

Keene State College and the Harris Center Year in Review 2019



HARRIS CENTER
FOR CONSERVATION EDUCATION
Making Tracks Since 1970!



photo: Brett Amy Thelen

“This internship was vital in bridging the gap between what I learned in the classroom and valuable real-life field experience.”

— Katelyn Fournier '20

▲ **Culvert Assessments** The KSC internship team uses an iPad to enter field measurements into a statewide database of road-stream crossings.

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 greater Keene community.

Conservation Internships

In the seventh year of an innovative partnership with the **KSC School of Sciences, Sustainability, and Health**, four students participated in a two-month summer **conservation internship program** with the Harris Center. Under the guidance of Harris Center staff and KSC faculty mentor Karen Seaver, the interns gained specialized training and firsthand experience with many facets of the Harris Center’s diverse conservation, education, and stewardship work.

Together, the team documented vernal pools, inventoried forest communities, surveyed road-stream crossings for fish passage and flood risk, measured chestnut seedlings, collected data at red-backed salamander research plots, monitored conservation easements and backcountry campsites, removed invasive plants, maintained trails, and assisted with educational events. They also presented on their experience as part of the **Fall 2019 KSC Seminar Series**.



◀ **Pointing Out Pollinators**

In June, the interns assisted with several 2nd grade field trips to study pollinators. Here, intern Julia Yates and a young student observe insects in the Harris Center’s pollinator garden.

photo: Ben Conant



◀ **Vernal Pool Inventory** Faculty mentor Karen Seaver works with the KSC interns to identify amphibian egg masses in a vernal pool on Harris Center-conserved land.

photo: Gianni DeMasco

Monadnock Region Natural History Conference



In November 2019, the Harris Center partnered with KSC, Antioch University New England, Franklin Pierce University, and the UNH Cooperative Extension to host the first-ever **Monadnock Region Natural History Conference** at KSC.

This full-day conference featured 22 short talks and 11 poster presentations on natural history topics ranging from Mount Monadnock to forest management, wildlife to water quality. Dr. Denise Burchsted (Environmental Studies), Dr. Gordon Leversee (Provost's Office), and Misty Kennedy (Campus Events) served on the conference planning committee, and KSC student intern Jacqueline Lundsted worked closely with Harris Center staff on all aspects of conference coordination. Several KSC students and faculty presented original research to the capacity crowd of 160 attendees. We're planning our next conference for fall 2021.

Citizen Science

Dozens of students, faculty, and staff also participated in our 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; 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.



◀ **A Helping Hand for Salamanders**
Salamander Crossing Brigade volunteers moved 795 spotted salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*) to safety during the 2019 spring amphibian migration.
photo: Brett Amy Thelen



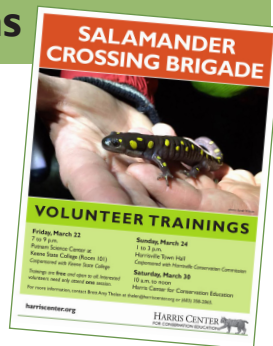
Research on Harris Center Lands

From spring through fall, undergraduate researcher Jackie Lundsted conducted wildlife surveys on Harris Center lands as part of her two-semester **capstone research experience** in Environmental Studies.

◀ **Wildlife Camera Survey: Moose at Robb Reservoir**
A camera trap image of New Hampshire's largest mammal, moving through a large tract of Harris Center-protected land. photo: Jackie Lundsted

Community Programs

In 2019, the Harris Center offered three **film showings**, two **citizen science trainings**, and one **lecture** at KSC — all free and open to the public — with more than 300 attendees in all.



◀ **Understanding Forest Dynamics**
In the fall, Harris Center Director Jeremy Wilson taught a **CALL** course exploring the complex changes our forests undergo over time.
photo: Brett Amy Thelen

Continuing Education

The Harris Center additionally partnered with KSC's **Cheshire Academy for Lifelong Learning (CALL)** program to offer on-campus CALL courses on winter mammals and forest dynamics, as well as a spring course on water at the RiverMead retirement community.



Questions?

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