

5 Best Places to  
Go Fishing

Easy & Delicious  
Rhubarb Recipes

Spring Babies  
at Billings Farm

YANKEE

# Our Vermont

SPRING 2021



*Celebrating the people, places, and traditions  
that make the Green Mountain State so original*

## Come Wander

While autumn in Vermont announces itself in a blazing foliage display sweeping from north to south, with hundreds of thousands of people flocking to see it, spring arrives without fanfare, without a surge of travelers. But take a moment now and come with me—this time from south to north—as we follow the greening of both the landscape and our spirits.

Daylight lengthens; a layer or two of clothing may be shed. The sweet smell of maple sap being boiled off to syrup in sugar shacks hangs in the air. Each place I stop with you has inspired me, has made me thankful that this small and narrow small state is so full of possibilities.

In Woodstock we find the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, which holds a special place in America's environmental legacy: It includes what was once the home of George Perkins Marsh, whose 19th-century writings sparked a movement of caring for the land that has never ended. Across the street is the Billings Farm & Museum, where in the spring you can roam a working farm that holds cows, draft horses, sheep, chickens, and more, all in a lovely 270-acre setting. This is lambing time, and no matter our age there is something about watching baby animals that quickens our hearts, and takes us back to childhood wonder.



An hour northwest is Ripton, and the farmstead where the poet Robert Frost once lived. Come to see his 19th-century house and its rolling fields, and especially the interpretive trail where you can stop and read his poetry along

the mile-long path. Walk to the apple orchard between the house and his modest writing cabin, and know that where you are standing is where Frost once stood, and inside that little cabin, he wrote some of the most enduring poems of our time.

Just a few more miles west, the University of Vermont's Morgan Horse Farm in Weybridge keeps alive the lineage of Justin Morgan's colt, Figure, one of the most famous horses in American history. Today, visitors look out to the pastures as the foals of spring find their footing and learn the joys of running through the soft grass.

In a final northward push we reach Stowe, a place long treasured by my own family. From the time my two sons could ride their bikes, we'd visit my uncle there, and we'd shake off winter rust riding the famous Stowe Recreation Path. They would pedal fast and furious, then wait for me at one of the numerous wooden bridges that span the West Branch of Little River. When I think of spring in Vermont, this is what memory holds so clear: two young boys, bright light jackets, ball caps on their heads, pedaling as fast as they can, leaving winter behind as they charge into the warming sunlight.

Mel Allen

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**On the cover:** Visitors to Billings Farm & Museum in Woodstock come face-to-face with Vermont's agricultural heritage—and sometimes literally, in the case of this inquisitive Southdown sheep. Photo by Billings Farm & Museum

# Contents



Take a virtual visit to some of photographer Corey Hendrickson's favorite destinations in the Green Mountain State, including Caspian Lake, above. Story, p.18

## *Changing Seasons*

- 4** **First Blush**  
Winter can wind down so slowly that spring sneaks up on you—unless you know where to look.

## *Local Flavor*

- 5** **Sweet on Rhubarb**  
This versatile veggie adds zing to *Yankee*-tested recipes. **Plus:** Tips for growing rhubarb at home.
- 12** **Green's Sugarhouse**  
We head to Poultney for our latest Q&A with small producers who are bringing the bounty of Vermont to our tables.
- 14** **True Colors**  
Looking for a fresh new way to dye Easter eggs? Raid your kitchen.
- 16** **Spreading the Wealth**  
A legendary Vermont jam maker offers tips for home cooks.

## *Destinations*

- 18** **Picture Perfect**  
A *Yankee* photographer shares a portfolio of places that remind him why he loves living in Vermont.
- 23** **Cast Away**  
Get hooked on socially distanced recreation at these top fishing spots.

## **25** **Animal Attractions**

Nothing delivers springtime joy quite like the babies of Billings Farm & Museum.

## *Vermont Life*

## **28** **The Rule of Thaw**

When the deep freeze starts retreating, the action heats up at Joe's Pond.

## **30** **Lilac Time**

How a simple newspaper essay heralding spring became not just a local tradition, but also a symbol of resilience.

## **33** **The Prophet**

Long before the first Earth Day dawned, a gifted Vermonter was laying the groundwork for environmental action.

## *Made in Vermont*

## **36** **Everlasting Glove**

A century-old Randolph company is turning out products that gardeners and lineworkers alike want to get their hands on.

## *One Last Thing*

## **39** **Maple Trivia**

With sugaring season upon us, see if your syrup knowledge makes the grade.

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ULTIMATE SUGAR SNACK TONGS  
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# First Blush

*Winter can wind down so slowly that spring sneaks up on you—  
unless you know where to look.*

Once, during the dark days of February, a friend of mine who lives in a warm place sent me a package in the mail. Inside were little pink-stained shells, a small plastic palm tree, and a tiny pink flamingo. On an index card she wrote: “Instant Tropical Isle! To assemble, take a shallow dish, place palm tree in the center. Arrange shells at base of tree. Add salt water. Place flamingo in shallow water near isle. Replace water when it evaporates.”

In her kindness, she assumed that for those of us who live up here in the north, waiting patiently for spring, anything tropical could lift our spirits. I have, once or twice, gone south during the winter, and I won't say it's not lovely to be there in the free and easy warmth with nothing very much to think about when you go outside. But coming home is so disorienting. I roam around for days, as if I'm looking for something but I can't quite figure what it is.

What I've lost, by being away, is the rhythm of the season's slow progress toward summer. What we gain, by being here, is a sixth sense, a finely tuned instrument capable of detecting even the subtlest signs of the coming warmth.

In the fall we all like to watch the leaves turn, and we chronicle their progress. The television tells us where the colors are the best. Huge tour buses, as misplaced in our landscape as a logging truck would be on Fifth Avenue, lumber along narrow back roads in search of peak color. It's a great festival, a long party

we throw up here for our neighbors to the south, a wild celebration, compliments of our trees.

The advent of spring brings no such ecstatic ritual. Maybe we are asleep, waiting for longer, warmer days to wake us up. Maybe we are all away on our personal tropical isles. Whatever the explanation is, the earliest

days of the season don't necessarily bring the poetry out in us.

There is a quieter ritual, one that starts in February and passes into March, and that is the making of maple syrup. It begins with sugar makers watching the tops of the maples. They wait for the gray hillsides to blush red, by degrees, a sign that the sap has come up. Every day, the tint in the treetops grows gently stronger.

The weather never lets the sugar makers know how long the spell will last. Once the tips of the maple branches come out in flower, the sap is sour; the season is over. They've made all they're going to make until next year. Time to clean up the buckets and go home to sleep.

But with all due respect to the sugar makers, it's the maple buds I wait for. That's my own tiny ritual of March, my instant tropical isle. When the air turns warm, the ends of the reddened branches unfold into ornate lacy blossoms. I go out with clippers and gather all the branch ends I can reach and set the stemmy bouquet in a vase by the window. It's just one bloom, the very first flower of the season, an opening that tells us we're on time, ready for the real flowers that follow. —*Edie Clark*



Local Flavor

# Sweet on Rhubarb

*This versatile vegetable adds zing to favorite Yankee recipes.*

## Savory Rhubarb Compote

*Spread this sweet-and-sour compote on sliced grilled or toasted baguettes, or top with soft mild goat cheese as an hors d'oeuvre. It's also delicious as a sauce served with grilled fish or chicken.*

**½ cup honey**

**¼ cup orange juice**

**1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice**

**1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**

**1 pound rhubarb, cut into ½-inch pieces  
(about 3 cups)**

**½ teaspoon finely chopped fresh rosemary**

**Freshly grated zest of 1 lemon**

**¼ teaspoon kosher or sea salt**

**2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives**

In a heavy-bottomed 2- or 3-quart nonreactive saucepan, combine the honey, orange juice, lemon juice, and vinegar. Set over medium-high heat, and bring to a boil. Add the rhubarb, rosemary, lemon zest, and salt. Simmer until the rhubarb breaks down and the sauce thickens slightly, about 15 minutes. Add the chives, and cook 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. *Yields about 2 cups.*



## Rhubarb Salad with Fennel & Goat Cheese

*Honey-glazed rhubarb gives this nutty salad a hint of sweet-tart pizzazz.*

- 1 pound rhubarb, cut into ½-inch pieces (about 3 cups)**
- ¼ cup honey**
- ¾ cup walnut halves**
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- 1 small shallot, minced**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste**
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 small fennel bulb, fronds removed, cored and very thinly sliced**
- 1 pound mixed baby greens, washed and dried**
- ¾ cup fresh, soft, mild goat cheese**

Preheat your oven to 450° and set one rack to the top position and the other to the middle position. Line two rimmed baking sheets, one large and one small, with foil.

In a medium-size bowl, toss the rhubarb with the honey; then spread the mixture on the larger baking sheet. Arrange the walnuts on the smaller baking sheet.

When the oven is hot, transfer the rhubarb to the top rack and the walnuts to the middle rack. Cook the rhubarb until the honey begins to caramelize, about 5 minutes (watch closely so that it doesn't burn). Remove from the oven. Let the walnuts cook another minute or so, until fragrant. Remove from the oven.

Cool the rhubarb and the nuts on the baking sheets while you make the salad. Pour the vinegar into a large bowl; then add the shallot and the salt and pepper. Add the oil in a thin stream, whisking as you go. Add the fennel and baby greens; toss gently to coat. Distribute the rhubarb over the greens, then break up the goat cheese and sprinkle over the top. Garnish with walnut halves. *Yields 4 individual salads or 6 side salads.*



## Rhubarb–Cherry Crumble

- 1 cup tart dried cherries
- ½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 tablespoon freshly grated orange zest
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for pie plate
- 1 pound rhubarb, cut into ½-inch pieces (about 3 cups)
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ teaspoon table salt, divided
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 ounces almond paste, coarsely grated
- ¼ cup firmly packed light-brown sugar
- 1 large egg yolk
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- Whipped cream or ice cream

Preheat your oven to 375° and set a rack to the middle position. Lightly butter a 9-inch pie plate.

In a 2- to 3-quart pot, combine the cherries, orange juice, and orange zest. Bring to a boil, turn down to low, and simmer about 5 minutes, until the juices are reduced and the cherries are plump. Remove from the heat. Strain the cherries, reserving the juices. Stir the butter into the juices and let cool.

In a large bowl, combine the rhubarb, sugar, cornstarch, ⅛ teaspoon salt, and cherries. Pour into the pie plate and spread evenly with a spatula.

In another bowl, stir together the flour, almond paste, brown sugar, and ⅛ teaspoon salt. Take the cooled juice mixture and whisk in the egg yolk. Drizzle this over the dry ingredients, and stir with a fork to form little pea-sized bits of crumble. Sprinkle evenly over the fruit mixture; then top with sliced almonds.

Bake until juices are bubbling, 35 to 40 minutes. Serve warm or cooled, with whipped cream or ice cream. *Yields 6 to 8 servings.*

## Rhubarb Squares

*These delicious bars are like lemon squares, but with unexpected flavors of rhubarb and cardamom.*

### For the crust:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch cubes, plus more for pan**
- ⅓ cup confectioner's sugar**

### For the topping:

- 4 large eggs, beaten**
- 2 cups granulated sugar**
- ½ cup all-purpose flour**
- ¾ teaspoon kosher or sea salt**
- ¾ teaspoon ground cardamom**
- 4 cups thinly sliced rhubarb (cut crosswise into ¼-inch-thick slices)**
- Confectioner's sugar**

Preheat your oven to 375° and set a rack to the middle position. Butter an 11x16-inch jellyroll pan and line the bottom with parchment paper. (This recipe may also be made in a 9x13-inch baking dish; the squares will be thicker and fruitier, and require more baking time.)

Now make the crust: Put the flour, butter, and sugar in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until the mixture looks like coarse sand. Press into the prepared pan, working it into the corners and sides.

Transfer to the oven, and bake until the crust is just beginning to brown, about 30 minutes. Halfway through, check the crust and press any puffed areas down with a fork.

While the crust is baking, prepare the topping: In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, flour, salt, and cardamom. Then add the rhubarb and stir.

Spread this mixture evenly over the hot crust, return to the oven, and bake 30 to 35 minutes until the top is beginning to brown at the edges. Turn on the broiler, if you like, to further crisp the top, but don't walk away! It can brown very quickly.

Cool the pan on a rack, then sprinkle with confectioner's sugar and cut into squares. *Yields 12 to 15 squares.*



## Rhubarb and Mango Compote

*Tangy, sweet, and creamy, this refreshing dessert is a pretty and unexpected way to make the most of a bumper crop of rhubarb.*

- 2 tablespoons salted butter**
- ½ cup brown sugar**
- 2 tablespoons sweet Muscat wine**
- 1 pound rhubarb ribs, cut into 1-inch pieces**
- ½ cup heavy cream**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 mango, peeled, diced**
- 1 pint ice cream (your favorite flavor)**

Preheat oven to 375°. In a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat, melt butter and cook until lightly browned and fragrant, about 4 minutes. Stir in brown sugar and wine. Raise heat to a simmer and add rhubarb, stirring well to coat.

Place pan in oven 4 minutes. Remove (remember, the handle will be hot) and stir gently. Try not to break up rhubarb. Cook in oven 2-5 minutes longer, depending on the rhubarb's thickness; it should be just tender but not falling apart. Set aside and let cool (or refrigerate up to 4 days).

In a clean, dry bowl, whip cream until it begins to thicken. Add sugar and whip to soft peaks. In parfait glasses, layer rhubarb, diced mango, ice cream, and whipped cream; repeat until filled. *Yields 8 servings.*

# RHUBARB 101

One of the first spring foods that can be harvested from the garden is also one of the easiest crops to grow.

The rhubarb plant dates back thousands of years to Asia, though it has been a standard in Vermont and in other parts of America for centuries. There was a time when New England farm children could often be found munching on raw cuts of the tart stalk vegetable that had been coated in sugar.

The earliest culinary use of rhubarb was primarily as a filling for tarts and pies (in 19th-century America, it was called “pie plant”), and this is still true today. But there’s so much more you can do with rhubarb: purée it for sweet and savory sauces, bake it in an upside-down cake, toss it in a salad. It’s also packed full of nutrients, being very high in potassium, manganese, and vitamin C.

Even better, rhubarb is an easy plant to grow, and once well established in your garden it will produce for several years. Though harvest season in Vermont runs roughly from May to June, early spring is the perfect time to get your patch established.

—Shelley Wigglesworth and Jane Walsh

## Growing rhubarb

- Choose an area that receives full sun, is well-drained, and has rich soil with plenty of organic matter.
- Plant rhubarb crowns (not seeds) in the early spring when the ground is able to be worked and the roots are still dormant. It is fine to plant crowns before the last frost. Although the tops of the plant stalks and leaves may freeze, the base will produce new growth below the soil. You may also plant crowns in the fall after dormancy has set in.
- Space the rhubarb plants about 2-3 feet apart and dig large holes deep enough to cover the roots of the plant crowns about 2 inches below the ground.
- Water well all season to allow the plants to become properly rooted. New buds will push up as warmer weather arrives.
- Remove any flower stems that appear to ensure the plant energy stays in the crown area.



- It’s best to not harvest any rhubarb during the first year of growth after planting, in order for the plant to become hearty and established.
- Wait approximately 5-6 years before transplanting crowns.

## Harvesting rhubarb

- When rhubarb stalks are approximately a foot long, it is time to harvest. Do not pull

stalks out to remove; instead, cut the stalks at the base of the rhubarb plant or twist gently at the base, allowing the base and roots to stay undisturbed.

- Be sure to leave at least half of the stalks on the plants to ensure healthy future harvests.
- Note: Rhubarb leaves are toxic, so be sure to remove them before washing, preparing, processing, or eating your rhubarb.

Local Flavor



# Green's Sugarhouse

*As part of an ongoing series, we meet up with small producers bringing the bounty of Vermont to our table.*



In a year of milestones many of us would just as soon forget, Pam and Rich Green reached one last May that was truly worth celebrating: 50 years of marriage. Hitting the “golden anniversary” was maybe inevitable for the Poultney couple, given that their lives revolve around maple syrup. Since the 1980s they’ve been turning maple sap into liquid gold—and a host of related treats—as the owners of Green’s Sugarhouse, which sits on land settled by Rich’s family before the American Revolution.

Pam will tell you it’s a peaceful life, out there in the Vermont woods, but a busy one too. When we caught up with her in early January, she and Rich—with the help of general manager Lexi Bancroft and the family beagles, Tapper and Ellie—were already out fixing tap lines and putting up new tubing in preparation for what everyone hopes will be a maple season to remember. —*Jenn Johnson*



Rich and Pam Green, with general manager Lexi Bancroft (CENTER).

## Did you ever dream this is what you’d end up doing for a living?

Rich knew from the start he would get into sugaring; it’s always been in his family. As for me, when I was small, my parents would go and help the neighbors during sugaring season, but all I really remember was that we could bring home syrup afterward, which I treasured. Until I met Rich, I didn’t think too much about having maple syrup in my life ... aside from eating it.

## How do you two divide up the work?

We decided a long time ago that retail was the way to go, and I do enjoy that side of things—sometimes I have so many ideas for new products that Rich has to put his foot down! But basically each of us knows how to do every facet of the business, from running the log splitter and moving barrels to boiling the sap and making products. It’s the same with Lexi, our general manager.

And all three of us take turns being greeters for our visitors. It’s something we all share in and enjoy, presenting our way of life to people.

## What are some things you found yourself doing for the first time last year?

Asking customers to schedule when they would come in, doing curbside pickup, changing around how people enter the retail area—and of course the mask mandate—those were all new. But another big change was how much more we relied on the Internet. With people buying

more online, we were lucky to already have a well-established website. We usually do farmers’ markets and three to four really big retail shows a year, and those just did not happen. So we found that by using Facebook and Instagram, we could keep up people’s interest in what was going on at the sugarhouse. And we participated in a few virtual retail shows—that was really new!

## So what do you think this year’s maple season will look like?

Well, if you’re a sugarmaker, you tend to be an optimist. We look forward to spring every year, and we usually don’t make too many predictions.

I do miss having an open format, and I hope that comes back before too long. It’s so nice for people to be able to stop by without calling ahead, like visiting a neighbor. Or maybe you’re driving around New England in an RV, and you decide to look up a sugarhouse and just drop in. I love that feeling of personal connection with customers, and I’m looking forward to returning to that.

## IF YOU GO

■ **Green’s Sugarhouse** in Poultney is open by appointment; call 802-287-5745. [greenssugarhouse.com](http://greenssugarhouse.com)

■ **Vermont Maple Open House** has been canceled for 2021; however, many sugarhouses are allowing visitors, and all welcome your business. [vermontmaple.org](http://vermontmaple.org)

# True Colors

*Kitchen staples offer a fresh new way to dye Easter eggs.*



Coloring Easter eggs with homemade dye yields Easter eggs with a much more natural hue, and can be done using common kitchen ingredients. The only downside? Homemade egg dye means a longer soak for the eggs—two to three hours—but all-natural beauty like this is well worth the wait. Use the finished eggs in your Easter decor, or in a braided Easter egg bread. —Christine Chitnis

### Ingredients

- Hard-boiled white eggs, shells on (save the egg cartons to use later, for drying)
- Water
- White vinegar
- Salt
- Beets, ground coffee, red cabbage, ground turmeric

### Instructions

First, make your egg dye base: Combine 4 cups water, 1 tablespoon white vinegar, and 1 tablespoon salt.

Soak in the homemade egg dye (see recipes below) until eggshells reach the desired shade, two to three hours; the longer you soak them, the deeper and richer the color will be. Using a spoon, set the eggs into their carton(s), and let them dry thoroughly.

#### Natural red dye: Beets

Roughly chop 2 beets, and combine with the dye base. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes. Strain into a bowl and reserve the liquid for dyeing. Let cool.



#### Natural brown dye: Coffee

Combine 4 tablespoons of ground coffee with the dye base and stir well. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Strain into a bowl and reserve the liquid for dyeing. Let cool.

#### Natural blue dye: Red cabbage

Shred half a large red cabbage and combine with the dye base. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes. Strain into a bowl and reserve the liquid for dyeing. Let cool.



#### Natural yellow dye: Turmeric

Combine 5 tablespoons of ground turmeric with the dye base and stir well. Simmer just until the turmeric dissolves, 2 to 3 minutes. Pour into a bowl and reserve the liquid for dyeing. Let cool.

# Spreading the Wealth

*A legendary Vermont jam maker  
offers tips for home cooks.*



**F**or Vicky Allard, the search for new preserve flavor combinations is limitless, almost addicting. “I’m always discovering possibilities,” says the English-born Vermonter, who in 2009 founded Blake Hill Preserves with her husband, Joe Hanglin. “It can be a problem.” Allard’s quest began when she was a young girl making preserves with her mother and grandmother in their family home. It continues today in Windsor, where she and her team produce Blake Hill jams, marmalades, and chutneys, which have earned international accolades and are sold in more than 300 stores across the country. Here, she shares some favorite tips for home cooks on how to make jam. —*Ian Aldrich*

### Start Simple

Allard recommends that newbie jam makers go the basic route to get some successes under their belts. “Raspberries are a great first option. They’re naturally high in pectin, and if you do it right, they’ll keep their deep-red color. The jars of jam will look beautiful.”

### Get the Proper Pot

To avoid a boilover, Allard advocates using a wide pot that’s three times as high as the depth of your berries. Begin on low heat to warm the mixture up; then, as soon as it starts to seep juice, add sugar. You want your mixture to be equal parts berries and sweetener. Once the mixture begins to boil, bring the heat down to medium and continue to cook off the excess water.

### Set It Right...

Jam reaches its perfect set point at 220°. An instant-read thermometer is a must, and you’ll know you’re getting close to that finished point as the mixture’s bubbles begin to get smaller. But Allard, who doesn’t add pectin to her products, also notes that you can employ other methods. For example, start by placing a plate in the freezer when you begin cooking. As you near setting, take it out and place a dollop of the hot jam on the surface. Let it sit for a minute; then run your finger through it. If it’s developed a nice skin, you’re done. If it’s still runny, keep cooking. Another trick: Dip a spoon into the jam, turn it on its side, and hold it over the pot. If the drops cling to the spoon and sheet off, you’re there.

### ...and Seal It Tight

The jars that will hold your jam must be clean and sterile. “Don’t use anything that has cracks or is compromised,” Allard says. Once they’re clean, run



Vicky Allard and her husband, Joe Hanglin, launched Blake Hill Preserves after a jar of their homemade wild blackberry and apple jam won them their first commercial order, from the Grafton Village Store, back in 2009.

them through the dishwasher without detergent, or place them in the oven at 275° for 15 minutes to bake. When you’re ready, fill the hot jars with your hot, newly made jam, being sure to leave a quarter-inch of space at the top. Then seal tightly with a new lid.

Finish by putting the jars into a hot-water bath—make sure they’re submerged at least two inches—to create a proper vacuum seal.

### Explore the Possibilities

As you become more comfortable making preserves, start experimenting. Allard’s suggestion: Follow your senses. “Browse your local market and explore the herbs and spices,” says Allard, who’s played around with everything from hibiscus flowers to chai. “Think about the flavors that you enjoy and love to eat.”

To learn more about Blake Hill Preserves, go to [blakehillpreserves.com](http://blakehillpreserves.com).

# Picture Perfect

*Photographer Corey Hendrickson shares a portfolio of places that remind him why he loves living in Vermont.*



A few years ago, Corey Hendrickson trekked up Vermont's Mount Abraham with his friend Peter Fried, a Burlington-based landscape painter. It was a gorgeous September afternoon—warm, with blue skies overhead—and as the two made their way down, Hendrickson made a picture of his buddy and the autumn-tinted Green Mountains that rolled on behind him.

"It captures a lot of what I love about Vermont," says Hendrickson. "You see the ruggedness of the landscape but also the scale. There's a vastness to it you don't normally associate with New England."

Hendrickson's love of photography and Vermont both go back to childhood. The Lexington, Massachusetts, native was raised by parents who themselves were never far from a camera, and in high school he delved into the world of the darkroom and black-and-white photography. Landscapes and the outside world became his focus.

Family trips, meanwhile, brought him to the Green Mountain State. There was skiing at Sugarbush Resort and weekends visits to Burlington to see his sister at the University of Vermont. Hendrickson eventually landed at UVM too, where he studied forest biology.

Summer work with the U.S. Forest Service and then post-college life took Hendrickson out west. Settling in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, he almost always kept a camera with him, shooting pictures of his adventures, his friends, and the landscapes they explored. By the mid-2000s, however, nearly a decade after he'd left New

England, Hendrickson felt the pangs of homesickness. He wanted to come back east—and to one state in particular.

"Vermont had always felt like home to me," he says. "It's easy to think that, compared to the West, everything back east feels like the city. But in Vermont you can get to some remote part of the woods so easily. Or go down some gravel road and get a little lost in a place you've never been before. It's accessible in ways you don't often find in other places."



Corey Hendrickson

Over the past decade and a half, Hendrickson has gotten to know Vermont's lands and people as few other photographers have. His *Yankee* assignments alone have covered all facets of his adopted state, from artisans and crafters to outdoor-recreation hubs such as the Mad River

Valley, and homegrown celebs including Anaïs Mitchell, creator of the Tony-winning *Hadestown*.

"Vermonters have this resourcefulness of making stuff work," he says. "I admire that. They find ways to make or build something any way they can."

Including building a unique life in Vermont—just as Hendrickson has. —*Ian Aldrich*

To see more of Corey Hendrickson's photography, go to [coreyhendrickson.com](http://coreyhendrickson.com).



PREVIOUS PAGE: "Caspian Lake in Greensboro is a Northeast Kingdom gem. I love its small scale," says Hendrickson. Another favorite spot for him is historic Highland Lodge, which sprawls across 132 acres on Caspian Lake and beautiful Barr Hill. "While the resort has some modern conveniences, it lets you focus on the important things: family and nature."

LEFT: At 4,393 feet, Mount Mansfield towers over the landscape northeast of Burlington and ranks as the tallest mountain in the state. Thanks to its large rocky summit, "there are lots of places to find solitude even when it's busy at the top," says Hendrickson. "Also, I enjoy the feeling that I'm walking along the 'spine' of the Green Mountains."

## Destinations

**RIGHT:** Located just 20 minutes from Hendrickson's home in Middlebury is this favorite local swimming hole, Bristol Falls. "I love observing the annual rite of passage of jumping off the high rocks. On any hot summer day you can find folks exploring the waterfalls and smaller, less intimidating swimming spots up and down the river."

**BELOW:** With its views of the Taconic and Green mountain ranges and the Battenkill River in the valley below, the historic Manchester estate Hildene is a stunning place to visit year-round. "The guided tour is fascinating—make time for it," Hendrickson says. "The grounds are spectacular, and it's easy to imagine why [former owner] Robert Todd Lincoln would have wanted to escape Washington, D.C., in the summer to come to this idyllic retreat."





“The Kingdom Trails are an incredible mountain biking network for riders of every ability,” says Hendrickson, who caught these two bikers as they buzzed past the Inn at Mountain View Farm in East Burke. The inn’s massive red barns are not only eye candy for trail riders but also a scenic backdrop for the many destination weddings held here.



Fall foliage was just starting to come on when Hendrickson took this picture of artist Peter Fried hiking on Mount Abe, which straddles Addison and Washington counties. "This short hike delivers a great workout and stunning 360-degree views. There are a few forested hallways en route to the top that are particularly beautiful, and oftentimes fragrant with evergreens."

A catboat glides past the Burlington Breakwater South Light on Lake Champlain, which provides a world-class aquatic playground for Vermont's biggest city. "The lakefront in Burlington is not to be missed," says Hendrickson, "and in summer I love watching the variety of sailboats heading out against the backdrop of the Adirondack Mountains."



# Cast Away

*Get hooked on socially distanced recreation at Vermont's best fishing spots.*

Professional bass fisherman Jimmy Kennedy makes a splash in the Inland Sea of Lake Champlain.  
PHOTO BY JUSTIN BROUILLARD

**T**hough ice fishing does have its diehard fans, for many anglers there's nothing like getting out on the open water again each spring. And even if there's still a nip in the air, it's quickly chased by the thrill of reeling in a keeper on any of the lakes, ponds, and rivers that make the Green Mountain State's fishing scene so impressive.

"Other states have a lot of bodies of water and fisheries, but they're all very similar. You don't find the kind of diversity that you find in Vermont," says Chris Adams, a Shrewsbury-based fishing guide who also competes in tournaments around New England. "You've got the high elevation—the trout streams and ponds—and you've got the valleys where you can fish for species like bass, pike, and carp."

Then there are other important lures, like easy public access and beautiful surroundings. "You're out in these amazing waters with just gorgeous scenery all around you," says the 34-year-old Vermont native. "The wildlife, the views—it's all pretty unique."

Here, Adams shares his insights on some prime fishing spots across the state. Before packing up your rod and reel, though, be sure to check with the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department ([vtfishandwildlife.com](http://vtfishandwildlife.com)) for information on fishing seasons, regulations, and licenses. —*Ian Aldrich*

### **Lake Champlain, Franklin, Chittenden, Addison & Grand Isle Counties**

Stretching 120 miles along the New York–Vermont border, Champlain is one of the "best all-around fisheries in the country, if not the world," says Adams. "There are dozens of bays and little sections, and a ton of public access points like bridges, causeways, and boat ramps." This lake is home to about 80 of the 91 fish species that occur in Vermont, including trout, salmon, and bass. Best of all? They're always biting, Adams says. "It's incredible."

### **Lake Saint Catherine & Lake Bomoseen, Rutland County**

Situated along Route 30 in Rutland County and separated by only 10 miles or so, these bodies of water feature a rich stock of trout, bass, pike, and catfish. "The broad range of species you find at each lake makes fishing here really nice," Adams says, "but you've also got good access and these great views of the surrounding mountains." Both lakes offer boat ramps and a namesake state park on their respective shores.



### **Chittenden Reservoir, Rutland County**

If Adams had to pick just one spot in Vermont to fish that *isn't* Champlain, this might be it. The fishing scene is excellent—perch and bass are the big players—but then there's the scenery too. The reservoir is surrounded by the Green Mountain National Forest, which means that deer, hawk, and moose sighting are not uncommon, while the lack of development guarantees you'll feel that you've really "gotten away," says Adams. "For my money, it's one of the most picturesque places in Vermont that I fish."

### **Lake Memphremagog, Orleans County**

Adams's go-to when he's in the Northeast Kingdom is Memphremagog, the centerpiece of the region's fishing scene. "Like so many lakes around Vermont, it's a glacial lake, so you've got these middle sections that are deep and clear and rocky where cold-water species like trout salmon and smallmouth bass like to hang out. Then you've got the shallower bays where you're going to find the largemouth bass, pike, and other fish like that."

### **Otter Creek, Rutland & Addison Counties**

In addition to its wealth of lakes and ponds, Vermont also features a number of prime rivers in which to fish. There's the Connecticut and the Battenkill, of course, but the longest-flowing river contained within the state's borders is 112-mile Otter Creek. Adams particularly enjoys fishing it north and south of Rutland's Mount Tabor, spots that provide a number of easy access points. "The trout fishing is phenomenal," he says. "And because you have all these streams from the Green Mountains flowing into it, you can go to the top of those mountains and catch trout all the way up. It's pretty cool."



At Billings Farm & Museum, a Jersey calf proves to be a magnet for friendly little hands.

# Animal Attractions

*Nothing delivers springtime joy quite like the babies of Billings Farm.*

**O**n March 13, 2020, Billings Farm & Museum posted to its Facebook page a photo of sheep drowsing peacefully in their pen. It accompanied the news that the Woodstock nonprofit would be closed to the public until April 10, the planned start of the Baby Farm Animal Celebration, its biggest event of the year. But the shutdown would end up lasting longer than four weeks—meaning that if this hands-on, cuddle-intensive springtime experience actually happened, it would have to be completely reimaged.

On that same Friday the 13th, more than 900 miles away, a model for pandemic-era visitor outreach was taking shape. Toward the end of their last day before

shutdown, staffers at Chicago's Shedd Aquarium were hustling to gather photos and videos that they could post online, to help keep the public connected to the aquarium while stuck at home.

One of the caretakers offhandedly submitted a 27-second video she'd taken of a rockhopper penguin wandering the halls of the aquarium, peering at underwater life from the other side of the glass. You probably know what happened next: Wellington the penguin broke the Internet.

The huge popularity of animal-centric pandemic videos wasn't lost on the staff at Billings Farm, as they brainstormed how to adapt their much-cherished Baby Farm Animal Celebration to the new reality.

## Destinations

“The Shedd and the New England Aquarium are two of the ones that I remember watching and really noticing how people responded,” says Christine Scales, the interpretation and education manager at Billings Farm. “When we added in the fact that schoolteachers were looking for material for their remote-learning classes, we saw pretty quickly there was real potential for us online.”

But for a place long defined by “in person” appeal—with visitors strolling its 200-plus scenic acres and being greeted by friendly farm animals—going virtual came with a learning curve. “We were pretty low-tech, shooting the videos mostly on cellphones,” Scales says. “Now, we’ve got some equipment for virtual field trips and we have a whole [production] setup, but back then it was, ‘Work with what you have!’”

With the farm staff gamely serving as film crew, and using photos and videos provided by local farmers who had “loaned” some of their own wee livestock to Billings Farm for past events, the first-ever virtual Baby Farm Animal Celebration went ahead last April. For a week, the museum’s social media channels were home to snuffling piglets, spraddle-legged calves, bounding baby goats, and even a live stream of incubating chicken eggs. And in keeping with the event’s educational mission, Scales and her team loaded up the Billings Farm website with

baby-animal fact sheets and kid-friendly craft projects.

The effort was a hit, with the average social media post reaching over 12,000 people, or about three times the visitors who attend the typical two-day Baby Farm Animal Celebration in person. (In the case of the breakout star, a smiley-faced lamb named Norman, the posts were seen by a whopping 70,000 people.)

And although the 2020 event did not bring in anywhere near the same kind of revenue as in years past, Scales thinks that’s OK. “We get that times are really hard for everyone. This was an opportunity for us to support our community and the folks out there who needed a little something to bring a smile to their face, and I think that’s worthwhile.”

**W**hen I reach Scales at her office at Billings Farm & Museum in January, she tells me it’s too soon to say what this year’s Baby Farm Animal Celebration

will look like. But the enthusiasm that bubbles up when she describes the event makes it pretty clear her fingers are crossed for a return to IRL.

The celebration got its start in April 2012, a time when Billings Farm wasn’t starting its visiting season until May—which meant people were missing out on the flurry of farm births that happened earlier in spring. Looking at the Easter holiday, the staff realized that



**ABOVE:** As if baby lambs weren’t already aw-worthy, staffers sometimes put hand-knit sweaters on them if the weather is especially chilly.

**RIGHT:** Billings Farm & Museum in springtime. The living history museum is rooted in the c. 1871 farm of Frederick Billings, who developed it into a model of land stewardship and progressive farming. Today it’s owned and operated by the Woodstock Foundation, a nonprofit educational institution founded by Laurance and Mary Rockefeller.



COURTESY OF BILLINGS FARM & MUSEUM



a lot of people would be together with their families and looking for something to do, Scales says. “It’s that notoriously iffy Vermont mud season, where you can’t go skiing anymore but it’s not great for hiking or things like that. So inviting people to come see baby animals seemed like a perfect fit.”

Held on the Saturday before Easter, the Baby Farm Animal Celebration caught on quickly, and by 2016 was drawing about 2,700 people in one day. So Billings Farm expanded it to two days—and brought on more babies, too. In addition to the farm’s Jersey calves, Southdown lambs, and heritage-breed chicks, there are now Berkshire-Tamworth piglets and a variety of goats (“hilarious and the cutest kind of trouble ever,” says Scales), plus Angora rabbits loaned by an area fiber farmer. All told, Scales estimates there are about 40 critters that star in the event.

“It’s so funny to see which animals different people are drawn to,” she says. “The ones that just crack me up are the chicken kids. The first time you put a chick in their hands, there’s a look on their face that’s so excited but

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: A weeks-old Southdown lamb gets a gentle petting; the wide-eyed wonder of a “chicken kid”; a baby Nigerian Dwarf goat, one of the newer stars of the Baby Farm Animal Celebration.



also kind of scared and unsure—it’s wonderful to see.”

Yet the connection that visitors make goes deeper than just being able to touch fluffy, fuzzy newborns. “It’s really a chance to understand what these animals’ jobs are and what their purposes are, because we are an operating farm,” Scales says. “Although people can pet the animals, they’re also learning about where their food comes from and the benefits of supporting small local farms.”

Just as important, the Baby Farm Animal Celebration can help folks reconnect with each other. Sure, families and friends can do a lot of things together—going shopping, watching a movie—but Scales says what’s often missing is a shared sense of discovery.

“That’s what I think is so special about places like Billings Farm: It gives people the opportunity to come together around a shared experience and make memories that really will last for a lifetime.” —Jenn Johnson

## IF YOU GO

■ As of press time, **Billings Farm & Museum** in Woodstock was scheduled to kick off its 39th season on April 9, with the Baby Farm Animal Celebration set for April 10 and 11. Since Covid may affect those plans, please check the website for updates before you visit. [billingsfarm.org](http://billingsfarm.org)



For the community around Joe's Pond in Danville, spring officially starts when this pallet disappears.

# The Rule of Thaw

*When winter starts retreating, the action heats up at Joe's Pond.*

I keep it in my wallet, tucked behind my driver's license and Mastercard: a slip of paper with my best guess for when winter will end. This year I'm betting April 2 at 11:27 a.m.

This guess cost me a buck, and if I'm correct, I stand to collect \$5,000. But it all depends on the "ice out" contraption hunkered down on the frozen expanse of Joe's Pond in West Danville, a wacky raft composed of a pallet, a cinder block, and a flag, tethered by 250 feet of nylon rope to a clock back on land. If it eventually begins to ride low and slump in the thaw of a warm spell in late

March, and if it actually starts to sink beneath the pond's chilly waters around breakfast time on April 2, and if its descent strains the rope such that it finally breaks the connection, stopping the clock at precisely 11:27 a.m. ... then, yes, I'll get my five Grover Clevelands.

And come July, no matter who wins, everybody in the vicinity of Joe's Pond will receive their share of the ice-out prize. They'll gather around the pond at dusk on Independence Day with their picnics and bug spray, and soon the sky above will fill with sparkles and crackles and scintillating stars falling to earth—because the fireworks

COREY HENDRICKSON

display is funded by all those little tickets, those best guesses on the exact moment of winter's end.

Joe's Pond, make no mistake, is no Golden Pond, for its late summers and autumns are more prone to barking squawks of Canada geese than the spooky piccolo of loons. It's less known for its scant romantic coves than for its broad shores studded with summer retreats, camps, and cottages—the east side claimed mainly by people from St. Johnsbury, the west side by folks from Barre—a bunch of these places inhabited year-round, so that you'll never sit on the dock and think you've given civilization the slip. Nope, you're neighbor to neighbor here, on the rim of one of the largest bodies of water in Vermont that doesn't spill over into the category of lake.

In fact, it was some of the pond's year-rounders, jawboning over coffee and doughnuts at Hastings Store decades ago, who first started betting on ice-out. As current store owner Garey Larrabee recalls, "My wife's great-grandfather would write his name and guess on a dollar and tack it to the ceiling." Others would, too. Then spring would come, the ice would go, and whoever came closest kept the kitty.

A more formal arrangement got under way in the 1980s, when Jules Chatot Sr., then owner of North Barre Granite Co., began keeping track of bets on a slip of paper which he kept in his shirt pocket. Jules was a ringleader; with his big shock of white hair and mirthful blue eyes, he was at the center of the pond's card games and parties. These little bets tucked into his shirt were Jules's way of organizing spirited discussion over the big question: "Yes, we know the ice is gonna retreat from the edges, but when will it finally go out?"

From a pocket-size affair it grew. In 1988 the Joe's Pond Association assumed responsibility, and it became a bona fide contest as they sold between 400 and 500 tickets that year. Today the association manages a sophisticated betting pool, printing some 15,000 tickets, available for purchase online or at Hastings and local stores. Furthermore, the 30-plus-year-old bedroom clock

emeritus has been replaced by a large round "Warrior" electric, specially made to withstand weather.

But what hasn't changed is winter, which in the Northeast Kingdom is long and leaves its inhabitants yearning for a sign of spring. In 2018, that sign didn't come until May 4 at 11:27 a.m., though the next year was earlier (April 25 at 5:39 a.m.) and 2020 was earlier still (April 15 at 6:07 a.m.).

I remember standing on the shore of Joe's Pond several years ago, squinting at the ice-out raft with its cinderblock cargo and orange flag. It was April 19, and the flag post was still solidly afloat, but it was clearly listing to the right. Cold in the brisk wind, I shoved my hands into my jacket, where my left hand grazed the lumpy wallet harboring my ticket—this time marked April 27 at 6:20 p.m. *Just one more week*, I wished for my little ticket: *Please be chilly and cloudy for one more week.*

Alas, the raft sank five days later and stopped the clock, and it was Barre resident Gary Clark who hit nature's lottery with

his prediction of 8:44 a.m. on April 24.

Nevertheless, there were little wins and gains for spring over the following days: The tree swallows coasted into town; a white-throated sparrow began chanting on a branch; and then, just as the last bubbles of the newly sunken contraption were bursting at the surface, the first squeaks of peepers. But the final payout is yet to come, when the other half of the betting pool goes to Northstar Fireworks in East Montpelier.

Jules Chatot Jr. admits that when he was a boy, the Joe's Pond Association would shoot boomers off his family's front lawn, and he would naively think, *Wow! What a party!* for his father, born on July 3. Now the professional display of sky dazzlers comes replete with the kinds of names that seem to sum up the North Country winter's yield to spring and summer and fall and back to winter again: "Crackling Wave to Green," "Brocade with Orange Strobing Pistil," "Red and Silver Cascade," then—finally—"Midnight Snow with Green Pistil." —*Julia Shipley*



It's a way of organizing spirited discussion over the big question: "Yes, we know the ice is gonna retreat from the edges, but when will it finally go out?"

# Lilac Time

*How the annual reprinting  
of a simple springtime  
essay became a symbol  
of resilience.*



ENGRAVING BY PIERRE-JOSEPH REDOUTÉ  
(NICOLLAY/ISTOCK)

Paper is a precious thing. Those of us who crumple it into packing material or cut it up for papier-mâché or tape it over a drafty window rarely think about that. But newspaper editors do, always. After payroll, the second biggest cost of making their product is typically paper, and that cost is only going up.

Given how dear their pages are, newspapers rarely give up space to something they've printed before—something that, by definition, would not be *news*. Yet on the editorial page of the May 26, 2020, *Rutland Herald* there appeared 262 words that longtime readers might have even known by heart.

"Lilac Time" is an essay first published in the *Herald* in May of 1929. Written by then-publisher William Field, it's an homage to the lilac, which he describes as "the sturdy, wholesome dooryard emblem of the New England

*Montpelier Times Argus*, but in 2006 he was settling into the job of the *Herald's* managing editor, which had him working with Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial writer David Moats on the op-ed page. That's when Pappas first remembers seeing "Lilac Time."

"I can't say I was a fan," Pappas recalls. "I thought it was, um, flowery, for a lack of a better word." It was hard for him, as someone who admittedly preferred "hit 'em between the eyes" editorials, to see how "Lilac Time" fit in with the issues of the day.

But it was by then well established that the paper would reprint "Lilac Time" each May—not on the same day but usually in the same week, around peak bloom time—a tradition that had been carried forward by Robert Mitchell, the owner, editor, and publisher of the *Herald* for more than 40 years. The torch subsequently passed to Moats, who faithfully revived the essay each spring from a folder he kept on his computer desktop, changing only the introduction that accompanied it.

"David was really good at writing about the things that were kind of inherently Vermont," Pappas says. "He was often complimented about being able to take something as benign as the weather and suddenly make people feel really good about why they live here, and the things that they're proud of. And I think that's very much what 'Lilac Time' is: a kind of gentle reminder of something that's always there."

Yet Pappas doesn't see the continuing of "Lilac Time" so much as a tribute to Moats—who departed as editorial page editor when the position was eliminated in 2018—as a tribute to the endurance of the *Rutland Herald* itself, founded in 1794 as Vermont's oldest newspaper. It was also the state's most venerable family-owned newspaper until 2016, when the *Herald* and its sister paper, the *Times Argus*, were sold—and then sold

again two years later. It has survived downsizing. It has weathered catastrophic flooding (2011's Tropical Storm Irene knocked out the printing presses shared by the *Herald* and the *Times Argus*, as well as inundating the latter's newsroom). And now it is staying the course through a pandemic.

When "Lilac Time" was published last May, it was with a new introduction that read:

*In these challenging times, we seem to crave a sense of normalcy. In many ways, we are blessed this pandemic unfolded at the end of winter, on the cusp of spring. We can, at a minimum, be outside with ease,*



Vermont native Steven Pappas has served as executive editor of the *Rutland Herald* and the *Barre-Montpelier Times Argus* since 2018. He was also named publisher of the two papers the following year.

home." The lilac is "steadfast," he writes; it is "lonely, faithful." And each spring it blooms anew and "lavishes its sweetness in memory of the hands that planted it."

It's a sentimental piece, even a bit sepia-toned. Encountering "Lilac Time" for the first time on a modern-day editorial page, alongside letters about mask mandates and the failures of the healthcare system, you might well wonder: *What in the world is this?*

Steven Pappas did. Today he's the executive editor and publisher of the *Rutland Herald* and the *Barre-*

*enjoy the blooming of springtime flowers, and the leafing of spring foliage. We needed the rebirth as we self-isolate in the starkness of social distancing.*

*We hope the following provides a benchmark as well.*

Two months earlier, the *Herald* and the *Times Argus*, which also published the essay that May, had to cut back from publishing five days a week to three. Nearly two dozen of their employees were furloughed. Yet here they still were, offering their readers a voice of reassurance, a comforting continuity.

And readers had already been responding to that continuity. Letters and emails came in, thanking staffers for their service. Subscriptions went up, with one individual even donating 10 three-month subscriptions for others to enjoy. Reader participation was on the rise, most notably with a series of interviews called “Five Questions With,” which asked everyday people how they were coping with the lockdown.

“People started volunteering to be interviewed,” Pappas says. “They wanted to be part of it because it gave a sense of community. And that’s what I’ve been telling the staff throughout: What’s become important in this whole thing is that people have kind of re-understood the value of the local newspaper, their local newspaper. And we have become once again the center of community, and a resource and a conduit for community-building.”

Extending a hand to local businesses has been a big part of that too. Even with their own finances under strain, the papers offered a matching deal for advertisers who were suffering as a result of the pandemic, to give them the chance to get their ads in front of thousands of potential customers. By the end of the summer, the papers had matched some \$25,000 in ad space. “We’ve had advertisers reach out to us and say, ‘Thank God you guys are around, we couldn’t have done this without you,’” Pappas says, and laughs. “When was the last time a newspaper publisher got to hear *that*?”

The *Herald*, along with the *Times Argus*, was able to return to its five-day publication schedule last summer, and some of the furloughed employees have been brought back on. Still, keeping tradition alive—whether it’s a 92-year-old essay or a 227-year-old newspaper—it takes tenacity. The staff is doing “much more with much less,” says Pappas, who couldn’t quite remember the last time he’d voluntarily taken a day off since the pandemic.

“I’ve talked to a lot of my colleagues [at other papers] who are just panicked because they don’t see the other side of this,” he says. “And I feel like we do. I feel like we have the commitment of the community. And I think everybody on my team understands what we’re trying to do—and that when we finally have a day off, it’ll be so worthwhile. And will hopefully be around lilac time.” —*Jenn Johnson*

## Lilac Time

By William H. Field

Now is the brief season of the lilac bush, modest and enduring symbol of the depth and permanence of New England traditions.

It has given a name to color, perfume, poems, songs, story. Translated into many languages, its name is upon the lips of millions in many lands. Yet it remains unspoiled by such widespread fame.

It is still the sturdy, wholesome dooryard emblem of the New England home. With what eager anticipation has it been planted at the threshold of new, bravely begun homes.

With what poignant grief has it been left behind for long bitter migrations from whose hardship and loneliness homesick thoughts have turned in anguished longing.

To what strange and distant homes have its roots been transplanted, there to grow blossoms and, in turn, be abandoned again. On this very day in mountain pastures and along deserted roads, over the graves of dead homes bloom the lilac bushes planted by the founders of those pioneer households.

Many of those graves would be otherwise indistinguishable, their timbers long since buried, their cellar holes filled in and grassed over. Were it not for the steadfast lilac bush, there would be nothing to mark that here once dwelt human souls who shared happiness, sorrow, hope and despair.

Who lived there, whither they went or what their adventures nobody knows. No descendants make annual pilgrimages to remember and decorate these forgotten graves of the homes of ancestors.

But each year at this season, the lonely, faithful lilac bush blooms again and lavishes its sweetness in memory of the hands that planted it.

— *Originally printed in the May 29, 1929, edition of the Rutland Herald*



# The Prophet

*Long before the first Earth Day dawned, this Woodstock native was laying the groundwork for environmental action.*

**Y**ou know Henry David Thoreau and you know John Muir and you know Teddy Roosevelt. You probably have heard of Aldo Leopold (*A Sand County Almanac*), Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*), and Edward Abbey (*Desert Solitaire*). These are the famous nature lovers of American history, the writer-thinker-preachers we credit with opening our collective mind to the glories of the wild. Dirt under their nails, wind in their hair, they taught us to wander and wonder and respect and protect and defend and cherish the land.

LEFT: George Perkins Marsh c. 1850. RIGHT: A stained glass window in Marsh's boyhood home in Woodstock, now the centerpiece of Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park.

But what of Vermont's George Perkins Marsh, born in 1801? Do you know his name?

Outside that green tribe made up of environmental historians, professional conservationists, eco-philosophers, and rangers at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, Marsh doesn't get much play. Within that tribe, though, he's a sage; his book *Man and Nature*, a kind of bible.

Marsh's biographer, David Lowenthal, ranks *Man and Nature* as "the most influential text of its time next to Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*." The word *ecology* wasn't coined until 1866, two years after *Man and Nature* came out, but the threat of ecological collapse is precisely what Marsh is driving at. He warns the still-young American republic that "human crime and human improvidence" might reduce the earth "to such a condition of impoverished productiveness, of shattered surface, of climatic excess, as to threaten the deprivation, barbarism, and perhaps even extinction of the species."

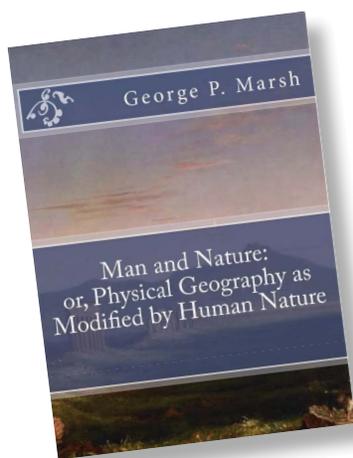
Does this sound radical? By today's standards, maybe not. But try to imagine encountering *Man and Nature*, all 560 vehement pages of it, at the time of its publication. Lowenthal describes the middle of the 19th century as "the peak of Western resource optimism,"

a time when New England's pioneers were caught up in the myth of limitless plenty. Between 1791 and the War of 1812, Vermont was the fastest-growing state in the Union. By the 1850s it was almost entirely deforested, much of the lumber going to produce potash and charcoal that provided a cash bonus for the hardscrabble hill farmers doing the cutting. Come 1860, 42 percent of native-born Vermonters had "out-migrated" to places like the Ohio Valley—to the promise of Beyond and the assured abundance of Elsewhere.

Hindsight being what it is, we now can see how all the dots connect. We can see the axes glinting and the trees falling, the rainstorms tearing naked slopes to pieces and the sediments clotting the rivers. We can see thousands of sheep grazing gullied pastures; the beaver, bear, moose, and deer flickering out like ghosts. And we can see the men—earnest and industrious—their heads lowered to the task of unwittingly ruining the land.

"Sight is a faculty," Marsh writes in *Man and Nature*, "seeing, an art."

**H**ow a country boy from Vermont grew up to re-envision his culture's destructive attitudes is a story full of improbable alignments. It begins in 1808 with a 7-year-old George Perkins Marsh hunched over an encyclopedia in a dim room in a Victorian mansion in Woodstock. He's a voracious reader, and having spent a week straight squinting at the pages, he finds that the



words are at last blurring away. His father, a wealthy lawyer, forbids further study, ordering his nearly blind son outside to heal in the light.

It takes many days for young George's eyesight to come back, and when it does, it's as though he's seeing the natural world for the first time. He hikes. He roams. He learns the ridges and valleys, the forces that shaped them, the rhyme and reason of the earth beneath his feet. He spent his early life "almost literally in the woods," Marsh will remember years later.

But the glinting axes, well, you know what the glinting axes do. By 1816, when Marsh heads off to Dartmouth College at age 15, his home is fast becoming a scrapeland. Mount Tom stands behind the family's house, a lump in a mosaic of stumps and rocky ledges. The Ottauquechee River floods its banks, heavy and brown, sanding over the meadows. These images go inside Marsh and grab hold of something deep, never to let go.

**"We can never know how wide a circle of disturbance we produce in the harmonies of nature when we throw the smallest pebble into the ocean of organic life." —George Perkins Marsh**

After graduation, Marsh's accomplishments pile up to form a sort of Renaissance man's résumé. A lawyer by training, he serves as Vermont railroad commissioner, fish commissioner, and State House commissioner and is elected to four terms as representative in Washington, D.C. Fluent in 20 languages, he's respected around the world as a premier linguist, translating German verse, Danish law, and Swedish fiction. Yet he remains a down-to-earth, practical-as-ever Yankee, dabbling in marble quarrying, woolen manufacturing, and farming.

Appointed U.S. envoy to Turkey in 1849, Marsh tours Egypt, Palestine, Central Europe, and Italy, taking note of fallen cities, worn-out river valleys, and strange deserts where human and natural histories entwine. Marsh thinks back on his childhood, to the axes, to the denuded ridges. And in so doing, "he builds a bridge between these two points of his own lived experience," says environmental historian William Cronon. "In the degraded environments of the Mediterranean he sees a prophecy of America's possible future."

It's a light-bulb epiphany, and over the years it will only grow brighter. When Marsh starts work on *Man and Nature* in 1860, his eyes are still weak from the early battle with the encyclopedia, but his vision—his *vision*—is sharp.



**T**hat vision—the thing that went on to inspire conservation reforms in India, Australia, South Africa, and Japan, not to mention everything from the creation of the U.S. Forest Service to the rise of the modern environmental movement—it has a home.

At 643 acres, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park in Woodstock is considerably less grand than, say, the Grand Canyon, but the terrain is stunning in its own mossy, ferny, Green Mountain way. On the flanks of Mount Tom, paths and dirt lanes wind through stands of sugar maples, red pines, and hemlocks, the clear-cuts that once wrecked the surrounding countryside now visible only in a hiker’s imagination.

Opened in 1998, Vermont’s sole national park is unique in the federal system because of its mission: to tell the story of conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in America. Yosemite has its soaring granite domes, Yellowstone its howling wolves. Woodstock has its local boy and his big book.

In the Carriage Barn Visitor Center—a warm, woody museum-library with comfortable chairs and an environmental-history display that runs from Ralph Waldo Emerson through Earth Day and beyond—Marsh’s life is written across the walls, bound in books lining the shelves, framed in black-and-white photos. One photo shows Woodstock in 1869, all bony pastures and bare

**An archival look at the timeless landscape that would become the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park. Established in 1992, the park is named for George Perkins Marsh, philanthropist Laurance Rockefeller, and conservationist Frederick Billings.**

hills; another shows a white-bearded Marsh working on the third edition of *Man and Nature* at a sprawling desk. Quotes are collaged with the images: excerpts from letters Marsh wrote to friends, lines from lectures he gave. In this welcoming space, *Man and Nature* is not a dead tome but a living presence, its message of balance and interdependence speaking across the ages.

Much has changed since 1864, both for better and for worse, but when looked at from another angle, little has changed. Mass extinctions, global warming, corporate polluters—everyone talks about these things as if they’re new terrors, new problems. But maybe they’re better understood as symptoms of some deeper, older problem.

Maybe the real problem is no different from the one that a 19th-century Vermonter faced in his time, and the Romans faced in theirs, and today’s children will face 30 or 50 years down the line: We members of *Homo sapiens* have a mighty power, a power to destroy and to heal. We must restrain ourselves, must act as friends and helpers of the greater natural whole. Or, as Marsh puts it, “Man has a right to the use, not the abuse, of the products of nature.” —*Leath Tonino*

Made in Vermont



# Everlasting Glove

*A century-old Randolph company is turning out a product that a lot of folks want to get their hands on.*



**W**hen Sam Hooper was growing up on his family's farm in Brookfield, he worked alongside his parents and brothers, slopping pigs, haying, cutting wood, repairing fences, clearing snow—a multitude of chores all done by hand. And that was a problem. The rugged labor, done in all kinds of weather, took its toll on his work gloves. “I’d go through five pairs in just a winter,” he recalls. Then one day he put on a pair of Green Mountain-brand work gloves, meticulously hand-made from goatskin, a craft honed and perfected by three generations of the Haupt family and their small company in the nearby town of Randolph. And that day is when this glove story begins.

“I went, *Wow*,” Sam says. “I was floored by them”—by how comfortable they were, how supple and flexible, and so durable that he could not wear them out. Hands down, they were unlike any he had ever worn.

Sam eventually went off to a small liberal arts college in Connecticut. Upon graduating in 2016, he returned home to work in the marketing department of Vermont Creamery, founded by his mother, Allison, and Bob Reese, and known nationwide for its butter and its specialty cheeses made from cow and goat milk. But not long afterward, he learned that Kurt Haupt Jr., the third generation to own the Green Mountain Glove Company, was preparing to retire.

At the time, the company was struggling. A few years earlier a major garden supply retailer that featured Green Mountain gloves as a top-of-the-line brand had been sold to a national corporation, which dropped them in favor of cheaper, mass-produced ones.

Even the company's main business—protective gloves made specifically for power line workers, a product that needed to be flawless to ensure their safety—was under increasing pressure from overseas manufacturers. The Green Mountain Glove Company was one of the country's last local glove makers, and it was fighting to survive.

Sam, now 23, had long been fascinated by the manufacturing process. At the creamery he had seen something raw being turned into new and desirable products, and then each year 4 million pounds of those products being packaged on their way to people who loved them. The Green Mountain Glove Company had been in business in Vermont since 1920, and unlike young entrepreneurs who flock to startups, Sam had this



**ABOVE:** Vermont Glove owner Sam Hooper outside the company headquarters in Randolph. **LEFT:** A vintage photo of the same building, back when it was the Whiting Milk Creamery. In 1960 it became the factory for Vermont Glove's forerunner, the Green Mountain Glove Company, founded in 1920.

feeling, this optimism, that he might be able to stitch

his ambition and vision to its legacy. So, in the summer of 2017, he went to see Kurt Haupt.

“I asked him if I could be an apprentice,” Sam says. “I wanted to know every step of the process. ... Here is this craft that's been perfected the Haupt way, and they learned it from their parents and they from their parents. I asked Kurt, ‘How did you learn?’ He told me that one winter he needed gloves, and his father said, ‘Fine. I’m setting you up at this machine. Just get used to following the material. It takes a lot of time as you graduate to the next step.’”

For the next six months, Sam walked into the old former milk plant where the Green Mountain Glove Company was headquartered and kept learning for no pay except in the form of knowledge. Kurt and his

daughter, Heidi, who had grown up in the business, taught him not only the intricate steps to make the best work gloves in the world, but also why each step mattered. And Sam kept graduating to the next one.

Sam learned why the fibers in goatskin made it both the most supple and toughest material. He learned how to look for the slightest imperfections in the tanned leather, and how to select and cut sections for thumbs, for fingers, for the back. He learned that they sewed seams on the outside so there would be more finger space inside. He learned how to do the special double seams and the tricky thumb attachments. And he learned that the incessant sound of motors and pedals and needles walking along on sewing machines dating from the 1940s and '50s was the music of skilled sewers, some of whom had worked on the machines longer than Sam had been alive.

By the end of his apprenticeship, Sam could make a glove that would pass as a Haupt. At night he did market research, punching in numbers, figuring out whether he could—or should—should make the leap to becoming not a student, but an owner. He decided yes, and in January 2018, Sam became the first person outside of the Haupt family to own the company. Heidi Haupt stayed on as operations manager and sewing supervisor, as well as keeper of institutional memory.

Sam knew the challenges. For one thing, the company's building was showing its age. Driven by an ingrained environmental ethic, Sam had the coal burner converted to wood pellets, retrofitted the building with its first layers of insulation, and added solar panels, so that within two years he had created a net zero user of power.

Plus, he needed to expand the customer base beyond the time-honored utility worker. "We can't lose sight that we make gloves for people where it is life and death that they are made right," he says. "The fact that we make gloves for utility line workers gives us leverage: "These gloves are made for people who trust their lives to them. Now they are for you."

In one of the most delicate decisions he had to make, he rebranded the entire line. In 2019, the Green



Though protective gloves for lineworkers (LEFT) remain a core part of Vermont Glove, the company also turns out everyday work gloves (BELOW LEFT) that are proving popular with gardeners, along with leather mittens and ski gloves.



Mountain Glove Company became Vermont Glove. "It was a bit scary," Sam admits. "They had a 100-year-old heritage. I did not want to offend the Haupt family. That name represented four generations of the best glove makers in the world. But I got their blessing.

"It was the right time, if we were going to be known to consumers and not just utility workers. And when you ask people outside of New England where the Green Mountains are, many do not know. Vermont has cachet. You aspire to its lifestyle. We felt being here for a century making these gloves gave us clout to use the name."

But even with the many changes, some traditions have

remained. For instance, many glove styles still bear names that read like codes, such as the most popular all-purpose glove, the AG47Ro. "I have no idea where that name comes from," Sam says with a shrug. "But it doesn't matter. It's always been that name. It's kind of cool, really."

And so, sometimes, the young lead the way. The work force has expanded from four to 10 ("and I want to hire three more," Sam says), while the number of gloves that leave the building each month has tripled to more than 600. "But we have to be careful we don't grow too fast," he says.

Today Sam works 80 to 90 hours a week. He lives in an old hunting camp on the family's 67-acre homestead. He still works outdoors as often as he can. Still works with a pair of gloves made just down the road, as comfortable and as strong as the first ones that made him go *Wow*.

"We think about who we are, our value system," he says. "It does matter. We are time-tested. We are still here. That is a testament." —Mel Allen

For more information, go to [vermontglove.com](http://vermontglove.com). And for an in-depth look behind the scenes, go to YouTube and search for "How Vermont Gloves Are Made."

# Maple Trivia

*See if your syrup knowledge makes the grade.*

**GO WITH THE FLOW:** Edible syrup can be made from the sap of any maple species—black, red, silver, box elder, etc.—as well as from trees such as birches, walnut trees, and sycamores. Alaska, in particular, prides itself as being the top U.S. producer of birch sap.

**TOP OF THE CROPS:** The tree with the sweetest and highest volume of sap is the sugar maple (*Aceraceae Acer saccharum*), which Vermont made its official state tree back in 1949. It's also the most popular state tree nationwide, with Wisconsin, New York, and West Virginia tapping it as their fave.

**SLOW AND STEADY:** It takes about two decades for a sugar maple to reach tapping size (roughly 10 to 12 inches diameter). But if tapped properly, it may be productive for well over a century.

**SUGAR GRANDDADDY:** The oldest sugar maple in North America is believed to be a tree in the Niagara Region of Ontario, Canada. Known as the Comfort Maple, it measures approximately 100 feet tall and 20 feet around the trunk, and is estimated to be 540 years old.

**SAP-HAPPY:** Clear and almost tasteless, maple sap is about 98 percent water. You'll need an average of 40 to 50 gallons to make just one gallon of sweet, flavorful maple syrup.

**GREEN MOUNTAIN GOLD:** The top maple-producing U.S. state, Vermont boiled up more than 2.2 million gallons of syrup last year. That's fully half of the nation's total

2020 production (4.4 million gallons) and an increase of close to 400 percent in Vermont's own production since 2000.

**TO YOUR HEALTH:** According to *Consumer Reports*, if you downed  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of maple syrup—the amount listed as a serving on the Nutrition Facts Label—you'd get 80 percent of your daily need for riboflavin, about 6 percent of calcium, 11 percent of zinc, and 4 percent of potassium.

**COMPOUND BENEFITS:** Pure maple syrup is rich in healthful compounds known as antioxidants, with the highest amounts being found in Grade A Dark Color (formerly Grade B) maple syrups as compared with the lighter syrup varieties.

**POUR SUBSTITUTE, PART I:** Since they have about the same viscosity, motor oil is a favorite stand-in for maple syrup in food advertisements, partly because it doesn't absorb into the pancakes and make them soggy.

**POUR SUBSTITUTE, PART II:** In 1911, after a mechanic's mix-up, a Brattleboro grocer reportedly drove his car for 20 miles with maple syrup in the oil tank instead of motor oil. (In case you're wondering: It's not recommended.)

**THE REAL DEAL:** Out of the more than 1,600 IHOP locations in the United States, only one—in South Burlington—has been allowed to offer genuine Vermont maple syrup alongside IHOP's signature flavored syrups.

**SUGAR RUSH, PART I:** In 2017 Kevin "L.A. Beast" Strahle, a professional competitive eater from New Jersey, set the Guinness World Record for chugging pure

maple syrup by emptying a 32-ounce jug in an astonishing 10.8 seconds.

**SUGAR RUSH, PART II:** For maple five ways, order the "Bad Larry" at Waitsfield's Canteen Creemee Company: a maple creemee with maple crystal, maple drizzle, maple cookie bits, and a pile of maple floss.

**HAND-ME-DOWNS:** The comically tiny handles you see on maple syrup bottles are thought to be callbacks to a time when maple syrup came in large, heavy earthenware jugs that were hard to tote otherwise.

**GET YOUR MITTS ON IT:** In 2015, presidential candidate and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders was honored with a signature cocktail made with lime juice, grapefruit juice, silver tequila, and yes, Vermont maple syrup.

—Jenn Johnson



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