

## **Another Exciting Year of Citizen Science Volunteer Monitoring in Canterbury**

With an additional year of support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Connecticut Audubon Society completed a third year of Citizen Science projects in Canterbury. From 2009-2011, this partnership with the Canterbury Public Library brought 179 volunteers out to the streams, forests and fields, to collect conservation data in their community. That's 1,113 volunteer hours!

The word spread and enthusiastic volunteers arrived, ready to explore. Many volunteers participated in more than one project and several participated all three years. A spring gathering will be scheduled to celebrate our accomplishments as well as a planning session to explore where we go from here.

A final report and data will be shared with the conservation community. The following is a brief summary of our citizen science work.

Canterbury stream work focused on the Little River where volunteers walked several sections, documenting the condition of the stream bed and adjacent riparian zone. A few areas of concern were found, but generally, the stream is in good condition. Based on the species of aquatic insects, the water quality index was Very Good-Excellent. This data can be seen at the DEEP website, search Rapid Bioassessment for Volunteers.

Volunteers surveyed twenty-two vernal pools referred to us by local residents. The wood frogs calling in early spring announced the locations! Ray Shinkiewicz, introduced us to Kevin Ryan, a graduate student researching amphibians and vernal pools on the Shinkiewicz property. Each year during our training sessions, John Tetrault invited us to explore his vernal pool where we found fairy shrimp. Thanks to Ray, Kevin, and John, among other property owners, volunteers had some unique vernal pool experiences.

Several Canterbury residents, along with participants from other area towns, learned how to identify mammal track and sign. Much of the training was done on the DEEP Quinebaug Management Area on the west side of the Quinebaug River where we found sign of gray and red fox, coyote, deer, eastern cottontail, beaver, river otter, bobcat and turkey. The habitat diversity of this parcel makes it a perfect mammal monitoring site.

We'd like to extend our thanks to our partners, the Canterbury Public Library, the USFWS, and our terrific volunteers. Big thanks go to the great CPL team, Kathleen Hart and Marion Sheeheen, and Mammal Monitoring Project liason, Michael Sheehan. We also thank all of the residents who invited us onto their property over the last three years.

Connecticut Audubon Society Citizen Science is an on-going program and we welcome new participants to join the fun. Call 860-928-4948 or email Citizen Science Coordinator Paula Coughlin at [pcoughlin@ctaudubon.org](mailto:pcoughlin@ctaudubon.org). Spring programming on reverse side.