

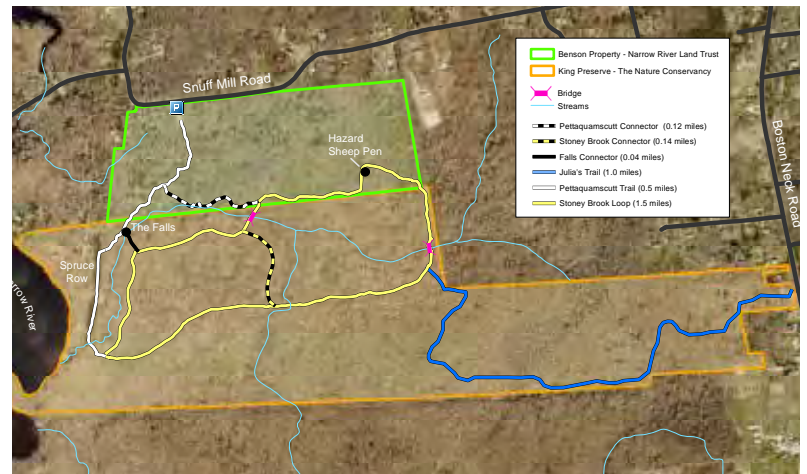


BENSON PRESERVE

Looking for a place for a great walk in the woods? The Benson Preserve, purchased by the Narrow River Land Trust in 2014, is a forty-five-acre property with beautiful hillside trails over wetlands, vernal pools, small waterfalls, and a wide variety of vegetation. The property abuts the King Preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The two properties share a well-marked trail system, which affords miles of walking and access to the Upper Pettaquamscutt Pond on the Narrow River. Pack your bathing suit!

The Benson Preserve is conserved thanks to the generosity and foresight of Elsie Benson and her family. The property was the home of Elsie Benson for many years and her wish was to preserve the land in its natural state for the benefit of the native plants and animals found in the vernal pools, uplands and small streams. The Benson family worked with the Narrow River Land Trust to fulfill that wish.

The Narrow River Land Trust purchased the property with funding from donors and the RI Department of Environmental Management Open Space fund. The Land Trust also partnered with the Town of North Kingstown to install a small parking lot to access the property on Snuff Mill Road. The Benson property is a vital link in the Green Belt which surrounds much of the Narrow River.



QUICK FACTS:

- A well-marked trailhead can be located at 500 Snuff Mill Road, Saunderstown, RI 02874, approximate address, (Lat x Long: 41.519468, -71.440777).
- There are approximately one (1) mile of trails, equipped with few boardwalks, at Benson Preserve. The contiguous TNC King Preserve hosts a few additional miles of connected trails.
- Hunting is allowed on nearby properties. It is recommended that hikers wear fluorescent orange during hunting season.
- Dogs should be on leash.



Japanese Knotweed - creamy white flowers in panicles

KILL THIS PLANT: JAPANESE KNOTWEED *(Polygonum cuspidatum)*

You see this annoying invasive plant everywhere in New England. It thrives on disturbed ground along stream beds, ponds, roadsides and highways, in vacant lots, and maybe even your neighborhood. A member of the buckwheat family, it has evolved to survive harsh environments. Its roots may be several feet deep. It can go dormant for years. It can punch through asphalt, and it will crack foundations. It has no natural enemies (at least not yet). It squeezes out native species throughout Rhode Island, upsetting the normal ecological balance. And it's hard to eliminate!

Identification: Japanese knotweed is easy to identify. It usually grows in dense stands, some over six feet tall. It is semi-woody when mature and resembles bamboo. The leaves are heart shaped. The creamy white flowers appear in late summer in panicles (the one redeeming feature of this plant is that pollinators do love the flowers). It spreads by vegetative cuttings, rhizomes, and to a lesser extent, by seed.

Mechanical Control: Mowing is usually not effective because new plants can grow from fragments of the mowed plant, and the mowing encourages rhizome growth. Plants can be dug up by the roots and rhizomes, but some plant material will usually be left behind, making mechanical control a multi-year project. Dug plants can be left to dry, so long as they are not in contact with soil. Dug plants can also be bagged in black bags, left in the direct sun to “solarize,” and then disposed of. The plants can be covered with heavy plastic, which must be kept in place for five years, if that is your eradication method choice. If left unchecked, knotweed will spread indefinitely.

Chemical Control: Herbicide application is the most effective and labor-efficient measure for eradication. In late summer or early fall, the plants should receive a thorough foliar spray with a glyphosate mixture. The glyphosate mixture should be about 2% glyphosate and water. The mixture is improved if there is a surfactant added. The spraying should be done after the flowers have finished blooming, as the flowers attract a variety of bees and other pollinators. Foliar treatment is reported to be up to 95% effective because, in the fall, nutrients are returning to the root structures, and the herbicide will reach underground parts of the plant. Repeat spraying in the following year may be required.

Be sure to follow all instructions on the herbicide label. Do not spray when it is windy or very hot. Glyphosate is non-selective and will harm non-target plants that get exposed.

For more information: Natural Resources Conservation Service: Invasive Plant Control, Japanese Knotweed, *Polygonum cuspidatum*. <https://tinyurl.com/wazmcwyr>

Some notes on invasive species. Unfortunately, a wide variety of invasive species grow aggressively in Rhode Island and on Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) properties. We are committed to controlling these plants to reduce propagation and to restore the environment as much as possible. The task is virtually insurmountable, but also very important. Please learn more about invasive species growing in our neighborhoods and help eliminate them from our landscape!



Japanese Knotweed - mature stalks

SUMMER CLEAN-UP WITH THE YOUTH CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) is fortunate to recruit members of the Youth Conservation League (YCL), a project of the Rhode Island Audubon Society, on an annual basis. There were two successful projects completed this year. On Monday, August 5th, a crew of fourteen YCL workers, along with four members of the NRLT board, cleared vegetation from the historic walls along the east side of Middlebridge Road in South Kingstown. Despite the blistering hot and muggy weather, hundreds of feet of wall were re-exposed to enhance the views of the NRLT properties located on Middlebridge Road, Reed Overlook and the Watts Overlook, adjacent to the Narrow River.



YCL volunteers with NRLT Board members on Middlebridge Rd. in South Kingstown

On August 6th, another YCL crew descended on the fields at the Viall fields, located at the corner of Gilbert Stuart Road and Boston Neck Road in North Kingstown. The field has been



Black swallowwort extract with roots intact.

invaded by an invasive species known as black swallowwort (*Cynanchum louiseae*). The ten-member crew, along with another four board members, soldiered through the rainy day, digging twenty-seven garbage bags worth of this invasive plant. Swallowwort is difficult to eradicate as it spreads through rhizomes and seeds, and it disrupts the mating cycle of the Monarch butterfly.



YCL volunteers working at Viall Preserve in North Kingstown

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) Annual Meeting, held on May 15th at the South County Museum, in Narragansett, featured a presentation by Jeff Willis, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), titled “CRMC’s Role in Climate Change, Erosion and Adaptation”. The focus was on our changing environment, the threat of global warming, and sea level rise to coastal communities.

At the meeting, members elected Marcia Izzi and David White as Co-Chairs of the Board. Richard Shults was re-elected Treasurer, and Kellie King was re-elected Secretary. Other board members elected include Julie Sharpe, Michael Woods, David Borkman, Craig Wood, Derek Miller and Brian Tefft.

Meeting members also voted to honor Julie Sharpe for her many years of service to NRLT. A bench will be erected in her honor at the Garrison House Acres.



THANK YOU!

Thank you to our longstanding contributors and new donors who make Narrow River Land Trust's (NRLT) a success every day. We depend on your generous donations for preserving our properties.

We welcome new members all year long, so if you have not yet renewed or wish to join, please do so today! Please spread the word about our vital work and invite your family and friends to join us as well. Visit the NRLT website to join (www.narrowriverlandtrust.org) or use the QR code.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Narrow River Land Trust has a new office! Located on the ground floor of 148 Main Street, Wakefield, RI, we are thrilled with the location and that we will be assessable to you. Please stop by during our offices hours (TBD!) if you are in the neighborhood. Our mailing address will remain the same, P.O. Box 65, Saundertown, RI 02874. Our email address is office@narrowriverlandtrust.org.

FULFILLING OUR MISSION

There is one organization that stands out when it comes to protecting the Narrow River Watershed (NRW). The Narrow River Land Trust (NRLT) owns and preserves more property in the NRW than any other group or government entity. The total land area protected in the Narrow River Watershed is over 660 acres.

NRLT is committed to its mission of preserving the natural resources in the NRW by monitoring, maintaining, and improving its properties for the public and future generations.

Address Correction Requested

PO Box 65, Saundertown, RI 02874

Narrow River Land Trust



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