

Coyotes—or Coywolves

Join us at White Oak's annual meeting on Thursday, November 14 at 7 p.m. at the Holden Senior Center. Research Scientist Jonathan Way of the George Perkins Marsh Institute at Clark University will offer a 90-minute presentation on coyotes.

Jon has made it his life's work to study these carnivores, which he calls "coywolves," living in eastern Massachusetts. His website, www.easterncoyoteresearch.com, is full of fascinating information on coyotes. The following is reprinted with his permission.

The eastern coyote or coywolf—reflecting that they are really a hybrid between western coyotes and eastern/red wolves—lives in the northeast from New Jersey to Maine. Western coyotes live in the remainder of the country, outside of Northeastern North America. The coywolf is the biggest type of coyote, about 30-45 lb on average. Tracks from their paws are oval and from 3-3.5 inches long. Their color ranges from blonde to darker black and brown, but is usually tawny brown.

Coywolves feed mostly on small mammals like mice, voles, rabbits, and woodchucks, but they are opportunistic predators, eating fruit as well as meat. They will eat larger mammals, like deer, where available. Their habitat ranges from rural to urban, but they prefer edge habitat, like that found in agricultural and suburban areas. Coywolves are not considered dangerous to people. There have been only 4-5 coyote bites in state history, compared to 4.7 million dog bites nationwide each year.

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Jon Way has long studied the eastern coyote, which he calls the coywolf. Coywolves are a hybrid between western coyotes and eastern/red wolves. Their habitat ranges from New Jersey to Maine.

Photos by Jonathan Way.

“Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns.” —George Eliot

5k Recap

Sunday, September 15 dawned sunny and beautiful—the perfect day for White Oak's first-ever 5k trail run and walk. Registration fees and sponsorships help fund White Oak's land acquisition projects and educational programs.

Approximately 25 people finished the course, which featured a prominent hill and challenging terrain, with great views of Mount Wachusett. Participants gave favorable feedback, praising the overall organization and the fun course. A number of them commented on the perk of a new White Oak membership with their race registration. Plans for next year's race are already underway, with a goal to double registrants for 2014. 🌿



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(Above) Mount Wachusett provided a beautiful backdrop for the inaugural 5k Run for White Oak.

(Left) Runners Emma Peterson and Dawn Ertel charge to the finish line.

Photos courtesy of Nancy Wilson



WHITE OAK
LAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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Jon Way's research has proved invaluable in efforts to rehabilitate injured and debilitated coywolves. Photos by Jonathan Way.

Jon has developed a long-term study on eastern coyotes or coywolves inhabiting eastern Massachusetts, and has a B.S. (UMass Amherst), M.S. (UConn Storrs), and doctorate (Boston College) related to this research. He is the author of two books: *Suburban Howls*, an account of his research findings and experiences studying eastern coyotes in Massachusetts, and *My Yellowstone Experience*, which details - in full color - the spectacular wildlife, scenery, and hydrothermal features that can be found in the world's first national park.

He runs an organization called Eastern Coyote Research that helps supports his long-term ecological and behavioral study of coy-

wolves in Massachusetts. He also works part time with the Yellowstone Ecological Research Center examining the effects of mortality on coyote population demographics, and frequently travels to the Yellowstone area to watch wolves and bears and other wildlife. Jon is working on a third book project called "Coywolf" which details the genetic and morphological findings that distinguish these animals from their parental species: western coyotes and eastern wolves.

His long-term goal is to create an eastern coyote/coywolf discovery center that melds the fields of science and education to benefit both people and animals. 🌿

Another Land Project in The Works

White Oak's land committee is a hard-working bunch. Only ten months ago, we finalized a generous land donation from the Lane family (see *Oak Leaf*, Spring 2013), and now another project is coming together.



Thanks to our land committee and, once again, Lane Development Corporation, White Oak will soon have 65 more acres conserved permanently. Part of the Oak Hill cluster subdivision, this additional acreage will play a key role in accessing a network of trails and other open space. Careful development of this new neighborhood will keep the land as open space, benefitting all of Holden and our surrounding communities.

We enjoy strong support of MassAudubon in this endeavor, as well. In a letter to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, they said: "This design is far preferable to conventional subdivision design which typically converts virtually all available upland to developed and landscaped areas." White Oak looks forward to working with Oak Hill residents to maintain careful stewardship of the land.

We've Got It In Writing

So it's really, truly official. The certificate declaring White Oak Land Conservation Society Accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission has arrived.

Chuck Knox, the Executive Director for the Massachusetts Land Trust Alliance, accepted the award on White Oak's behalf at the



annual national Land Trust Alliance Rally, held this September in New Orleans. Chuck was pleased to help celebrate White Oak's success, as one of only two Massachusetts land trusts to be accredited this year. "Congratulations on your great work achieving the LTAC accreditation," he said. We are grateful to Chuck for his assistance. 🌿



WHITE OAK

LAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 346

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Living with Coyotes

*A Presentation by Jonathan Way
of Clark University*

White Oak's Annual Meeting

*Thursday
November 14
7 p.m.*

Holden Senior Center

FREE to all! Light refreshments will be served.

