



Vermont Coverts Woodlands for Wildlife

A newsletter of Vermont Coverts: Woodlands for Wildlife, Inc.

Volume 56 Summer 2021

NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Rich Chalmers, *Class of 2005 Spring*



A friend of ours, up from the Boston area, was walking in our woods early one morning this spring and stumbled on three young bear cubs. He stopped and watched the cubs trying to figure out what he was. One cub ran across the trail, another climbed a tree, the third stayed put, peering around a tree trunk. When it was clear Mark posed no threat, they all

moved on. It struck me how fortunate we are to live in a place where a simple walk in the woods can be such a wonderful experience.

As we pull out of Covid, at least in Vermont, we have a chance to evaluate how this experience has changed us and, in this case, our relation to the land. We've been reminded of the healing power of nature and have developed a stronger bond with the world around us. We have explored, observed and learned more about the intricate interrelationships of healthy habitat and the creatures that live here.

We are the ones who will choose what Vermont looks like in the future. As we learn more about what a healthy ecosystem means, why large blocks of unfragmented forest with corridors connecting them are important, how diversity leads to resilience, how seemingly small acts by individuals make a big difference, we start to understand the power we have to do good. The knowledge and tools required to have this positive impact are available and ready to experience. Coverts is here to help.

Check out the website for more information and our event calendar. Visit our Youtube channel for over 50 webinars to watch at your leisure.

Live and in person, join us for a full day of talks, workshops and walks at our "Crawling Out of Covid" celebration in Shrewsbury on September 25th. It will be an excellent chance to

connect with old friends, make new ones, and to learn and explore possible approaches to caring for our woods. Look for the registration form in this newsletter.

Hope to see you there.

Rich Chalmers



Sow with cubs in Waltham, VT

photo by Cooperator Caitlin Zarriello



MISSION Enlist Vermont landowners in a long-term commitment to maintain and enhance diverse wildlife habitat and healthy ecosystems.

COOPERATOR SURVEY RESULTS: WHAT WE LEARNED (PART 1)

By: Alicia Carlson

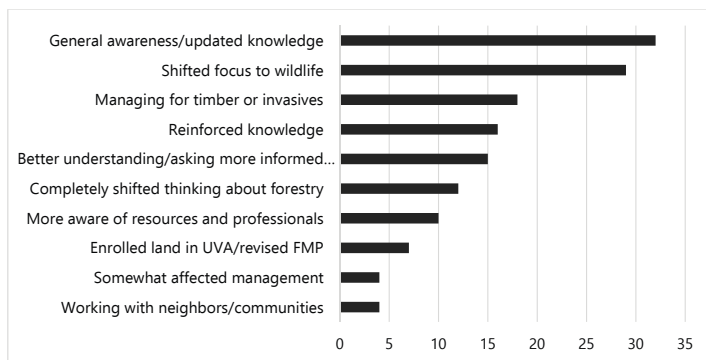
Understanding our Cooperators and the success of our Training is important as Coverts moves into the next 36 years. Earlier this year, we wrapped up a survey of Coverts Cooperators that was conducted between 2018 and 2021. We heard from 251 Cooperators, which represents 31% of all people trained by Vermont Coverts since 1985.

Most of the surveys were done as phone interviews, although we also collected some results through an online survey. Our goal was to connect and learn from you, our Cooperators, and we're ready to share the results with you.

We will do so through a few newsletter articles. In this first article, we'll describe what we learned about how you're managing your land and sharing information with your neighbors and community.

The Cooperators who responded to the survey reported managing more than 43,000 acres of Vermont forest land. More than 80% of these Cooperators have a forest management plan, and 75% have their land enrolled in current use.

One reason we conducted this survey was to find out how the Coverts Training impacted the way Cooperators manage their land. Seventy-four percent reported that it did.



Responses from Cooperators who said the training did change the way they manage their land.

People shared with us a number of ways that their management changed. Some said the Training updated their knowledge of forests and wildlife, while others said it shifted their focus to thinking about wildlife. Several people reported that they feel more confident talking with their consulting forester about forest management.

The Cooperators who said the Training did not change how they manage their land either said they were already managing for wildlife, or they have been to too many other programs and workshops to be able to say one had more of an effect than others.

Overall, it sounds like the Training is fulfilling one of its primary purposes – providing forest landowners and managers with information on how forest management can benefit wildlife. Another purpose is the establishment of a peer-to-peer network.

The Cooperators who responded to this survey indicated that they do talk with their neighbors about managing their land (or dealing with invasive species, or thinking about wildlife, etc.). Almost 70% said they “often” or “sometimes” talk to others about the information they learned from Coverts. Only about 45% said they “often” or “sometimes” show other landowners how they’ve been managing their land. About 50% said they have held a workshop or less formal gathering on their land.

We could, however, do a better job at motivating Cooperators to share information within their communities. We asked if people are using their Coverts knowledge when interacting with local committees and government officials, like the town planning board or conservation commission. A majority of people said they never interact with town officials. Only 37 people said they often interact with the conservation commission and 30 with the planning commission.

Unique to Coverts is our peer-to-peer network. We would like to see more interactions throughout the network and within your communities. We have some exciting plans coming up in 2022 to help move that objective forward. Stay tuned for more information!

We would like to acknowledge Vermont Fish and Wildlife and the Statewide Wildlife Grants for supporting our survey effort. Next time, we'll share how Cooperators responded to questions about the “Coverts experience.”



COVERTS COOPERATOR SIGNS AVAILABLE NOW!

At your request, we now have a Coverts Cooperator sign for you to hang on your property. Here is an easy way to let your neighbors and community members know that you are a Coverts Cooperator.

Designed by your fellow Cooperators, they are made of white, durable plastic, and are 9” wide by 12” tall. There are two pre-drilled holes along the short edges for easy hanging.

We are providing one sign per Cooperator/household at no charge to you. All you need to do is contact the office by e-mailing lisa@vtcoverts.org or calling 802-877-2777.

Crawling out of Covid Information and Registration

September 25, 2021, 9:30am – 4:30pm
Shrewsbury Meeting House, Shrewsbury, VT

Register by September 10, 2021



Agenda

I = Inside O = Outside

9:30	Registration
10 – 12	Woods Walk with Travis Hart at a nearby Cooperator property (O)
10 – 11	iNaturalist app with Cooperator Juanita Burch-Clay (I/O)
	Conserving Land in Your Town—A Process that Worked for Shrewsbury (panel) (I)
11 – 12	Game cameras with Chris Bernier (I/O)
	Chainsaw safety and maintenance with Scott Carlson (O)
12 – 1:30	Lunch, Annual Meeting and Awards
1:30 – 3:30	Town Farm Wildlife Management Area walk with VT Fish and Wildlife (O)
	Getting to Know Avenza Maps with Ethan Tapper (O)
1:30 – 2:30	Ruffed Grouse with Chris Bernier (I)
2:30 – 3:30	Woodcock Research and Management with David Sausville (I)
3:30 – 4:30	Wrap-up and cake

Lunch Menu

We're pleased to partner with **Vermont Bliss Catering** from Shrewsbury to offer these luncheon options.

Choose two: soup and sandwich, soup and salad, salad and sandwich, or a double order of one item.

Lunch also includes a soft drink of your choice and fresh Vermont apple crisp for dessert.

This is included in the cost of your registration.

Salad: Crisp red and green leaf lettuce from Little Leaf Farms with roasted butternut squash, cranberries, dried apple, walnuts and homemade maple balsamic vinaigrette.

Soup: Cup of creamy roasted tomato bisque.

Sandwich: Grilled cheese with caramelized onions, apple, Cabot cheddar cheese and optional North Country Smokehouse bacon, on hearty sourdough bread with a touch of brown mustard.

Mail registration form with credit card information or check to: Vermont Coverts, P.O. Box 328, Vergennes, VT 05491. If you have questions, contact Lisa Sausville at 802-877-2777 or lisa@vtcoverts.org.

Participant Information

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Event and Lunch Selection

Rank your choices for both the morning and afternoon.		Choose 2 lunch options for each participant.
Morning Workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Travis Hart walk <input type="checkbox"/> iNaturalist <input type="checkbox"/> Conserving panel <input type="checkbox"/> Game cameras <input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaws	Afternoon Workshops <input type="checkbox"/> WMA walk <input type="checkbox"/> Avenza Maps <input type="checkbox"/> Ruffed grouse <input type="checkbox"/> Woodcock	Participant 1: <input type="checkbox"/> Soup <input type="checkbox"/> Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwich (<input type="checkbox"/> w/Bacon) Participant 2: <input type="checkbox"/> Soup <input type="checkbox"/> Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwich (<input type="checkbox"/> w/Bacon)

Register by Sept. 10 -- \$20 per person, includes lunch

Number attending _____ **Total \$** _____

Checks can be written to: Vermont Coverts, or enter credit card information below.

Visa or Mastercard #: _____ Name on card: _____

Expiry Date: _____ Security #: _____ Signature: _____



Vermont Coverts Woodlands for Wildlife

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Vermont Coverts **LOGOWEAR** COMING SOON!

Get your Vermont Coverts t-shirt, long sleeve t-shirt or sweatshirt soon by visiting our online store that will open in August. The new logo is featured on the front, with a familiar saying to Coverts Cooperators, "Wildlife Like it Messy" on the back. Your items will be shipped directly to you. Hats will be on sale at the September 25th event.



Keep Vermont Coverts growing strong!
Donate online at www.vtcoverts.org