

BONNYVALE

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Growing Passion for Place, Wildlife, and Wild Lands

The Only Constant is Change

2018 was a year of positive change and much growth at BEEC, thanks to you. We are so grateful to everyone who has supported BEEC's efforts through your memberships, donations, volunteer hours, and participation in our programs and events.

Because demand for our programs continues to grow, BEEC added another Environmental Educator, Emily Hartz, to our team of dedicated staff this year. We also hired a new Director, Linda Huebner. Emily and Linda started at BEEC in October, just in time for the Forest of Mystery. Both have histories of prior involvement with BEEC and are excited to be part of such a committed group of people.

Read on to learn more about what you enabled all of us to accomplish in 2018....





Director's Report

Thank you for your interest in BEEC and our work; I'm so excited to be part of this team. It's wonderful to hear nice things about BEEC around town and I'm grateful for our community support. I'm also eager to meet all of you who make this collaboration possible.

With your help, we're planning for the future, informed by our 27 year history. Since our beginning in 1991, BEEC has been offering residents of all ages opportunities to learn about and connect with the natural world, as well as chances to enhance and conserve it. Going forward, we intend to expand those efforts - both at BEEC and beyond.

I hope to see you in the fields and forests,

Staff

Linda Huebner – Director
Patti Smith – Public Programs, Wildlife Rehabilitation, Conservation Initiatives
Joan Carey – School & Professional Development
Kristina Weeks – Camp & Youth Programs
Emily Hartz – Environmental Educator

Board of Directors

Belle Coles - President
Kathleen White - Vice President
Morgan Ingalls - Treasurer
Mike Auerbach
Tracey Devlin-Grubinger
Tom Hinckley
Jennifer Course

Advisory Committee

Drew Adam
Joe Cook
David Deen
Maggie Foley
John Gorzalek
Alex Wilson
Bob Reuter



Photo by Emily Davis, WRC

"Few are altogether deaf to the preaching of pine trees. Their sermons on the mountains go to our hearts; and if people in general could be got into the woods, even for once, to hear the trees speak for themselves, all difficulties in the way of forest preservation would vanish."

—John Muir

Public Programs

Snowshoeing through wild wetlands, visiting beavers under the Beaver Moon, learning to recognize Jefferson salamander egg masses—these were among the experiences BEEC public programming created during 2018. Our programs offered a wide variety of opportunities to celebrate, marvel at, and learn about the natural wonders of our region and were enjoyed by 522 participants.

We enjoyed synergistic partnerships with other area groups to achieve our programming goals. We co-sponsored climate change lectures with the Dummerston Conservation Commission, Vernal Pool Mapping Training with the Guilford Conservation Commission, and worked with the Green River Watershed Alliance to build sense of place in the Green River towns of Marlboro, Halifax, and Guilford. We partnered with the Vermont Center for Photography to photograph and study dragonflies in the field.

Our Halloween season Forest of Mystery, was once again written and directed by the talented thespian duo James and Jess Gelter. Many wonderful community actors brought *The Everwood* to life for the 450 community members who attended.



Photo by Star Drooker

Nature Explorers Camps

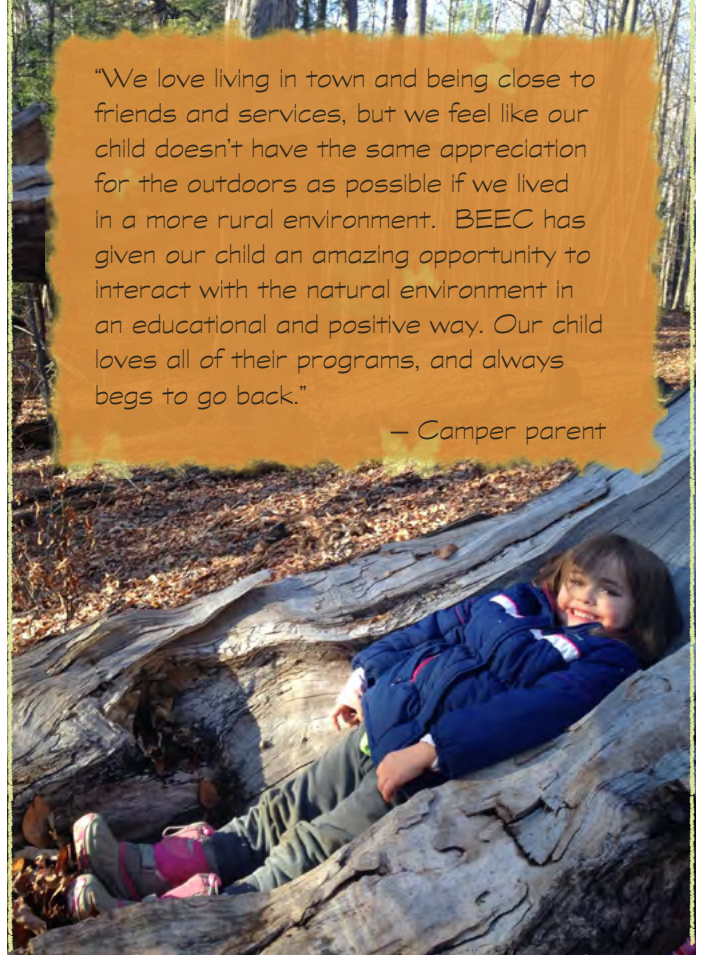
BEEC's lovely Heifer Hill property was once again the perfect place for our spring, summer and winter vacation camps. Discovery, investigation, play, adventure and fun are at the heart of these camps, which serve children ages 4-12. We ran seven weeks of summer day camps, each with a different theme and for a different age group. We also ran camps during the school vacation weeks in February and April.

Our camps foster children's love of nature in a fun, safe, and supportive environment. Campers spend most of each day outdoors, in small groups, exploring the forests, meadows and waters of our 60 acres.

Scholarship funds from your generous donations allowed BEEC to provide scholarship assistance to children who would not otherwise have been able to attend, giving these children an opportunity to learn and play in nature.

"We love living in town and being close to friends and services, but we feel like our child doesn't have the same appreciation for the outdoors as possible if we lived in a more rural environment. BEEC has given our child an amazing opportunity to interact with the natural environment in an educational and positive way. Our child loves all of their programs, and always begs to go back."

— Camper parent



"The programming is interesting, the staff is amazing, the facilities are great, and my child's awe and respect for nature grows with each program attended."

— Camper parent



"Passion is lifted from the earth itself by the muddy hands of the young; it travels along grass-stained sleeves to the heart. If we are going to save environmentalism and the environment, we must also save an endangered indicator species: the child in nature."

—Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*

In 2018 we held Nature Day programs on teacher in-service days and holidays to provide working parents a nature-enriched learning opportunity for their children.

We also continued Great Outdoors, our collaboration with InSight Photography, offering a ten week session of outdoor photography experiences for kids aged 11- 18.



School Programs

Our school programs are as varied as the seasons! In the fall we might be found exploring the fields and forest of BEEC in search of seeds and animal shelters, while the winter months offer ample opportunities for tracking forays as we learn about Vermont animals that remain active here all year long. Vernal pool, pond and stream visits fill many of our spring days as we examine macroinvertebrate and amphibian adaptations.

School Program director Joan Carey has built enduring relationships with regional elementary school teachers, offering professional development to enrich their science curricula and to help them craft programs that connect their education standards to nature.

Demand has been growing for BEEC's programs. Last spring we assembled a team of on-call naturalists to help meet the need. They were amazing! In the fall we hired seasoned educator Emily Hartz to support youth program education.

During the 2017-18 school year, for the first in BEEC's 27 year history, BEEC delivered programs to all 7 schools in WSESU as well as classes in neighboring Newbrook Elementary School, Townshend School, and across the river at Hinsdale Elementary School. Our teaching staff delivered 214 programs for a total of 3,395 student contacts.



Teacher testimonials:


"Just want to extend a big "Thank You" for the wonderful expertise you share to help young and older find understanding and joy in the natural world! Kudos to the BEEC family! "

"We had a wonderful time. I've never seen students so enthusiastic about trees."

"You provide great opportunities for students to explore the world around them and get hooked on science."



I like being in natcher. I like it be cause... thier is lots to... exploring and find out new things. its fun to be in natcher.



"An environment-based education movement—at all levels of education—will help students realize that school isn't supposed to be a polite form of incarceration, but a portal to the wider world."

—Richard Louv

Last Child in the Woods:
Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder

"BEEC programs are always so great-- a combination of classroom and outdoor learning, all aligned to NGSS standards and delivered by knowledgeable naturalist educators who also support classroom teacher learning and involvement. It is an amazing model!"

—Teacher



Wildlife Rehabilitation

BEEC's wildlife rehabilitation program cares for injured and orphaned mammals with the goal of giving these animals a chance to live the wild lives they were born to. We are licensed to care for non-rabies vector mammals, and also help to get birds and rabies vector species (raccoons, skunks, foxes, woodchucks, and bats) to someone who is licensed to treat them. We also fielded many calls from people with questions or concerns about wildlife.

In 2018, 60 injured or orphaned wild animals were admitted for care. Of these, 50 were successfully returned to the wild. Five of the mortalities were porcupines, four of which were afflicted by an unknown malady that we are working with other rehabilitators to identify.

Wildlife Rehabilitator Patti Smith began training a small group apprentices this year, part of our ongoing work to expand and strengthen the capacity to care for injured and orphaned wildlife in the region.



"Only in the last moment in history has the delusion arisen that people can flourish apart from the rest of the living world."

—E. O. Wilson



Salamander Crossing Brigades

Each spring, BEEC organizes volunteers to assist amphibians migrating across roads to their breeding habitat. In 2018 we held two well-attended trainings and recruited new volunteers. They joined the list of 250 who receive our Salamander Crossing Alerts. In 2018, volunteers escorted a reported 2,350 amphibians safely across roads to their breeding pools: 1,326 spotted salamanders, 424 woodfrogs, 454 spring peepers, and 166 other amphibians. These are numbers from the volunteers who send in their reports. We know there are more!

Who we worked with:

Dummerston Conservation Commission
Putney Conservation Commission
Guilford Conservation Commission
Green River Watershed Alliance
Vermont Center for Photography
InSight Photography
Marlboro College
Landmark College
Holton Home
Community College of Vermont
Academy School
Green St School
Oak Grove School
Vernon Elementary School
Putney Central School
Dummerston Elementary School
Guilford Central School
Newbrook School
Townshend Elementary School
Hilltop Montessori School
Marlboro Elementary School
Hinsdale Elementary School
SPARKS program
Guilford Stage and Stream
Summer Program
Community House
Winston Prouty

Other Outreach

There is so much that goes on at BEEC that does not fall into one of the program categories. Here are some examples:

- Naturalist Patti Smith shared her wildlife world with readers of the Brattleboro Reformer through her monthly column, the View from Heifer Hill.
- BEEC staff also contributed an article to each issue of Parent Express, sharing nature activities with parents and kids.
- We also worked with many individuals who called with questions about the natural world, wildlife concerns, or with reports of injured or orphaned wildlife.
- We are working with the Guilford Conservation Commission and the Green River Watershed Alliance on biodiversity inventories that will provide the information needed to practice strategic conservation.



Financials 2018

Income

Donations - \$36,054
Fundraising - \$9,056
Grants - \$5,000
Rental income - \$16,200
Interest/Dividends - \$31,425
Membership - \$4,519
Program Fees - \$87,302
Merchandise - \$587

Expenses

Wages - \$145,473
General Expenses - \$26,436
Repairs - \$5,059
Stipends (contractors) - \$13,697
Insurance - \$11,596
Taxes - \$7,878

Help to support BEEC's mission of developing an ecologically informed citizenry. **Visit our website** or or mail a donation to:
BEEC, PO Box 2318, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

Your donation will allow BEEC to continue and to expand our efforts in 2019. All donations are tax-deductible as allowed by federal law.