable energy goals, Maryland farmers have the ability to lease their lands for commercial solar installations. But at what cost? Attend the Solar Summit to hear experts and industry perspectives and to discuss agrivoltaics and the broad impact of solar on Maryland's food system.

Registration is required to accommodate lunch for all guests. For more information about the summit please contact MDA Director of Communications, Jessica Hackett at [jessica.hackett2@maryland.gov](mailto:jessica.hackett2@maryland.gov).



REGISTER TODAY:

[HTTPS://WWW.ESLC.ORG/FORESTS-FORESTRY-WORKSHOP/](https://www.eslc.org/forests-forestry-workshop/)

## USDA WOOD INNOVATIONS GRANTS

APPLY BY DEC 15TH!



December 10-12, 2023

Hyatt Regency, Cambridge

Join entrepreneurs, government officials, private sector entities, and educators for UME Extension's upcoming Maryland Agritourism Conference, "Growing Maryland Agritourism."

Interested parties will gather and identify critical elements to enhance agritourism in the state. Agritourism offers educational and recreational opportunities for visitors and generates income for the farmers, local community, as well as adjacent businesses.



Maryland's forest products sector is far larger than most people realize (\$ 3.3 billion) and consistently ranks within the Top 10 tax-bases. Marylanders consume 9x more wood products than what is made in-state, yet our forests grow 4x more wood than what is harvested or lost through natural events. Pay scales in forest products manufacturing are typically higher than in other sectors.

USDA Forest Service has 3 grant opportunities offering up to \$1 million for capital projects using wood grown locally. Applications are due December 15th.

<https://usfs-public.app.box.com/s/l9pn9h7dyllo19sdwu3kgv06gxa6h7bz>

Additionally, MARBIDCO Wood Products Industry Equipment Incentive offers 25% matching capital up to \$100k for equipment purchases. Applications are due December 15th.

Contact Brian Cadden at 410-267-6807 or [bcadden@marbidco.org](mailto:bcadden@marbidco.org) for more information.





# Field Notes

Lower Shore Land Trust  
100 River Street  
Snow Hill, MD 21863



## Upcoming Events



STAY TUNED:

We're launching a new Birding SERIES for 2024!

PHOTO BY B.SHEPPARD

November bird walk with Frank Deuter, Larissa Prezioso, Fallon Jackson, Jared Parks, Laurie Layton, Barbara Dolan & Kathy Johnson

With an investment from Rural Maryland Council, Lower Shore Land Trust is planning a series of birding field trips and interpretation across the Lower Shore to promote critical investments from the state that help to conserve these sites. Stay tuned for upcoming events in the new year.

A festive holiday-themed graphic with a light beige background. It features hanging pine branches with pinecones and red berries, and several green snowflake icons. The text is centered and reads: "Fresh CUT GREENS SALE in Snow Hill FRIDAY DEC. 1ST SUPPORTING Lower Shore Land Trust Annual Rotary Christmas Sale: 12-4pm @ Old Fire Hall in Snow Hill & Open House & Greens Sale: 3-6 pm @ LSLT office, 100 River St Visit Us and Get Your Holiday Greens!". The bottom right corner shows a close-up of a pine branch with a red ribbon tied around it.

**Fresh CUT GREENS SALE**  
in Snow Hill  
**FRIDAY DEC. 1ST**  
SUPPORTING *Lower Shore Land Trust*  
**Annual Rotary Christmas Sale:**  
12-4pm @ Old Fire Hall in Snow Hill  
&  
**Open House & Greens Sale:**  
3-6 pm @ LSLT office, 100 River St  
*Visit Us and Get Your Holiday Greens!*

Fresh bunches of greens and wreaths available!