

Donating your unwanted clothing and household goods to charity isn't a new or novel idea. Even still, in 2011 the average person in Connecticut threw away 55 pounds of clothing, shoes, and linens. What a waste! Ninety-five percent of these items could have been reused and recycled, saving disposal costs, creating jobs and realizing environmental benefits. CT DEEP recently held an in-depth Panel Discussion on Textiles Reuse and Recycling to address this issue.

Many of us are reluctant to donate clothing and other fabric items like sheets, towels and underwear (all of which are referred to as "textiles") if they are too worn out. Even if textiles are stained, missing buttons, worn or torn, they can still be used. Only items that are wet, mildewed, odorous or oily should not be donated.

And it's not just textiles from households or individuals. Hospitals, nursing homes, hotels, colleges and universities and some government agencies (prisons, police, social services) can also donate their old bed linens, table linens, scrubs and uniforms.

According to Second Materials and Textile Recycling, or SMART, donated textiles are separated into three categories – 45% remain as usable clothing, 30% become rags or other wiping and polishing cloths used in commercial and industrial settings, and 20% is reprocessed into fibers for furniture stuffing, upholstery, insulation, sound proofing, carpet padding, building and other materials. Only 5% is unusable and discarded.

So please remember to donate EVERYTHING! Most of the major charities, such as Goodwill Industries and Salvation Army participate in SMART. Some smaller, local organizations and churches may not, so check with them first.

Reprinted from P2 View, a quarterly newsletter published by the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, Office of Pollution Prevention. For a free subscription, go to www.ct.gov/dep/p2view or call 860-424-3694.

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Wilton Conservation Commission Newsletter



THE LILIES' LAST STAND

If you are a regular passerby of Horseshoe Pond, you have had several chances over the years to witness various activities in the pond that have no doubt made you wonder who is doing what and how come there are *still* so many lilies. A group of pond neighbors and motivated residents have walked the Conservation Commission down memory lane to revisit all those activities and helped the commission accept the reality that these efforts are not effective and it is time to change strategies. For the commission, this was difficult as the last strategy reasonably available is the use of herbicides.

Recognizing the only way to slow the progression from pond to marsh is to largely rid the pond of lilies; the commission authorized herbicide treatments to Horseshoe Pond beginning May 2014.

The Friends of Horseshoe Pond are motivated by the prominent position Horseshoe Pond has as the gateway to Wilton and an appreciation that this is a favorite walking spot for many residents and employees of surrounding businesses. The pond is overall quite shallow, 2–4 feet, making it absolutely perfect for lilies. Unfortunately, the dense carpet of pads discourages waterfowl and when those plants die back in the late fall, the decomposition process drains the oxygen from the pond and releases excessive nutrients. This,

of course is detrimental to other aquatic life.

With research, the Friends came to understand the cost to dredge the pond is prohibitive, there are too many stumps and logs on the pond floor to make hydro-raking effective, carp won't control the lilies, and with direct personal effort, volunteers found pulling the lilies by hand is not reasonable in a 6-acre pond.

The Pond and Lake Connection has been selected to implement the plan approved by the CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection. The initial push back on the lilies will span three years, resulting in a 65–70% reduction in coverage. Some lilies are a good thing, providing nutrient absorption and aquatic habitat. After the third year, periodic treatments will be needed to keep the lilies in check.

The Conservation Commission will contribute to the funding, but bulk of the expense will have to come from donations. The Friends of Horseshoe Pond are now raising \$15,000 to cover the next three years of chemical applications.

To donate, send a check made payable to "Town of Wilton" to the attention of The Friends of Horseshoe Pond at the Conservation Office at Wilton Town Hall, 238 Danbury Road, Wilton, CT 06897.

-Anne Deware, Founder, Friends of Horseshoe Pond



THE ABC'S OF PESTICIDE, INSECTICIDE, AND HERBICIDE USE

We use billions of pounds of pesticides globally as a weapon against weeds and to kill the bugs that infect our crops and spread diseases. Some of these compounds keep our lawns weedless and green, while others hold diseases like malaria in check. They coat our produce to ensure a high yield, but also end up in our waterways. And many of them are carcinogenic and have been linked to depression, birth defects, ADHD, Diabetes, and even Parkinson's.

Given the risks, one should only use pesticides as a last resort after considering if the pest problem is severe enough to warrant the use of chemicals or if there is a non-chemical solution. Wherever possible, use organic pesticides. If absolutely necessary, use toxic chemicals with the greatest care. In preparation for that time, it will help to understand some basics about pesticides, as well as some common sense tips for pesticide safety.

Pesticides are chemicals that are used to control pests. They include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and others.

Insecticides are pesticides that are used to control insect pests without harming the host. Insect damage is done by insects that chew leaves and roots and by insects that pierce the plant and suck its sap. Insecticides that control root-feeding insects may be applied as granules with a lawn spreader or with a sprayer in liquid form. Either way, it is important to wash the chemical into the soil and prevent children and pets and wildlife from resting on the lawn for the safety period specified on the pesticide label. Top-feeding insects, which feed on the leaves of ground covers and turf, are best controlled by spraying the pesticide and allowing it to dry on the foliage. The pesticide's effectiveness is lost if it is washed off by rain or irrigation.

Herbicides are pesticides that control weeds. Weeds are divided into two main categories. Perennials, which may be broad-leaf or grassy, live for many years. Annuals, either broad-leaf or grassy, live for only one season and reseed. Pre-emergent herbicides are used in the early spring to prevent the germination of many weed species, mostly annuals such as crabgrass.

Postemergent herbicides are directly applied to newly germinated or perennial weeds.

Planting native vegetation and using mechanical, biological and nontoxic vegetation control methods are effective in reducing and eliminating pesticide applications. Creating and encouraging stable, low-maintenance vegetation is a more permanent vegetation management strategy as those plants can out-compete undesirable species. Although native vegetation may take more time to establish itself, native flower and grass species are better adapted to local climate and stress than those introduced from Europe and Asia. Native plant species are especially effective in providing increased erosion control, aesthetics, wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

- *Kristen Begor*

Reminder: No paint will be accepted at the 2014 Household Hazardous Waste Day.

Take unwanted paint to Keough's Hardware, True Value, or Ring's End at your convenience all year long!

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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238 Danbury Road
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WHY SET ASIDE?

Today there are 1250+/- acres of protected land in Wilton. In addition to the better known parks and preserves owned by the Town of Wilton, there are 27 smaller parcels of open space scattered throughout town that support plants, animals and ecological communities. These small parcels are known locally as 'Set Asides'.

Set Aside by definition refers to 'something, such as land..., that is set aside for a specific purpose'.

These parcels of land came to the town in different ways. Most of these parcels were dedicated as open space as part of the subdivision process. At the time of the subdivision review, the Planning and Zoning Commission typically requires 10% of the parcel be reserved for open space. Historically, this meant the steep slopes, wetlands, or other unbuildable portions of the land. Today, other land use regulations protect these sensitive areas, so set-asides can serve to protect other land.

Set Asides range in size from less than one acre to one that is in excess of ten acres. Although Wilton is fortunate to have these areas preserved and protected, they are of limited use for trails and recreational purposes.

Some of the parcels were acquired by other means; a few were deeded to the town in lieu of foreclosure; others, including the lands around Kent Pond and Allen's Meadow area, were purchased. By whatever means these lands came under town ownership, they all now function as valuable green spaces serving as wildlife habitats, providing natural buffer areas in a developed landscape, and in some instances, existing as miniparks for residents to use and enjoy.

If you have questions or concerns about a Set Aside in your neighborhood please contact the Conservation Department.

- *Susan DiLoreto*

Please visit www.wiltonct.org regularly to access trail maps, Wilton's zoning & wetland regulations, news about community events and more.

WILTON GO GREEN FESTIVAL 2014!

- **Sunday, May 4, 2014, 11 am – 4 pm**
- Rain or Shine
- A free, community-wide celebration of green living
- Wilton Town Center

With dozens of educational displays that foster stewardship of our air, land, water, wildlife and other natural resources, the Wilton Go Green Festival is all about the small, thoughtful things we can do every day to make a difference. Don't miss this wonderful family day filled with fun and discovery.

- Atka from the Wolf Conservation Center
- Westport Electric Car Club Rally
- May Pole celebration and fun-filled children's activities
- Live entertainment by Wilton musicians
- Delicious local and organic fare

See you there! • www.wiltongogreen.org

Norwalk River Valley Trail Demonstration Trail Open House and Celebration is Saturday, April 26th from 9am to noon with special events, food and door prizes. Nrvt-trail.com



April 26, 2014 • 9am – Noon
(Rain date of 4/27/14)

Park at the commuter lot at
Rte. 7 & Wolfpit Road