



▲ **Tree Coring** Harris Center Director Jeremy Wilson teaches the 2018 KSC conservation internship team how to collect tree cores.

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 faculty to design internship and 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.

Citizen Science



▲ **Spotted Salamander On the Move**
One of 60 spotted salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*) documented crossing North Lincoln Street in Keene in the spring of 2018.

photos: Brett Amy Thelen

In 2018, dozens of students, faculty, and staff members participated in the Harris Center's popular citizen science programs: the **Salamander Crossing Brigades**, in which volunteers identify, count, and move frogs and salamanders across roads 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.



◀ **Nighthawk Nest Remains** Shell fragments, discovered near a Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) nest site in June 2018.



▲ **Vernal Pool Documentation**
Wood frog eggs, discovered and documented in a local vernal pool.

◀ **A Helping Hand for Wood Frogs**
Salamander Crossing Brigade volunteers moved 2,029 wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvatica*) to safety during the 2018 spring amphibian migration. photo: Jess Baum

Conservation Internships

In the sixth year of an innovative partnership with the KSC Department of Environmental Studies (ENST), four outstanding ENST students participated in an 8-week summer **conservation internship program** with the Harris Center. 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 team collected tree core samples for a dendrochronology study, documented vernal pools, inventoried forest communities, surveyed road-stream crossings, measured chestnut seedlings, monitored conservation easements and backcountry campsites, removed invasive plants, maintained trails, planted and watered native plants at a stream restoration site, and assisted with educational events. Their most memorable task was also the most unexpected one: retrieving and transporting not one, but two



dead Bald Eagle chicks — two weeks apart — via canoe and car from Harris Center-conserved land to a wildlife rehabilitation center to be necropsied.

▲ **Native Plantings** The KSC internship team works alongside a group of high school student volunteers to remove invasive species and sow native plantings — which were grown from seed by Katie Featherston in the KSC greenhouse — along the banks of a newly restored stream in Swanzey.

photo: Brett Amy Thelen



◀ **Spoonwood Pond Monitoring** In May and June, the internship team conducted conservation easement and backcountry campsite monitoring on Harris Center-conserved lands along the shores of Spoonwood Pond — canoe-access only! photo: Taylor White

"[My internship experience] allowed me to see how my studies at Keene State can translate into real work and how that work can directly impact the environment." — Taylor White, '18

Community Programs

In 2018, the Harris Center partnered with KSC to offer three **film showings**, three **citizen science trainings**, three **lectures**, and one panel **presentation** — all free and open to the public — with more **400 attendees** in all.



▲ The spring CALL course concluded with a live owl presentation by Marcia and Mark Wilson of *Eyes On Owls*. photo: evanrichman.com

Continuing Education

The Harris Center additionally partnered with KSC's *Cheshire Academy for Lifelong Learning (CALL)* to offer a spring continuing education course on New Hampshire's birds of prey at the RiverMead retirement community, and a fall CALL course on insects.

Questions?

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▲ **Stream Surveys** After a field training with stream specialists from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the KSC-HC conservation interns surveyed 15 road-stream crossings for both fish passage and flood capacity. photos: Brett Amy Thelen



"The Harris Center internship was a phenomenal learning opportunity. It gave me vital tools to understand, communicate, and carry out scientific work." — Audrey Kaiser, '20

Falls Brook Fish Survey

In May, the interns joined biologists from Trout Unlimited and New Hampshire Fish and Game for a fish survey of the Falls Brook stream restoration site in Swanzey. The team found Eastern brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*), tessellated darters (*Etheostoma olmstedii*), and white suckers (*Catostomus commersonii*), among other species. photo: Brett Amy Thelen



Research on Harris Center Lands



In the spring, summer, and fall of 2018, several Environmental Studies students performed wildlife and plant surveys on Harris Center lands as part of their two-semester **capstone research experience**.



trail cam photos: Taylor White