Every time I took a walk, I could imagine what the site would be like, with a little help from volunteers.

- Tim Kennelly, CLC Trustee

Where some might have seen a large hedge of invasive honeysuckle at Siegel-Kline Kill Conservation Area, dedicated volunteers and Master Gardeners Glenda Berman and Tim Kennelly saw potential habitat for birds, bees, butterflies, and other wildlife.

Glenda and Tim approached CLC with a plan to transform the site into a haven for wildlife by removing invasive species and installing native plants. Since 2017, more than 70 volunteers have put their hands to work to bring that vision to fruition.

“The first step was to get rid of the invasive weeds,” says John Horton, CLC’s Volunteer Coordinator & Public Lands Steward. “We removed hundreds of pounds of Japanese honeysuckle, which was important for preparing the site. Honeysuckle is one of the first plants to leaf out and blossom in the spring, which means that by the time native plants are growing, they have to compete with shrubs that are already taking up much of the site’s light, water, and nutrients.”

After volunteers removed the honeysuckle hedge, a group of staff and volunteers planted a variety of native trees and shrubs. CLC staff then worked with local contractor Helia Land Design to prepare the soil at the site for planting native wildflower seeds. Scraping off the top layer of the soil was necessary in order to remove as much of the existing seedbank (which could include more weeds) as possible.

Staff and volunteers collected milkweed pods (critical for monarch butterflies!) from other CLC sites and planted them in the fall of 2018, then added a mix of pollinator-friendly seeds and native trees this past spring. Plants were selected based on their ability to provide habitat for wildlife and increase the biodiversity (variety of plants and animals) at the site.

“We hope to attract a variety of different species to the meadow,” says Tim. “Populations of pollinators like bees and butterflies are declining everywhere, and creating even relatively small meadows like this one can have a big ripple effect. We especially hope to see an increase of monarch butterflies and native bees at the site, which are important for the entire ecosystem.”

Keep the meadow blooming all year long with a monthly gift!

CLC relies on your regular donations to ensure that we are able to protect this land we call home, all year long. Please consider making your gift early and becoming a monthly donor, which provides a dependable source of funds year-round, and is easier on your pocketbook!

Want to make your gift over the phone instead, or sign up for monthly giving? Contact Craig Westcott, Director of Philanthropy, at 518.392.5252, ext. 222, or craig.westcott@clctrust.org.
What’s next for Siegel-Kline Kill? Since much of the soil was disturbed during the invasive species removal and planting process, staff and volunteers are actively managing the meadow to make sure that plants like Canadian thistle and invasive grasses don’t establish before the native plants are able to.

To learn more about how you can create or restore meadow habitat at your own property, join Heidi Bock, John Horton, and Tim Kennelty for the first-ever Landowner Engagement and Resource Network (LEARN) workshop. The event takes place at Siegel-Kline Kill on July 13 from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Attendees will take a guided tour of the meadow and native tree and shrub plantings, learn about common invasive species, and practice using tools and techniques to create these kinds of habitats. Register at clctrust.org.

CLC is always looking for volunteers for projects like this one. If you’d like to get dirty for a good cause (or help out in the office) contact John Horton at john.horton@clctrust.org.

Restoration of the meadow has been supported by a number of grants. This project was contracted by the Capital Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management using funds from the Environmental Protection Fund as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The project was supported with funding from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program (NYSCPP) and New York’s Environmental Protection Fund. The NYSCPP is administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the state Department of Environmental Conservation.
Upcoming Events

Trekking Tuesday - Guided Hikes
Every Tuesday, May - October
5:00 p.m.
Email info@clctrust.org to join the list-serve.

Wag Wednesday - Dog Walks
Every Wednesday, May - October
5:30 p.m.
Ooms Conservation Area, Chatham

Om at Ooms
Every Thursday, June 6 - August 29
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Ooms Conservation Area, Chatham

iNaturalist Volunteer Training
June 6
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
CLC Office, Chatham

Sip & Stroll: Wine & Weeds
July 12
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
High Falls Conservation Area, Philmont

LEARN Workshop: Native Meadows
July 13
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Siegel-Kline Kill Conservation Area, Ghent

Schedule subject to change - register at clctrust.org!