

TRUST FOR WILDLIFE, INC and Halifax Nature Camp 2025

It takes a community to run a successful Nature Camp and volunteers from the community stepped up to help run a most wonderful and successful camp.

Trust For Wildlife, Inc. (TFW; <https://www.trustforwildlife.org/>) a 501c3 nonprofit based in Shaftsbury, Vermont, offers a free one-week “nature camp” at the TFW sanctuary on Woodard Hill Road in West Halifax. Marshal Case is the founder of Trust for Wildlife, and the 115-acre sanctuary was gifted to TFW in 1981. The camp is run by Marshal and Joanne Case, along with Merritt Youmell, Halifax School teacher, and Andrea and Jessica, dedicated parent helpers.

This year the focus was on trees and forests (both managed and unmanaged as half our forest is old growth and the other was recently logged to create “patch cuts” to encourage more wildlife diversity in the new growth) and why the natural world is so vital to the health of the planet. We talked about land use in Halifax past, present and future.



We were invited by our neighbor David Brewster to walk his property to visit old stone walls, cellar holes and mill sites. He gave a nature journaling session, and we drew what we saw.



Ed Metcalf, of the Vermont Natural History Museum, brought a barred owl and a kestrel to camp, and we learned about these rehabilitated birds, unable to return to the wild. They are ambassadors to educate us about their behaviors and why we need to protect them.

Besides exploring the woods and fields, we investigated our neighbor's pond to discover the micro and macro life that populate small ponds. We discussed how leeches (and maggots) are still used in medicine.

Included in our discussions was the changing climate and how we can all do our part to keep Vermont resilient and protected. We planted wild apple trees and American chestnuts with hopes that in the future our campers can revisit the sanctuary to harvest the fruits of the trees they helped plant.



Brian (just back from a family trip to Ireland) serenaded our final day of TFW Nature Camp week with Irish folk ballads.