

A DARK NIGHT SKY HELPS NATURE SURVIVE

One of the pleasures of living in a rural area is seeing the moon and stars in the dark night sky.

Darkness at night is also vital for the survival of wildlife and the health of human beings.

Life as we know it developed in a cycle of day and night, light and dark.



Research is finding that excessive artificial light at night disrupts the way many insects, amphibians, birds and mammals hunt, reproduce and migrate, threatening their very survival. Humans also need dark nights, especially to promote the high-quality sleep so important to health—including mental health.

Speaking of peace of mind, consider the effect that illuminating your landscape is having not only on nature, but on your neighbors. In fact, Clinton’s Zoning Code stipulates that “no unreasonable glare” be perceptible beyond lot boundaries and that lighting be directed away from streets and neighboring properties (Chapter 250-28 General Performance Standards).

Lighting up your yard may make you feel safer, but it actually does not deter crime. Which is not to say we should be stumbling around in the dark. Ideally, lighting should be focused just where it’s needed and—with motion-detectors or timers—when it’s needed. The rest of the time, it’s good to be in the dark.

The information here was compiled by the Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council. For more details on research and lighting options, go to darksky.org.

