



The newsletter for owners of land protected by a Conservation Restriction (CR) held by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)



Department of Conservation
and Recreation

Summer 2023

Conservation Connections

DCR Land Protection Program News

Dear Friends,

We hope you are enjoying your summer. The LPP has had a great year so far, and we wanted to update you on some exciting changes to the program.

CR Stewardship Program

The CR Stewardship Program continues to be coordinated by Caroline Raisler, who started in August 2022 (introduced in the winter newsletter). Sasha Auer, who was a long-term seasonal from 2019-2022, became a permanent member of our staff – CR Stewardship Planner – in late 2022. Finally, we have also hired another long-term seasonal – Seasonal CR Monitor – bringing our program to a total of 3 staff.

Emily Carty was our long-term seasonal for the Winter 2022-23 season. Having grown up in New England and coming off of a six-month AmeriCorps term at a land trust in NH, she was familiar with CR monitoring practices and the landscape. While her time here at DCR has come to an end, she told us that she enjoyed traversing the diverse DCR CR properties and working with the stewardship staff team. She may be returning for Winter 2023-24.

For Summer 2023, Mark Kresge has joined the team as a long-term seasonal. As a well-versed advocate for open space planning and trail connectivity, he has deep ties to land trusts, state agencies, and trail groups throughout central MA. He revels in finding obscure pieces of history and long-forgotten boundary monuments, so it will be common to see him poking around in the stone wall corners and piles when he visits your property!

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Nature Corner

The wild orchids of MA

There are 28,000 species of orchids worldwide, over 40 of which are native to Massachusetts. Many of the MA species are very uncommon and hard to find making a search for native orchids a bit of a treasure hunt. They can be found in many different habitat types across the state, including forests, meadows, coastal landscapes and wetlands, and include 16 species of what are known as bogs orchids.

Many orchid species depend on mycorrhizae, which are fungi that grow in association with plant roots and form aCont. Page 4



North Wind Bog Orchid is found in fens, forests, meadows, swamps, edges of wetlands and disturbed sites. Photo by catskillbob

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LPP News Continued

Land Acquisition Program

Jennifer Howard continues to head the Land Protection Program, which encompasses both CR Stewardship and Land Acquisition. We recently hired two new Land Protection Specialists, Nick Rossi and Loni Fournier.

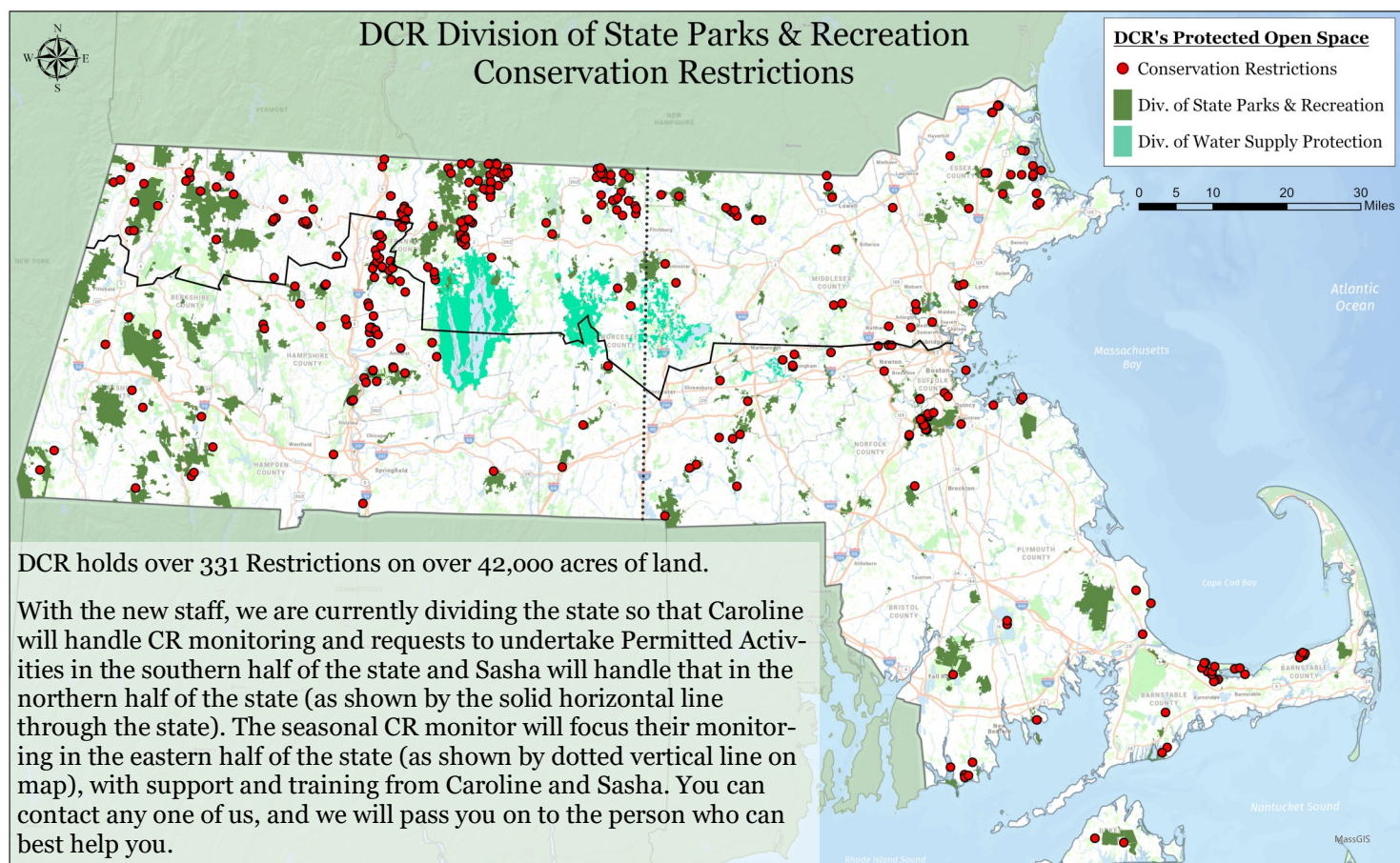
Nick Rossi comes to DCR with several years of experience and will be focused on land protection in the Connecticut River Valley. He also has experience in CR stewardship. Previously, he worked for Mass Audubon for almost eight years first managing their CR stewardship program, and then serving as their Land Protection Specialist in central and eastern Massachusetts. In his downtime, Nick is an avid hiker, brews his own beer, and quality tests his wife's baking projects.

Loni Fournier is rejoining DCR after spending the last eight years working for the Town of Hingham as their Senior Planner for Conservation and GIS. Loni's knowledge and experience related to wetlands regulations and permitting, land acquisition and management, and fostering strong partnerships (not to mention her GIS skills) are well-suited for her focus areas in metro Boston and eastern central Mass. This time of year, Loni spends all of her spare time outside: gardening, bird watching, walking/hiking, etc.

In fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022—June 30, 2023), Land Protection Specialists acquired three CRs, on 309 acres in Princeton, Sandisfield, Otis and Harwich.

Boston Office Move

The Boston office has moved from 251 Causeway Street to 10 Park Plaza. Please direct formal notices or requests for approval to the new address which is on the mailing portion of your newsletter. Always be sure to email Caroline or Sasha as well when sending mail, but especially now during this transitional time.



Property Boundary Markers

Photo by Joe Smith



Corner stone wall and triple blaze

If you have ever walked through a New England forest, chances are you have seen an old stone wall running between the trees. While these stone relics may be considered fascinating remnants of a bygone era, many remain in use to distinguish property lines. Stone walls are one of the most common, and often one of the most identifiable, types of boundary markers that can be found here in MA.

But not every boundary line is marked by a stone wall, and not every stone wall is a property line. So, what are some of the other ways one might recognize a boundary? In addition to stone walls, fences, and other human-made structures, another common way boundaries are marked is with blazes. A blaze is made by removing a 4-6" rectangular section of a tree's bark and painting over it. Over time, these marks heal, and end up looking like oblong scars with splashes of color.

Blazes can be 'read' by their placement on the tree and by their relation to one another. Two blazes on opposite sides of a tree indicate that the property line is going right through the tree in that direction. A single blaze on one side of a tree signals that the property line is within a few ft of that side of the tree. Three blazes stacked in a column on the side of a tree indicate a property corner, which can be found on whichever side of the tree the blazes are located. Often, a corner marked by a blazed tree will be found in combination with another type of monument.

Because blazes need to be repainted periodically. It is not uncommon to find an old blaze with no paint, making it difficult to distinguish them from a normal tree scar. When trying to identify a blaze, it is important to remember that blazes are typically at chest or eye level. A blaze-like scar very low or high on a tree is more likely to be a natural scar. Furthermore, a blazed property line will have blazes consistently along the line, whereas natural tree scars are unlikely to line up with one another.



Blaze

Photo by Jessica Applin



Rebar

Photo by Emily Carty



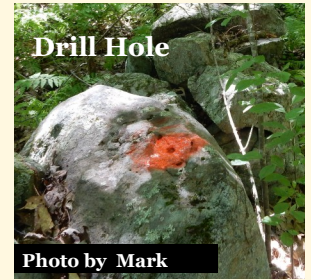
Iron Pin

Photo by Emily Carty



Granite post

Photo by Mark



Drill Hole

Photo by Mark

Another common boundary marker, typically found at corners, is the iron pin which is put in the ground by a surveyor and often marked with a metal or plastic cap. Pieces of metal rebar or pipe are often used as well. Some properties even have old gun barrels stuck into the ground as boundary markers!

Other examples of boundary markers include stone or concrete bounds, which are typically rectangular columns. A large stone bound may indicate the town property line. Another indicator of a property boundary is what is known as a drill hole; a small hole about a 1/2 in wide and 3/4 in deep, drilled into a rock. While they are sometimes spray painted over, these tiny holes are often very difficult to find.

Last, but not least, boundaries may also be marked with signs that can show ownership or CR holder. The stewardship team is in the process of installing boundary signs on CR properties. Contact us if you would like to have 3.5" x 3.5" CR boundary signs added to your CR property!

The best way to find a boundary is with the help of a survey plan. A detailed map created by a professional surveyor, a survey plan will not only show which types of boundary markers are on a property, but also give the bearings to move from one to the next! If a survey has been done for your CR property in the past, it is likely recorded in your county's registry of deeds, which can be accessed online through masslandrecords.com using the 'property search' feature. A description of the property boundary may also be in your deed, and describe the 'metes and bounds' (distances/bearings and boundary markers) of the property.

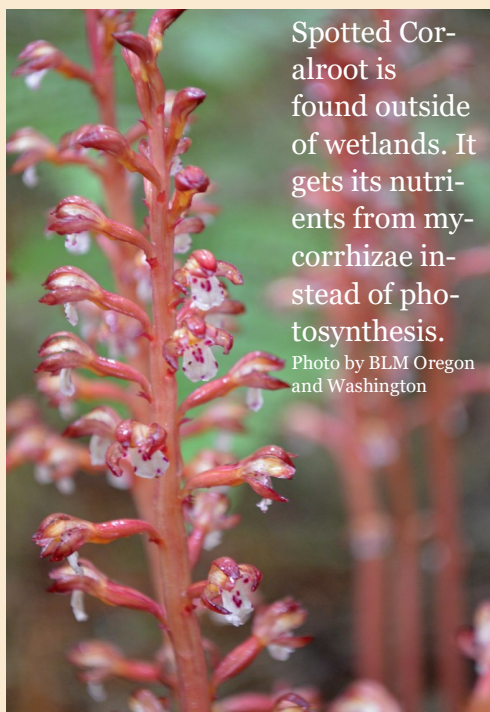


Orchids continued from Page

symbiotic relationship with plants. The seeds from many orchid species, because they are so small, depend on mycorrhizae to develop into plants since they obtain all their nutrients from the mycorrhizae. Adults can completely rely on mycorrhizae during years when they don't appear above ground. Given the rarity of orchids as well as their dependence on specific soil and environmental conditions, finding them on your CR property is a great indicator of habitat quality and biodiversity.



Downy (pictured above) and Checkered Rattlesnake Plantain are widespread evergreen orchids. Photos by Jason Hollinger (left) and Joshua Mayer (right)



Spotted Coralroot is found outside of wetlands. It gets its nutrients from mycorrhizae instead of photosynthesis.

Photo by BLM Oregon and Washington



The less common Rose Pogonia can be found throughout MA in bogs, fens, meadows and disturbed sites. Photo by er-birds



Yellow Lady's Slipper is very uncommon and grows in fens, forests, shrublands, thickets, edges of wetlands and on shorelines of rivers and streams. Photo by Wernerehl

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

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Conservation Connections is produced semi-annually for owners of land protected by a DCR-held Conservation Restriction.

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