

2017 Tudor Richards Award

Presented by Paul Nickerson at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 23, 2017.

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.

This 2017 recipient of the Tudor Richards Award is John Harrigan.

John is often described as the “voice of the North Country.” It’s a voice that for over four decades has advocated for wise stewardship of the wild ones—New Hampshire’s natural landscape and its wildlife. His voice reaches far beyond the North Country—as a newspaper owner-publisher, as well as columnist for regional and statewide newspapers, on the web, and as a regular radio guest. His long-running column, “Woods, Water and Wildlife” in the New Hampshire Sunday News had a wide following.

Chris Schadler, co-founder with John of the New Hampshire Wildlife Coalition, writes that John “passionately defends traditional hunting in our state,” at the same time adding his voice in strong opposition to nontraditional hunting—including a proposed mourning dove hunt and, more recently, bobcats.

Importantly, he bridges two groups that at times need bridging: on one side hunters and anglers (the “bait and bullet” group), and environmentalists (“tree huggers”) on the other. He has earned the respect of both.

Governor Judd Gregg appointed John to the Northern Forest Lands Council, and Council chair Charlie Levesque writes:

John Harrigan has always focused on the detail of the outdoors and rural living in his writing, but he has also dedicated significant efforts to the “big picture” of the rural landscape of the Northeast and its conservation. While more recently focused on what Northern Pass might do to the wilds of New Hampshire, he played a prominent role in two other landscape efforts.

The federal Forest Legacy program came out of the Council’s work. As a side note, it was Forest Legacy funds secured by NH Audubon which expanded its Willard Pond Wildlife Sanctuary in Antrim and conserved 1,700 acres down the road in Stoddard.

Charlie also points out that Governor Shaheen appointed John to the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Task Force focused on protecting International Paper’s 171,000 acres in northern NH. A major conservation endeavor successfully accomplished.



John Harrigan accepting the 2017 Tudor Richards Award from NH Audubon.

Photo by Dyanna Smith.

As for Tudor Richards, this award's namesake, John and Tudor spent time together at Pondicherry and beyond. I think we all would have enjoyed being the proverbial “fly on the wall” for those outings. Tudor Richards and John Harrigan were cut from the same cloth: Two strong, principled, effective, inspiring advocates for New Hampshire’s wild world.

Jeff Fair, former Director of the Loon Preservation Committee wrote:

John Harrigan celebrates “traditional and wilder things that are shared with about 95% of conservationists, be we hunters or fishermen-and women, or bird watchers, or berry pickers. He has been an agent, perhaps innocently but nonetheless effectively through the decades, of bringing together the many and varied denominations of conservationists, based on that 95% of values that we share. Conservation should be a friendly neighborhood of caring people and forces, accepting (with an “a”) the few disagreements that we might share, and working together despite any arguments. Our landscape and the wildlife upon it depends on such connections, and John Harrigan has been cement to those connections across New Hampshire. I honor John for his lifelong conservation.”

A final tribute from Paul Bofinger, longtime president of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (and past recipient of the Tudor Richards Award):

*“John Harrigan is the iconic New Hampshire native. He’s not just the spokesperson for the North Country, he’s also the guardian of the North Country **and** New Hampshire values. **This** newspaper man understands the language. He’s direct and doesn’t play games. You know exactly where he stands. If he doesn’t get the Tudor Richards Award, then there’s something wrong with the jury!”*

It’s with great pleasure that New Hampshire Audubon presents the Tudor Richards Award to John Harrigan.

