

DIONONDEHOWA

Wildlife Sanctuary & School

ISSUE 19

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2021

DWS&S

Incorporating Purposes

The Wildlife Sanctuary:

- * Provides a recharge area for wildlife on the Sanctuary and in the region
- * Contributes to the corridor that provides migration routes for large animals
- * Provides habitat for native plants and animals in an ever-dwindling natural landscape
- * Provides riparian and landscape beauty for recreational users of the Battenkill
- * Contributes land to existing forever-wild areas

Dionondehowa School:

- * Focuses on Nature Studies, the Healing Arts, and the Expressive Arts in a beautiful natural setting
- * Encourages the free exchange of ideas
- * Makes Expressive Arts, Healing Arts, and Nature programs available to individuals of diverse backgrounds and interests
- * Engenders a sense of social and environmental responsibility
- * Offers skills for implementing social and environmental responsibility



The Presumption of Human Supremacy

I was planning to speak both broadly and specifically to Dionondehowa's 2021 focus but the responses of our Board on pages 2&3 have that covered... so here I offer portraits of a few of the many faces who have said hello to me over the many years, much to my delight and now, hopefully, yours!

Based on the supposition that when we see faces in nature... it is reality's way of saying not only that everything *has* consciousness but that *together* everything-*is*-consciousness.

Just an idea for your consideration. And if *it is* true then our Presumption of Human Supremacy is an obstacle to deep delight and belonging.

~Bonnie Hoag

DWS&S Board of Directors

Danielle Anastasia
Peter Andrea
Nancy Brown
Stanley Dorn
Bonnie Hoag
Leilah Mariposa
Geoffrey Ovington
Kristi Plunkett
Eric Strebel



The Presumption of Human Supremacy ❁ Our Dionondehowa Board Responds

There was a time (not so very long ago) when *domesticated* was neither a word, nor a concept. Everything was *Wild*. The idea that humans are somehow superior to anything else is a modern illusion, spurred by big brains feeding dopamine to frothing egos, and manifesting in a delusion of ownership and superiority. When we, as a species, arrived at this point we disassociated ourselves from our true spirit and place in the world. Our loyalty and reverence for the environment as a partner was supplanted by the desire to own, measure, and evaluate our world in an effort to capitalize and exploit what was once *Wild*. Humans were once *humane*. There was respect for the land and the other creatures, and we recognized ourselves as minor characters in a much greater story. When this shifted, the *modern* approach began to take hold, gained speed and continues to devolve, charting our perilous course. This pursuit has become a supremacy based in nothingness. By any standards (other than the human) there have been no measurable gains, and wholesale, catastrophic loss. What can we do to change this course?

~Peter Andrea

As children we are taught the theory of greater than or less than.

This theory is most often used in mathematics...

5 > 4 (five is greater than four)

3 < 6 (three is less than six)

Greater than or less than is not just a mathematical theory.

Humans like this "> or <" equation and we use it in many ways...

Common "> or <" statements that are adopted by humans include...

White > Black

Gay < Straight

Able > Disabled

Humans > All

These statements are the root of much suffering.

They are the beliefs of racists, homophobes, ableists, and human supremacists.

In our effort to recover from human supremacy we may want to create a new greater than or less than equation...

Humans > Supremacy

(But this statement is ridiculously ironic and perpetuates the belief that humans are in fact greater.)

In order to begin healing the damages of human supremacy we must use the missing piece of the "> or <" equation, the equal sign.

Humans = All

Humans are All.

We might acknowledge that we are not greater than or less than any other living organisms (including, loosely speaking, rocks and minerals, too).

We are all beings, existing in this very moment and this makes us one.

~ Leilah Mariposa

earthlings.

The earth is the heart
beating inside my chest.

The flower whose beauty I take in,
a part of me.

The stone who stood witness
to generations before me, my eyes.

The apple satiating my hunger,
the energy that sustains me.

The deer who catches my breath
at the sight of her bounding
over fallen trees and fences, my meditation.

The moon and sun,
my light and warmth.

The tree, whose breath I inhale,
my life.

It's all part of me, given freely.
May I learn to care and give back as freely.

- for they are not other

~Danielle Anastasia



I grew up in the suburbs of Texas and didn't have a relationship or connection with nature. I remember a lot of concrete and dusty school yards.

It wasn't until I moved to New Jersey in the sixth grade that I became aware. I marveled at all of the colors, the sounds of trees rustling, and the feel of the air during my first fall there. As I struggled to adjust to the move, walks in the woods were therapeutic.

Again, newly in college in upstate New York, nature was there for me when I was losing my way. Walking on the Sanctuary among the trees and alongside the Battenkill - taking in all of the sights and sounds - I was able to think clearer, recollect myself, and move forward.

If we subscribe to the presumption of human supremacy, we take away the power of nature as refuge.

~ Eric Strelbel

Dionondehowa's 2021 Calendar of Events

- May 8 *Annual Bird Walk* 9am - Noon Donation
- May 22 *Creek Restoration Workshop* 9am - 4pm Volunteers needed See article page 4
- June 27 *Taconic Music Concert* in The Muse Room 3pm Joint fundraiser
- July 17 *Introduction to the Abenaki Language* with Jesse Bruchac 1 - 4:30pm \$30
- July 31 *Healing the Wounds of Human Supremacy - a Yogic Adventure* with Kristi Plunkett 10am - 1pm
Dionondehowa fundraiser \$50 donation (Raindate: August 7)
- August 14 *Old-growth Forest Study* with David Hunt 1 - 4pm Volunteers needed See article page 4
- August 21 *Finding Faces in Nature* with Bonnie Hoag 1 - 4:30pm \$30

Please note that while access to the Sanctuary is through the School, visits by appointment are available at 518.854.7764.

✧ *Maybe it's not win-or-lose. Maybe it's winnow-and-loosen.* ✧

Throughout my childhood we had a family vegetable garden. In my teens I began to hear about ways of farming that promoted chemically created fertilizers added to the soil and made only from NPK without any other nutrients. The seeds were coated with chemicals to discourage the eating by the birds and seed-eating animals.

When the seeds began to grow, the young plants were sprayed with yet more chemicals to eliminate, by poisoning, the insects who might eat the plants. As the plants matured to the stage of being edible and ripening, they were sprayed with more chemicals to "save the fruit" from animals and insects eating them.

Then they were harvested and brought to the stores *for us to eat*.

Who *were these humans* who decided that this was a *good idea* - after thousands of years of gardening and farming societies... who had lived in more natural ways and *fed themselves in fair weather and in winter?*

Even way back then, as a youngster, I was drawn to the mantra of "organic gardening" and I still am!

~ Nancy Brown



Healing The Wounds of Human Supremacy - A Yogic Adventure

Saturday July 31 10am to 1pm \$50

This workshop will be led by Kristi Plunkett a Registered Yoga Teacher and *Founder of Yoga for Funks Sake*. www.yogaforfunksake.com

Through our Bodies and Breath we will explore and honor the interdependence between Humans and Non-Human Beings.

We'll work with the physical practice of Yoga Asanas on the mat, Pranayama (guided breathing techniques), Deep Rest through Guided Meditation, Walking Meditation with the Land, Journaling, Inquiry, and Sharing.

By creating and honoring the energetic and physical forms of Non-Human Beings, we re-establish ourselves as allies. And as allies, we help dismantle the presumption of Human Supremacy.

Through compassion and kindness toward all Beings, we remember our way back to ourselves and our true nature. Our liberation is contingent on the liberation of all Beings.

~Kristi Plunkett



Mysterious Stone Piles

We are continuing to explore the mystery of the five stone piles on the Sanctuary which are thought to be ancient artifacts. Last year's request to the New England Antiquities Research Association (NEARA) put us in touch with researcher and author, Curtiss Hoffman. His book, *Stone Prayers*. For those whose curiosity is piqued, you may want to request by email our minute-long video scanning the field and stone piles.



Leilah Gaia Mariposa **Our New Board Member**

Whenever I visit Dionondehowa I like to play the baby grand piano in The Muse Room. I've been playing that piano since I was a kid. Much of my early musical experience came from concerts, drum circles, and the music of the land itself.

Now, as a student at Berklee College of Music in Boston, I'm studying *Music Business* and *Songwriting* as well as fulfilling the responsibilities of a founding board member of The Berklee Japanese Ensemble.

Many hours of my life have unfolded happily at the Sanctuary: swimming at the River, admiring snakes among the stone walls, taking long exploring walks getting to know the land. And... I've been there to help with the Creek Restoration Project, clearing old farm roads as trails, and removing invasive plant species. For me, serving on the Sanctuary's Board of Directors is yet another way to give back.

And then there's the spirit of this place. When I'm feeling uprooted or anxious, a trip to the Sanctuary always helps me breathe easier.

LGM

The Berklee Japanese Ensemble's first production "Teo Torriatte" can be enjoyed on Youtube.

✧ *Being alive is a mystical adventure* ✧

Creek Restoration and Ceremony

Saturday May 22 9am - 4pm Guided by David Hunt

As part of an ongoing series to clean up the major human disturbances along the corridor of Batten Kill tributary T28 on the Sanctuary, we will focus our 19th year's efforts on continued removal of invasive Honeysuckles, moving downstream from where we left off in 2020 - North of the wetland pond".

In addition to simply removing these shrubs we plan to link Spirit and Science by sharing stories and circles related to the streams, invasions, restoration and other ideas stirred by our activity. Lunch will be provided with attention to Covid protocols. We will also celebrate David's 62nd birthday which is May 23! Volunteers are asked to bring sturdy work gloves, energy, love for streams, and openness to restorative healing.



Regrowing Old-Growth Forest **Monitoring Regrowth on the Sanctuary**

Saturday August 14 1pm - 4pm Guided by David Hunt

This workshop will recap characteristics of old-growth forest patches outlined in the 2016 workshop, following the guidelines of the New York Old-Growth Forest Association. The area chosen as a model in 2016 for "forever-wild" will be evaluated for long-term progression of forest maturity. It has now been five years since that permanent plot was chosen and several measurements of key maturity features were recorded.

On August 14 we will return to assess the progress of this forest patch's recovery toward an eventual old-growth state by updating measurements for many forest characteristics and any long-term impacts from an ATV trespass within the plot in 2018.

Abenaki Workshop with Jesse Bruchac

Saturday July 17 1pm - 4:30pm \$30



Join us for an *Introduction to the Abenaki Language* with Jesse Bruchac from Ndakinna, Greenfield Center, NY. Through stories and songs, with drum and flute, Jesse returns to us the beautiful ancient language that once sang through the woods and along the valley. Dionondehowa: TAWN TA ho WA: "she opens something for someone". Come help the land (and the river) remember its voice.

The Sanctuary has long been lively with Spirits but it was only in 2020 that we discovered unexplained anomalies in a video which was thought to be only capturing a Pileated Woodpecker on an Ash Tree. A streak of light can be seen coming through the woods, then exploding along the stalk of the tree. A moment later an unknown shape manifests near the ground, then zips behind the tree and explodes in a flash, lower along the stalk. For anyone who would like to receive this short video and has the capacity to slow it for frame-by-frame study we welcome an email.



This Revolutionary War Long Gun Trigger Guard with pineapple motif was uncovered during a 2018 metal-detector exploration. Other artifacts, such as metal buttons manufactured in the 1830's, suggest colonizing site-occupation from that period forward. If so, the trigger guard may have been on "grandpa's gun" - an 18th century war relic. Your speculations are welcome.



Nick Ruepp, Dionondehowa volunteer extraordinaire and husband of Board Member Kristi Plunkett, takes a moment - between tasks - to bask in autumnal beauty. He led the Fall 2020 workcrew, reopening the old farm-road trail that had been lost to Russian Olive bushes.

Thanks to Mike Conklin and Alex Rich who, in Spring of 2020, took on the challenge of collecting and removing - for recycling - those ornery piles of rusted metal which had been pulled up from the Creek during our 2019 Creek Restoration Workshop.

Special thanks to CJ Davidsen, off-duty Sheriff's Deputy, who again patrolled the Sanctuary for "deer season" 2020. As a gesture of gratitude for CJ's generosity, Dionondehowa made a donation in his name to the Washington County Sheriff's Department's *Explorers Post* program, a favorite of CJ's "for young people who like law enforcement and want to see what it's like".

✧ *Facts are mutable. Truth is subjective. Intuition can fill the gap!* ✧

Lyme Disease as Biowarfare Update Please read our 2020 article on page 5 of last year's *Newsletter*. Not much has changed except that Lyme Disease and its ever-morphing list of co-infections have been supplanted by Covid-19, also ever-morphing - another example of protean disease, another instance of the term "conspiracy theory" being used to stop public demand for an end to Biosafety Level Four weaponized-disease laboratories, worldwide.

Further, are the mice, pigs, and macaques - who are sacrificed in the testing of vaccines - victims of the *Presumption of Human Supremacy*?

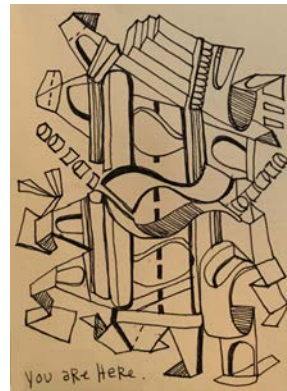
When we were first brainstorming about the *presumption of human supremacy*, we had a lot of fun compiling a list of references to animals and their characteristics - as interpreted by humans. Dumb as an ox. Sly as a fox. Don't badger me! You chicken. Don't be cowed. She's a real cougar. You're so catty. You dodo bird! *You get the idea!*

Over the course of an hour of rollicking good fun, our list burgeoned to fifty and then toppled into disparaging references to plants - dumb as a stump... and minerals - dumb as a box of rocks. For many years now when someone says, "he's a male chauvinist pig"... I respond, "Oh please don't denigrate our porcine brothers and sisters... by comparing them to us!"

Now, we invite *you* to add to our list. It'll be more fun than a barrel of monkeys. It doesn't have to be all sassy either! Sometimes they're terms of endearment. Soft as a kitten. Wise as an owl.

Email your list to dionondehowa@yahoo.com. The longest list received by May 1st will win you a walk on the Sanctuary, guided by a member of our Board! BH

In celebration of the life of David W. Buck, who was born April 14, 1944 and died October 24, 2020, a longtime supporter of Dionondehowa and husband of Patti Hoag Buck, sister to Dionondehowa's Co-founder and Director.



◀ Covid Update

Geoengineering Update

Please read our 2020 article on page 5 of last year's *Newsletter* found at the top of our homepage at dionondehowa.org. Not much has changed: notables like Ken Caldeira, David Keith, and Bill Gates are still discussing the *possibility* of using Solar Radiation Management to mitigate global warming... and yet... anyone with the courage to look can plainly see SRM is already implemented. Here is yet another example of how the term "conspiracy theory" is used to control the narrative and silence public debate. And - mitigation or not - geoengineering-the-planet reeks of *Presumption of Human Supremacy*.

Thanks to Board Member Kristi Plunkett for including Dionondehowa in the *Enviro Tokens Program* at the Honest Weight Co-op in Albany, where she is a member. The program rewards shoppers with a nickel for each reusable bag they bring when Co-op shopping. They then can keep their nickels or choose a nonprofit they'd like to support. There are five different organizations selected each quarter and we are now among those five through to the end of March.

Kristi also connected us with the Becker Career Center on the Union College campus for a *Virtual Career Fair* where she interviewed interested students for interning and volunteering opportunities on the Sanctuary.

Interns' areas of interest can include: Deep Ecology, Plants, Cataloging Species, Conservation Easements, Environmental Philosophy, Environmental Ethics, Environmental Activism, Environmental Politics, Promoting DWS&S programs to increase public involvement and attendance, Development of social media accounts, Establishment/Management of a Crowdfunding Campaign, Capital Campaigns - structure and effectiveness, Land Spirits: Land Memories, Emotional Landscape.

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Come to your senses at Dionondehowa!

copied on 100% PCW recycled paper

☀ *Come to your senses at Dionondehowa!* ☀



Union College Ozone House Covid-pod and Dionondehowa pod de-masking briefly for this photo on our October 2020 Workday

Dionondehowa Wildlife Sanctuary & School, Inc. is a non-profit land trust located on 217 acres bordering the Battenkill (Dionondehowa before the Dutch came) in southern Washington County, New York State. While the Sanctuary serves as a refuge and recharge area, the School is dedicated to Nature Studies and to the Healing and Expressive Arts, using them to engender social and environmental responsibility, in an atmosphere both contemplative and joyful. The name Dionondehowa, pronounced dye-on-on-duh-how-uh, was first recorded in 1709 and is listed in Beauchamp's *Aboriginal Place Names of New York State*. It means "She Opens the Door for Them" and may have referred to the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee) Confederacy. Or maybe not...

In early Spring, 2021, Vermont Public Radio began to compile a list of Abenaki place names in the state. Since the Battenkill's source is near Dorset, VT, we inquired of Abenaki teacher Jesse Bruchac what the word Dionondehowa might be and with what meaning. TAWN TA ho WA - "she opens something for someone". So the mystery remains. Who is she? What is opened? And for whom?



Two poems by Director Bonnie Hoag are included in this 2021 anthology.



Barred Owl with Rabbit & Deer. By Patti Evans in Manchester, VT



Is this an example of the Presumption of Human Supremacy? A snowmobiler leaves Stanton Road to cross our fields (without permission).



Phil Clark's machine for August 2020 mowing of the Long-grass Nesting fields and pushing back on perimeter succession.



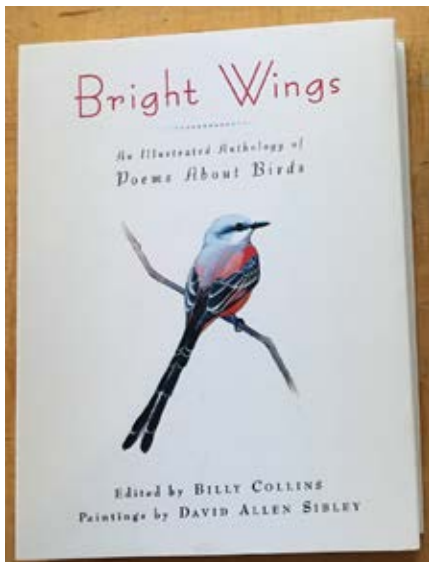
A Summer 2020 visit from former intern Jess Bieber with husband Bobby Koeth and Hannah Maisie.



A Bear came through and left this dietary study including lintels that'd been composted.



An example of the Presumption of Human Supremacy?



Poetry book donated by Robbie and Bliss McIntosh commemorating past Birdwalk adventures.



Presumption of Human Supremacy? Ammunition ad in the NYS DEC regs



Patti & Jim Evans Spring-cleaning the Bluebird boxes.