



Land Preservation Society of Norton, Inc.

Post Office Box 204 • Norton, Massachusetts 02766

[www.nortonlandpreservation.org](http://www.nortonlandpreservation.org)

## The LPS Insider Summer 2025



We acknowledge that LPS owns land which was once part of the original Wampanoag territory when explorers and settlers arrived in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## Welcome to the LPS Insider Newsletter

The Land Preservation Society of Norton is an all-volunteer organization which owns nearly 1100 acres of land in Norton. We work to protect and preserve natural resources, natural areas and historic sites, and to provide open space and educational opportunities for the public.

We would love some help with publicity, graphic design, fund raising, trail maintenance, and more. If you enjoy walking our trails and/or attending our events you might like to support our efforts by volunteering your skills and talents.

Contact us at [nortonlandpreservation.org](http://nortonlandpreservation.org) or by email  
[admin@nortonlandpreservation.org](mailto:admin@nortonlandpreservation.org) if you would like to help.

## Upcoming Events

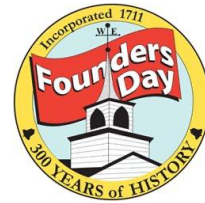
### Pride Day

Look for our table at the Norton Pride Event  
Norton Outdoor Center at Camp Finberg  
Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025  
11AM – 3 PM



### Founders Day

Look for our table at the Founder's Day Event  
Behind the Yelle School  
Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
3 PM – 6:00 PM



## Support LPS by Becoming a Member

**Donate online at [nortonlandpreservation.org](http://nortonlandpreservation.org)**

**or**

**Mail a check to**

**Land Preservation Society of Norton, Inc.**

**PO Box 204**

**Norton MA 02766**

#### **Individual**

\$20 for a one-year membership.

#### **Household**

\$40 for a one-year membership.

#### **Seniors (65 years and up) and Students**

\$10 for a one-year membership

#### **Life Membership**

\$300 for an individual and \$500 for a couple gives you a lifetime membership.

#### **Become a Trail Blazer**

With a \$500 donation, you can name a trail after yourself, a family member or a friend.

## Spotlight on Wild Things & Wild Places

### An Uninvited Guest: Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)— Kathy Morgan

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is a European and Asian native plant that is now found commonly throughout North America. Its common name “garlic mustard” derives from the observation that its leaves when crushed have an odor of garlic.



In its native lands, it is an important plant for many insect species. It also has traditional medicinal and culinary uses. In fact, it was imported to the United States in the 1800's for these reasons.

But here, far from the diseases and insects that have co-evolved to keep it in check, it has become quite a problematic invasive species, rapidly outcompeting native plants and taking over our forest floors.

Garlic mustard is a biennial, only setting seed in its second year. In its first year of growth, its leaves are rounder, like the lower leaves in the drawing above. In its second year, the plant grows a flowering stem and has leaves that are more heart-shaped and triangular, with a toothy edge. At the top of the stem, small white four-petaled flowers appear in the spring. If left to be pollinated, these flowers lose their petals, and the plant develops long slender seed pods such as you can see in this drawing. Each plant can produce hundreds of seeds. The establishment of a large seed bed in the soil surrounding these plants is why they come back in the same area year after year, as though they were perennials.



Garlic mustard is a problematic invasive species in North America for several reasons. First, prolific seed production enables it to spread rapidly. In terms of sheer numbers, it rapidly outcompetes native forest floor species such as Jack-in-the-pulpit, Lady's slipper, dog-toothed violet, and wild geranium. It is an early spring bloomer and shoots up before many of these native plants have begun to emerge, thus blocking the ability of natives to get the sunlight and nutrients they need. Second, its roots release a group of chemicals that are toxic to other forest plants and to soil fungi important for helping trees to absorb needed nutrients. Finally, the plant itself is toxic to the caterpillars of several native butterfly species, who because of its resemblance to native mustards will mistakenly lay their eggs on it. Younger plants contain quite a bit of cyanide and are toxic to any vertebrate naïve enough to eat them.

Fortunately, garlic mustard is an easy plant to remove. It has a long tap root but one that does not take a strong hold on the soil, and thus, if grabbed near its base and gently pulled on, it is easily pulled out of the soil intact. Remove plants as soon as you see them, and especially before they begin to flower and go to seed. Place them immediately in a trash bag to discard them; do NOT add them to your compost pile. You will need to keep checking the area over several years, but in time, you can remove garlic mustard from your garden and help preserve the biodiversity of our native New England fields and forests.

## Grand Re-opening of the L.A. Foster Refuge

On May 3, 2025, LPS held a grand re-opening of the Foster Refuge on Route 140 in Norton, attended by members of the town Select Board, state representatives, members of LPS and the local community. The Refuge is named for Leighton A. Foster who purchased the land in 1942. In 1992 his widow, Marjorie Foster donated 47 acres to the Land Preservation Society of Norton. Subsequent donations from the Foster family have expanded the preserve to nearly 100 acres on either side of Taunton Avenue. This land was once the site of a thriving copper works industry founded in 1831 by three brothers from the Crocker family. The Crocker Brothers Copper Works produced copper sheets for sheathing the bottom of ships and copper coin blanks used by the U.S. mint to produce pennies. The Foster mile-long trail, with its tranquil setting and changing seasonal views, has long been a popular place to walk, thanks to the efforts of the LPS Trails committee. Enhancements to this land began with a project by a Wheaton student intern, Jessie Kilburn, in 2023. She researched and designed a story board poster about the Copper Works that once existed on this site. The Norton Historical Society was a valuable resource for information on this subject, as was Marshall Martin, a native of Norton and member of the LPS Board of Directors. You can see the Copper Works poster as you walk the Foster trail.



A grant awarded by the Norton Cultural Council enabled LPS to print the Copper Works poster and to create 6 plaques along the trail with information about the natural features and history of the Foster Preserve. The poster and informational plaques were mounted and installed by Norton High School Wood/Tech Shop students supervised by their teacher, David 'Pops' Cuddington. Employees of Alnylam Pharmaceuticals helped clear the trail and install benches overlooking the Wading River. The Norton Cultural Council grant also funded the cost of printing the brochures on the Foster Wildlife Refuge, and the construction of two of the benches along the trail where you can stop to take in beautiful views.

Taken from an essay by Ann Murray.

## LPS and the WW II Veterans Memorial Trail

Often called the Rail Trail, this 6.6-mile trail runs from Mansfield Center to Crane Street in Norton. The Norton section which will open this summer generally follows the abandoned Old Colony Railroad track bed. A water permeable section crosses the LPS Dahl Preserve, and the trail runs by the LPS Henrich-Johnson land on North Washington Street. It passes through typical eastern Massachusetts mixed forest, primarily a pine-oak forest, but with a wide variety of tree species, shrubs, and plants. Both the Dahl and Henrich properties have vernal pools, and the Henrich land is on the Rumford River. Parts of the area are successional forests on what was formerly farmland. Remnants of stone walls remind us of the past use. Informational signs and kiosks are found along the way.

For great information on the natural history of Norton, visit the [Norton Conservation Commission site](#), select Open Space and Recreation Plan, then Section 4 Environment Part C