



The Naturalists' Club - Dept. of Biology  
 Westfield State University  
 P.O.Box 1630  
 Westfield, MA 01086-1630

# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

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

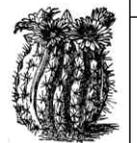
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## APRIL *to* JUNE SCHEDULE *of* ACTIVITIES

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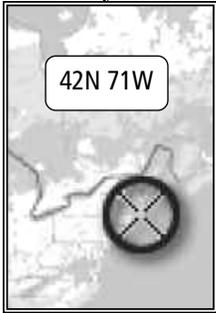
<b>APRIL</b>	6	Saturday	Benedict Pond, Beartown State Forest, <i>Monterey</i>
	13	Saturday	Life Begins Again After Winter, <i>Russell</i>
	17	Wednesday	APRIL MEETING: WILD ALASKA
	18	Thursday	Rails to Trails, <i>Southwick</i>
	20	Saturday	Nature Bike Hike, <i>Easthampton</i>
	27	Saturday	Pioneer Valley Outdoor Fair, <i>Westfield</i>
<b>MAY</b>	4	Saturday	A Journey to Chapel Brook Falls, <i>Ashfield</i>
	5	Sunday	Spring Hike at Whitaker Woods and McCann Farm, <i>Somers, Connecticut</i>
	11	Saturday	Wildflower Search and Identification, <i>Russell</i>
	12	Sunday	Paddle the Quinebaug River, <i>East Brimfield</i>
	15	Wednesday	MAY MEETING: THE PANORAMA OF CALIFORNIA'S DEATH VALLEY
	16	Thursday	Round and About Ashley Ponds, <i>Holyoke</i>
	19	Sunday	Columbia Greenway Rail Trail Walk, <i>Westfield</i>
	26	Sunday	A Hike at High Ledges, <i>Shelburne Falls</i>
<b>JUNE</b>	8	Saturday	Hubbard River Gorge, <i>Granville</i>
	15	Saturday	Green Thugs in Our Woodlands, <i>Russell</i>
	20	Thursday	Riverside Forest, <i>Agawam</i>
	23	Sunday	Mountain Laurel on Observation Hill, <i>Chester</i>



Barrel Cactus  
*(Ferocactus  
 cylindraceus  
 var. lecontei)*

# NATURALIST'S CORNER

## HOME ~ A NATURALIST'S YARDSTICK TO THE REST OF THE PLANET



I travel a lot but have Western Massachusetts as my home. I am constantly comparing what I see away from home against the baseline of hometown nature. How can you appreciate how alpine wildflowers grow if you can't compare them with those in your own backyard? How can you appreciate just how dry the Southwest desert is, at 8 inches of rain a year, if you're unaware of annual rainfall at home? Change in latitude (distance from the equator) parallels the progressive change in day length and season exhibited between the equator, at 0 degrees latitude, and the poles, at 90. The kinds of plants and animals living at these various latitudes correlate to this range of seasonal contrasts between equator and the poles: penguins, phoebes and parrots all live where they do because of the effects of latitude.

I recently went on a trip to Death Valley in California which got me thinking about this very topic. It is the lowest spot in North America and also the driest and hottest. With less than 2 inches of rain in a year, the hills were bare of vegetation. Not desert vegetation ~ I mean NO vegetation. The geology that formed the landscape was bared for all to see. I started thinking about how these conditions make it possible not only to compare New England with that part of California but to see WHY these two places are so different.

We are at 42 degrees north latitude, not even halfway to the North Pole. The 45 degree line runs at the Canadian border of Vermont and New Hampshire and out West at the border between Wyoming and Montana at Yellowstone National Park. Our latitude of a few degrees less than 45 puts us in line with southern France, Rome, Mongolia, and North Korea. We do not seem to share the same climate, but that is due to jet stream patterns around the world. Death Valley is a bit farther south from us, at 36 degrees latitude, a factor that partially accounts for its warmth.

In February a few years back I found myself at 42 degrees south latitude, in Santiago, Chile. It was warm enough that I went swimming. All the trees had green leaves. Being in the southern hemisphere, their February is like our August. It felt strangely familiar, just out of place in time.

Another feature of being south of the equator is prevailing wind direction. We are used to our weather arriving from the west: rain in Albany today will be here tomorrow. Just as the seasons in the southern and northern hemispheres are opposite each other, in the two hemispheres prevailing winds blow conversely to one another. The Andes form a range down the west side of the South American continent, where winds come from the east, travel over the continent, then hit the mountain range and lose all the moisture on the eastern slopes. The Atacama Desert on the western slope of the Peruvian Andes is so dry it may not rain there for 10 years at a time. That's even worse than Death Valley!

As one approaches the equator, the seasonal changes characteristic of Western Massachusetts and Santiago, Chile disappear. Some New Englanders don't appreciate Florida (latitude in the 20's) because they miss the seasons. Continuing south from Florida, seasons disappear altogether. Once when I was leading a trip to Costa Rica in June, people were thinking it would be hotter than hot. However, with 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of night year round, the temperature range in Costa Rica remains constant whether it's January or June. The tropics never get as hot as can a Massachusetts summer day, with up to 16 hours of daylight.

At this latitude we have a diversity of tree species that dwindles as we head northwest. Ever notice how many fewer tree species there are in northern Maine? Some forests even approach a monoculture of conifers. The opposite happens if you head south of home: Tree ID books get more complicated, and pollination cannot be left up to the wind when so many different species abound. There may not be two of the same kind of tree within a mile in places like Panama. That circumstance, of course, has bred specialized pollinators, another factor contributing to increased biodiversity as you approach the equator.

Of course, rainfall makes a big difference in the vegetation we see. Death Valley gets under 2 inches of rain, hence no vegetation, which is why its geology is so visible. We get around 42 inches ~ actually 4 inches more, on average, than that city everyone considers so rainy, Seattle. They have lots of clouds, yes, but we get more actual rainfall. A visit to Dallas, Texas reminds one of a dry climate, yet believe it or not Dallas gets as much rain as Seattle. The difference is in how that rain falls: In Springfield and Seattle, long, gentle rains, and in Dallas, downpours that quickly drain off the land, leaving little behind for plants to grow.

I remember once our family having a visitor from Texas who expressed dismay at the claustrophobic effect of our trees. New Englanders hike trails for miles to a goal which usually includes some sort of view. In the drier West, views abound with every step on the trail. What westerners call "big sky country" we call boring desolation, always comparing to what is home. Back to that geology that can be seen in Death Valley. Just because we can't see rock layers and volcanic cones here in Western Massachusetts doesn't mean we don't have an interesting geological history. Main Street Wilbraham travels along a gigantic fault line. Mt Holyoke and Mt Tom are lava beds that have been tilted. We live on the cores of very old mountains that used to be higher than the Alps. It is all here, it's just that vegetation obscures the evidence.

APRIL

So this is our unique place on the planet, where 42 degrees latitude gives us seasons and 42 inches of mostly gentle rain provides enough moisture for large trees to grow in forests exhibiting a moderate diversity. There are enough plants here that they have not needed to get defensive by developing spines or poisons, as plants tend to where life is tougher. Here we get weather mostly from the west that is not usually extreme (well, that may be changing), and our geology, although interesting, is not in a present state of volcanism and earthquakes. Our 42 degrees of latitude is neither as warm as Rome nor as cold as North Korea. This is home.

As I travel, it is always interesting to compare natural populations. We have white pines and gray squirrels. In the Rockies there are ponderosa pines and golden-mantled ground squirrels. The naturalist in me is intrigued by such differences, even more so when I can figure out how latitude, altitude, climate, and geology determine the plants and animals that can live where they do. Home serves as a baseline for my personal comprehension of the nature of Planet Earth. ~ Sonya Vickers ~

**Benedict Pond, Beartown State Forest, Monterey**

Saturday, April 6, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Leader:** Bill Fontaine

**Registration:** Call Bill to register (533-2153).

**Meeting Place:** Town parking area behind the Otis Fire Department, at the junction of Routes 8 and 23.

Beautiful Benedict Pond in Beartown State Forest is undeveloped except for a boat launch and small beach. This area features diverse habitats, including a deciduous forest and a cattail marsh, and is rich in wildlife, particularly birds. On this walk, we'll follow the Pond Loop Trail and a short section of the Appalachian Trail to complete our circuit of the pond. Trail length is about 2.5 miles, over fairly easy grades. For those who are interested (and ambitious!), a short, steep half-mile detour leads to the Ledges, with attractive views westward toward Mount Everett and the Catskills beyond. Bring sturdy footwear and something to eat and drink.

Autumn arrives in early morning, but spring at the close of a winter day. ~ Elizabeth Bowen ~

 Ptarmigan  
(genus *Lagopus*)



**APRIL MEETING**

**WILD ALASKA**

Wednesday, April 17, starting at 7:30 p.m.

Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

**Presenter:** Gary Melnysyn

Holding certifications as a Master Naturalist and Master Wildlife Conservationist, tonight's guest speaker, Gary Melnysyn, works as a seasonal ranger in Yellowstone National Park. He has led eco-tours throughout North America and is an accomplished nature photographer whose stunning images have appeared in *National Geographic* and *Outdoor Photography* magazines. Come along tonight on a journey to four of Alaska's national parks. Gary's passion for photography combined with his naturalist's background will reveal Alaska's vivid natural landscape and the wildlife dependent on such magnificent remoteness.

**Vernal Pools ~ Life Begins Again After Winter, Russell**

Saturday, April 13, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Leader:** Tom Tynning

**Registration:** Call Gary Forish (519-3251). \$5 fee applies.

**Meeting Place:** AMC Noble View Outdoor Center, 635 South Quarter Road, Russell

Late winter and early spring find an abrupt flurry of activity in the small forest wetlands known as vernal pools. With neither inlet nor outlet and even drying up for part of the year, vernal pools are easily overlooked in the forested landscape, yet to many species of amphibians these oversized puddles are lifesavers.

Come take a short walk to visit a couple of Noble View's vernal pools and take a close look at the amphibians so dependent upon these landscape features. Our leader, Tom Tynning, is a professional naturalist and onetime nature columnist for the Springfield Republican. He is currently Professor of Environmental Science at Berkshire Community College. Tom was also a Master Naturalist and Field Herpetologist with Mass Audubon, where he worked for 24 years.

**Rails to Trails, Southwick**

Thursday, April 18, starting at 9 a.m.

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

"Linear greenspaces, including trails and greenways, have all the traditional conservation benefits of preserving greenspace but also have additional benefits by way of their linear nature. As tools for ecology and conservation, greenways and trails help preserve important natural landscapes, provide needed links between fragmented

habitats, and offer tremendous opportunities for protecting plant and animal species...In addition, they can allow humans to experience nature with minimal environmental impact" (from Rails to Trails website). Please call to register and for meeting place. Remember to bring your binoculars. Dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

I hope you love birds too. It is economical.  
It saves going to heaven. ~ Emily Dickinson ~

APRIL – MAY

**Nature Bike Hike, Easthampton**

Saturday, April 20, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

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

**Registration:** Registration is required for this trip.

**Meeting Place:** Meet with your bike at Flaherty Park in Easthampton, at the intersection of Pleasant Street and Ferry Street on the northern end of Mill Pond.

Our nature bike hike will lead us through a variety of habitat, beginning along the newly opened spur of the Manhan Bike Trail. From there, on a hard-packed dirt road, we'll ride through the Arcadia Meadows, a great area for viewing birds. Especially interesting will be the great blue heron rookery. After a break at the Arcadia Visitor Center, we'll resume the ride, taking the original Manhan Bike Trail. This loop bike hike brings us back to Flaherty Park. Of course, we'll stop at times to explore whatever gifts Mother Nature offers. Call Dietrich for more details, directions, and information.

**Pioneer Valley Outdoor Fair, Westfield**

Saturday, April 27, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Location:** Westfield State University's Scanlon Hall

The Naturalists' Club and Westfield River Environmental Center is sponsoring a big, brand new, exciting event. All the outdoor clubs and organizations in the valley will converge at Westfield State University and Stanley Park on this day. Bring your neighbors and your friends and family for a day full of outdoor adventure. Visit the booths to learn about opportunities for enjoying the outdoors in the region, then attend a trip with one or more of the organizations. Go on a birding trip with the Allen Bird Club, take a hike with the Wilbraham Hiking Club, or bring the kids to "Noticing Nature," put on by the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation. See the mineral display and presentation by the Connecticut Valley Rock and Mineral Club, or go on a "Stories of the Land" hike with our own Kevin Kopchynski, plus many, many more outings. Over 20 groups will be in attendance and events for kids and adults will occur all day long. For complete information visit the PVOF website: [www.valleyplanning.com](http://www.valleyplanning.com).

We can also sure use some volunteers to staff the Naturalists' Club table! To help out on this day, contact Nancy Condon (564-0895).

Winter lingered so long in the lap of Spring that it occasioned a great deal of talk. ~ Edgar Wilson Nye (1850-1896) ~

**A Journey to Chapel Brook Falls, Ashfield**

Saturday, May 4, starting at 10 a.m. (Rain cancels)

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697). Call with any questions.

**Meeting Place:** Table and Vine parking lot, Route 5, West Springfield

Join us to explore one of the lesser known waterfalls of Western Massachusetts. Managed by The Trustees of Reservations, this beautiful waterfall and hiking trail is something you don't want to miss. We will explore the waterfalls first and then hike a trail to the summit of Pony Mountain, exploring wildflowers and a beautiful forest along the way. When we reach the 1400-ft summit, we might see ravens nesting in rocky crags. While these rocky ledges attract rock climbers, the trail is less daunting, about a half-mile hike. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and bring a snack.

**Spring Hike at Whitaker Woods and McCann Farm, Somers, Connecticut**

Sunday, May 5, from 9:30 a.m. until ?

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

**Registration:** Contact Sheila to register.

**Meeting Place:** Parking lot behind Somers Town Hall, 600 Main St. (south side of Rt. 190)

Spend a few hours exploring the trails on this beautifully preserved 350 acres of mixed woodland and pastures in Somers, Connecticut. The trails were built, and are maintained, by The Northern Connecticut Land Trust. Along our hike we will encounter a couple of brooks, the Whit Davis Bird Sanctuary, stone walls, and interesting rock formations. Trails are slightly hilly in places, but not difficult. We'll cover about 3.5 miles. Bring along a lunch and water, and wear sturdy hiking boots.

**Wildflower Search and Identification, Russell**

Saturday, May 11, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

**Leaders:** Nancy Condon and Laura Stinnette

**Registration:** Contact Nancy to register (564-0895)

**Meeting Place:** Noble View Outdoor Center, 635 South Quarter Road, Russell

Did you always want to know the name of that beautiful, shy flower peeking out from under the pine needles? Join us for search and ID hike. Young children invited. Hiking will be slow and easy.



Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)

MAY

**Paddle the Quinebaug River, East Brimfield**

Sunday, May 12, from 9 a.m. till about 2 p.m.

**Leaders:** Dick and Moreen Kardas (967-5739)

**Meeting Place:** Job Lot/Big Y shopping center, Route 32, Palmer (Take I-90/Mass Pike to Palmer, Exit 8. Go left at the traffic light, onto Route 32 North. Take a left at the next traffic light into the shopping center.)

From the meeting spot we will caravan about a half hour to East Brimfield Lake, off Route 20, near the Brimfield/Sturbridge town line. There, where parking is generous, we'll put our canoes and kayaks in the lake. After about a half-mile paddle westward across the lake, we'll enter the Quinebaug River. Paddling south, against the current, we'll pass some farmland, but most of the river winds through thick marshes filled with birdlife. We have a chance

of seeing turtles, great blue herons, geese, ducks, red fox, deer, turkey, hawks, varied songbirds, and even bald eagles and otter. In 5 miles, we'll find ourselves on Lake Siog (also known as Holland Pond). After a stop for lunch, we will turn around and paddle from whence we came, going with the flow this time, and back to our cars. Total trip distance is about 11 miles. The current is negligible. The water is flat and paddling is generally easy. Novice paddlers are welcome, keeping in mind the distance we'll cover is a good challenge. Bring your boat, life jacket, lunch, drink, camera, binoculars, hat, sunscreen, and sense of adventure.



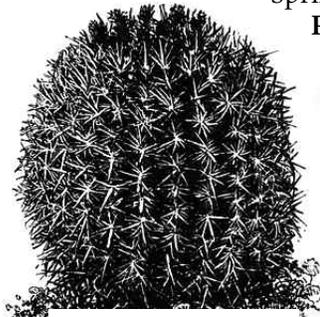
**MAY MEETING**

THE PANORAMA OF CALIFORNIA'S DEATH VALLEY

Wednesday, May 15, starting at 7:30 p.m.

Springfield Science Museum, Tolman Auditorium

**Presenter:** Sonya Vickers



Barrel Cactus (*Ferocactus cylindraceus* var. *lecontei*)

Our good friend Sonya Vickers offers a program tonight on Death Valley in California. This, the lowest and driest place in North America, also holds the record for the hottest reliably reported air temperature in the world, 134°F. Such extremes render Death Valley an other-worldly experience, captivating for distant views of the landscape and renowned for glimpses into far-off time owing to the exposed geology. Plants have evolved methods of living in a very salty, hot environment, and animals have altered their behaviors to survive in this arid land. Thus it happens a notable number of both plant and animal species are endemic to the valley and to the surrounding national park at large. Some folks see Death Valley as an unforgiving, desolate landscape. Others come to admire this wondrous place with its expansive views. Come to the meeting and see where you stand ~ beauty or desolation?



Roadrunner  
(*Geococcyx californianus*)

**Round and About Ashley Ponds, Holyoke**

Thursday, May 16, starting at 8:30 a.m.

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

Take a midspring stroll round these ponds atop East Mountain, sighting resident or migrant birds busily flitting about in the cool morning air. Please call to register and for meeting place. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Bad weather cancels.

**Columbia Greenway Rail Trail Walk, Westfield**

Sunday, May 19, from 1 p.m. to about 3 p.m.

**Leader:** Dave Lovejoy

**Meeting Place:** Meet where the rail trail crosses Shaker Road (Shaker Rd. becomes Ponders Hollow Rd. at or near this point). There is a parking lot (with a sign) near the trail crossing, which is also at the entrance to Shaker Farms Country Club.

This relatively newly opened trail extends into Southwick and beyond. We will walk a portion of it at a "naturalist's pace" watching especially for wildflowers that bloom in the spring. Children are welcome, but no pets, please. Heavy rain cancels.

From a woodland back of our cabin, in the dusk and in the dark, came an ancient song of spring, the tirelessly repeated call of a whippoorwill. Listening there in the soft June night we remembered how Henry Thoreau at Walden had longed to hear whippoorwills in his dreams and how, to him, this final month of spring was the "whippoorwill's moon." ~ Edwin Way Teale ~

MAY – JUNE

**A Hike at High Ledges, Shelburne Falls**

Sunday, May 26, starting at 9 a.m. (Rain cancels)

**Leaders:** Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697) Call with questions.

**Meeting Place:** Table and Vine parking lot, Route 5, West Springfield

Enjoy the beauty of the forest and wildflowers at High Ledges, where Ellsworth Barnard, naturalist and writer, would spend his summers with his wife. Ellsworth created hiking trails along this beautiful ledge where the rare yellow lady's slipper grows. The property is now owned by Massachusetts Audubon Society. High Ledges has wonderful vistas of the valley below, including Shelburne Falls, a picturesque New England town known for its "Bridge of Flowers." If you like, you may take the afternoon to explore the town's unique shops and beautiful waterfall. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a lunch.



Yellow Lady's slipper  
(*Cypripedium parviflorum*  
var. *pubescens*)

**Hubbard River Gorge, Granville**

Saturday, June 8, 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 in the heart of Granville State Forest. On this walk/hike we'll visit the former 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 begin our walk along a gated forest road and then follow a footpath along the river, south toward Connecticut. When we've had our fill, we'll go back the way we came. Wear sturdy footwear and bring along something to eat and drink if you wish.

**Green Thugs in Our Woodlands: Current and Expected Invasive Plants Impacting Native Habitats, Russell**

Saturday, June 15, from 10 a.m to 12 noon

**Leader:** Julie Richburg, regional ecologist for The Trustees of Reservations

**Registration:** Contact Gary Forish (519-3251)

**Meeting Place:** Noble View Outdoor Center, 635 South Quarter Road, Russell

You might call them weeds, as they are unwanted and troublesome. These plant pests have come from foreign lands and invaded our area. Come learn about some common invasive plants in this area, how to identify them, their ecological impact, and how to safely get rid of them.

**Riverside Forest, Agawam**

Thursday, June 20, at 8:30 a.m.

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

Start the day early with a walk through part of Robinson State Park with folks who appreciate finding themselves in natural surroundings. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Call to register and for meeting place. Bad weather cancels.

Unseen in the brilliance of midday, a new moon ~ a faint greenish-silver parenthesis mark in the sky ~ had moved across the zenith. Now, as the colors faded in the west and the long slow twilight of the summer solstice began, it increased in brightness .... we waited, in spite of the night chill, until the last sunlight of the spring had ebbed from the sky .... It was late when we stepped out to look at the sky. From horizon to horizon the heavens were clear, filled with the glinting of the stars. And almost as we looked, in the night, under the stars, spring was gone. It was summer when we awoke.

Everywhere in the Northern Hemisphere spring had come and gone. The season had swept far to the north; it had climbed mountains; it had passed into the sky. Like a sound, spring spreads and spreads until it is swallowed up in space. Like the wind, it moves across the map invisible; we see it only in its effects. It appears like the tracks of the breeze on a field of wheat, like shadows of wind-blown clouds, like tossing branches that reveal the presence of the invisible, the passing of the unseen .... For spring is like life. You never grasp it entire; you touch it here, there; you know it only in parts and fragments .... We were well aware that it is only on the calendar that spring comes to so sudden a termination. In reality its end is a gradual change. Season merges with season in a slow transition into another life.

~ Edwin Way Teale ~

**Mountain Laurel on Observation Hill, Chester**

Sunday, June 23, starting at 1 p.m.

**Leader:** Dave Lovejoy (572-5307)

**Meeting Place:** Carpooling is encouraged. Meet Dave at the commuter parking lot at Westfield State University at 1 p.m. Alternatively, at 1:45 p.m. join us at the Chester-Blandford State Forest, 4 miles west of Huntington on Route 20. To reach the trailhead, turn onto Sanderson Brook Road (opposite Banish Lumber) and park in the small lot on the right just a few feet up the road.

The H. Newman Marsh Memorial Trail in Chester-Blandford State Forest is approximately one and a half miles in length, the first half an ascent up Observation Hill's north face. Three vistas cleared along a broad loop at the top of the hill offer excellent views of the Westfield River Valley. The trail, steep and rocky in places, provides a nice introduction to the northern hardwood forest (beech, birch, maple). On this early summer day we hope to see the stands of mountain laurel in full bloom, with clusters of white or pink cuplike flowers displayed against leathery dark green leaves. Heavy rain cancels.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Exploring the Upper Connecticut River Valley,

*Pittsburg, New Hampshire*

Thursday, July 11 through Sunday, July 14

**Leaders:** Tom and Nancy Condon

**Registration:** Call (564-0895) or email (science@condon.net) to reserve a spot by May 1.

Join Tom and Nancy for 4 days of hiking and canoeing in one of the most beautiful areas in New England. The Connecticut River is New England's longest river, extending from the Canadian border to Long Island Sound. Its headwaters are home to moose, otter, deer and the plants and birds of the northern forests and is a great place to explore by foot and by boat. We'll hike out to the headwaters of the Connecticut River, see beautiful waterfalls and climb to fire towers with panoramic views of the area. We'll also paddle on small beaver ponds, quiet streams, and the lakes of the upper Connecticut River. There are options for canoe rental if you don't have your own boat.

The drive to Pittsburg is five hours, too far for one day but well worth an overnight trip. We can tent camp, book lodge rooms, or rent a quaint cabin. Register by May 1 with your overnight preference so we can make appropriate reservations.

It is pleasant to have been to a place the way  
a river went. ~ Henry David Thoreau ~

## Stump Sprouts Weekend, *West Hawley*

From dinnertime Friday, September 6,  
through Sunday luncheon, September 8

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

**Registration:** All-inclusive cost for two nights lodging and six meals is \$154 per person. Make check payable to The Naturalists' Club and send to Dietrich Schlobohm, 52 Poplar Ave., West Springfield, MA 01089. Indicate your roommate preference.

Reservations and a 50% deposit must be received no later than June 1. This trip will be cancelled if 15 people are not paid by that date. Call Dietrich or Julie for more information.

High on the side of a mountain, with a grand view, Stump Sprouts ski lodge provides a unique setting to walk, hike, or relax in solitude. A 90-minute drive from Springfield, the property consists of a 450-acre tract surrounded by state forests. Guests bring their own bedding, towels, and toiletries; bathrooms are shared. Our hosts provide family-style garden-fresh meals, complete with homemade breads, usually a choice of meatless entrees. Bring along binoculars, good footwear, curiosity and a sense of wonder. Limit: 20 people.

## Nominating Committee and Election

Elections are held at the May meeting. Anytime prior, members may contact the Nominating Committee to make additional nominations. Committee members are Karen Daniels (786-8228), Delores Gentile (783-6113), and Colette Potter (786-1805). The following incumbents are running for office:

- President ~ Dave Gallup
- Vice President ~ Nancy Condon
- Treasurer ~ Dave Lovejoy
- Corresponding Secretary ~ Suzanne Gallup
- Recording Secretary ~ Sonya Vickers
- Directors ~ Tom Condon, Bill Fontaine, Jack Megas, Dietrich Schlobohm

Nominations may also be made from the floor at May's meeting.

## LAUGHING BROOK WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, *Hampden*

Please contact Arcadia at 800-710-4550 to register. For general information, you may contact Kevin Kopchynski at 267-4757. All programs are led by Kevin except as noted. Fees apply.

**Intro to Nature Photography** Sundays, from 1 to 5 p.m. This two-part class is being offered April 14th and 21st, then a second series June 2nd and 9th. We will review principles of photography, especially as related to nature. Following an indoor session, there will be time in the field to practice what was learned. The class meets initially at Town Hall in Hampden. Participants are encouraged to bring photos for review at the second session.

**A Visit to the Vernal Pond** Saturday, April 20, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. We should see salamander eggs and frog eggs or tadpoles. The walk to the pond takes approximately 15-20 minutes.

**Wildflowers at Laughing Brook** Wednesday, April 24, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Enjoy an early spring walk at Laughing Brook looking for early, or vernal, wildflowers. We hope to see fringed polygala, wild oats, red trillium, and wild leeks ~ and more! We'll walk through both field and forest. This trip is led by botanists Connie Parks and Janet Bissell.

Three programs taking place at Noble View are co-sponsored by AMC's Noble View Outdoor Center's Education Committee: April 13 Vernal Pools, May 11 Green Thugs, and June 15 Wildflower Search.



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

- carpool to destinations
- share costs with your driver

~ Thank you ~ *Naturalists' Club Board of Directors*

# THE NATURALISTS' CLUB 2012-2013

## FROM THE TREASURER

Members with a "12-13" (or later) on their newsletter mailing label are paid up for (at least) the current year. Otherwise, unless you remit dues for the current year, this is the last issue you will receive and in April you will be sent a final reminder to continue your membership. Please save us the time and expense of mailing these April reminders by sending your check now, payable to the Naturalists' Club and mailed to Dave Lovejoy, Department of Biology, Westfield State University, Westfield MA 01086.

*Note:* If your address and contact information have not changed, the form below need not be completed. We would, however, like your email address if you haven't sent it previously. Thanks.

*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



## RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW

Name

Address

Phone Number

Email

Requests for programs/trips

Please send information per the above to Club Treasurer Dave Lovejoy, Department of Biology, Westfield State University, Westfield, MA 01086.

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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.