

**The Harris Center for Conservation Education** supports undergraduate field research in environmental studies, geography, and related disciplines at Keene State College by training students in data collection methods and working with KSC faculty to design capstone research experiences with applied conservation value. We also facilitate connections between KSC students and conservation professionals in our research and monitoring network, and offer public programs at KSC – with a focus on nature and conservation science – for the benefit of students, faculty, and the broader Keene community.



**HARRIS CENTER**  
FOR CONSERVATION EDUCATION

### Community Programs

In the 2014-2015 academic year, the Harris Center partnered with KSC to offer four **film showings**, five **citizen science trainings**, and one **lecture** by a visiting researcher – all free and open to the public – with nearly 500 attendees in total. We also invited Dr. Denise Burchsted – Assistant Professor in the KSC Department of Environmental Studies – to present on her research at the Harris Center in Hancock.



**Vernal Pool Project Volunteer Training**  
Citizen scientists take a closer look at amphibian eggs during a volunteer training for the Vernal Pool Project. (photo: Emily Hague)

### Conservation Internships

In the third year of an innovative partnership with the KSC Department of Environmental Studies (ENST), four outstanding ENST majors participated in a seven-week summer **conservation internship program** with the Harris Center in 2015. Under the guidance of ENST faculty and Harris Center staff, the students gained specialized training and firsthand experience with many facets of the Harris Center's diverse conservation and education work. Together, the internship team documented vernal pools, inventoried forest communities, surveyed and removed hundreds of invasive plants, monitored conservation easements, helped prepare the Harris Center's new pollinator garden site for planting, assisted with educational events, and conducted a wildlife road mortality study. You can see intern Will Holden's video snapshot of this innovative summer internship experience [here](#).

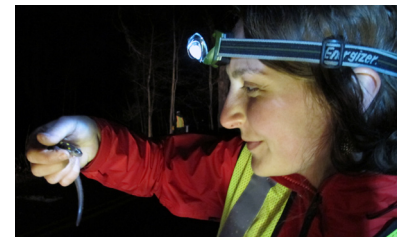


#### **Invasive Plant Workday at the Harris Center**

KSC conservation interns Meaghan O'Dwyer, Elizabeth King, Will Holden, and Bryan Mindermann work with Harris Center staff to remove invasive plants from the Harris Center grounds. (photo: Brett Amy Thelen)

### Citizen Science

Dozens of students and faculty members also participated in our citizen science programs this year: the **Salamander Crossing Brigades**, in which volunteers identify, count, and move amphibians across roads throughout the Monadnock Region during the spring amphibian migration; the **Vernal Pool Project**, in which citizen scientists find and document the ephemeral waterbodies that serve as specialized breeding habitat for those migrating amphibians; and **Project Nighthawk**, in which volunteers monitor the Common Nighthawk in Keene, one of the last places in New Hampshire where this endangered bird still breeds. In the summer of 2015, the Keene nighthawks were particularly active in the skies above the KSC campus, and several KSC staff members were invaluable in helping to sleuth out potential nighthawk nesting sites.



**Salamander Crossing Brigades**  
KSC Environmental Studies major Alex Kirk ('14) carries a spotted salamander across North Lincoln Street in Keene during the spring amphibian migration. (photo: Brett Amy Thelen)

### Research on Harris Center Lands

Under the direction of Dr. Denise Burchsted, a team of KSC students are maintaining a network of water quality sensors and conducting stream habitat research on three streams on Harris Center conserved lands. Dr. Renate Gebauer's students are also



#### **Pollinator Surveys**

KSC senior Elijah Wyman conducts bee surveys in the Harris Center's new pollinator garden. (photo: Will Holden)

focusing on Harris Center lands for their two-semester **capstone research** experience in 2015, conducting pollinator and wildlife surveys, assessing road-stream crossings for fish passage and flooding potential, investigating the effects of road salt on plants and soils, and researching historic land use for one of our newly-conserved properties. They'll share their findings in poster sessions at both KSC and the Harris Center later this fall.