

The NATURALISTS' CLUB Newsletter

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Westfield, MA
Permit No. 18

Museum of Science • 236 State Street • Springfield, MA 01103
<http://naturalist-club.org/>

A P R I L - J U N E - 2 0 0 4 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

APRIL	4	Sunday	Treasure in the Woods ~ Geocaching
	14	Wednesday	Sheffield Clay & Pottery
	16	Friday	Sounds of Spring: Twilight to Starlight
	18	Sunday	Springfield's Earth Day Festival
	21	Wednesday	APRIL MEETING: Weird Nature ~ Spectacular, Strange, Everywhere Around You
	24	Saturday	Springtime Botany
	25	Sunday	Mt. Tom Wildlife Viewing Area Maintenance Picnic Party

MAY	1	Saturday	Springfield's Earth Day Cleanup
	2	Sunday	Hike at Peaked Mountain Reservation
	16	Sunday	Wildflower Wander
	19	Wednesday	MAY MEETING: Connecticut River Sturgeon
	23	Sunday	Warblers and Berkshire Berries

JUNE	6	Sunday	Connecticut River Canoe Trip
	12	Saturday	Pocket Wildlife Sanctuaries



It is a bright, sunny winter day, with not a single cloud in the cerulean blue sky. The crusty snow is still 6 inches deep in places, and the weatherman again used the word “frigid” to appropriately describe today’s temperature. Yet spring is just around the corner. I know because I hear Canada geese, and those snowdrops are thrusting themselves out through the snowless recesses of my yard. How marvelous that despite drastically fluctuating temperatures so common at this time of year, plants and animals around me steadfastly keep to their annual clock, like ...well...like clockwork. How do they know it’s time to come out of winter dormancy and start to carry on?

Investigating this question, I discover that every living thing, down to the simplest of organisms, has an internal body clock. This internal mechanism triggers some to migrate, others to open their flowers, some to change the color of their fur, when to seek mates, and still others to awaken from a long winter’s nap. Basically, this ingrained timepiece dictates the timing for many important life functions in plants and animals alike.

In order for an organism to be in tune with its environment, this clock has to be adjusted frequently. It is set not by temperature, but by a more dependable standard - sunlight, or, more correctly, by photoperiod which is the length of sunlight verses length of darkness. All vertebrates, including you and I, have a hormone-producing organ called the pineal gland to detect daily changes in light. It helps set our internal clock. If you were to live underground for a good length of time, exposed only to artificial light, you would keep a regular sleep/wake schedule, but it would slowly get out of whack. Not being in touch with the cycle of the earth to readjust, people subjecting themselves to such experiments have been shown to lengthen their cycle to up to 26-hour days. (I sure could use some of those sometimes!)

The tilt of the earth is responsible for variations in day length. Millennia with the same yearly pattern of day lengthening and day shortening have allowed nature to respond to this dependable cycle. Antler growth in deer, reproductive cues in birds, fall color change in deciduous trees - all are cued by photoperiod. Temperature seems to have some influence in the spring leafing of trees and flowers but it is the lengthening of days that plays the main role.

The more I learn, the more impressed I am with the waking of life all around me. Soon songbirds will be nest-building, leaves will be unfurling, insects will be emerging, and the life functions that were put on hold for the winter will once again resume. Each day brings more sunlight and more activity. Nature is indeed intricate, and all the more amazing to observe and appreciate.

– by Nancy Condon

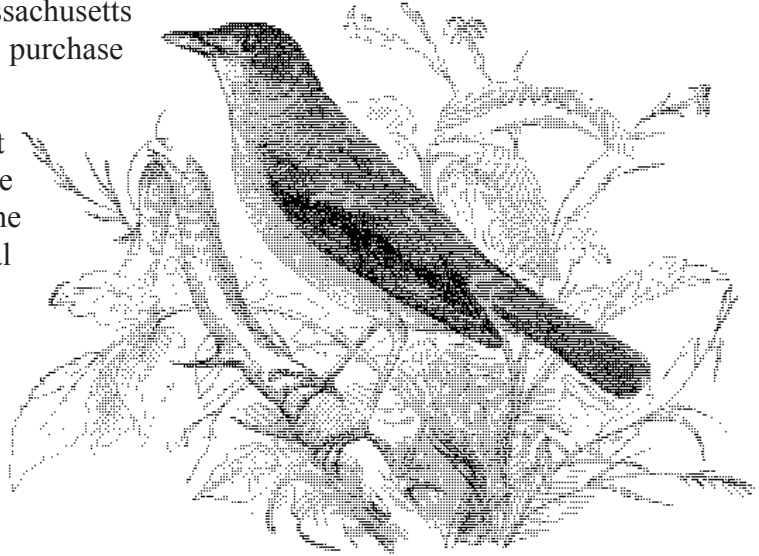
NATURALISTS' CLUB HELPS PROTECT GRASSLAND BIRD AREA

*In 1997, the estate of Dorothy
Anne Wheat bequeathed \$25,000
to The Naturalists' Club.*

The Board of Directors recently voted to make a \$1,000 gift to the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton. The gift will aid Arcadia in its efforts to protect endangered grasslands, which are critical for the health and survival of various bird species. Arcadia, a Massachusetts Audubon Society property, recently had the opportunity to purchase an additional 60 acres surrounding the sanctuary.

This contribution comes from the Dorothy Anne Wheat Endowment, which the club has established with the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts. In the past the club has made gifts to the Silvio O. Conte National Fish Wildlife Refuge, the Peaked Mountain Land Trust, the Valley Land Fund (to help preserve the Mt. Holyoke Range), the Nature Conservancy and the Massachusetts Audubon Society. In addition, we have endeavored on numerous occasions to provide support to Tom Ricardi for his rehabilitation work with birds of prey.

This most recent gift to Arcadia for grassland protection is part of a long term ongoing project to protect one of the last remaining large tracts of grassland in Massachusetts. The Naturalists' Club and its members should take pride in our efforts to protect critical habitats and wildlife. *—Report submitted by Dietrich Schlobohm*



SIGURD F. OLSON

Sigurd F. Olson (1899-1982) was one of the most influential conservationists of the 20th century. Though best remembered as the author of The Singing Wilderness and eight other books, Olson also played a critical role in establishing and preserving a number of national parks, seashores, and wilderness areas.

Olson believed that wilderness provided spiritual experiences vital to modern civilization, and this conviction formed the basis of both his conservation and writing careers. (www.northland.edu)

Quotations not otherwise notated come from Sigurd F. Olson's Wilderness Days, a compilation of passage from other books he wrote. Those with specific citations are drawn from Spirit of the North. The Quotable Sigurd F. Olson, edited by David Backes. A comprehensive online source can be found at www.uwm.edu/Dept/JMC/Olson/contents.htm.



*Redwings sat on every cattail and shrub, the males flaunting their crimson epaulets and pouring their hearts out in gay **conkarees**. It was as though all the blackbirds in the north had congregated there that day to make us glad – and never for a moment were they still. This was a sound that comes only in May, when their singing is a warbling symphony to spring.*
– Sigurd F. Olson

If it contributes to spiritual welfare, if it gives them perspective and a sense of oneness with mountains, forests, or waters, or in any way at all enriches their lives, then the area is beyond price. – Sigurd F. Olson, "We Need Wilderness," National Parks Magazine, Jan.-Mar. 1946

Treasure in the Woods - Geocaching

Date and Time: Sunday, April 4, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: Please call Nancy or Tom to sign up

Meeting Place: Route 57, Southwick, just over the Agawam town line.

“Thirty-five feet, 25, 20, now just 10. Read that clue to me again. There it is. I’ve found it.”



What is this all about? It’s a new activity that gets folks out into the woods, called Geocaching. Using a GPS (Global Positioning System) device, people can search for hidden treasure. An enthusiast has hidden three such treasure boxes on Provin Mountain along the Southwick-Agawam-Westfield border. They then post the exact longitude and latitude of the boxes on the internet (www.geocaching.com). We’ll use that information to go and find these boxes and at the same time find more treasures that nature hides for us in the woods too. It is not necessary to have a GPS unit for this hike, but if you do have one, bring it along. Geocaching tradition allows you to take a piece of the treasure home with you, but you have to leave something there in return. These treasures are usually little trinkets or tiny toys, so if you would like, bring something along to trade.

I have discovered in a lifetime of traveling in primitive regions, a lifetime of seeing people living in the wilderness and using it, that there is a hard core of wilderness need in everyone, a core that makes its spiritual values a basic human necessity. There is no hiding it.... Unless we can preserve places where the endless spiritual needs of man can be fulfilled and nourished, we will destroy our culture and ourselves.— Sigurd F. Olson, from a 1965 speech to Sierra Club.

Sheffield Clay and Pottery

Date and Time: Wednesday, April 14, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Leader: Art O’Leary (413-789-7274)

Registration: Limited to ten people

Meeting Place: Sheffield Pottery, Route. 7, Sheffield, MA

Directions: Mass. Pike (I-90) to Exit 2 (Lee).

Follow Route 102/7 South to Sheffield. Pottery is on the right, a cluster of barn-red buildings, about 25-30 minutes from turnpike exit.

Mining and processing fine, moist Sheffield clay has been a family operation since 1946. State-of-the-art clay production ensures quality, screened clay of consistent moistness. Sheffield Pottery is a favorite supplier of clay, clay supplies, and equipment to potters.

Begin our tour viewing the mining operation down in the clay pits. Advance to the 72-inch flow-through separator which screens unwanted materials. Be drawn to the iron filtration magnet (made of “rare earth” magnets), which traps ferrous metals and eliminates iron spots in clay. Be enlightened in the education center as you consider fun, creative clay projects. We conclude this tour in the rustic retail showroom, filled with an extensive variety of beautiful finished pottery, made by over 60 clay artists.

Sounds of Spring: Twilight to Starlight

Date and Time: Friday, April 16, at 7 p.m.

Leader: Dave Gallup (413-525-4697)

Meeting Place: Santa’s House at park entrance, off Route 20 in West Springfield. Call Dave for directions.

Join us for a leisurely evening walk at Mittineague Park, to hear peepers, wood frogs, and other sounds of Spring! We might even hear an owl or two. If it is clear, we will see the stars above, in the twilight sky.

After the walk ~ why not meet for a warm drink and friendly conversation at a nearby coffee shop.

Springfield's Earth Day Festival

Date: Sunday, April 18

Time: TBA

Leader: Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: None

Location: Quadrangle, Downtown Springfield

This annual festival under the big tent on the Quadrangle celebrates Earth Day. Demonstrations and exhibits, crafts for kids and music highlight the festivities. There will also be an air conditioner exchange for Springfield residents. Don't miss the fun!



BECOME A FROGWATCH VOLUNTEER

The National Wildlife Federation and the United States Geological Survey encourage people with an interest in frogs and toads, whether in their own backyard, nearby stream, or a local park and pond, to collect information about frog and toad populations. Survey a convenient wetland for the chorus of frogs or the cackle of toads. Then document and submit your findings to Frogwatch USA. Coordinators compile the information, so you can log on to see how frog populations in your area compare to those in the rest of the United States. Interested? Log on to their website, www.frogwatch.org, where you can learn the nine easy steps of how to observe and report on frogs.

Submitted by Art O'Leary

A P R I L M E E T I N G

WEIRD NATURE - SPECTACULAR, STRANGE, EVERYWHERE AROUND YOU

Wednesday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m.

Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum

Speaker: Mark Cashman

Metallic insects narrowly escaping death at the hands of plants...

Expanses of creeping yellow slime...

Bleeding mushrooms...

Trees twisted into knots...

The Amazon? The wilds of South Pacific islands? Another planet, or a science-fiction story? Not quite - these are the hiking trails of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Mark Cashman, owner and author of New England Trail Review, presents the strangest sights selected from 15,000 photographs taken on over a hundred miles of New England paths (and a few other places).

New England Trail Review (www.newenglandtrailreview.com) is a three-year-old showcase of detailed photographic journeys across the trails and summits of New England. Each trail is examined for features from the tiny to the vast, captured on the fly, camera handheld, with available light - while the photographer tries to keep a pace close to that of a normal hiker.

Join us for a lively commentary and a digital slide show of strange sights... and see how many weird things are just over the hill.



Springtime Botany

Date and Time: Saturday, April 24, at 1 p.m.

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (413-572-5307)

Registration: Not required. Heavy rain cancels.

Meeting Place: Parking lot of the Franconia Country Club on Dwight Road, near the town line for Springfield/ Longmeadow

We'll walk on a hiking trail in an area called East Forest Park, along Pecousic Brook (which flows into Porter Lake). Some of the woods in this area are moister and richer than that found in much of the city, so we may see species different from those typical of oak-hickory woods. Appropriate footwear for this walk would be something that can stand a little water and mud, especially if we venture off trail a bit.



Mt. Tom Wildlife Viewing Area Maintenance Picnic Party

Date and Time: Sunday, April 25, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

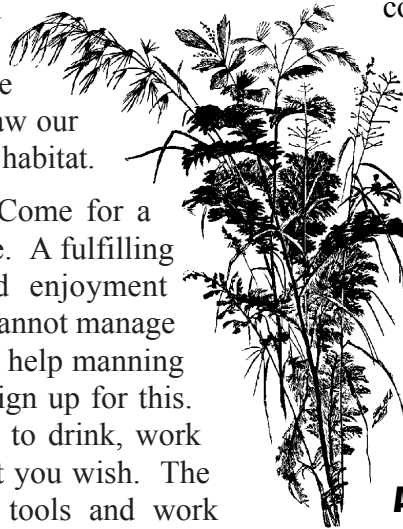
Leader: Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: It would be helpful to know you are coming, but drop-ins are welcome and encouraged.

Meeting Place: Route 5 entrance to Mt. Tom State Park Reservation, Holyoke, MA at 9:00. Afterwards, meet us at the overlook, entering via Route 141.

Come help continue the work of removing invasive trees to encourage the growth of berry-producing shrubs up at Goodreau Memorial Overlook on Mt. Tom Reservation. The superb vista afforded by our wildlife area is one of the top rated views overlooking the Pioneer Valley. Migrating birds will likely be encountered as we clip, trim, and saw our way to a fruitful, wildlife-enriching habitat.

Picnic fixings will be provided. Come for a couple hours, or for the whole time. A fulfilling day of service, camaraderie and enjoyment should be in store for you. If you cannot manage the rigors of pruning, we could use help manning the lunch station. Call Nancy to sign up for this. Come in work clothes, with water to drink, work gloves, and any pruning equipment you wish. The Mt. Tom staff will also provide tools and work gloves. Mark your calendar!



*How much good the rain would do,
how fresh the water in every stream,
how flowers would pop with the sun, the linnaea,
the anemones, the dogwood and everything
else along the trails! The ferns on the
rocks would begin to grow again, and the silvery
caribou moss would be soft and resilient with just a
tinge of green. The dry and brittle lichens along the
cliffs would turn from black to velvet green.
Mushrooms and toadstools would suddenly emerge
from every dead log, and the dusty humus would
bring forth growths that had been waiting for this
very hour, for no rain had fallen in a month.*

*It was good to lie in the tent knowing the rain was
replenishing the water supply, that none of it was
being lost except where it ran off the smooth rocks,
that even between them, in every cleft and crevice
where there was any accumulation of humus at all,
it would be held for months to come.*

– Sigurd F. Olson



Springfield's Earth Day Cleanup

Date and Time: Saturday, May 1, between 8:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Leader: Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: It would be helpful to know you are coming, but drop-ins are welcome and encouraged.

Meeting Place: Breckwood Plaza, Springfield, at the corner of Wilbraham Road.

Put on your grubbies and sense of green pride and come help pick up unsightly trash from a number of city-owned green spaces throughout Springfield. This annual clean-up effort has been conducted for a number of years and, with your help, is really making a difference. Lunch is provided, as well as buckets, gloves, and trash bags. Come for the whole day, or just part. Come with a team, or come by yourself and we will partner you up. Feel that sense of pride that comes when taking a messy park and giving it back its natural beauty.

Amherst Orchid Society Show,

Date: Saturday, April 24 and
Sunday, April 25

Where: Smith Vo-Ag High School,
80 Locust St., Route 9, Northampton, MA



Hike at Peaked Mountain Reservation

Date and Time: Sunday, May 2, from 9 a.m. through early afternoon

Leader: Jack Megas (413-782-3962)

Meeting Place: Call after 6 p.m. for info.

Join us for a quiet walk at Lunden-Miller Pond in Monson, where we may encounter waterfowl, wildflowers, and beaver. Bring a picnic lunch, binoculars, and hiking boots. Then we will hike up through woodland trails to the magnificent vistas of 1227-foot Peaked Mountain. This is a moderately strenuous short hike. Rain cancels.

This morning, not able to stand it a moment longer, I started out over the old hills I know so well.... It was balm to my shattered nerves and it did me good. How wonderful it was lying under that big spruce to hear the spring song of the first robins.... I tried to think out my problem but all I could think of was the beauty of the sunlight, the sound of the wind through my spruce and the silhouette of the birches over the hill to the west. The more I tried to think the more soothing grew the influences around me.... How true that has been all the time. Great thoughts do not come to me when I am out.... When I am out I am too receptive, too liable to see only and feel, I become entirely sensuous, an animal soaking up the impressions of color, and light and smell and sound. – Sigurd F. Olson, Journal, April 9, 1935

Wednesday Walkers

Join this small group of folks who know where to find the wildflowers blooming. Bring lunch and meet up with the Wednesday Walkers at 10 in the morning, walk till around noontime, then stop for lunch (often at a picnic table) before going on with your day. Destinations are often close by, though sometimes the walkers venture off, round and about, to places like the Quabbin or a bulb show at one of the colleges in the spring. Or perhaps a Wednesday in May in the Granville State Forest to see spring ephemerals. Wouldn't you like to be part of this informal gathering? Places are decided by the group the week before. Please contact Barbara Farrington (413-786-7432) to join in.

Wildflower Wander

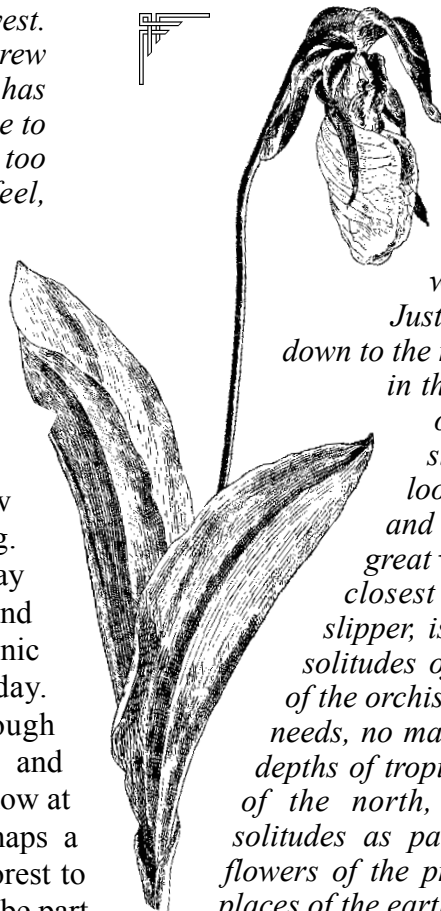
Date and Time: Sunday, May 16, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: Call Tom or Nancy

Meeting Place: Stanley Park, near Ed Piela Woodland Wildflower Trail.

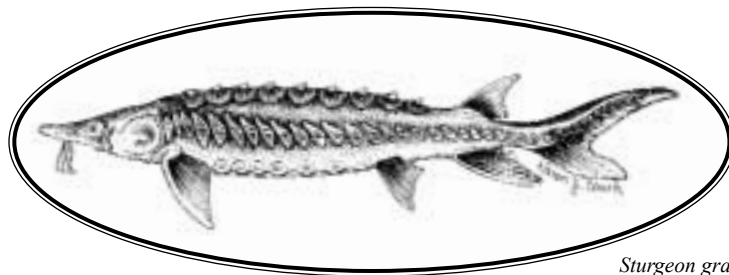
There is more to a wildflower than meets the eye! Join us for a salubrious springtime stroll to reveal the wildflowers in this shade garden named for one of the Naturalists' Club's formative members. Brush up not only on identification of the flowers we see, but learn something of the origin of their names, medicinal uses, or interesting pollination strategies. After investigating here, we may carpool to another wildflower-rich location, yet to be determined. Wear sturdy walking shoes. Bring a lunch and drink. Heavy rain cancels.



On a great shelf carpeted with moss I rested, enjoying the panorama of wilderness far below me, the sweep of distant ridges with sky-blue waterways between them. Just then I happened to look down to the mossy shelf below, and there in the shade made the discovery of the day: a single pink lady slipper in full bloom. While I looked at it, I forgot the heat and humidity and thought of the great woods to the south, where its closest of kin, the showy lady slipper, is found and of all the great solitudes of the earth where members of the orchis family bloom. Alike in their needs, no matter where they grow, in the depths of tropical jungles or in the woods of the north, they have shadows and solitudes as part of their lives. They are flowers of the primeval and the unchanged places of the earth. – Sigurd F. Olson

MAY MEETING CONNECTICUT RIVER STURGEON

Wednesday, May 19, 2004, at 7:30 p.m.
Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum
Speaker: Bernard "Mickey" Novak, hatchery manager
at the Richard Cronin National Salmon Station,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



*Sturgeon graphic:
K.J. Couch/USFWS*

Sturgeon ancestors coexisted with dinosaurs 150 million years ago, during the Jurassic Period. Sturgeon ~ primitive fish with large pectoral fins as well as an unusual and strong sharklike fin ~ swim great distances at sea as well as up swift rivers. Largely due to protection under the Endangered Species Act, shortnose sturgeon populations are increasing in some rivers along the East Coast. Shortnose sturgeon is the only endangered specie native to the Connecticut River. Currently, three populations exist in the waters of the Connecticut: the first, partially landlocked above the Holyoke Dam, another below the Holyoke Dam, and a third in the estuary flowing from Connecticut into Long Island Sound.

Mickey Novak will bring along a live sturgeon, as he shares his latest research findings. Spend this evening with us as we learn what is being done to enhance these populations for the generations to follow. Speaking of Jurassic, now's your chance to see a swimming dinosaur.

STUMP SPROUTS WEEKEND

West Hawley, MA

High on the side of a mountain with a magnificent view, Stump Sprouts ski lodge provides a beautiful setting for walking, hiking, or relaxing in solitude. A 90-minute drive from Springfield, the property consists of a 450-acre tract surrounded by Dubuque, Savoy, and Mohawk State Forests.

Guests need to bring their own bedding, towels, and toiletries. Bathrooms are shared. Our hosts will provide superb family-style garden-fresh meals, complete with homemade breads, and cookies. There is usually a choice of regular or meatless entrees. Bring along binoculars, good footwear, curiosity and a sense of adventure.

Limit: 20 people



Spring Sign-Up

Dates: Friday, September 10, through Sunday, September 12

Time: Dinner - Friday evening through a Sunday lunch

Leaders: Dietrich and Julie Schlobohm
(413-788-4125)

Registration: All-inclusive cost for 2 nights' lodging and 6 meals is \$119 per person. Make check payable to The Naturalists' Club and send to Dietrich Schlobohm, 52 Poplar Ave., West Springfield, MA 01089. Indicate in your registration your roommate preference. Reservations and a 50% deposit must be received no later than June 1. This trip will be cancelled if 18 people are not paid by that date. Call Dietrich or Julie for more information.

Warblers and Berkshire Berries

Date and Time: Sunday, May 23, from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.?

Leader: Art O'Leary (413-789-7274)

Registration: Call Art with questions

Meeting Place: Berkshire Berries, Route 20, Becket, MA

Directions: Route 20, west of Huntington and Chester, MA

Tip: Restroom for customers at Walker Brook Convenience Store, Route 20 in Chester

May is migration month for warblers. The first part of this adventure will be a gentle walk along a well-maintained forest road, in search of warblers.

At 10:45 a.m., regroup at the meeting place to start our tour. With hand-picked fruits of their own and from neighboring farms, Berkshire Berries makes gourmet jellies and jams. Hives on the rooftop of the beautifully decorated shop and throughout the grounds produce honey, and there's 100% maple syrup, made in their own icehouse from Berkshire maples. Products made famous by the Graves family include Bee-Man's Rooftop Magic™ Honey and Big Apple Honey, produced from hives on urban and suburban rooftops, some in downtown Manhattan, NY.

Following the tour, try scrumptious samples of gourmet jellies and jams during a garden-side picnic lunch (BYO). Bring water, binoculars, lunch, money, and wear comfortable all-weather clothing and footwear.

The movement of a canoe is like a reed in the wind. Silence is part of it, and the sounds of lapping water, bird songs, and wind in the trees. It is part of the medium through which it floats, the sky, the water, the shores.... There is magic in the feel of a paddle and the movement of a canoe, a magic compounded of distance, adventure, solitude, and peace. The way of a canoe is the way of the wilderness, and of a freedom almost forgotten. It is an antidote to insecurity, the open door to waterways of ages past and a way of life with profound and abiding satisfactions. When a man is part of his canoe, he is part of all that canoes have ever known.

– Sigurd F. Olson, *The Singing Wilderness*

*In the warmth of rains and sunny days, the forest floor literally teems with life. Seeds swell and burst and grow, colored fungi and lichens all but spring from the ground. Flowers are bolder in their hues than those of spring. They bloom in crannies on cliffs, on bare rock faces, in swamps and forest shades.... There is a sense of almost tropical lushness after the stark severities of winter. – Sigurd F. Olson, *Wilderness Days*, 61*

Connecticut River Canoe Trip

Date and Time: Sunday, June 6, from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Leaders: Tom and Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)

Registration: Please call Nancy or Tom to sign up

Cost: \$5 per person for canoe rental

Meeting Place: West Springfield Boat Ramp on Route 5. Heavy Rain Cancels

New England's longest river, the Connecticut, winds through bucolic rural settings as well as big cities. In this section, we will paddle 8 miles from West Springfield to Enfield, enjoying the surprising diversity of wildlife and history along the way. We will pass Longmeadow flats and go over where the Enfield Dam once stood. Canoeing experience is not necessary. This is a flat, easy section. A brief safety and instructional session will be provided at the beginning of the trip.

Bring a lunch. Pack belongings in water-resistant containers (zip lock bags work well). Bring your own canoe or let us know if you would like us to bring one for you. Paddles and life jackets and waterproof bags are provided if you rent a canoe. Limited space, so please sign up early.



*In the saving of places of natural beauty and wildness we are waging a battle for man's spirit. – Sigurd F. Olson, "What is Wilderness?" *Living Wilderness*, Spring 1968*

Pocket Wildlife Sanctuaries

Date and Time: Saturday, June 12, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Leader: Art O'Leary (413-789-7274)

Registration: Call Art with questions.

Meeting Place: Outlook Farm Market, Route 66, Westhampton, MA

Directions: Route 66 runs from Route 9 in Northampton center to Route 112 in Huntington, MA. Outlook Farm Market is perched on an east-facing hilltop.

The focus of this excursion will be three relatively unknown local wildlife sanctuaries. Easily missed when traveling by car, the sanctuary at 221 Pine Street is in a commercial area of Florence, MA. This meandering riparian corridor of the Mill River has prominent ledges, steep banks, a dam, potholes, wildlife trails, and is strewn with rocks.

A short distance from our meeting place is the Marion Sherman Lyons Sanctuary, on Laurel Hill Road in Westhampton, MA. It has no trails and is a new property of the Mass. Audubon Society.

The Hazel A. Young Trail, in the Mahan Meadows Sanctuary on East Street in Southampton, MA, has well-placed boardwalk and cable footbridges at the floodplain of the Mahan River.

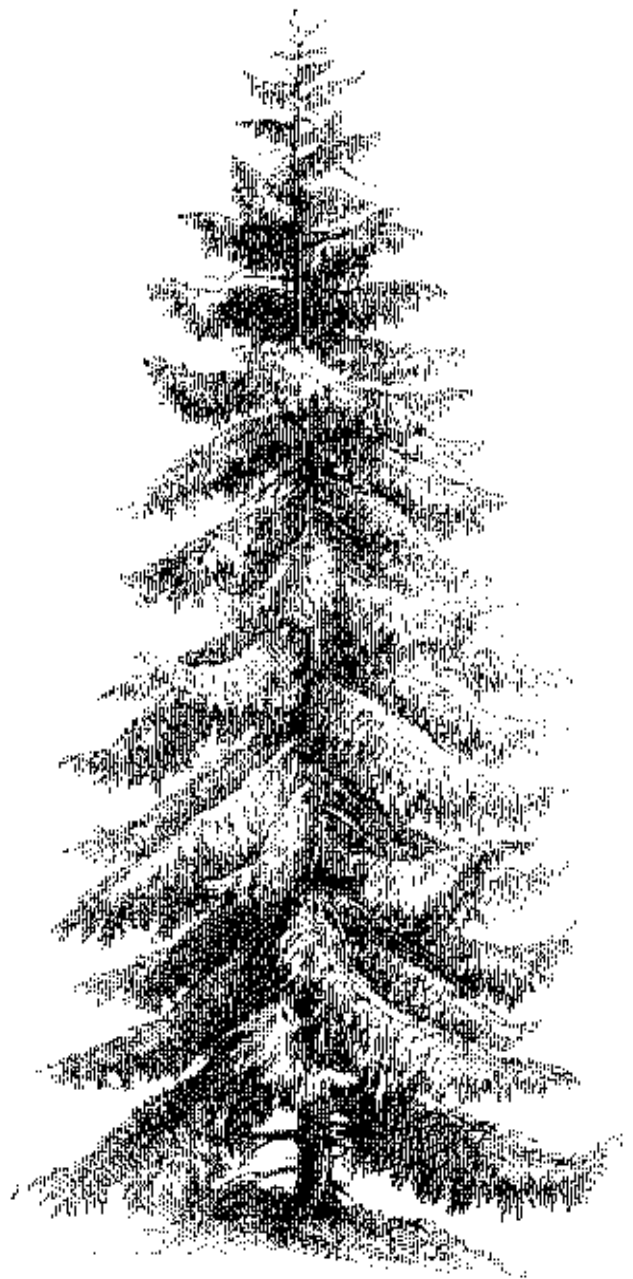
Bring water, binoculars, camera, insect repellent, and lunch (or purchase a to-go lunch at the meeting place).

Some can find their wildernesses in tiny hidden corners where, through accident rather than design, man has saved just a breath of the primeval America. I know of a glen in the heart of a great city park system, a tiny roaring canyon where many seeking solitude and beauty can find release.... There, if a man wishes, he can regain in a swift moment the feeling of the wild, and steal, for a brief instant, respite from the noise and confusion of a big city. There, if he has perspective, he may recharge his soul. ~ Sigurd F. Olson, "We Need Wilderness," National Parks Magazine, Jan.-Mar. 1946



Wouldn't It be Lovely?

Joan Presz is arranging an early July garden tour and afternoon tea at Stockbridge Farm, South Deerfield (and possibly some other local places of interest), in conjunction with the Agawam Garden Club and the Lavender and Herbs Society of the Pioneer Valley. Prepayment of \$5-10 for the tea will be requested. Please call Joan for details (413-569-6663) if you're interested.



2 NATURALIST'S CORNER 2

Last fall my wife, Lotte, and I, taking a stroll through Mittineague Park, had a rare close-up sighting of a redtail hawk. Near the highest elevation in the park (Buffalo Mountain), a hawk flew very close to us, then landed on a branch 30 feet away. I was afraid to raise my binoculars, not wishing to scare it away, but when after a while I did so, nothing happened. Finally, the hawk flew off.

As if this close-up was not enough excitement, on our way back to the car, the hawk again flew in front of us and then over a meadow, landing at the edge of the woods. Wishing to see more of the hawk, we spotted it sitting in a tree. Slowly, we went closer and closer, when suddenly a second redtail landed next to the first, prompting the first to fly away. The second hawk was larger. It flew a bit erratically, brushing a tree with one wing. Again we were very close and wondered that our being there did not bother the big bird.

A truck stopped near where we stood, as we were obviously watching something interesting through our binoculars. The hawk flew back, hitting the same tree again, then fell down the trunk of the tree to the ground. It must have been hurt! No, it had caught something. We heard a faint distress call but could not see whatever it was, as it was covered by the leaves on the ground. Twice the hawk struck downward with its beak. When, after a short while, it flew away we could see a squirrel dangling from its claws. By keeping our eyes on the hawk, with its large wingspan, we must have missed the squirrel clinging to the side of the tree before being caught in the talons of the hawk.

Such an exciting experience one doesn't have very often. I've written it down so as not to forget it and to share it with others.

– Ernest Dittmer

On a little side hill above the swale was a patch of dwarf dogwood not yet in bloom. Soon the entire hillside would be stippled with the four white, notched petals typical of all dogwoods on the continent. Up here only two or three inches in height, they make up for their lack of size as soon as the blossoms fade, for each produces a cluster of brilliant red berries that transforms the place of their growing from late summer until fall.

– Sigurd F. Olson



I have always been fond of linnaea because it grows in the shadows, away from the direct glare of the sun, seems a part of big timber and the depths of the wilderness, a spiritual relative of the orchids that are also found there. How different from the harebells growing on the cliffs in the direct sweep of the winds, flaunting their blue and wiry beauty to space. They can stand the searing dryness of midday heat, do not need the rains. The linnaean bells are shy and delicate, would shrivel to nothing if protection were gone or the rains did not come in time. As fragile as solitude, they would disappear at the slightest intrusion.

– Sigurd F. Olson

2004

**OFFICERS
and
DIRECTORS**

President David Gallup (413-525-4697)	Vice President Art O'Leary (413-525-4697)	Treasurer Buzz Hoagland (413-572-5308)	Corresponding Secretary Colette Potter	Recording Secretary Dave Lovejoy (413-572-5307)
--	--	---	--	--

Director Nancy Condon (413-564-0895)	Director Tom Condon (413-564-0895)	Director Robin Marie Demetrius	Director Dietrich Schlobohm (413-788-4125)
---	---	---	---

Publicity
Belle Rita Novak
belle-rita@map.com

Webmaster
Tom Condon
(413-564-0895)
science@condon.net

Newsletter Editor
Debbie Leonard Lovejoy
(413-848-2047)
drleona@yahoo.com

Graphics and Layout
Loren Hoffman
(413-569-9577)
blackdogsim@yahoo.com

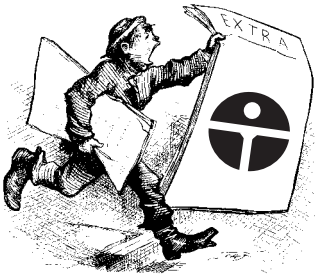
Nominating Committee and Upcoming Elections

Elections for officers and board members will be held at the May meeting. The following individuals are running:

Dave Gallup, President;
Art O'Leary, Vice President;
Dave Lovejoy, Treasurer;
Colette Potter, Corresponding Secretary;
Nancy Condon, Recording Secretary; and
Tom Condon, Nancy Condon, Robin Demetrius,
and Dietrich Schlobohm, Directors

Prior to the May meeting club members may contact anyone on the Nominating Committee to make any additional nominations:

Karen Daniels (786-8228),
Delores Gentile (783-6113), and
Joan Presz (569-6663).
Nominations may also be made
from the floor at the May
meeting.



Professor Buzz Hoagland is stepping down this year as Treasurer of the Naturalists' Club and past Newsletter Editor, with our thanks for his dedication and service, as well, in creating the club website and upgrading newsletter production.

To anyone who has spent a winter in the north and known the depths to which the snow can reach, known the weeks when the mercury stays below zero, the first hint of spring is a major event. You must live in the north to understand it. You cannot just come up for it as you might go to Florida for the sunshine and the surf. To appreciate it, you must wait for it for a long time, hope and dream about it, and go through considerable enduring. – Sigurd F. Olson, The Singing Wilderness, 15-16



Myriads of stars were my net that night, but I no longer felt lonely, for I knew that while man might unravel the puzzled skein of life and solve the riddles of the universe, what really matters is the wonder which makes it all possible. Back of everything is always a net of dreams. – Sigurd F. Olson, Runes of the North, 18