

A monarch butterfly with orange and black wings is perched on a yellow flower, feeding. The background is a lush green field of similar flowers.

RESTOREECOLOGY

Luke Brussel, Founder

2023 Review
and
Look Forward to
2024

2023: We Engaged with and Across Our Community to Foster Ecological Knowledge, Practices and Purpose

We partnered with key local environmental and ecological institutions including Friends of Larchmont Parks, the Sheldrake Center, and the Town of Mamaroneck Environmental Collab to restore areas to ecological vitality where damaging mowing practices, turf grass, use of chemical fertilizers, other injurious practices and invasive plants had heavily degraded ecosystems including in parks, along roadside streambanks and in the Sheldrake Preserve.

We engaged and helped educate Mamaroneck High School Students in the practice of Ecological Restoration at Kane Park in Larchmont.

We established thriving beautiful public spaces where nature can be experienced directly, and which enable people to interact with and in an ecosystem that is healthful and alive with living wild things.





**WE ARE DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR
AND HONORED BY
*FRIENDS OF LARCHMONT
PARKS'* GENEROUS GRANT
THAT FUNDED
OUR RESTORATION OF KANE
PARK IN 2023!**

2023: We Re-Seeded the Landscape and Planted the Seeds of Ecological Knowledge Across our Community

We responsibly collected thousands of local ecotype native plant seeds in the wild – including endangered populations of native plants on the Sound Shore – to reestablish a healthy robust seed bank here where our native seed bank has been drastically diminished by turf grass lawns, fields and golf courses, (all with imported non-native species with little to no ecological value), overdevelopment, and (ubiquitous) invasive species (often introduced and spread by municipal and privately owned mowing crews).

We distributed thousands of local ecotype native plant seeds to Community Members to plant in their yards and contribute to the Ecological Restoration of Kane Park in Larchmont

We educated dozens of community members on how to practically address the urgent need for ecological restoration, in light of the existential crises we face from Climate Change and World-Wide (and local) Collapse of Biodiversity, through restoration of ecosystems, including how to treat native plant seeds through cold stratification so they will germinate when planted, how to prepare the land for native plantings, and how to introduce native plants in to the landscape while maintaining (or re-establishing) the health of the soil.

2024: We are Growing Our Programs and Redoubling Our Work to Restore Ecological Health in Our Communities



We are forming a not-for-profit organization (with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status) to support individual contributions and greater grant funding opportunities that can further our ecological and educational work (look for more information on this soon!)



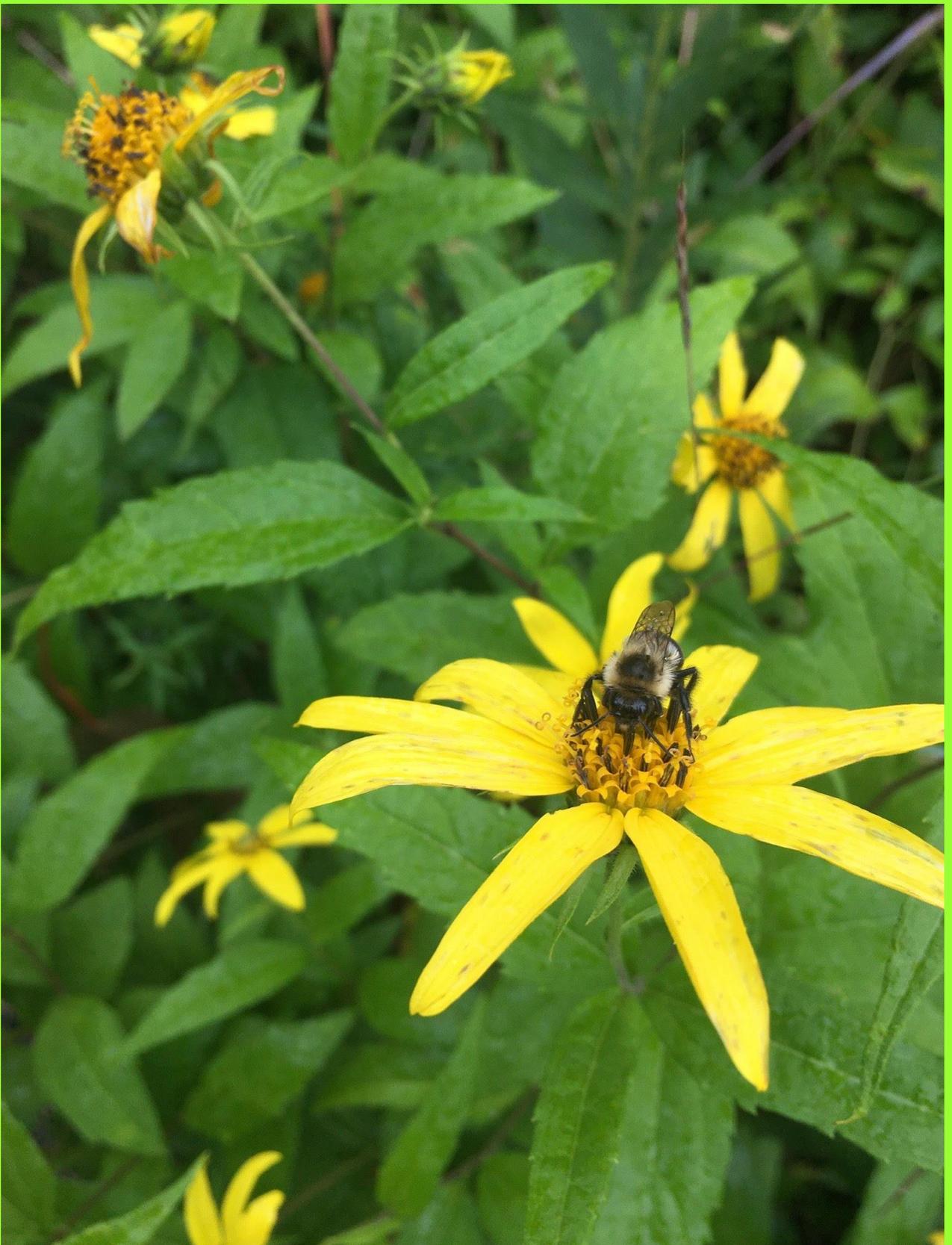
We are starting a new SubStack publication which promises to be *always informative, usually passionate, and sometimes hilarious* original writing on ecological restoration, native plants, the biodiversity and climate crises and what we can do to make a more livable world here and now.



Invasive species are out of control in Westchester, and across the lower Hudson Valley and the Sound Shore. We are committed to starting a program to find a workable enduring means to control invasives in all of our restoration sites this year (and expand the efforts going forward).



We Are So Excited to Announce that The Rotary of Larchmont has Awarded Us a Generous Grant to Complete the Restoration of Kane Park, Including More Native Plantings, a Walking Path and *More in 2024!!!! THANK YOU!*



In these times of global uncertainty, strife, dislocation and grief, it is sometimes hard to see the possibilities for renewal and true progress towards a better world for our children and children's children. But the seeds of hope are all around us (still), there to be found if we make it our purpose to do so.

The photo below is the seed head of a SeedBox Plant (*Ludwigia Alternifolia*), a wild plant native to the Northeast US. Given the diminished state of our local ecology, I get excited when I find any wild native species growing here, no matter how commonplace they may be generally. So, when this Autumn I found a population of SeedBox right here in Southern Westchester, growing in a small disturbed site near a broken watermain, I was over the Moon(!) - and reminded that hope endures still.

Let's keep reminding each other by continuing our work together to restore ecosystems in 2024!



On This Land Where We Live And Grow: Honoring The People In Who's Footsteps We Follow

As we work to restore ecosystems to health here where we live, plant and grow, we recognize that we were predated on this land by the Siwanoy tribe of indigenous people.

The Siwanoy's largest village at the time of Dutch colonization in the 1600's was located in what is now Rye, NY. The Siwanoy Chieftain in 1661 was named "Wappaquewam" and was from the area which is now the Town of Mamaroneck, NY.

The name "Siwanoy" is believed to stem from the Siwanoy's word (in the Munsee language they spoke) for "The Salt People"; likely arising from their culture's connections with the salt waters of the Long Island Sound – a cultural connection which still runs deep in the current inhabitants of this land on the Sound Shore, including us.

The Siwanoy culture recognizes the interconnectedness of all things, a belief system in symmetry with the central principle of the contemporary science of ecology and in particular ecological restoration: the practice at the heart of our work to restore the land where we live back to ecological health. In carrying forward this central principle by which the Siwanoy sought to live, and which is now so urgently needed of us, we seek to honor their People and life of this Land.

The present-day Siwanoy Flag

