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The NATURALISTS' CLUB Newsletter

Springfield Science Museum at the Quadrangle, Springfield, Massachusetts http://naturalist-club.org/

SCHEDULE · OF · ACTIVITIES

JULY		
Sunday	9	An Afternoon in South Deerfield
Sunday	9	Southern New England Trees and Shrubs, Westfield
Saturday	15	Hubbard River Gorge, <i>Granville</i>
Sunday	23	Windsor Jams Picnic and Hike, Windsor
AUGUST		
Sunday	6	Aquatic Plants, Westfield
Sunday	13	Mid-Summer Wildflowers, Westfield
Friday	18	Star Party at the Astronomers' Conjunction, Northfield
Sunday	20	Early Morning Paddle on Littleville Lake, <i>Huntington</i>
Saturday	26	Nature along the Trail, Westfield
SEPTEMBE	?	
FriSunday	8-10	Stump Sprouts Weekend, West Hawley
Sunday	17	Monument Mountain Hike, Great Barrington
Wednesday	20	SEPTEMBER MEETING: The Galapagos Islands
Saturday	23	Early Bird Sunrise Walk, <i>Hadley</i>
Sunday	24	Canoeing the Quabog, West Brookfield
Sunday	24	Fall Wildflowers, Westfield
OCTOBER		
Sunday	15	Mount Tom Wildlife Viewing Area Maintenance Picnic Party & Hawk Watch, <i>Holyoke</i>



Ramblings about Naturalists

It seems as though scientists and naturalists of past centuries were likely to be more broadly competent and familiar with science and nature than is the case today. For example, the French scientist George Buffon (1707-1788) wrote a 44-volume work, *Histoire Naturelle*, which covered a broad range of topics. A century later, Louis Agassiz became an expert in fossil fishes as a young man in Switzerland and then afterward made significant contributions on the effects of Europe's glaciers on topography and animal distribution. Later yet, Agassiz emigrated to America, where he became the most visible scientist of his generation, perhaps most notable for founding the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. Yet another European doing pioneering work in the natural history of America was Mark Catesby, remarkable for bringing scientific illustration to a new level and for authoring *Natural History of Carolina*, *Florida*, and the Bahama Islands (1731), considered the best account of North American flora and fauna over the next 100 years. These three men were each certainly competent in many scientific areas.

Knowing the right people was sometimes necessary for breaking into a field of natural history. Catesby may have gotten himself appointed to do his first scientific expedition in the colonies through the efforts of the prominent English botanist John Ray, a family friend. Later, when the unsuccessful poet Alexander Wilson, who lived near Philadelphia, was contemplating whether to try to become a serious ornithologist, his efforts were encouraged by William Bartram, one of the first American naturalists born here rather than in England. For others, connections had negative effects, which John James Audubon experienced in Philadelphia a few years after Wilson's death when, seeking a publisher for his major work, he spoke disparagingly of Wilson's accomplishments to men who held Wilson in high regard. Audubon was forced to travel to England to arrange for the publication of *The Birds of America*.

Other connections between scientists and naturalists have become immortalized in the scientific names of plants and animals. In 1765, while exploring southern Georgia, John and William Bartram found a small tree which they believed to be a new species. They named it *Franklinia alatamaha* after their friend Benjamin Franklin. Frequently, a scientist who determines that a plant or animal is a new species will name it after the person (often a naturalist) who first collected it. Linnaeus, the great Swedish taxonomist of the 1700s, did this frequently, even naming a plant for himself (*Linnaea borealis*, the twinflower). Further, he was not above "immortalizing" those who disagreed with him, in one case naming an unattractive and smelly weed, *Sigesbeckia*, after Johann Sigesbeck, who had criticized some of his writings.

In modern times, new species are still being found and named, of course, although some of these new species have been "right under our noses" for years. In 1975, a former professor of mine at the University of Connecticut discovered a new species of peccary (a type of pig) in Paraguay, which had been seen for years but had not been distinguished from other similar species. Even more recently it has been realized that "African elephants" are in fact two distinct species, the bush elephant and the forest elephant. A little closer to home (but still 1,000 miles away), an old friend of mine who is an entomologist (by avocation) in central Florida has collected more than a dozen new species of insects, mostly on the University of Central Florida campus just a few miles from downtown Orlando. As in the time of Linnaeus, the person who collects the first specimen may get the organism named for himself, as has been the case several times for my Florida friend.

An aspect of natural history which has changed considerably over the years is the degree of specialization of many naturalists and scientists. Today there are fewer generalists like Agassiz or Catesby since most contemporary scientists tend to focus on a particular topic or group of organisms. For instance, some botanists in the New England Botanical Club are expert in one group, such as aquatics or ferns, yet know surprisingly

Ramblings about Naturalists...continued on next page.

Ramblings about Naturalists...continued.

little about the broader spectrum of plant groups. In a corollary development to specialization by scientists, organisms themselves have been further distinguished. Thus, although a colleague of mine who specializes in marine algae may be generally identified as a "botanist," technically algae are not even in the plant kingdom.

It is to our credit that many members of our club do not fit this "specialist" mold, being inquisitive about a variety of topics and perhaps also being active in other nature organizations in the area, such as the Allen Bird Club and Stars Club. This trait, I think, is one of the strengths of our group, as the Springfield Naturalists' Club has persisted for more than 35 years "actively promoting the knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of our natural environment." ~ Dave Lovejoy

An Afternoon in South Deerfield

Date and Time: Sunday, July 9, at 1 p.m.

Leader: Joan Presz (569-6663)

Meeting Place: To register and get directions, call Joan

after 8 p.m.

Important note: The field trip is free, though you need to register. If you want to attend the special tea, you will need to prepay \$10 by July 5th to Joan Presz.

This trip is in two places, with a number of activities planned. Our first stop is Stockbridge Farm, owned by John and Mary Ellen Warchol and for many years part of a Lavender Tour in this area. John is a very enthusiastic gardener who loves to talk about and display his garden. Mary Ellen and her sister, Denise Lemay, use the garden to fashion interesting culinary dishes. They are giving us a chance to taste their creations by hosting an afternoon tea especially for us.

Our second stop is just down the road, at Warm Colors Apiary. Dan Conlon, the speaker at our May meeting, has invited us to visit with him and his wife, Bonita, a master gardener, at their homestead. Dan was named 2005 Beekeeper for the state of Massachusetts. Both Dan and Bonita feel a deep love for nature they want to share with others. They'll escort us on a nature walk through their acreage, complete with gardens, birds and bees. A honey tasting is included as well.

Southern New England Trees and Shrubs, Westfield

Date and Time: Sunday, July 9, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Stanley Beveridge Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary (on the right, beyond the tennis courts and picnic area) in Westfield's Stanley Park.

Registration: Not necessary

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (572-5307) Meeting Place: At the entrance sign to the Frank follow the river south, toward Connecticut. Then we can go back the way we came or consider other options for our return trip. Bring a sandwich and a drink and enjoy lunch along this beautiful river. Stay longer and explore other hiking opportunities, or visit the state forest

We'll begin our walk along a gated, paved road and

camping area to begin planning your return visit!

This walk and those on August 13 and September 24 are part of the "Summer of 2006 at Stanley Park" nature workshop series. This casual hike will focus on the variety of woody plants commonly seen in the various habitats of the region, including the oak forest, floodplain forest, northern hardwood forest, and the wooded and shrub swamp.

Hubbard River Gorge. *Granville*

Date and Time: Saturday, June 15, 10 a.m. to 12 noon?

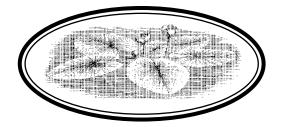
Leader: Bill Fontaine (533-2153)

Meeting Place: Dunkin Donuts parking lot, Southwick,

Mass., on Route 10/202 Registration: Call Bill

Come explore the Hubbard River Gorge! On this walk/hike, we'll explore the Hubbard River Gorge in Granville State Forest, Granville, Massachusetts, the hunting and fishing grounds of the Tunxis Indians.

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. The Hubbard River begins in the hills surrounding Cobble Mountain and 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.



Windsor Jams Picnic and Hike, *Windsor*

Date and Time: Sunday, July 23, from 9:00 a.m. to

2:00 p.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon (564-0895)

Registration: Please call to register, so if bad weather

forces cancellation we can contact you.

Meeting Place: Large parking lot at the picnic area in Windsor State Forest, off Route 9 in Windsor, Mass.

Come join the club for a picnic and hike in this wonderful state forest. We'll start by carpooling up to the upper parking area. Then, with a stroll along the top of the Windsor Jams gorge, we'll explore this unusual geologic formation. Our hike will continue down the gently sloping trail to the picnic area. Along the way, we'll visit hemlock and oak forests, as well as a spruce forest more reminiscent of Canada than Western Massachusetts. Wear sturdy shoes and bring along a camera and some binoculars.

After the hike, we'll spend some time down along the Westfield River as it flows past the picnic area. Bring along some hamburgers, hot dogs, or your favorite grilling items and a side dish to share with the group. We'll bring the charcoal and grilling tools.

Aquatic Plants, Westfield

Date and Time: Sunday, August 6, from 1 to 2:30 or

3 p.m.

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (572-5307)

Meeting Place: Commuter parking lot at Westfield State College. We'll take a short carpool to the site

(which has limited parking). **Registration:** Not necessary

In this short walk we will visit an artificial pond or two in Westfield's "wolfpit meadows," which, besides the usual pondside vegetation, typically have a variety of floating and submerged aquatic species. In addition to viewing the plants in their habitat, we will collect some specimens, and Dave will demonstrate some of the different techniques used to prepare good-quality aquatic specimens. Those wishing to cool off in the pond may assist in the collecting, but one can also fully benefit from this field trip by remaining dry on solid ground.

Mid-Summer Wildflowers, Westfield

Date and Time: Sunday, August 13, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (572-5307) **Meeting Place:** same as July 9 **Registration:** Not necessary

Another in the Stanley Park nature workshop series, this walk will focus on the wildflowers in bloom during midsummer and will likely cover the same habitats as the tree

and shrub walk held in July in the Park.

Star Party at the Astronomers' Conjunction, Northfield

Date and Time: Friday, August 18, at 7:30 p.m.

Leaders: Jack Megas (782-3962)

Meeting Place: Northfield Mountain Visitor Center, Rte. 63 (three miles north of Route 2, in Northfield, MA.)

The Astronomers' Conjunction started 24 years ago as a Naturalists' Club activity and has now evolved into an annual Northeastern regional three-day astronomy convention, with 100 participants and nationally known speakers. Help us celebrate this anniversary by joining us for Friday's free dark-sky Star Party in this beautiful rural setting. Clouds or rain cancels.

Early Morning Paddle on Littleville Lake, *Huntington*

Date and Time: Sunday, August 20, from 8 to 10 a.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon (564-0895)

Registration: Space is limited, so please call to sign up. **Meeting Place:** Parking area at Littleville Lake, off Goss

Hill Road in Huntington

August brings us the Dog Days of Summer, so how do you beat the heat? Get up early and get onto the water! Join us as we explore this surprisingly picturesque reservoir. Tucked up in the hills of Huntington, Littleville Lake offers paddlers a unique opportunity. With so many lakes overrun with oversized powerboats, there are few quiet places to enjoy a morning paddle. Littleville restricts engine size, so the worst we could experience are small trolling motors on tiny skiffs. Come enjoy this tranquil lake, its wildlife, the scenery, and the early morning.

No canoe? No problem. Nancy and Tom can provide them. A \$5 per person donation to Venture Crew 872 in Southwick is all it will cost you. We limit the size of the group to make the logistics reasonable, so please call early. Bring a bag lunch, camera, binoculars, or whatever. Each canoe will be equipped with a small dry bag to keep things safe.

Nature along the Trail, Westfield

Date and Time: Saturday, August 26, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Leader: Art O'Leary (789-7274)

Meeting Place: Meeting Place: At the entrance sign to

the Frank Stanley Beveridge Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary (on the right, beyond the tennis courts and

picnic area) in Westfield's Stanley Park.

Registration: Not necessary

Join us this day for an interpretive nature walk in Stanley Park, using guides from well-known nature trails and wildlife management areas in our area. Food, water, cover, and nesting sights for wildlife will be the focus of this nature walk. Learn how people as well as animals make use of the natural resources. Examine the educational opportunities for nature study by using interpretive trail maps from four local wildlife areas, then comparing them to the Wildlife Sanctuary in the park.

Stump Sprouts Weekend, West Hawley

Date: Friday, September 8 through Sunday, September 10 **Time:** Dinner on Friday evening through a Sunday luncheon.

Leaders: Dietrich and Julie Schlobohm (788-4125) Please note: At this point 20 people are signed up, but we are creating a waiting list. Please give us a call.

Registration: All-inclusive cost for two nights' lodging and six meals is \$129 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. Limit: 20 people.

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 ninety-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 binoculars, good footwear, curiosity and a sense of adventure.

Monument Mountain Hike, Great Barrington

Date and Time: Sunday, September 17, at 9 a.m.

Leader: Dave Gallup (525-4697)

Meeting Place: Town and Country Liquors parking lot, on Route 5 in West Springfield. Rain Cancels.

By climbing Monument Mountain and viewing colossal white granite, breaching the landscape like a whale, you will soon discover Herman Melville's inspiration for "Moby Dick." Other famous authors and poets, such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Oliver Wendell Holmes, would come to this area for inspiration as well. If you would like, bring some of their works or your own favorite poems to share.

A moderately strenuous hike up the trail leads to the summit's captivating view of the valleys below. As we make our ascent, we will examine the effects of increasing elevation and thinning soils on the vegetation. Following lunch, we will descend the mountain, and you will have the afternoon to explore, on your own, nearby Stockbridge with its famous Red Lion Inn and Norman Rockwell Museum.

SEPTEMBER MEETING: THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Wednesday, September 20, at 7:30 p.m. Tolman Auditorium, Springfield Science Museum Speaker: Sonya Vickers

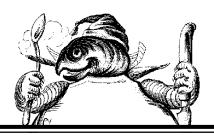
Sonya Vickers will present a program on the Galapagos Islands, the very islands that set Darwin to thinking about evolution from his observations of giant tortoises and many kinds of finch. The Galapagos sit directly on the equator, 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador. Because they have been uninhabited for much of their history, the animals are not wary of man and can be approached and photographed without the aid of a telephoto lens. These islands are the home of the northernmost penguin, huge marine iguanas, and oddities like the blue-footed booby.

TRAVEL TO THE GALAPAGOS!

If this program sounds interesting to you, how would you like to plan an adventurous trip to the Galapagos? Sonya will be leading a trip in the beginning of August 2007. The ten-day trip will include a four-day island cruise aboard the ship Galapagos Legend and five nights in comfortable hotels in Quito. Breakfasts and all shipboard meals are included as is the airline transportation. We will also have the chance to explore the high-altitude volcano in Quito, Ecuador, and you will have the option of extending your trip to Peru and Machu Picchu. At \$3521, the price for this trip is quite competitive with other similar trips. Call Sonya Vickers for more information at (413)566-3406.

In the dark that comes so September 15. noticeably sooner now, Nellie and I, a little after nine o'clock this evening, follow the path up onto the open, higher ground of the Starfield....While we are standing here beneath the multitude of the stars, our ears catch other sounds -- the little cheeps and calls of migrants passing overhead. By now many of our birds have slipped away almost unnoticed....And now, night after night, birds from farther north -- like these unknown wayfarers traveling under the stars above Trail Wood -- are streaming southward....What a great adventure lies before these small travelers whose lives are touching ours only once, only through faint sounds in this starlit night. Standing here motionless, wingless, earthbound, Nellie and I almost feel the tug of migration ourselves.

A Walk Through the Year, by Edwin Way Teale.



SAVE THE DATE! Wednesday, October 18

The Board of Directors has been making plans for a banquet meeting of the Naturalists' Club in October, to be held once again at School Street Bistro in downtown Westfield. Jack Megas, the keynote speaker, will present Exploring the Wonders of Southern Utah, a photographic essay on the "grand canyon" lands and Navajo tribal parks in a region all too often overlooked.

Early Bird Sunrise Hike, *Hadley*

Date: Saturday, September 23 **Time:** Call Dave or Suzy for time.

Leaders: Dave and Suzy Gallup (525-4697)

Meeting Place: The entrance gate to Mount Holyoke (Skinner State Reservation), Route 47. Rain cancels.

This is a hike for early risers! Enjoy the cool fall air of the early morning, when dawn is breaking. We will meet at the entrance gate to Mount Holyoke (Skinner State Reservation). The gate will be closed at this hour. A brisk walk along the paved road will bring us to the trailhead leading up to the Summit House, where we will enjoy sunrise and breathtaking views of the valley. This is hawk migration time so many species of hawks can be seen flying south. Later, after hiking down the mountain, you may join us for breakfast in Northampton. Dress appropriately for weather, and feel free to bring along a thermos of something warm!

Canoeing the Quabog, West Brookfield

Date and Time: Sunday, September 24, from 8 a.m. to

4 p.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon (564-0895)

Registration: Space is limited, so please call to sign up. **Meeting Place:** Big parking lot near AMF Chicopee Lanes, where the Mass. Pike and I-291 intersect. We'll carpool from there. Heavy rain cancels.

This 6 mile paddle starts in a wide open, flat marsh rich in birdlife and aquatic plants. We'll watch for great blue herons, red-winged blackbirds, and a variety of ducks among the cattails and pickerelweed. The river eventually narrows down as it enters woodlands. We'll scoot over a couple of beaver dams, around a fallen tree or two, and through a couple of small riffles ~ just enough to add a bit of excitement to this quiet stream. The interesting paddle, combined with plenty of wildlife viewing opportunities makes this trip from West Brookfield to the Lucy Stone Park in Warren memorable.

No canoe? No problem. Nancy and Tom can provide them. A \$5 per person donation to Venture Crew 872 in Southwick is all it will cost you. We limit the size of the group to make the logistics reasonable, so please call early. Bring a bag lunch, camera, binoculars, or whatever. Each canoe will be equipped with a small dry bag to keep things safe.

Fall Wildflowers, Westfield

Date and Time: Sunday, September 24, from 2 to 4 p.m.

Leader: Dave Lovejoy (572-5307) **Meeting Place:** same as July 9 **Registration:** Not necessary

By late September, goldenrods and asters are among the dominant wildflowers and will comprise the focus of this easy hike. Participants who also attended the midsummer wildflower walk in August will see the distinct contrast in the wildflower flora as the seasons change.

Mount Tom Wildlife Viewing Area Maintenance Picnic Party & Hawk Watch, *Holyoke*

Date: Sunday, October 15

Times: Maintenance 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Hawk Watch 1 to 3 p.m.

Leaders: Tom & Nancy Condon (564-0895) **Registration:** It would be great to know you are coming, but drop-ins are welcome and encouraged. **Meeting Place:** Route 5 entrance to Mount Tom State Reservation. If you come late, meet at the Bray Tower. Heavy rain cancels.

For many years, the Naturalists' Club has maintained an area at the Goodreau Memorial Overlook in the Mount Tom Reservation. Twice yearly, members pitch in to remove invasive trees, plant wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs, and erect bluebird boxes. **WE NEED YOUR**

HELP TO KEEP THIS PROJECT GOING.

Come join us, for with many hands the work is light. We work at our own pace and abilities and simply enjoy the time in this lovely space. We've sighted many species of birds, deer ~ and even a snake this past spring, but don't let that stop you.

After a few hours of clipping down saplings, we'll break and enjoy a picnic lunch ~ on us. For those still interested in enjoying the day on the mountain, we'll move up to the Eyrie House ruins and try our luck at spotting straggling migrating hawks.

With today's excessive gasoline prices, please be mindful of the environment, trip leaders, and drivers. If possible, please:

- carpool to destinations
- share costs with your driver
- ~ Thank you
- ~ Naturalists' Club Board of Directors



the May meeting At Naturalists' Club annual elections were held. Of note, Arthur J. O'Leary, III, has stepped down after his many years of heartfelt service to the Naturalists' Club on the Board of Directors, first as director, then as vice president. Over the years Art has built up with personal renown remarkable outings he's researched and shared with many enthusiastic members who have followed along in his footsteps. It seems we're going to be missing contributions for the short run at least.

Nancy Condon steps up to assume the role of vice president this year and Sonya Vickers picks up the pen as recording secretary. Please join in welcoming Bill Fontaine, of South Hadley, a high school teacher of biology, who joins the board as a Director, willing to become one of the club's outing leaders. The membership cast votes in support of, and so will continue to benefit by, dedicated service of the balance of officers and directors of the board, Dave Gallup, Dietrich Schlobohm, Tom Condon, Dave Lovejoy, Jack Megas, and Suzanne Gallup.



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Here's how to become a member of the Springfield Naturalists' Club: Enclose a check, in the appropriate amount, payable to The Naturalists' Club.

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

\$300 for Lifetime Membership

Mail to Club Treasurer Dave Lovejoy, Biology Dept. Westfield State College, Westfield, MA 01086-1630. Include your mailing address and phone number.

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.

FROM THE TREASURER:

Many of you know that September is the month for membership renewal and also the time that our largest annual bills (rental of Tolman Auditorium, liability insurance) are due. You may pay over the summer by sending a check (payable to The Naturalists' Club) to David Lovejoy at Department of Biology, Westfield State College, Westfield, MA 01086. Or wait until the September meeting. If you cannot recall when you last paid, you may inquire at dlovejoy@wsc.ma.edu or 572-5307.

Any member current with payment of dues will see a "05-06" or "06-07" on their mailing label. For those with an "04-05" on the label, please make your payment as soon as possible if you wish to continue as a member. In the fall, we will send a final reminder letter to 04-05 former members; paying now will save the Club the expense and time of sending these reminders. And special thanks to the increasing number of members who have renewed at the Supporting or Sustaining level. Most members renew at the regular rate, but as of May 2006 we have 23 supporting and five sustaining members.



Become a Club Member or Renew Your Membership for 2006-2007.

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Requests for programs/trips	