



GREENWICH LAND TRUST

Notes from the Field: Sargent-Gildersleeve-Stone Preserve

The three Greenwich Land Trust properties that make up the Sargent-Gildersleeve-Stone Preserve form a continuous greenway connecting each other and the properties of The Nature Conservancy and National Audubon Society. The parcels were given to the Land Trust at different times, (1971, 1980, and 1998), and in different ways, (purchase, subdivision set aside, and donation) providing a



demonstration of the many ways in which open space can become protected forever.

The 5.2-acre Sargent Woodland was bought from a willing seller by a group of Greenwich residents and given to The Nature Conservancy in 1971, before Greenwich Land Trust existed. Members of the Sargent family made the largest gift in memory of John Sargent of Meadow Lane, who instilled a love of nature in his descendants. It has two wetlands, one



on each side of a rocky ridge. The wetlands are filled with local vegetation and animals. They provide water for two branches of the Byram River.

The 8.7-acre Gildersleeve property is 15 percent of the Gildersleeve farm that was added to the Sargent Woodland when the family divided the farm into building lots. It includes woodland along Riversville Road, wetlands, meadows filled with native wildflowers, and a large pond.

The Nature Conservancy deeded the Sargent and Gildersleeve preserves to Greenwich Land Trust in 1981.



The 4.5-acre Stone Preserve is part of Emerson and Louisa Stone's 8.5 acres. They kept the four acres required for their home and gave the rest to Greenwich Land Trust. Most of the Stone Preserve borders Sterling Road and includes the branch of the Byram River that springs from the Gildersleeve pond. Steep stone outcroppings host a variety of spring ephemerals that burst into bloom each spring safe from the grazing white tailed deer.

Stone walls are found throughout. In addition, the Stone Preserve has remnants of a railroad bed that was started, but never finished, before the Civil War and the roadbed of the original Sterling Road.

The Sargent and Stone properties have mature hardwood forest with beech, tulip, oak, and maple trees providing plentiful shelter and food for a plethora of wildlife.