

2016 Tudor Richards Award

Presented by Francie Von Mertens and Meade Cadot at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 17, 2016.

Each year since 1983, New Hampshire Audubon has presented the Tudor Richards award to an individual or individuals who have worked tirelessly and effectively for conservation in the Granite State.

The 2016 recipients are Ann and Roger Sweet from Sullivan.

So many people in the state involved in natural resource protection and education have crossed paths with Ann and Roger Sweet. They are fully engaged in their hometown, and well beyond: on numerous committees, at workshops, on field trips they have led for the Harris Center, the Nature Conservancy, the Society for Protection of NH Forests (the Forest Society), and the Monadnock Conservancy—or beyond state boundaries, for the Appalachian Mountain Club on Maine's Mt. Desert Island. Roger and Ann share Tudor's love for and knowledge of the natural world, and his generosity sharing it with others.



Ann and Roger Sweet accepting the 2016 Tudor Richards Award from NH Audubon.

Photo by Terri Donsker.

Among their considerable committee work, Ann was longtime chair of Southwest Region Planning Commission's Natural Resource Advisory Committee, assisting towns with Natural Resource Inventories and Conservation Plans. She served on the advisory committee of the statewide Center for Land Conservation Assistance, and the Connecticut River Valley Resource Commission. Roger serves on the Sullivan Conservation Commission, the Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee, and as longtime board member of the Harris Center he was elected Honorary Trustee, one of only a few.

Ann and Roger received the Forest Society's first-ever Trish Churchill Volunteer of the Year Award in 2009 in recognition of their exemplary contributions and commitment, including monitoring conservation easements for both the Forest Society and the Monadnock Conservancy. Ann and Roger also tend their farm and forest land in Sullivan—over 100 acres under conservation easement with the Forest Society. Meals are cooked exclusively on a woodstove; Roger is an accomplished maker (and player) of cellos and other stringed instruments. As it was for Tudor, sharing music is a part of the Sweets' lives. In the summer of 2016 the Sweets hosted the Forest Society's inaugural gathering for Conservation Easement landowners, continuing a tradition of hosting land conservation gatherings.

Krista Helmboldt of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) endorsed the nomination of the Sweets with the following words.

I am so glad you are nominating Roger & Ann for the Tudor Richards Award. I did know Tudor, and I think Roger and Ann are truly kindred spirits. Roger and Ann helped TNC build the

extensive trail network at Otter Brook Preserve after we acquired it in 1999. They were there for every trail building day, imparting their good nature and wisdom along the way. Roger also helped with some chainsaw work at our Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve. Roger and Ann also led field trips for us, which, of course, were wonderful and well received.

Roger and Ann's love for the outdoors is evident in all aspects of their life, and they gave of themselves generously with their time, positive spirit, immense energy, and wisdom on all levels (natural history, politics, people, wildlife, plants).

Krista also described Roger in a way that makes it clear the Sweets' traditional ways go well beyond their wood cook stove.

I was struck with Roger's gear whether for trail work or field trip: old-fashioned yellow slicker as opposed to newer high-tech materials; an old, full-size chainsaw (similar era as the slicker?) as opposed to the newer, smaller ones we use for trail work; old jeans, far from today's lightweight alternatives; old boots instead of newer hiking footwear; a metal fuel can instead of plastic; and to crown it off, an old milk crate on a pack board, instead of a modern frame pack.

To me, this gear demonstrates a deep commitment to true conservation of resources – and I am sure it is no surprise to you that his excellent saw skills were in no way deterred by this equipment. Furthermore, when a return trip to the parking lot was needed to re-fuel, it was Roger that made the long journey, carrying not only the metal fuel can, but also the big chainsaw – and returning to the work-site more swiftly than I would have imagined of an ultra-light marathon trail runner!

I think Tudor would be very pleased to have kindred spirits of the caliber of Ann and Roger receive this recognition. They embody conservation on all levels of living, education, and deep care for our rich New England landscape and all its cultural and natural treasures.

It is with great pleasure that on behalf of New Hampshire Audubon we present the 2016 Tudor Richards Award to Ann and Roger Sweet, true partners in their work on behalf of conservation in our state.

