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# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Springfield Science Museum at the Quadrangle, Springfield, Massachusetts  
[www.naturalist-club.org](http://www.naturalist-club.org)

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## JANUARY to MARCH SCHEDULE of ACTIVITIES

<b>JANUARY</b>	8	Saturday	Life Under the Pond, <i>Russell</i>
	9	Sunday	Reading the Ways of Animals, <i>Monson</i>
	19	Wednesday	JANUARY MEETING: A Cat with Many Names ~ The Mysterious Cougar
	20	Thursday	Robinson State Park in Winter, <i>Agawam</i>
	22	Saturday	Workshop on How to Photograph Nature Close Up, <i>Westfield</i>
	22	Saturday	Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum, <i>Springfield</i>
	30	Sunday	Hike or Snowshoe at Bear Hole Watershed, <i>West Springfield</i>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	5	Saturday	Quabbin Reservation: Gate 30 ~ Rattlesnake Hill, <i>Orange</i>
	6	Sunday	Observing Wildlife and Animal Tracking at Quabbin, <i>Belchertown</i>
	12	Saturday	Nature in Winter Walk, <i>West Springfield</i>
	16	Wednesday	FEBRUARY MEETING: "Pollinators Welcome" ~ Gardening for Native Bees
	17	Thursday	Crystalline Ashley Reservoir, <i>Holyoke</i>
	19	Saturday	Hiking on the Rice Nature Preserve, <i>Wilbraham</i>
<b>MARCH</b>	5	Saturday	Hubbard River Gorge in Winter, <i>West Granville</i>
	6	Sunday	Hiking the Sweet Alice Brook Trail at the Holyoke Range, <i>Amherst</i>
	12	Saturday	Snowshoeing, <i>Russell</i>
	16	Wednesday	MARCH MEETING: Springfield Flora Then and Now ~ 100 Years of Change
	17	Thursday	Round and About the Duck Pond at Forest Park, <i>Springfield</i>
	27	Sunday	How Sweet It Is! Maple Sugaring Time in New England, <i>West Granville</i>





## NATURALIST'S CORNER

# SNOWFLAKES

We have all seen paper cutout snowflake patterns and drawings in blue and white depicting the very symbol of winter, but how many of us have really looked at snowflakes up close and personal? We take the proverbial word for it that snowflakes are six-sided and no two are alike, but have we looked with our own eyes?

Thankfully, one does not need any special equipment ~ just the right time and perhaps an inexpensive magnifying glass. Try it! Next time you see snow falling, go outside with a dark-colored jacket and that magnifying glass. Wait until your coat no longer melts the flakes and then watch closely as they accumulate on your sleeve. If the temperature is below freezing and the flakes are not in clumps, you'll be dazzled by the assortment of hexagonal needles and plates.

In the late 1800's a Vermont farmer, William Bentley, was enthralled enough with snowflakes to set up a camera outside and photograph them. He eventually published a book containing 2,000 of his photographs, and so demonstrated to the world that no two snowflakes are exactly alike. With the approach of winter we too can seize the opportunity to detect this diversity.

As naturalists, we wonder how it is that snowflakes should be so varied. First, we need to know why snowflakes have that six-sided symmetry. The crystalline form of any mineral is determined by its intrinsic molecular structure. So it follows that as a common earth mineral, water has a characteristic crystalline structure, which happens to be six-sided, thus: In the right conditions, six molecules of water ( $H_2O$ ) form into a hexagonal groups, the six oxygen atoms forming a ring held together by paired "arms" of hydrogen atoms. This intrinsic molecular structure is piled up until we see it reflected in the crystalline structure of snow.

Snow is comprised of water, but not by liquid water freezing into ice. Rather, a snowflake "grows," as water vapor (a gas), skipping the liquid phase entirely, condenses directly onto an ice core. Snowflakes start out as simple hexagonal plates. All flakes would look like this were there not varying conditions in the cloud. As snow falls through the clouds, the six tips of the plates attract a greater percentage of the vapor molecules, so the tips become exaggerated. Since no two snowflakes take the same path through the different temperatures and humidity levels of the clouds, the accumulation pattern is never identical on separate flakes; thus, snowflakes are unique. At the same time, since the accumulation pattern is identical on the six branches of any individual flake as it falls through the cloud, symmetry results.

Just like there are optimal conditions for observing wildflower diversity (not December and January!), there are optimal conditions for observing snowflakes. Hexagonal plates and small dendritic (branched) flakes form at just below freezing. At 20°F, hexagonal columns and needles take shape. Colder yet, the largest dendritic plates are formed at around zero. If the snowflake has experienced melting during its journey, it falls as sleet ~ nondescript chunks of ice. Manmade snow on ski slopes actually is made from water in a liquid state, not water vapor, and so resembles sleet.

Of course snowflakes are not alive, yet they can be said to exhibit characteristics ascribed to living things. You've observed that oak tree silhouettes share a common look, distinct from that of pine. Yet no two oak trees have identical contour and shape. Just so, though the hexagonal pattern is intrinsic to the very nature of a snowflake, each flake exhibits a unique variation on that common configuration.

Where does the water for snowflakes come from? It comes from evaporated bodies of water and from life itself. Each living thing on this planet ~ grass, trees, ants, cardinals, flying squirrels, and you, too ~ burn food and release water, breathed out as a waste product. You exhale about a liter of water vapor a day. The water you breathe out rains or snows back to earth, usually in about a week's time. The snowflake you catch on your sleeve, statistically speaking, contains about 1,000 water molecules that were once in you ~ yes, you personally! This may seem a striking circumstance, but then consider that your endowment of 1,000 molecules makes up only a quadrillionth (1 followed by 15 zeros!) of that tiny snowflake. Wow, you could be looking at metabolized spaghetti dinner from last week or a tiny percentage of your own body mass burned off while taking that walk with the Naturalists' Club last weekend!

Interests of naturalists are broad. We embrace the world through close observation of birds, wildflowers, planets of the solar system, and sand grains. Add to that now a deepened appreciation of the diversity exhibited in the crystalline form of one mineral, water! May you have the renewed wonder of a child when snow falls round you this winter.

~\*~ Sonya Vickers ~\*~

**Life Under the Pond, Russell**

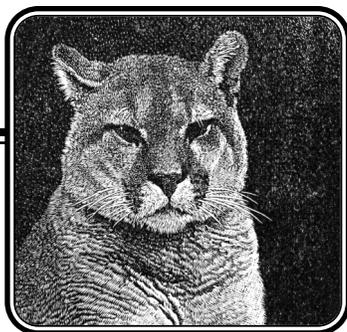
Saturday, January 8, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

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

**Registration:** Please call to register.

**Meeting Place:** Russell Pond public parking area.

Have you ever stood along the shore of a frozen pond and thought about what's going on under that ice? If so, have we got a trip for you! Grab up that old pair of skates or your boots with the stickiest soles and come join us at Russell Pond. This beautiful 400-acre pond will be our living laboratory as we explore the ecology and physics of a freshwater pond in the winter. We will criss-cross the pond, stopping to peer beneath the ice for signs of life and visiting a stream whose oxygen-rich waters feed the lake. We'll also step up into the surrounding forest to discuss how outside factors influence this ecosystem. If ice conditions are unsafe for travel across the pond, we will still be able to explore from its shoreline. Dress appropriately, with layers of synthetics or wool blends. Bring a lunch and plenty of water. You might throw in a thermos of hot cocoa too!



*Cougar: A large concolorous feline carnivorous quadruped peculiar to America.*

**Reading the Ways of Animals, Monson**

Sunday, January 9, from 1 to 3 p.m.

**Leader:** Kevin Kopchynski (267-4757)

**Registration:** Contact Kevin for meeting place.

Animals leave many signs of their wanderings in the landscape. Snowcover allows us to see their every footprint yet obscures a myriad of other sign. Whether there's snowcover or not, we'll take advantage of the open winter landscape to read the stories they leave for us. This walk takes place at the Miller tract of the Peaked Mountain Reservation, on Butler Road in Monson. Contact Kevin for more information and to be informed if the walk is cancelled due to weather. Heavy rain or poor driving conditions will cancel.

More than once, as the twilight deepened, a long skein of returning cranes passed directly across the luminous disk of the moon, each bird in turn standing out in sharp-cut silhouette. Each performer in this silhouette parade flew easily, buoyantly, riding the air on wings whose spread exceeded the extreme length of the bird by as much as three feet....Then in long lines they spiraled downward to alight with gangling legs far outstretched.

*~ Edwin Way Teale, Wandering Through Winter ~*

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**JANUARY MEETING**

**A CAT WITH MANY NAMES ~ THE MYSTERIOUS COUGAR**

Wednesday, January 19, at 7:30 p.m.

Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

Presenter: Frances Ryan

The cougar has been the inspiration of great myths and legends. Come join us for a program incorporating an interactive slide show and hands-on materials, including cougar track casts and skull, teeth, and claw samples. The natural history of mountain lions will be presented ~ the great cat's lifestyle, physical characteristics, adaptations, hunting strategies, reproduction, range, and habitat. Current issues, including status of the endangered Florida panther and the existence of the eastern mountain lion, will be examined, along with public perception and education.

Fran Ryan is an environmental journalist and educator. She holds an M.S. in Environmental Science from Antioch New England Graduate School and a B.A. in Legal Studies from University of Massachusetts. Fran has traveled throughout the U.S. and abroad, studying nature, wildlife, and relationships between humans and their environment. She is the founder and director of Horizon Productions and is the lead researcher, curriculum designer, and educator for all of their presentations.

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There is no wind at the edge of the wood, and the few flakes of snow that fall from the overcast sky flutter as they drop, now one side higher and then the other, as the leaves did in the still hours of autumn. The delicacy of the outer boughs of the great trees visible against the dark background of cloud is as beautiful in its own way as the massed foliage of summer. Each slender bough is drawn out to a line; line follows line as shade grows under the pencil, but each of these lines is separate....The leaves, in fact, when they come, conceal the finish of the trees; they give colour, but they hide the beautiful structure under them. ~ Richard Jefferies, *The Life of the Fields* ~

**Robinson State Park in Winter, Agawam**

Thursday, January 20, starting at 9:30 a.m.

**Leader:** Colette Potter (786-1805)

Can't you just picture the rolling terrain of this Connecticut Valley park under snowcover? Well, don't just sit there thinking how nice it would be ~ Step right into it! A morning traverse of this gem of a park, so close by, for sure sounds like the beginning of a memorable winter's day. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

### **Workshop on How to Photograph Nature Close Up,**

*Westfield*

Saturday, January 22, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Leader:** Sonya Vickers (566-3406)

**Registration:** Please call Sonya with the kind of camera you will use. You will also be advised of other items that might be useful to you in the workshop. Pack a bag lunch.

**Meeting Place:** Westfield State University (f/k/a WSC!) Natural History Museum and Herbarium on the second floor of Wilson Hall.

**Directions:** Take the main entrance from Western Ave. into campus and follow that road as it bears right. Wilson Hall is the second large brick building on the right (with an attached greenhouse). There's plenty of parking on a Saturday. The Museum is in the central portion of the building, on the second floor. A campus map can be found at [www.wsc.ma.edu](http://www.wsc.ma.edu).

Ever wonder how to get good close-up pictures with your digital camera? Ever wonder how to use that symbol that looks like a flower on your camera? Come to this workshop with your camera and learn how you can get great macro pictures of things in nature that are very small. You can come with a small pocket camera or a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) with detachable lenses. Most kinds of digital cameras are capable of macro photography.

No experience is necessary. You will learn some of the capabilities of your camera while practicing close-up photography. For those interested in getting an even closer view, setups for photography using microscopes will be demonstrated. Enjoy nature on a whole new scale with the world of the very small!

### **Behind the Scenes at the Science Museum, Springfield**

Saturday, January 22, starting at 11 a.m.

**Leaders:** Rich Sanderson (263-6800 x318) and Dave Gallup (525-4697)

**Meeting Place:** Springfield Museums Welcome Center parking lot

Join Rich Sanderson, Curator of Physical Science at the Springfield Science Museum, for a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the Museum's collections. Rich will lead us, in groups of six, into the highly secure, climate-controlled collections storage area and show us aisle after aisle of treasures that have been donated throughout the museum's century and a half history. These will include spectacular minerals, rare fossils, mounted birds and mammals, and Native American artifacts. Rich will discuss the philosophy that governs museums and their collections, including how specimens are acquired, steps taken to protect them, and their use for research and educational displays.

LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS. For directions, please check out the museum's web site: [www.quadrangle.org](http://www.quadrangle.org). For other information, contact Rich or Dave.

### **Hike or Snowshoe at Bear Hole Watershed,**

*West Springfield*

Sunday, January 30, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon

**Leader:** Sheila Croteau ([sheila.croteau@aol.com](mailto:sheila.croteau@aol.com)) or 732-7254

**Meeting Place:** The end of Bear Hole Road in West Springfield.

The Bear Hole Reservoir Watershed consists of 1700 acres of upland forest, rambling brooks, wildlife, and ponds. It is also where the former Bear Hole Resort and Restaurant was located. Join us on a easy up and down three-mile loop around the town's water supply area and pumping station. See a spectacular waterfall along Paucatuck Brook and the infamous bear's den. The M&M trail (New England Scenic Trail) is nearby, if people are interested to see where it comes through. It should be a great place to look for animal tracks in the snow. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, with boots and stabilizers if you have some as there are some hills that could be slippery if icy.

### **Quabbin Reservation: Gate 30 ~ Rattlesnake Hill, Orange**

Saturday, February 5, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Bill Fontaine

**Registration:** Call Bill (533-2153)

**Meeting Place:** Florence Savings Bank parking lot, Stop & Shop Plaza, Route 9, Belchertown.

This walk will take us along a gated, level snow-covered road through a variety of habitats on the northern end of Quabbin Reservoir, an area featuring abandoned fields and orchards, wetlands, plantation plantings, cellar holes, and a hand-laid keystone bridge. We'll take our time as we wind our way toward the reservoir some 2.5 miles away. It's an easy in and out (snow permitting!) so you can walk the whole 5 miles or any part of it. Wear appropriate footwear and bring along something to eat and drink. We'll linger a bit at the reservoir to take in the view and have lunch.

### **Observing Wildlife and Animal Tracking at Quabbin, Belchertown**

Sunday, February 6, starting at 11 a.m.

**Leaders:** Jack Megas and Dave Gallup (525-4697)

Please call if you plan on going.

**Meeting Place:** Enfield Lookout, Quabbin Reservoir. Call Dave for directions. Bad weather cancels.

Join Jack and Dave in a view from above at the Enfield Lookout at the Quabbin. We will have spotting scopes and telescopes for viewing eagles perched in trees nearby and wildlife along the shores of the Quabbin. We might even see eagles in flight overhead. At 12:30 Dave will lead us on a two-mile hike, observing animal tracks and signs along the way. This hike takes us through diverse forest and wetland habitat where we should see deer, coyote, fisher, and possibly mink tracks. If we're lucky, we might even see the animals who make these tracks! Dress warmly, bring hot beverages, and don't forget your binoculars. Plan on joining us after the field trips for a hearty meal at a local restaurant!

**Nature in Winter Walk, West Springfield**

Saturday, February 12, from 10 a.m. to noon

**Leader:** Dietrich Schlobohm (413-788-4125).

**Registration:** Call Dietrich to register. Limited to 20 participants.

**Meeting Place:** Bear Hole Watershed in West Springfield.

We will meet at the “Four Corners” (intersection of Prospect Ave. and Morgan Road). For more detailed directions speak to Dietrich or use MapQuest.

Winter is a season when nature appears to slow down: Leaves have fallen from the trees, plants are dormant, and many animals appear to be hibernating. The familiar sounds

of spring and summer are gone. How plants, insects, animals and birds survive the challenges of winter will be one focus of our walk. In addition, we will try to detect patterns of life not clearly visible: Are bears really hibernating? Have all the insects died? Where are the snakes, frogs, and salamanders? Are plants as lifeless as they appear? And what’s really going on beneath that blanket of snow? We may be surprised to find that there’s more life and vitality to winter than meets the eye.

Participants should dress warmly, wear good warm footwear, and pack a snack. The outing will last about two hours. All ages are welcome. Pets should be left at home.

Go to the winter woods: listen there, look, watch .... There is nothing in the world more beautiful than the forest clothed to its very hollows in snow. That...loveliness to which surely none can be insensitive.... wherein every spray, every blade of grass, every spire of reed, every intricacy of twig, is clad with radiance....is beauty so great and complex that the imagination is stilled into an aching hush. There is the same trouble in the soul as before the starry hosts of a winter night.

~ Fiona Macleod, *Where the Forest Murmurs* ~



*Bees visiting flowers. At the left, a bumblebee on the flower of the dead nettle; below, a similar bee in the flower of the horse-chestnut; above, a honey-bee in the flower of a violet.*

**FEBRUARY MEETING**

**“POLLINATORS WELCOME” ~ GARDENING FOR NATIVE BEES**

Wednesday, February 16, 7:30pm

Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

Presenter: Tom Sullivan

Do you plant your garden to attract butterflies? How about hummingbirds? Have you ever thought about providing for one of our most important pollinators? Come learn about the habitat requirements of native bees in New England and what we as gardeners can do to make sure these incredibly important creatures have a place at the table. Tom Sullivan will share his knowledge about the distinction between native bees and honeybees, the benefits of native bees, how native bees raise their young, and what we can do to provide them a suitable environment. Tom will show some of the plants native bees visit, as well as sharing a few design ideas you can work with over the winter.

Pollination is central to sustaining fruit and vegetable formation. Tom’s vision, embracing the role native bees play in flower, seed, and fruit production, has fired up in him a passion to raise awareness and to support others in creating suitable native bee habitat. His yard-by-yard approach, dovetailing edible landscape and permaculture design with native bee flyways and habitat, holds promise to sustain our native bees and consequently our livelihood.

As recently as 2008 Tom’s focus on pollinator conservation in people-dominated landscapes took wing at the Conway School of Landscape Design. Two years ago he started Pollinators Welcome, a nursery where nectar and pollen-rich plants are grown, aimed to attract bees to our vegetables, berry, and fruit blossoms. Tom’s new motto is “Plant it, and they will come,” and he loves to talk about why bees and the plants they depend on are so vital to us all. So come along and hear him speak up for native pollinators!!

In the gray of the year, to our green-hungry eyes, the pines come into their greatness....It is in the pitch pine that you have all that was ever embodied in the name of pine ~ the fondness for growing on craggy ledges, the wind-molded, storm-blasted shape, the dark and pungent foliage, the tears of silvery rosin bleeding from the rough...trunk, and the clusters of cones black against the sky. When it dies, it dies standing. And even as a skeleton, it has grandeur.

~ Donald Culross Peattie, *An Almanac for Moderns* ~

**Crystalline Ashley Reservoir, Holyoke**

Thursday, February 17, starting at 9:30 a.m.

**Leader:** Colette Potter (786-1805)

The trails round and about Ashley Reservoir lead to a wintertime vista of crystalline beauty, with tall trees surrounding, both evergreen and deciduous. Don’t miss this chance to step out into the season in the warming company of friends. Please call to register. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

**Hiking on the Rice Nature Preserve, Wilbraham**

Saturday, February 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Sonya Vickers (566-3406). Register so you can be alerted if weather cancels.

**Meeting Place:** Park at the end of Highmoor Drive, on the left off Main Street, Wilbraham 1½ miles south from the center or intersection of Springfield Street.

This is a new nature preserve in the Wilbraham Mountains on property that was formerly an apple orchard. The clearing allows spectacular views of the Connecticut River Valley, all the way to the Berkshires and up to Mt. Holyoke and Mt. Tom. If there is snow, you may want to try snowshoeing. The trail goes up the hillside, so be prepared for a moderately strenuous hike. Bring binoculars, camera, and a snack or lunch.

**Hubbard River Gorge in Winter, Granville**

Saturday, March 5, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Bill Fontaine

**Registration:** Call Bill (533-2153)

**Meeting Place:** Dunkin' Donuts parking lot, Southwick, on Route 10/202.

Come explore the Hubbard River Gorge! On this winter walk/hike, we'll explore the Hubbard River Gorge in Granville State Forest, Granville, formerly the hunting and fishing grounds of the Tunxis Native Americans. In 1749 the first white settler in the area, Samuel Hubbard, made his home along the banks of the river that now bears his name. This pristine, high-quality waterway is home to one of Massachusetts' native fish species, the brook trout. The river begins its journey to the sea in the hills surrounding Cobble Mountain, then drops 450 feet over some 2.5 miles as it makes its way to Barkhamsted Reservoir in Connecticut. For much of its course the river flows through Granville State Forest, an underappreciated jewel among Western Massachusetts state forests. We'll walk along a gated, snow-covered forest road and follow the river south toward Connecticut. When we've had our fill, we'll go back the way we came. Dress appropriately, and bring poles if you have them (strongly advised!).

**Hiking the Sweet Alice Brook Trail at the Holyoke Range, Amherst**

Sunday, March 6, starting at 10 a.m.

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697) Please call if you plan on going.

**Meeting Place:** Holyoke Range Visitor Center, Route 116 at the Notch, Amherst

The Holyoke Range, one of the jewels of Western Massachusetts, has many hiking trails in a diverse geological and historical environment. We will be hiking a forest trail along a lovely brook named Sweet Alice. Along the way, we will explore an interesting forest environment habitat for many animals and birds. This is a loop hike, about a mile and a half long. To warm and refresh ourselves toward the end of the hike, we can follow a trail that leads to Atkins Farm and enjoy some hot chocolate and sweets! We'll eventually hike back to the Visitor Center at the Notch. Please wear sturdy footwear in light of possible snowy or icy conditions.

The lost leaves measure our years; they are gone as the days are gone, and the bare branches silently speak of a new year, slowly advancing to its buds, its foliage, and fruit.

~ Richard Jefferies, *The Life of the Fields* ~

**Snowshoeing, Russell**

Saturday, March 12, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon

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

**Meeting Place:** Noble View parking lot outside of gate

If the snow is still around, join us for a foray into the woods at AMC's Noble View. This beautiful area has a web of trails through evergreen and hardwood forests. We'll make sure to wind our way over to the overlook down into Westfield. In winter, when the air lacks humidity, visibility increases and we should see for many miles. Signs of wildlife should be all around us. Noble View is always a great place to see animal tracks. Wear appropriate layers, bring plenty of water to drink, as well as a lunch or snack. We'll supply the hot chocolate.

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FRAGRANT BLOOMS *to* TIDE US OVER,  
COME THE END *of* THESE LONG WINTER MONTHS

**Amherst Orchid Society Show**

Saturday, February 26, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, February 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Held at Smith Vo-Ag High School, Locust Street/Route 9.

Vendors and demonstrations on orchid culture.

Club members will be available to answer questions on orchid culture in New England. \$3 Admission.

**Annual Spring Bulb Shows**

Saturday, March 5, thru Sunday, March 20, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• The Botanic Garden of Smith College  
Lyman Conservatory, College Lane  
Northampton, Mass.

\$2 suggested donation

• Mount Holyoke College  
Talcott Greenhouse, Lower Lake Road  
South Hadley, Mass.

Free (donation encouraged)

## MARCH MEETING

### SPRINGFIELD FLORA THEN AND NOW ~ 100 YEARS OF CHANGE

Wednesday, March 16, at 7:30 p.m.  
Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium  
Presenter: Dave Lovejoy

In the early 20th century, naturalist Luman Andrews rode the train from Connecticut to consult the collections at the Springfield Museum of Natural History (now the Science Museum) pursuing his interests in geology, astronomy, and botany. In 1902 he collected plants extensively in Forest Park and expanded his collecting throughout the city over the next 15 years. Much of his survey of the plant species growing in the city was done from 1911 to 1916 and was reported in his 1924 publication, *Catalogue of the Flowering Plants and Ferns of Springfield, Massachusetts*.

A century later, Dave Lovejoy, professor of Biology at Westfield State, resurveyed the city and in 2008 published *Vascular Flora of Springfield, Massachusetts*. Tonight's program will present some of changes that have occurred in the flora of the city over this hundred-year period, including the impact of habitat loss and the introduction of non-native species.



*Ranunculus sceleratus*, the cursed crowfoot. *Rotala ramosior*, the tooth-cup.

### Round and About the Duck Pond at Forest Park, Springfield

Thursday, March 17, starting at 9:30 a.m.  
**Leader:** Colette Potter (786-1805)

Spring-fed Pecousic Brook meanders east to west through Forest Park, along the way replenishing lakes and ponds covering more than thirty acres. Let's stroll along the banks of Duck Pond, keeping a sharp eye out for migrant ducks known to have taken up local winter residence. Seems like a walk for the kids in us: March is perhaps too early for ducklings...but you'll have bread crumbs in your pockets, won't you? Plans are under consideration also for a jaunt across the way to King Philip's Stockade for birding. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

### An Invitation from the Board

Naturalists' Club members have a wide range of interests and expertise in natural history. The Board would like to encourage participation and sharing of this knowledge by inviting members to consider offering a field trip in upcoming quarters. No one needs to think they need to be an "expert" to do this. Field trip leaders should expect that participants will add their own comments to the dialogue, rather than expecting the leader to have all the answers.

The board holds planning meetings four times a year, normally eight weeks before the next issue is due out. Therefore, a meeting will be held in early to mid-February to plan for the April-June 2011 edition. If interested, give Dave Gallup a call for the meeting date and location. Subsequent meetings will be in May (for July-September), in August (for October-December), and in November (for January- March). The perspective you share will enrich the experience of others ~ so please think about it and give us a call!

Among the four divisions of the year, winter is the most barren in scent. But even it ~ with its smell of snow in the air, its drifting wood smoke, and, in its latter days in maple-syrup country, the redolence of sugaring time ~ has its olfactory pleasures.

~ Edwin Way Teale, *Wandering Through Winter* ~

### How Sweet It Is! Maple Sugaring Time in New England, West Granville

Sunday, March 27, starting at 11 a.m.

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697)

**Meeting Place:** Westfield State University commuter parking lot, Western Avenue, Westfield

Join us for our traditional rite of spring, a sojourn to Maple Corners Farm in West Granville, a farm that's been in the Ripley family for over 100 years. There we will enjoy a pancake brunch with freshly made maple syrup! After brunch, we'll be given a guided tour to learn about the process and history of maple syrup production. Then we'll hike to a "sugarbush," about a mile round trip, to see how maple sap is harvested from the trees. This is always an enjoyable outing, one that's become an early spring tradition! Please note: You must call if you plan on going as we need to give a headcount. Thanks.

### Laughing Brook, Hampden

You may call Kevin Kopchynski at 267-4757 for information, but call Arcadia at 800-710-4550 to register. Mass Audubon is extending the courtesy of allowing Club members to attend for the MAS member price: \$3 MAS or Naturalist Club members; \$5 nonmember. Programs take place at Laughing Brook.

- **Tracking at Laughing Brook,**  
Saturday, January 15, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Tracking at Laughing Brook,**  
Saturday, February 19, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Signs of Spring at Laughing Brook**  
Saturday, March 19, from 10 to 11:30 a.m.

# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB 2010-2011

## FROM THE TREASURER

Those of you with a "10-11" (or later) on your newsletter mailing label are paid up for (at least) the coming year. Otherwise, your dues are owing for the year starting September 2010. You may renew by sending a check (payable to The Naturalists' Club) to Dave Lovejoy at the address below or by bringing a check to the monthly meeting.

*Please note: Since Dave Lovejoy maintains the Naturalists' Club mailing list, please direct special requests or changes to him.*

## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- \$15 per year for Individual or Family Membership
- \$25 per year for Supporting Membership
- \$50 per year for Sustaining Membership
- \$300 for Lifetime Membership

Just a reminder... Please be mindful of the environment. If possible, please:

- carpool to destinations
- share costs with your driver

~ Thank you ~ Naturalists' Club Board of Directors



The NATURALISTS' CLUB was founded in 1969 for the purpose of actively promoting knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of our natural environment. It is an all-volunteer non-profit organization.

Education is a main focus of The NATURALISTS' CLUB. Programming, with an emphasis on local natural history, is designed to create camaraderie among people of diverse interests through experiences deepening their appreciation of nature. Activities are geared to acquaint the layperson with the natural world, mostly through field trips. Monthly meetings are held at the Science Museum at the Quadrangle in Springfield, Mass. Most field trips and programs are free.

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Requests for programs/trips

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